

FIVE FOOT THREE



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FIVE FOOT THREE

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Editor: Nelson Poots

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

Cover Photograph: On 18th November 1990, a day of very mixed weather, No.461 is bathed in almost horizontal early morning sunlight on leaving Whitehead en route to Coleraine. (C.P. Friel)

EDITORIAL

1990 - according to the media, the start of a new decade. This assumes that AD started at 0000 and after 12 months became 0001. Whilst there are differing views on that, so far as the RPSI was concerned 1990 was certainly a notable year. Unfortunately this was mostly for the wrong reasons and it was therefore a year which many would gladly forget.

Faced with the 'wooden body' ban, the loss to traffic of No.85, the imminent prospect of major boiler work on other mainline locomotives and the financial implications of the Carriage Shed project, the Society had little cause for rejoicing at the dawn of the 1990s. Operationally, we hit rock bottom in May with the failure on the Railtour of our only remaining mainline engine. The tour itself had been under-subscribed, due to a combination of route, lack of vintage stock and "it's only another Derby tank". The latter would appear to reinforce one of the points made by Mr. Edgar (q.v.) since the prospect of haulage by a locomotive which has created a new set of records for Irish steam traction does not in itself appear to be a sufficient attraction. The moral seems to be that at least one blue 4-4-0 is required to induce people to cross the Irish Sea in large numbers. It will be interesting to see how attractive a black inside-cylindered 2-6-0 proves to be - it should certainly score on rarity value.

Which brings us to one of the more pleasant memories of 1990, the return to traffic of No.461, painstakingly restored after almost 30 years of decay. In more immediate terms, no less rewarding was the re-tubing of No.4, carried out in Dublin in record time, which enabled us to fulfil our planned programme of Dublin-based operations and generate some much needed finance. The other side of the coin was that no engine was available in the North for Portrush Flyer or Steam Enterprise workings, with resultant loss of revenue. Attempts to salvage something by running diesel-hauled Flyers (with vintage coaches) were a resounding failure. Given the different types of clientele involved, all sorts of conclusions could be drawn from comparison of this with the 2-day tour.



No.461 approaches Magheramorne on 11th November 1990. The piece of water in which the train is reflected was for many years the home of a pair of swans and the progress of their young was anxiously monitored every spring by Larne line commuters. (C.P. Friel)

Still on money matters, the Treasurer's report will make plain what we are up against and the fact that we are going to have to get a lot of extra money from somewhere. The Editorial in the last Five Foot Three suggested, and the Chairman in this issue, urges that someone should be responsible for fund-raising. It is a vital post; other Council members are fully involved in their various fields but without adequate finance the Society's activities will sooner or later grind to a halt. There is certainly money to be had - all it needs is for someone to go in pursuit of it.

1990 also saw the end of an era with the retirement of NIR Chief Locomotive Inspector, Frank Dunlop. It in no way belittles the work of others to say that over the years Frank's name had become almost synonymous with Northern-based RPSI outings. Never a man to suffer fools gladly, his expertise and enthusiasm nonetheless benefited us on innumerable occasions. If all goes according to plan, by the time this issue is published a function in his honour will have taken place. We may never see his like again!

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Sullivan Boomer

The past year has been a very difficult one for our Society. The bombshell in late 1989 that No.85 "Merlin" was stopped with worn firebox sides was followed by the revelation that No.171 "Slieve Gullion" would also require major boiler repairs, including a new front tubeplate, around 200 new firebox stays, and complete retubing. No.4 was also due for retubing, but was put out into traffic as a

calculated risk. This went wrong when she failed on the May tour, but a hasty retubing was effected and the engine returned to traffic to carry through another very successful Dublin summer season. Even the "Derry Engine", No.3 "R.H. Smyth" was stopped at the end of the summer requiring renewal of her firebox patches. We were reduced to one main line locomotive and one shunter, but on the diesel front No.23 kept struggling on, working on only two of her three cylinders, while restoration work proceeded on the Carlow diesel, No.4. On the plus side, however, No.461 was completed, successfully steamed, and commenced her running in programme.

On the coaching front the ban on non-UIC specification rolling stock on Irish Rail contributed to the cancellation of the "Steam Enterprise" operations, but otherwise affected us relatively little during the year except for the International Railtour in May, which again had to be run with Craven coaches hired from Irish Rail. This problem has not yet been resolved, although there has been considerable progress in some areas of negotiation during the year.

In spite of all these problems which collectively found the Society at its lowest ebb for many years, we are finishing the financial year with a relatively small deficit against that projected some months earlier. This has been achieved by severe financial control, and the application of strict priorities and conditions on all expenditure.

What, therefore, does 1991 hold in store for us?

Financial control will remain draconian, certainly for another twelve months, but our investment in the rebuilding of our locomotive fleet should see us with two main line locomotives for the entire season, with hopefully at least one more appearing during the year. Our confidence in the future can be gauged from the level of this investment; between 1989 and 1991 we expect to spend between £60,000 and £80,000 in putting our locomotives through extensive boiler and mechanical rebuilds which will ensure their availability for operations well into the next century! Current planning should see the Society, over the next three to five years, with its largest ever working steam fleet, amounting to five or six engines, and all of them with a long working lifetime ahead of them. Added to this will be the expansion of our diesel fleet, and a much broader based enthusiast marketing strategy for railtours.

The tour programme will feature the "Decies" in May, when our International Railtour will take No.461 back to her home territory, and renew our acquaintance with the south-eastern corner of Ireland for the first time since the early 1980s. The "Limerick Treaty 300" special in September will provide, in effect, a second two day tour, and there will be the usual full programme of operations out of Belfast and Dublin for the general public. A couple of film contracts are under negotiation, and the prospects look good for the year. We hope that by early 1991, we will have resolved the 'wooden body' question satisfactorily, and that the Society will be entering upon another period of peace and prosperity.

It is also vitally important to us to develop our infrastructure, and the capital development programme at Whitehead must proceed. The Carriage Shed will require the investment of around £25,000 of Society funds next year, or we may lose our grant and have to repay £18,000 already received! A smaller capital works programme at Mullingar is currently going ahead, for which 50% grant aid is available, and our Dublin based working members have undertaken to raise the Society's part of the investment. We are also exploring other sources of grants and sponsorship, and these have been reasonably promising so far.

This brings me to my annual appeal for help from the membership, which is so often repeated in newsletters and circulars. The weary faces of the Council were lightened a few months ago when, after a request for help with weed control at Whitehead, I received a parcel from a member in Huddersfield (Bruce Travis) containing a knapsack weed sprayer. I realise that many members cannot help physically on a day to day basis, but donations and encouragement of this nature makes it all worthwhile.

So if you can help at Whitehead or Mullingar, contact the Council member you feel you can assist in their job. Otherwise consider this idea! We need a member who is prepared to spend some time writing letters and making telephone calls to seek out sponsorship and sources of grant aid. I have often said that Council is an overworked body, and I must insist that our wives and families do like to see us from time to time. So the moral this year is **spread the load!** If you can help in a 'backroom' function you will be very welcome; the pay and conditions are appalling, the appreciation is minimal, and the pressure enormous. But seriously, can you be our Sponsorship and Grants Officer, and wheedle money for us out of companies or public bodies? Other societies can and have funded their schemes this way, and **we are missing out!** This is a job that you can do from your desk or fireside, and it could be the difference between success and failure for much of our activities.

During 1990 we struggled to survive. In 1991 we will be breasting the summit of that hill. Every member can help us make the climb over the top that little bit easier. To close with an example; if every member donated £25 the Carriage Shed could be built immediately.

NEWS FROM COUNCIL

Paul McCann

The Council meetings of 1990 were certainly a 'baptism of fire' for this new Council member. Whilst well tutored by my predecessor on the day to day running of the Society's affairs, I was in no way prepared for what came immediately on taking up my post.

In January it was reported that No.85 would have to be taken out of traffic due to excessive wasting of the firebox. This was a severe blow as the engine was required for the Comeragh International Railtour and for both the Portrush flyer and Steam Enterprise seasons. With No.171 out of traffic, that left No.4 as the only main line engine in service. The problem then arose of how to make best use of No.4, the decision being compounded by the fact that her tubes were life-expired and therefore unreliable. The extremely difficult decision was taken to base No.4 in Dublin for the season as this was the most profitable option. Thus for the first time in over twenty years no steam would be operating out of Whitehead. No.461 was an unknown quantity at that time.

In May came the ultimate disaster, the remaining mainline locomotive failed on the International Railtour. Morale was at an all time low at the following Council meeting. However, the Society was not beaten yet, and as is related elsewhere, No.4 has new tubes fitted and ran a superb season out of Dublin.

Matters improved slightly during the summer with the prospect of No.461 coming into steam again after 30 years of inactivity. This brought with it much needed income in the form of £1,700 raised by our London team to fund the running-in operations, and £5,000 to help fund the restoration from the Irish National Lottery, the funds of which are managed by the National Heritage Council. Mullingar has also benefited by the receipt of a 50% grant towards the £2,000 cost of upgrading the site facilities. The remainder of the money is being raised by the sale of scrap cleared from the site.

These followed a donation towards the carriage shed of £3,800 from Kirk, McClure & Morton who were the consulting engineers on the project, and the 50% grant of £18,620 towards the cost of the first phase of the project from the International Fund for Ireland. Nevertheless, the funding of the second phase of the shed was badly hit by the failure of the Railtour to generate income this year. This was a major debating point at Council during the year, but eventually it was decided that steps should be taken to seek IFI approval to defer progressing the building until the Society's finances are better able to cope with it.

The situation means that the expenditure in all departments, excluding locomotives, has been cut to zero, and is likely to remain that way for some time. However, some expenditure cannot be cut and our insurance premium this year was £13,000. We continue to benefit from the good advice given by Alan

Campbell of Bowring Martin on insurance matters.

The Society benefited from an unexpected quarter early in the summer when we were asked to provide period coaches for the filming of a television advert for Satzenbrau lager. Filming took place in Heuston Station in Dublin over a couple of days and nights.

A restructuring of NIACRO, the Government-funded youth training organisation who administer the Whitehead Railway Project, took place early in the year. The outcome of this was that any help they can provide must now be in the form of training projects. Unfortunately this is unsuited to the Society, and consequently NIACRO has been of limited benefit to us recently. This is most apparent in the preparation and mailing of newsletters and other circulars, and we have now returned to the 'stuffing' sessions of old.

The NIR Hunslet diesel electric locomotives, which have seen more retirements and comebacks than Frank Sinatra, are finally coming to the end of their days in NIR service. The Company has approached the Society to suggest placing two of the three engines into RPSI care, the third to go to the Downpatrick and Ardglass Railway Company. At the time of writing no further information is available, but no doubt the matter will generate lively debate in the months to come.

David Humphries, our Dublin Marketing Officer, has been rewarded by seeing the Office of Revenue Commissioners in Dublin finally succumb to many months of hard work and persuasion. They have now recognised the Society as a Charity and this means that we are no longer liable for Corporation Tax; this was becoming an annual problem in recent years with the increasing operations based in Dublin.

Society membership numbers have taken a slight dip this year; 137 members who had not renewed being replaced by only 110 members. The 1990 membership closed at 870. Of the 600 or so Irish members who received a questionnaire with their membership cards this year, a disappointing 34 replied offering their services to the Society. Many thanks to those who did reply.

Of the current 18 Council posts, 7 were filled by new faces in 1990. Also, several new faces appeared in posts of special responsibility.

John Creaner, that well known figure on all Society outings, has been appointed as RPSI legal adviser. Brian Ham was given Life Membership in recognition of the years he served the Society in this post.

With the NIR crews now coming under RPSI employment for steam operations, the financial side of Society affairs has increased dramatically. A new finance committee was set up early in the year to help ease the burden on the Treasurer and a finance policy document was soon produced. The Workshop sub-committee has started to meet again; this encompasses locomotive maintenance, carriage maintenance and site offices. As usual the task of planning tours was divided between the northern and southern operations committees. An unfortunate necessity was the setting up of a committee to take responsibility for trying to get the wooden-bodied stock ban rescinded south of the border.

As usual, by the kind permission of NIR, we enjoy the use of their board room for Council meetings. This year there have been three meetings in Dublin and IR have made available the ex-GNR board room in Connolly Station for this purpose.

In September the Society lost a good friend with the death of Stanley Bennett, who had retired in January 1990 from the post of promotions executive at the Belfast office of Bord Failte. Before joining Bord Failte Stanley had worked for the Ulster Transport Authority and, before that, for the Great Northern Railway. In a lifetime in the travel and tourism industry he became one of its most respected figures. We offer our sympathy to his wife and daughter.

The end of another financial year in the RPSI's history is now upon us. This has been a challenging year financially, to say the least, a baptism of fire perhaps for me in my first year as Treasurer!

The year started on an indifferent note; while a number of substantial bills were expected, so was the Carriage Shed grant and the profit generated by the two-day tour which has been our biggest single source of earnings in recent years. Then disaster struck. The availability of only one locomotive for main line use (and the marketing consequences for the two-day tour), the ban on RPSI coaches between Dundalk and Dublin, and most of the IR network, and other minor unforeseen expenses resulted in a major reduction in likely income during the year. With fewer trips, it could only be expected that bar and diner receipts would fall sharply and, with major re-stocking of the Commercial Department necessary, profit from this source would be cut.

And so it proved. As a result the Council took the decision to cancel all expenditure in the Site and Carriage departments at Whitehead and Mullingar which was not of an essential nature. The Locomotive Department was committed to heavy expenditure in order to complete work on No.461 - had this been cut we would have faced 1991 with only one locomotive, a situation which needs no further comment!

The Council, meantime, has actively pursued any avenue of sponsorship and grant aid known to us; from Government agencies, other charities, business and individuals. This is a policy which will become even more important in the future.

On 8th April the newly formed Finance Committee convened for the first time in well known premises opposite Dundalk railway station (thanks to David Humphries for making the arrangements). The function of the Committee is to provide guidance to the Council on financial matters and to lighten the workload of the Treasurer! I am very ably assisted here by David Humphries, Paul Newell and Barry Carse - all experts in various aspects of the Society's operations.

And so to the end of the year and the future. While we have struggled through 1990 we still face daunting times ahead. In order to have a second locomotive available, much expenditure will be needed on No.171 in coming months. No.4 and No.85, over the next few years, will require overhaul and this will be costly. On the carriage front, while we have lately received a very generous grant from Bass Ireland for refurbishment of dining car 87 further funds will be needed to complete this job. Despite the ban on new coach restoration the running sets at Whitehead and Mullingar require essential maintenance before next season. The largest financial challenge remains in the form (or lack of it) of the Carriage Shed. We are committed, by the terms of the grant already received, to complete this within the next two years, which will mean generating £13,000 extra per year over this period.

Another uncertainty relates to the ban on the use of our coaching stock on most routes of Irish Rail, an issue dealt with elsewhere. Suffice to say that, either way, substantial expenditure on carriages may become necessary within the next few years. If the ban becomes all-embracing or permanent we must look towards acquisition of steel-bodied stock, but if the ban is dropped or relaxed we must reinvest heavily in our existing stock.

It will be seen from the above that it is imperative that the Society restores itself to a healthy financial state in which we can plan ahead adequately, rather than having our hands tied by paying past bills. It gives me no pleasure to attend monthly Council meetings with what has almost become a recorded message - "No, can't afford it!"

What can we do? The Council is already firmly committed to cutting expenditure and seeking ways to maximise income. We depend heavily on the goodwill of the general public, who continue to fill our trains, but the response from our own membership has, regrettably, been very poor indeed. Few

members are to be seen on trains (other than some noted regulars) and financial support seems to be confined to payment of subscriptions annually. Nobody owes the RPSI a living - if we, the membership, have the necessary interest to join, why not travel on our trains?

I would therefore like to appeal to you to send an extra donation when renewing membership - an extra £10 per head (20p per week for a year!) would produce some £10,000. We do live in hard times but I would again appeal to all members to give as generously as you are able. Thank you in advance!

I will close by mentioning one of the lighter moments of my occupation. During the very hot weather in July I attended an Operations Committee meeting in a light (and scruffy) T-shirt one evening. As I walked in I was asked if the fact that I hadn't a shirt on my back had anything to do with the Society's finances!

I would like to place on record my thanks to the three Finance Committee members, particularly Barry Carse who looks after the day to day running of the accounts in the Republic and thereby lightens my load considerably.

SOUTHERN STEAM

Rory McNamee

When the going gets tough the tough get going. I make no apology for the cliché because it is a well known fact that a cliché becomes one because it is the solid truth. This year saw us steaming into the nineties but it was nearly not so! Most people are aware that the Society was entering the new decade with some of the biggest problems in its history. Apart from financial headaches and wooden stock bans we were suffering from chronic locomotive shortage. In fact during a steam test on No.4, our one remaining locomotive capable of entering traffic, a steam leak was discovered in the foundation ring which put serious doubt on whether we would run at all. After successful repairs at Whitehead the locomotive arrived in Dublin on 5th May, much to the relief of the Dublin Area Operations Committee.

The three day tour was planned to run from Dublin to Limerick and back via Ennis and Athenry, incorporating some new mileage for No.4. On Saturday 12th May we experienced superb running to Limerick Junction. From here we ran, as planned, to Carrick-on-Suir where low water pressure caused delay and required Peter Scott to visit the locomotive's tank to assess the water level in order to minimise further delay. On his expression of satisfaction we retraced our steps back to the Junction. Fingers had been kept crossed that No.4's tubes would see us safely through the entire season as they were soon due for renewal. Paddy Lipper had just shut off steam for Tipperary when a tube 'popped' bringing us to an unceremonious stop. Spectators looking from the train could, on seeing the emission of steam from the chimney, ascertain where our power had disappeared to. Fortunately P.N. O'Brien, our steam age yuppie, was in possession of a cellular phone and Michael Murphy - District Manager Mainline Operations with Irish Rail - (who was travelling, with his son, as our guests to see at first hand the requirements for crew training) quickly organised a rescue using said phone. They say it is hard to beat a Tipperary man at the best of times but to beat a Tipp man in Tipperary is impossible. Startled tour participants waiting to rejoin us at the local station from a lineside bus got unusual if undesired shots of our now diesel-hauled steam tour. Included were some of our German friends who soon realised that it was also a long way to Limerick as they were now temporarily stranded!

At Limerick Junction No.4 was shunted to a lonely siding to suffer her indignity in seclusion. Locomotive PSR for running, Mullingar, and son Paul were 'volunteered' to accompany the invalid to Dublin, determined not to be deprived of their footplate trip. As there was no vacuum brake on No.4 Saturday evening's move was cancelled as a brake-van was not available. On Sunday morning driver Mick Melvin and Vinny the guard arrived with an A Class and van at 09:30. Mickey, who was anxious to get away as quickly as possible, was shocked to learn that the locomotive had to be prepared for the journey. Motion and boxes were oiled as indeed was a most important additional oiling point, the blast

pipe. With No.4 now sandwiched between A Class and van we set out on the 111 mile journey to Dublin. After some time, as we were travelling at a speed rather higher than 30 mph, by operating the brake handle on No.4 we attracted Mickey's attention so he stopped. Using language unsuitable for Sundays he enquired what our problem was. We explained our timing method for establishing speeds and also that we had to re-oil the blast pipe, to which our driver replied that this day would be the death of him as he knew nothing about steam engines. We told him that by the time he got to Dublin he would! We proceeded at a more gentle speed with Mickey checking regularly with us for stop signals. An uneventful trip with numerous stops to pour oil down the blast pipe, etc., continued in privacy. My crack about P.N. O'Brien, Gary Brennan and dead engine crews in last year's Five Foot Three had come home to roost. We had to take the job more seriously, though, when you consider the distance we were travelling. The privacy of our trip was marred only by spies with cameras at Cherryville Junction, where the smoke sheen of oil blasting from the chimney gave the impression that we were actually in steam. Special thanks to Mickey and Vinny for getting us home safely. I feel I should now tell Mickey that neither of the McNamees could time an egg never mind a train speed. We are much better at psychology but you can read that as liars! For those interested in facts and figures No.4 consumed 4 tons of coal 6,250 gallons of water, 1.5 gallons of cylinder oil and 3 gallons of engine oil to get her to Tipperary. On the way back we used 10 gallons of engine oil and 5 gallons of cylinder oil mixed, 4 gallons of water and six lumps of coal which were thrown at the Cherryville spies. For historians it was the first time that an RPSI crew were in sole charge of a steam locomotive travelling on a main line. The fact that it was a father and son crew made it more unusual - a pity we were not in steam.

Having disposed of No.4 at Inchicore, we made our way to Connolly to await the arrival of the tour train. On its arrival the mystery, to us, of No.4 going to Inchicore and not Whitehead was explained. Peter Scott, who had left the tour train at Inchicore to examine the locomotive, confirmed his belief that all necessary repairs could be carried out in Dublin. Were we back in business?

With fourteen tubes replaced, a hydraulic test planned for 19th May was cancelled on examination of the tubes which had been removed. On Wednesday 23rd May, Tom Graham of Cornhill Insurance condemned all remaining small tubes. To speed matters up, until the Council met to consider the deteriorating situation, the remaining small tubes were removed. Notwithstanding the possibility that No.4 might not pass a subsequent hydraulic test it was decided to take that risk and proceed with replacement of all small tubes. The planned Maynooth Shuttles, now imminent, had to be cancelled. The race against time and fate was now on, aiming for the "Ennis 750" celebrations planned for the weekend of 9th and 10th June. The Whitehead men set about adapting the set of tubes acquired for No.171 to suit No.4's boiler which is not only 6" shorter but is unique in that the tubes have a reduced end which made some high speed swaging necessary. On 30th May the tubes arrived by container at North Wall and were transferred by road to Inchicore.

As the reliability of the tube expander at Whitehead was suspect we availed of the kind offer of a torque wrench at Inchicore. As this proved to be an extremely slow process Peter Scott sent down his air drill and this improved matters greatly with a tube end being expanded every thirty seconds. It was fast - all you needed was strength. Using this drill with universal drives meant that the brick arch could stay in place and this saved considerable time. On 3rd June an RPSI hydraulic test was passed, as was a similar test by the insurance company's inspector on the following day. On Wednesday 6th June Peter arrived to find the engine enveloped in steam - the mud-hole door gasket had blown. This old girl was being obstinate, but later that day she moved under her own steam. On Thursday 7th June Tom Graham passed the locomotive and at mid-day we were on our way to Ennis for their "750" celebrations. We had won the race.

But success always seems to be attended by adversity. As we were going through Athlone, we were routed through the former up platform which was in the process of being demolished. No.4 came in

contact with a dislodged coping stone and suffered a bent step. At Athenry we parted company with Tommy Blackwell and Nicky Moore who expressed satisfaction with the repairs. Paddy Perry, now retired, had also travelled with us from Dublin. We were joined by Paddy Lipper and Martin Cowley, who had been the unfortunate crew on the three day tour and who discreetly enquired "would she bite us again?" Inspector Michael Shine just raised his eyes to heaven!



It's a long way to Tipperary - and a longer way back. No.4 is seen near the famous town on the outward leg of the Railtour. Her return visit was behind the non-stopping diesel! (C.P. Friel)

On arriving in Ennis we learned to our surprise that the race of the previous weeks was not the only race that we were involved in! Unfortunately our luck did not hold out the second time. Ennis 750 as part of their year-long celebrations had chosen railways for this weekend's theme. With this in mind "Slieve Callan", or No.5 of the West Clare Railway, had been removed from her lofty plinth and sent to the FAS workshops at Shannon Industrial Estate a year earlier for cosmetic overhaul. She should have returned some weeks prior to our arrival. A very nervous Festival committee at 12 o'clock on the Thursday feared for their railway weekend for instead of having two engines it looked as though they would have none. Our surprise was that as we steamed under the bridge into the station another shiny black engine had beaten us there by two hours.

Saturday's three trips ran without any major problem other than the steaming of the engine which was erratic. The engine was left in steam overnight but a tortuous number of hours was spent trying to keep the injectors running. They would start, but would stop after a while and low water levels made it necessary to throw out the fire. David Carse decided on a few more attempts when suddenly the injector cleared. A hastily relit fire saw the first trip leaving half an hour late. More complaints about steaming forced us to take a short run out of sight at Gort with the smokebox door open but this

revealed no obvious leak. That the pressure needle always rose sharply when the regulator was shut led us to believe we had a leak in the main steam pipes or the superheater elements. We carried on, convinced that Percy French or the Ennis air affects steam engines badly.

Drivers Peter Brown and Tadgh Curley of Athlone suffered a bad run back to Mullingar because of continued steaming problems. One of the after effects of Tipperary's sudden fire extinguishing was a distortion of the ashpan, rendering the hopper door extremely stiff to operate. At Ballinasloe further stiffness made fire cleaning almost impossible. Our aging Mullingar Locomotive Maintenance Officer had to crawl under the engine and wield a heavy hammer before the ashpan hopper could be either opened or closed. Even so, only partial success was achieved. At Mullingar drivers Tommy Blackwell and Nicky Moore took over the engine and proceeded to the shed pit where extra leverage produced a deluge of ash. Our troubles receded as we raced towards Dublin. The problems of steaming were discussed and it was decided to return light engine to Inchicore where the assistance and facilities could once more be enjoyed as they had been over the previous three weeks.



After the re-tubing operation No.4 was able to carry out her scheduled Ennis-Gort trips on 9th June 1990, seen here south of Tubber. (W.T. Scott)

Next day, the boiler was filled to the brim and, with the regulator open, so were the superheater elements. Mains water pressure disclosed that the joints between the header and the elements were leaking as suspected. Our trial at Gort had failed because the smoke had obliterated our view of the header. This problem was quickly put to rights, along with water tanks and sieves being thoroughly washed out as indeed was the boiler itself. Inchicore proved to be a very useful place to work and Peter Scott was most impressed when a fitting for the main steampipe lubricator had to be made. The

assistance and provision of facilities in the machine shop and at both the wagon and locomotive running sheds was tremendous and we could never have done the job without them. To them all, our thanks. To inspectors Ned Dunphy and Barney Curtis our gratitude for their constant advice and encouragement. Those interested in history might like to record that No.4's work location was the same as where Bulleid's experimental turf-burning locomotive stood for its static trials. Indeed some people on seeing the cosmetic dome cover sitting neatly over No.4's chimney may well have thought that Mary Harney and her Environmental rules on smoke emission were causing us to experiment!



No.4 between the second and third tunnels at Bray Head on 7th July 1990. A disused tunnel on the earlier track alignment can be seen on the right. (C.P. Friel)

Ennis 750 was a no-risk commercial run for us as the train was contracted out at a fixed price for the weekend. A second such charter was from the Bray Seaside Festival Committee who required the train to run between Bray and Greystones. The trips were sponsored by Kelloggs. Difficulty with insurance prevented modifications to customise the locomotive to advertise their products. *[It may also have prevented an outbreak of angry correspondence! - Ed.]* As there was a long stopover at both stations there was no great pressure on the operating staff. Our Vice-President Dr. Garret FitzGerald and his grandchildren travelled on the second of the three trips. The shuttles ran without any problems and the only excitement was provided when the DART was brought to a standstill by the failure of the OHLE. As luck would have it Peter Cuffe - Signalling Engineer with IR - was travelling with us and he quickly organised for us to travel 'wrong road' from Pearse to Connolly! This facility was built in on the entire DART system to combat rewiring, road maintenance or derailments by allowing a full service to continue during such eventualities. So we travelled through Tara Street much to the astonishment of

stranded commuters.

On 23rd June we headed for the Yeats Country with our first UK-advertised trip. Once more at Mullingar we were joined by Locomotive Inspector Eamonn Lacken and driver Sean Nally who in turn were joined by Johnny Clynes, now also retired. It looks as if this will become their annual steam pilgrimage. No.4 was on her best behaviour. Had she forgotten me or was it that David Carse, who was now PSR for Locomotive Running, had more influence on her than me?



In the Yeats Country, No.4 passes Carrowmore, with Ben Bulben prominent in the background, 21st July 1990. (C.P. Friel)

21st July saw us heading once more for Sligo. The Dublin/Longford section was a public excursion and the Longford/Sligo return was chartered for the local festival.

At one stage the injector on the driver's side refused to start and by looking over the side, it was observed that the flow from the overflow pipe was minimal. On further examination at Sligo a cloth was found entangled in the water valve. After a struggle we got the valve cleared and a full flow was re-established. Last year the problems were all with water supplies and this year it was to be injectors - or so I thought until we got to Carrick-on-Shannon, when an urgent call was sent for the ex-PSR for Running by the new man. David had extracted a promise of calling on my expertise when required, so with ego well inflated I set off to impart my knowledge. Apparently the valve in the water tank, which had worked fine on the outward run, would now yield no water. I climbed to the top of the ladder to check on the water content - Supermug to the rescue! Yes, there was plenty of water but the rod to the valve was broken. There was not exactly a queue forming on the ladder so there was nothing for it but to get into the tank to lift the valve. I was having a bath and it wasn't even Christmas!

David Humphries rewarded the now dampened down ego with a glass of whiskey. Not really a fair exchange for 2,500 gallons of water was it? With 'borrowed' overalls to replace my wet clothes we headed home and during this stage the injectors reclaimed the title when the fireman's injector gave up the ghost completely. It was subsequently discovered that the cone assembly had come totally adrift. Thank goodness they had taken turns at being awkward.

"Sea Breeze 1" set out on 11th August with a capacity complement. We enjoyed trouble-free running - including what must have been a record-breaking climb of Glenealy bank - to Rosslare where, to combat last year's difficulties with servicing, we had arranged this year for the entire train to go to the turntable siding where a suitable fire hydrant was re-established. We retraced our steps to Dublin with No.4 in great form, storming Rathdrum and Glenealy banks as though instead of climbing them she

was running down them, and coming to a halt at No.5 platform at Connolly just as the minute hand settled exactly on our arrival time.



David Carse makes up No.4's fire prior to one of the Enfield trips on 23rd September 1990. Supervising the job is a deceptively peaceful looking Tommy Blackwell, whose romps on this engine were a joy to many in the years before his retirement in November. Many thanks and best wishes. Tommy! (Irish Times)

The 8th September "Sea Breeze 2" suffered delay due to single-line working between Dun Laoghaire and Glasthule. This was intended to be a mainland Europe advertised trip but with very low bookings from this quarter David Humphries rapidly advertised locally to fill the remaining seats. It paid off with another full train. With what is by now the normally expected high standard of driving we arrived in Rosslare on time.

The up Wexford was late in leaving and delayed our departure, while the single line working delayed our return run at Bray, Killiney and Dalkey where Inspector Jack Ahern made contact with CTC to hold the Sealink boat for our UK friends and the Belfast train for our Northern brethren. Thankfully they both waited.



On her way back from Rosslare on 11th August 1990, No.4 moves cautiously along Wexford Quays. This is probably a 'last chance' photograph as the old wooden-piled quayside is to be rebuilt. (C.P. Friel)

Our final trip of the year was unusual in that it was run on a Sunday (23rd September) as all our Dublin-based trips normally run on Saturdays. These two runs to Enfield were to replace the cancelled Maynooths of the previous May. We enjoyed two packed-out trains, Dan Renahan travelled as a passenger this trip with his wife. Tommy Blackwell was bemoaning the mysterious loss of his overalls on the last Sligo! Tommy, who has been with us for a good number of years was working his last day on steam and I know that certain timers will miss Tommy in years to come. We wish him well in his retirement.

Anyone who has witnessed coaling at Connolly on previous years' trips will appreciate that it was necessary to make a new arrangement. In the past, every mother or father, normally with a child in tow, had to either pass behind the forklift or indeed underneath the forks when it was moving, despite receiving highly audible verbal warnings. This was asking for trouble. The new method was to coal at 3pm on a Thursday at platform one which is normally vacant then. This enabled us to coal in privacy

and the procedure worked smoothly until September, when new environmental laws banning the burning of bituminous coal in Dublin meant that we had to obtain a special permit for Monahan's to both store and deliver coal to the engine. With both Mary Harney and the new law satisfied as to our exemption, we returned to the more satisfactory method of coaling.

The Society has to thank all mentioned above for what was a terrific season, also Stephen Brennan from Drogheda who, although he is used to the Northern line and despite the fact that we showed him two new roads, displayed a high standard of firemanship. I should also like to thank all Irish Rail staff, without whom it would all have been impossible. On our own side of the fence, a year that started out looking disastrous turned out, when all things are considered, to be a major success and we have to thank all those volunteer members who put in such an effort to make it so during the four special weeks when we had the privilege of working in Inchicore. We would all be willing, if the need arose, to take on such a job again. Only one stipulation - next time can we have a little more time PLEASE.

Finally, as I have established, it was an unusual and difficult year. It sadly turned out to be unusual in other respects.

Joe Millea of Waterford passed away gently one evening while babysitting his grandchildren. Those of us who worked on steam with him will never forget his gentleness on that special week in Carrick-on-Suir filming "Echoes".

Morgan D'Arcy of Inchicore, after a tough and hard battle, finally had to yield to a stronger inevitable force. Those who remember the memorable run from the Junction to Dublin in 1989 will know that we have lost a star performer. Indeed he was a star in his own right in the film "The First Great Train Robbery" with our own No.184.

In recent weeks we received the sad news that Sean Carter had died suddenly at a very young age. Sean was shed foreman at Limerick and it grieves me to think that No.4's untimely demise at Tipperary prevented us from receiving once more the generous and faultless facilities at his depot. I will not forget the morning in 1988 when he stirred me from my bed of coal sacks to offer me the comfort of his office along with breakfast.

I consider it a great honour to have known and worked with them all, if only briefly. To all their families we offer our sincere sympathy and hope that they can take consolation in the fact that they have suffered life's last indignity.

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

Peter Scott

No.3 "R.H. Smyth", Ex LP&HC 0-6-0 ST

Withdrawn and boiler dismantled for removal from frames. The inner firebox requires renewal of three patches, the new patches being extended to cover further areas of wasted plates. The smokebox, ashpan and saddle tank will require extensive repairs.

No.3BG "Guinness", 0-4-0 ST

On loan to DARS.

No.4, Ex LMS NCC 2-6-4T, Class WT

At the time of writing the tank engine is operating the Christmas train rides and this will probably be her swansong before being withdrawn for major boiler work and other repairs. Work will include removal of the cab, boiler and tanks; renewal of firebox seam rivets and stays; repairs to outer wrapper plate at foundation ring; renewal of other stays and rivets as required; retubing; renewal of cladding and insulation; rebuilding of ashpan and rocking grate. The tanks and bunker will require extensive platework renewal. Hopefully the front tubeplate will prove fit for further services, unlike No.171

which is having hers renewed at present. Mechanical work due includes renewal of valve rings and liners, overhaul of compression valves, drain cocks and snifting valves, overhaul of bogie and pony truck, overhaul of buffing and drawgear.

No.27, Ex SLNCR 0-6-4T

Awaiting heavy overhaul.

No.85, Ex GNR(I) 4-4-0 Compound, Class V

Out of traffic with worn out firebox. The method of repair is being finalised. The options are two large copper patches on the firebox sides, two new 'half sides' including renewal of the lap seams and a completely new steel inner firebox - in order of ascending cost and long term reliability.



The "Derry Engine" has been rather neglected in recent issues. This 1981 photo shows locomotive, driver Brian Hill and coach 861 still looking quite fresh. The bridge and signals have since been replaced. (C.P. Friel)

No.171, Ex GNR(I) 4-4-0, Class S

Boiler overhaul in progress. The boiler has been removed and opened up with tubes, front tube plate, internal steam pipe and long stays removed. The front tube plate was found to be badly corroded and deformed. In addition, the angle ring to which it was riveted is cracked through several rivet holes on each side. This appears to be an 'old sore' judging by the amount of corrosion around the cracks. The defective sections of angle are being cut out and renewed and a new tubeplate is being made courtesy of the Apprentice Training School at the Inchicore Works of Irish Rail.

Most of the work is drilling and boring of hundreds of tube, rivet and stay holes and it is most welcome

to have this task taken off our shoulders.

Further cracks were located in the throat plate and firehole plate, and these are at present being ground out for welding. The cracks in the throatplate occur where the plate is flanged in opposing directions to suit the firebox and barrel, and the defect probably dates from the original forming of the plate. The outer wrapper plate has in fact been extended to cover the defective areas and since this feature does not appear on the original drawing it is assumed that it was added at the manufacturing stage by way of reinforcement. Approximately 200 copper stays are being replaced in the firebox, due either to wasting of the heads or, in a minority of cases, to breaking of the stay. All stays and rivets are being surveyed by ultrasonic means. This method is not foolproof and must be treated with caution, but it has located several broken stays and rivets that would not otherwise have come to light.



Mysterious hands within the boiler wield a cutting torch as Peter Scott studies the front tubeplate about to be removed from No.171. The photo also shows a selection of the numerous holes referred to in his report. (C.P. Friel)

The foundation rivets and firehole ring rivets are being renewed, together with the firebar support brackets.

The firebox seam edges are being reinforced and the rivets, which are badly wasted, replaced with set screws.

In addition to boiler work, various jobs on the framing are being carried out while access is now possible with the boiler out of the way. Several other jobs require attending to, for example, repairs to

an expansion link where the rivets have slackened, and overhaul of leaf springs.

No.184, Ex GSWR 0-6-0, Class J15, Mullingar

Dismantling of the boiler prior to removal is being carried out.

No.186, Ex GSWR 0-6-0, Class J15

Awaiting heavy overhaul.



No.461 had one outing, on 22nd August 1990, with the engine in grey undercoat it seems to be making a lot of fuss over her one coach as she passes Downshire Park halt. (C.P. Friel)

No.461, Ex D&SER 2-6-0, Class K2

At the time of writing, No.461 is completing running-in and test trains. Initial problems were encountered with hot coupling rod bushes and driving axleboxes. The coupling rods were easily attended to by dressing up the offending bushes and journals, but the driving axleboxes required complete dismantling of the brakegear, big ends, valve gear and driving wheelset for access. The problem may have been due in part to over-enthusiastic running in of new bearings, but a further problem came to light when the driving axleboxes were taken apart. It was found that the journal had been coming away from the crown of the box and bearing heavily on the leading and trailing edges. This problem has been evident on other inside cylinder engines and may be due to the relative position of the big ends and coupling rods, which are at 180 degrees to each other. This magnifies the forward and backward forces due to the piston thrusts when reacted at the axleboxes. Hot axleboxes were only eliminated on No.171 when the sponge box was built up to provide in effect a partial bearing surface below the journal, and a similar modification has now been carried out on No.461. No.461's overhaul has been a protracted one - nearly everything was worn out, damaged or missing. Much of the work

was time consuming and required careful marking out, like renewal of the driving horn blocks and piston rods or heavy and laborious, like renewal of rivets in the boiler. I was going to say that the only item not requiring attention was the cab roof - but then I remembered that it did require two small patches. As well as that, of course, it had to be painted - not to mention lifted on and off to permit removal of the boiler!

While I must acknowledge that the RPSI Council affords a generous share of available funds towards locomotive maintenance, nevertheless in practical terms the work is underfunded to a degree which would be considered laughable on the mainland. Indeed, we only achieve results at all by applying these major principles:

- (1) Frugal and effective channelling of available funds, with the emphasis on devising means to cut costs without cutting corners.
- (2) The maximum use of volunteers and the minimum use of paid labour, the latter being part time only.
- (3) A policy of getting involved, learning how to do things and getting on with it - unfortunately on the part of so few of our members.

Unfortunately, the above means accepting a timescale in years rather than months, but unless we can achieve a dramatic increase in earning or fund raising capability there is little chance of any improvement.

No.23, Ex Irish Shell 0-4-0, Diesel Mechanical Shunter

The Whitehead shunting locomotive has been running for some time with a partly disabled engine but repairs involve removal of the cylinder block and so the locomotive is continuing to operate on light duties pending availability of the "Carlow" engine.

Carlow Ex Irish Sugar Board 0-4-0, Diesel Mechanical Shunter

The overhaul of this locomotive is progressing as time permits. The air brake equipment and radiator are being overhauled, and should soon be reassembled together with the engine, which was refurbished courtesy of Felden House Training School. The sheeting of the cab has been renewed by Crumlin Road Opportunities, a Youth Training Scheme, to whom our best thanks are due.

This engine is referred to as the "Carlow Diesel" since there is no definite evidence that it ever carried any number. However, recent information obtained suggests that it was numbered "4" when at the Carlow Sugar Factory. In the interests of historical accuracy it is therefore proposed to number the loco "4" and hope that confusion with tank engine No.4 will not arise too often!

Incidentally, while stressing that I have no particularly strong views one way or the other on the merits of diesel preservation, I would point out that the Carlow engine is only being worked on as time permits by myself and two others of the usual steam locomotive team. Where are those who so vociferously advocate diesel preservation? All right, so a 4-wheeled shunting locomotive is not in the same league as a main line Hunslet or Metrovick, but if the Society is to get involved with the latter, the attitude "let's preserve diesels - but someone else can raise the money and do the work" simply will not do.

A CONVERSATION WITH HARRY WILSON - PART 2

Charles P. Friel

Harry Wilson, the last Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Great Northern Railway, died in August 1974. Charlie Friel and friends used to visit him during his retirement and here Charlie concludes his recollection of one such visit in 1973:

We had some great characters on the GNR and I suppose it's only right to start at the top with the

Chairman, Lord Glenavy. He was a very shrewd and clever gentleman in every sense of the word. I well remember when I was only a young fellow attending a Board meeting in Belfast as a representative of the Mechanical Engineer. We were introduced and the meeting began. The first item was "Accidents" and the Secretary was giving an account of an accident in which a young lady suffered injuries to her thigh and other parts of her body. Just as the Secretary began detailing the injuries, Lord Glenavy stopped him with "Really, Mr. Secretary, not in front of Mr. Wilson". Thus was delicacy preserved.

There was one Board meeting sometime after the last War when the Government had posed a most difficult problem and despite over half an hour of discussion we were no nearer an agreed response. The Chairman, who I had taken to be asleep, suddenly came to life and suggested that such and such be put to the Government. The Board was just delighted with this - it was precisely what they had all been trying to say but failing to hit the nail on the head.



The last GNR(I) board meeting, at Amiens Street station. A list of 19 names to go with the 18 faces is available! Presumably Lord Glenavy is the gentleman behind the large volume. (C.P. Friel Collection)

The Board never met with thirteen people. If it turned out that the fatal number was present, the Catering Manager was called in to avert disaster. The Board meetings were held monthly. After the formation of the GNR(B) we got into an awful mess with the Chairmanship changing each year between Howden and Reynolds and each seemed to spend his time undoing the work of his predecessor so we got nowhere. The meetings were so depressing that everyone needed a stiff one (or two) to ease the pain on the way back to Dundalk.

Mr Glover was a great lover of the open air and every now and then he would walk from Dundalk to

Newry of an evening. There he would step up on an engine and go to Goraghwood and on the way get to know about the crew's problems. At Goraghwood he would transfer to the engine of a train from Dublin and continue on to Belfast. Again he talked to the crew, got to know their problems and in that way tried to assess whether the Locomotive Inspectors were doing their job.

He came back to Dundalk as a passenger. He would go through every coach with his notebook and note every defect in seating, fittings, toilets, electrics and so on. Next morning, when he got into the office, he would summon the Carriage Inspector and put all the defects to him. You could bet your bottom dollar that the Inspector made very sure the jobs were done; no-one knew if Glover wouldn't take a notion of doing the same thing the next night. This discipline filtered right down through the ranks and everyone was doing their job 100% - otherwise they would be on the mat.

Standardisation was a great thing to head for in the railway world and on the Northern we had several classes which had common boilers, fittings, tenders and so on. McIntosh, I feel, carried this a bit too far and even standardised the distance between centres of the cylinders. This led to a weak crank axle, particularly in the S class engines where the web on a nine inch diameter axle was perhaps only two inches. This was much too narrow for my liking. When we were renewing the Ss, I did a drawing of a new cylinder block to allow for a strong axle but that's as far as it went. When we were designing the VS engines, I moved the cylinders in to give us an extra half inch on each web and thereby give us a strong axle.

Still talking about engines, one under-rated locomotive was the crane tank which made life much more convenient for us. She was very useful for lifting things into and out of wagons. Just imagine how a squad of men would tackle unloading and stacking 6 foot 7 inch diameter driving tyres or even carriage tyres. The crane could stack them neatly away in a corner and bring them later to where they were to be used. The engine ran of course with a wagon in front, for the jib would foul everything. It tended to be driven by the same driver and he could manipulate the controls so that it was nearly as flexible as a hand. He could be raising the jib, lowering the appropriate hook and be reversing all at the same time. The jib was raised by admitting steam both top and bottom of the control cylinder and then bleeding it off - this gave a much finer control than admitting steam directly.

We did work for other railway companies, mostly the Donegal and the Sligo Leitrim, indeed one of the Sligo engines was at Dundalk when its own line closed. One job for the Donegal was putting new tubeplates in one of their engines. I was ordering up plates to be drilled for superheating tubes, as before, but the boss said no, they wanted a saturated boiler in her when they got her back. Now I was very much against it and said so, for a saturated boiler in that day and age was just nonsense in anything other than a shunting engine. I insisted on getting the order in writing before I went ahead with the saturated work. Then, months later, after the engine had gone back, I heard that the Donegal men had stopped using her because she was too hard on water.

Perhaps one of the more interesting, and least talked about, periods was the General Strike. It happened that Glover was in Belfast one day during the strike and there was this train that just had to be worked to Dublin. So he went to Adelaide to see what could be arranged and there the Foreman said that while he had an engine available, a Compound, he hadn't a crew. "But, sir," said the Foreman, "you designed the engine, you should be able to drive it. And if you drive, I'll fire to you."

So that's what they did, but by the time they got to Lisburn the Foreman made an excuse that he'd have to get a drink. In truth Glover was heavy on steam, the Foreman had little experience of a Compound and the boiler pressure was piteously low. However, the Foreman took his time over his drink and eventually made his way back to the engine by which time the pressure had rallied quite a bit.

So off they went again but they only got as far as Goraghwood when word came that No.190 was off the road at Dromiskin. Glover left his train at Goraghwood and made his way to Dundalk where there

was a great fuss to get the crane up to No.190 and get her back on the road.

Now I should say here that we had a very simple way of apportioning blame when a goods train broke a coupling. If there was the least sign of a flaw in the broken hook then the driver was in the clear. But if it was a clean break, the driver was on the mat in a very big way.

Be that as it may, I was on the ground when Glover was making up his train in Dundalk, at the passenger station. Of course he had a good audience of strikers on the Carrickmacross Road bridge watching to see how the Boss would fare. When all was ready, Glover prepared to move off. By now he was very ruffled; he was inclined to be easily upset anyway. His first movement was a bit severe and the first I knew the engine lurched forward and the coupling of a wagon shot out past my nose. Glover stopped and I retrieved the broken link and examined it. I called up, "Clean break, sir!" I think if he had a gun he would gladly have shot me!



Sligo Leitrim 0-6-4T "Lough Gill" was at Dundalk awaiting major works attention when the SLNCR - and the Irish North - was closed in September 1957. Thereafter she lay among the gathering of the unwanted at Dundalk and is seen here near the coal dump in early 1959. (Photographer Unknown)

Thinking back on No.190, I believe she got the green flag at the gates before the derailment and the driver put on more steam only to find the rails gone on both sides.

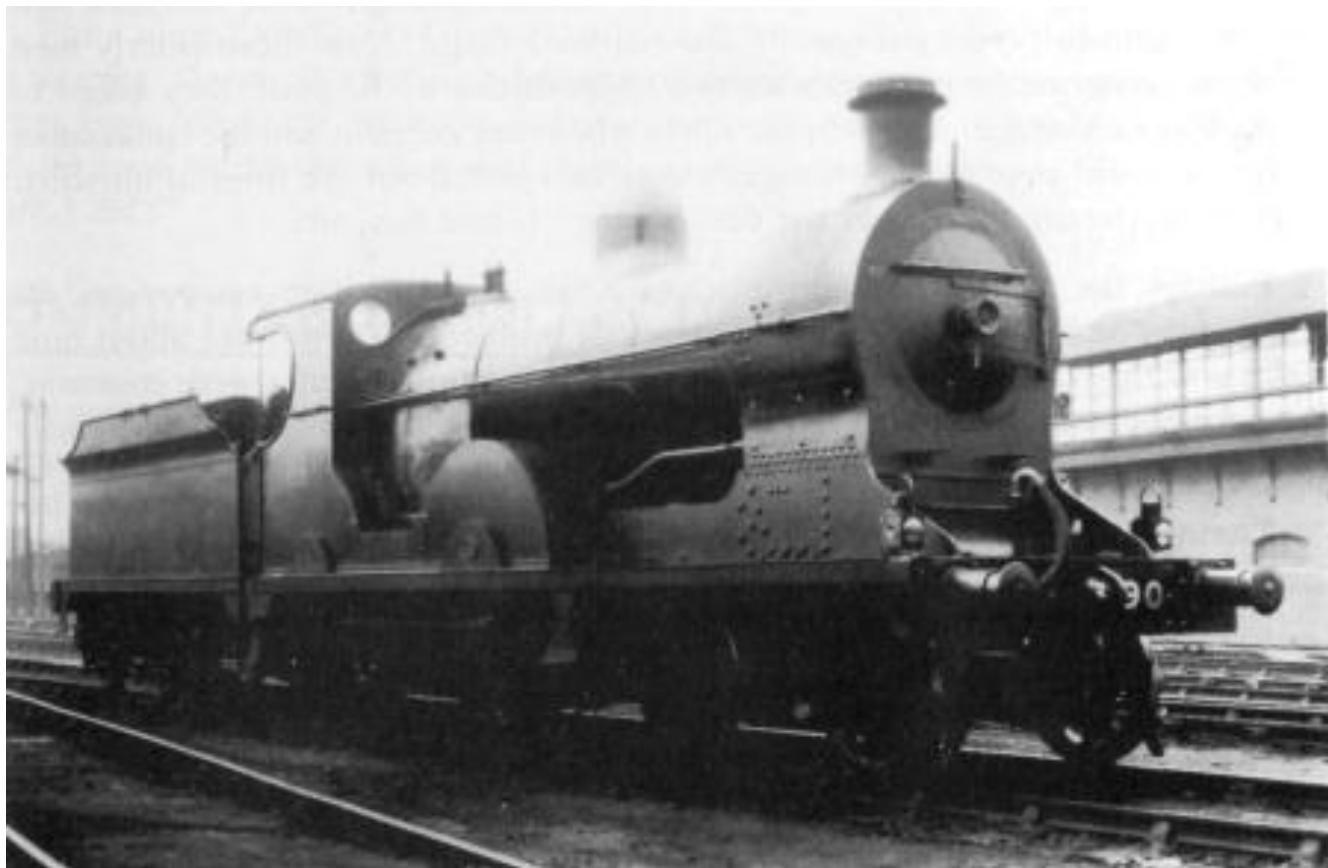
Going back to the Works - one incident which I should have mentioned earlier concerned the forge shop. Here we melted down old carriage and wagon axles to make forgings and it was the job of the foreman to price each job before the production run was started. There was one job I was concerned with and the foreman at the time was a real hard goer. He got out a fairly good price for the job and the order was approved for two thousand units.

It was a very hot summer and the heat in the forge shop was intense. A couple of fairly elderly and very faithful workers were helping in the shop. Their job was to put a carriage axle into the furnace and,

when hot, to pull it out for it to be chopped in three. They put the pieces back into the furnace to be reheated and then out again to be drop-forged to the required shape. Now these elderly men found the going was tough and after two hours of this hectic pace, they asked to see the Works Manager. I was in the office when they came in and the spokesman for the two went over to the Manager's desk and pulled out the front of his shirt. He promptly wrung it out over the desk saying, "Is that fair, sir?"

Perhaps the biggest problem in a place like Dundalk is manpower and its management and in Dundalk we had plenty of problems. There were about nine unions watching over the men's interests and demarcation disputes were common. These disputes were most frustrating for a works manager for they could so easily upset any carefully worked out schedule.

During my time as Works Manager in Dundalk we had one of our best foremen - he was a cripple and he could get anything done for no-one would hit him!



The engine that led to Glover's embarrassment. S2 class 4-4-0 No.190, which was derailed at Dromiskin on 1st February 1933, is seen at Amiens Street shed in 1929 in plain black livery. (Locomotive and General Railway Photographs)

We had a good lot of workers in Dundalk. One gang that intrigued me were the wheel runners. It was their job to move wheelsets about the Works to the various shops. Two men did the pushing while the third either kept the wheels square to the rails with his pole or, with a deft movement of the pole, sent the wheels off at an angle towards their destination. This was known as cutting. They went like greased lightning and could handle the wheelsets as if they were nothing at all.

Now it happened one morning that these boys had a wheelset for the wagon shop on the other side of the main line. The shortest route was along the main line. So off they went, cut the wheels onto the main running line, went like fury to the far end of the wagon shop, cut the wheels off again and into the

wagon shop. In no time at all they had the wheels where they were wanted.

Unfortunately there was a southbound train signalled - and had already left the station - when the signalman at the Square Crossing spotted this performance, he promptly gave birth to several kittens and reported the incident to the Traffic Department. I unfortunately had to tell these men off and make a suitable reply to the Traffic people. I told them that the offenders "had been suitably dealt with". But I also made sure that nothing further happened to those men, for they were the salt of the earth, only trying to do their job to the best of their ability.

It may seem strange but we had almost no contact with the Great Southern except in the matter of railcars, though even here it was mostly to England, and to the GWR, that we turned for help.

Two things I must tell you about Glover before you go. Glover used to have an apple at lunch time, usually a large red one, and during the morning it would be sitting on his secretary's desk. The men waiting to see him, perhaps for a ticking off, used to vent some of their feelings by offering to give the Boss's apple a good polish. To do this they would produce a large dirty handkerchief and give the apple a big spit before setting to!

For a while I worked in Glover's office and during a telling off I had to pretend not to exist. During this telling off Glover would rant and rave and go as red as a turkey cock. When the interview was over, he would return to normal very quickly and, as soon as the door was shut, turn to me in a bear's whisper, "How do you think I did?"

COMMENTS & RECOLLECTIONS

Laurence Liddle

I was most interested to read Charlie Friel's record of a conversation with Harry Wilson in the last Five Foot Three, and gladly take him at his word that he would welcome discussion on his article.

My first comment relates to Driver Davy Ryan (not Ryans). This driver was the outstanding personality in the Amiens Street top link for many years before World War II and it is not surprising that he was the preferred driver for coal trials. As far back as 1927 he was recorded as averaging 32.49 lbs per mile with his regular engine, No.174, as compared to 34-35 lbs for each of 171, 172 and 173, the other locomotives in the link. Nor was Driver Ryan's economy with fuel achieved at the cost of losing time on schedules. There is evidence of his taking 10 bogies, 317 tons tare, over the 31¾ miles from Dublin to Drogheda in 34 minutes 24 seconds, as against the 35 minutes allowed in the Working Timetable, and with the same train running the next section of 22½ miles to Dundalk in exactly the 26 minutes allowed, despite the severely curved start from Drogheda and the speed limit over the Boyne viaduct which prevented anything like a fast attack being made on the immediately following Kellystown bank. Unfortunately, I have no note of the engine involved other than that it was one of the 1938/9 rebuilt S class. As a contrast my own best noted time for a heavy load between Dublin and Drogheda was just 33 minutes, by Compound No.84 hauling 11 bogies in December 1937.

Charlie's article would seem to suggest that GNR coal more often than not came from South Wales. I have always understood that the Scottish Ayrshire collieries supplied their quota, and that in their case lower price frequently more than counterbalanced their lower calorific value.

Among the information printed below the photograph of No.173 leaving Dublin in 1914 it is stated that on a summer weekday the 09:00 left Dublin made up to 11 bogies, including a slip for Oldcastle, two off at Dundalk for Bundoran, one off at Goraghwood for Newcastle, a slip for Portrush at Lisburn and one off at Belfast for Bangor. This information may be correct for the pre-strike era, there was certainly an Oldcastle slip in 1932, but in the later thirties the through coaches to Newcastle and Bangor ran on certain Saturdays only. On such days a relief to the 09:00 operated, conveying these coaches and the Portrush one, together with a small buffet car which ran as far as Antrim before working back with the balancing Portrush-Dublin through carriage - probably the only recorded working of a catering vehicle

over the Antrim branch. The Oldcastle slip did not survive the strike either.

As regards the reference to turf briquettes, I remember G.B. Howden, at that time General Manager of the GNR, remarking that after the first time that a locomotive (I think either 190 or 192) worked through from Dublin to Belfast using the briquettes the result was a record number of claims for destruction of hay and other crops in lineside fields! This reminds me of a tale I once heard from a Portadown driver, concerning another driver who was notorious for his heavy hand on regulator and reverser and who was giving his fireman a hard time with a heavy train up the bank out of Dundalk towards Adavoye. "Look at all those bullocks galloping across that field," remarked the driver to his struggling and sweating mate. "And so would you be too if you had red-hot cinders raining down on your back," was the response.

During the War a plant was set up at Barrack Street to manufacture the pitch and slurry briquettes; it operated satisfactorily for some time but eventually fell into disuse owing to the difficulty of obtaining parts for repairs.

Boiler water: Harry Wilson's comments on the Canal water used at Amiens Street (piped from Canal Street over the Liffey viaduct, courtesy of GSR/CIÉ) struck a personal chord. From 1982 to 1989 I kept a glass fibre cabin cruiser at Lowtown on the Grand Canal, just where the feeder from the springs at Pollardstown Fen enters the canal. The water from the feeder has a very high lime content (Pollardstown Fen is not far from the Curragh, a famous limestone area) and boats kept at Lowtown quickly acquire an underwater sheathing of limestone.

I wonder why the Dundalk people "just could not get away" with slide valves for passenger engines after superheating, whilst the GSWR/GSR 321 class which were superheated not long after the Q and QL 4-4-0s of the GNR and were a very comparable type of engine, did very well with slide valves.

Comparison of Inchicore and Dundalk locomotives raises another point, namely what seems to a layman the reluctance of the Mechanical Engineering Department of one railway to establish anything like free and easy relations with those of other lines. This situation was perhaps even more marked in England and Scotland than in Ireland, and certainly nowhere more than in the case of the Great Western. But it was apparent in our country too. By all accounts both Clifford and Maunsell (who was more directly involved in the trials than his nominal superior, Coey) were appreciably less keen on the GNR/GSWR locomotive exchanges than were the chairmen of their respective companies, who are credited with having been responsible for the trials being set up. Then too I was surprised when talking to Harry Wilson one day after the demise of the Great Northern; the conversation turned to CIÉ locomotives which were being scrapped at Dundalk and it appeared that he had been quite unaware of the very existence of the ex-GSWR inside cylindered 2-6-0s until they appeared in the scrap sidings.

Another question, which probably can never be answered now unless perhaps Paddy Mallon has some information on the subject, is why Dundalk was so set against 2-6-0s on the grounds of possible derailment of pony wheels? After all, Harry Wilson is quoted as saying that the NCC had used leading ponies for years without bother, and surely by the time consideration was being given to the design of post-war large engines there was very ample evidence from each of the four British groups that 2-6-0s were no more prone to derailment in general service than any other type of locomotive. Perhaps the GNR's objection to Moguls was because at the relevant time (about 1946) they were thinking in terms of pre-war main line express speeds and felt that 90 mph and a bit more down the South side of the Wellington bank might have tested the rail holding qualities of pony wheels somewhat more than reasonably. But then, what about the Gresley V2 2-6-2s which had often been recorded at over 90?

I wonder was the Dundalk objection to pony trucks originally due to George Glover, who was a North Eastern (of England) man? Despite having the heaviest goods/mineral traffic of any of the pre-grouping British companies, the North Eastern never had any 2-8-0s; unlike the GN, GC, GW and even the

Somerset & Dorset, all of whom had very successful examples of the type for heavy goods trains. The NE, however, stuck to the 0-8-0 as exemplified not only by its ubiquitous two (outside) cylindered machines but also by its fine pre-grouping three cylinder locomotives of the same wheel arrangement. On the basis of results of trials conducted on the North British in 1921 these must have been among the most outstanding, if not the most outstanding, heavy goods engines of any British pre-grouping company, yet with the heavy weight of three sets of cylinders and motion at the front end no pony was provided. One can only wonder why. Did Gateshead instinctively reject anything resembling Doncaster practice (remember that Gresley produced 2-8-0s early in his career with the Great Northern) or did the North Eastern engineers, with whom Glover may be expected to have kept in touch, consider pony trucks to be unsafe on their own merits?

My final comment concerns the 4-6-0 referred to at the end of Charlie's article. This of course was something quite different to the 4-6-0 which was the subject of Paddy Mallon's article in Five Foot Three No.25 and which seems to have been a sort of enlarged U class - Dundalk's answer to Inchicore's "Long Toms" perhaps. Has the sketch which Harry Wilson made survived? Again, it must be over to Paddy Mallon.

A very last point. As one who knew Harry Wilson, even though only towards the end of his time at Dundalk, I would like to remind those who may read this article of the very prominent role he played in the earlier development of diesel power for Irish railways, and to say that Charles Friel's choice of the words "Engineer and Gentleman" was singularly happy and appropriate.

For details of coal consumption of S class engines and of the Dublin - Drogheda - Dundalk times achieved by Driver Ryan I am indebted to articles by Bob Clements in Irish Railway Record Society Journals Nos. 24 and 34.

[I had hoped to include Mr. Liddle's comments on the second part of the Harry Wilson article in this issue but unfortunately they have not arrived - from Australia! - in time for publication. This also seems an appropriate point at which to wish Mr. Clements a successful recovery from his recent serious illness. - Ed.]

A TEENAGER'S HOLIDAY

Norman Foster

During the summer of 1957 it was announced that the railway lines serving Bundoran, Enniskillen and Armagh would be closed, which in turn meant that lines serving Cavan (GNR), Belturbet, Clones and Monaghan would also cease to operate so far as passenger workings were concerned. I immediately set out on various sorties over all these lines and thus it was that I found myself on a week's holidays from 17th August 1957. My plan, if I ever had any idea of keeping to it, was to photograph as many places as possible and, of course, to have as many runs as I could afford - at that time my weekly wage amounted to £3-10s-0d (£3.50). The following is therefore more of a diary of the next nine days.

Saturday 17th August

Having worked until 12:30pm my first train out of Dublin was the 2:45pm for Belfast. This was No.206 with Billy Swann of Belfast driving and loaded to 8 bogies. Swann ran the 27 miles from Harmonstown to MP 30 in exactly 27 minutes, his 50 mph minimum over Rush summit and 69s after were excellent in those days. I decided to leave the train in Drogheda as I expected the 3:40pm to Oldcastle would be steam hauled. Sure enough, No.17 appeared from the shed and collected coaches 477, 445 and 469 from the yard. Our maximum speed to Oldcastle was just 47, and nothing more than 49 on the 5:10pm from Oldcastle was poor enough although we had recovered 9 minutes on the return run.

Our arrival time in Drogheda was 6:58pm, 17 minutes late, but I was still in plenty of time to join the 6:55pm Dublin-Belfast express. Our old friend No.85 had a full 12-bogie train forward to Dundalk. Joe

Murtagh of Dundalk was our driver, a man not noted for big running but he was in good form and passed Kellystown in 11' 18" at 37½ mph. A good run down the bank ensued with 69 before Castlebellingham and 72 at Dromiskin; our time from Drogheda to Dundalk was 29 minutes 25 seconds, allowed 30 minutes. At Dundalk we shed three bogies and Ralph McBrien of Belfast took over - Ralph was always a welcome sight up on an engine. We passed Adavoyle in 16' 11", minimum speed 27 mph, and reached Goraghwood in 28' 6", maximum down the bank was 64 mph. 9½ minutes were spent undergoing the Customs examination before we got away in fine style to pass Poyntzpass in 6' 52". This was followed by 60s over the 'Bog' to reach Portadown in 20' 39", allowed 21 minutes. The Donegal P bogie van was detached here and we left for Belfast after a 6½ minute stop. Lurgan was reached in 8' 52", maximum 55 mph, and then a good run into Belfast saw us pass MP 96 in 5' 43" at 50 mph, followed by 69 mph at Maze, Belfast being finally reached in 24' 44" at 9:58pm.



SG2 class No.17 at Beauparc with a train whose size explains the early withdrawal of passenger services from the Oldcastle branch. A fine mixed traffic engine, this class could easily run 8-bogie trains at 50-60 mph. (A. Donaldson)

Sunday 18th August

Sunday in Belfast had to be spent by a trip to Dublin, Portrush or Warrenpoint. The 2pm to Warrenpoint attracted as No.127, QL class, was to work it. We had 8 bogies, tare 225 tons, out of Belfast with J. Lackey of Adelaide in charge. Lisburn was reached in 13' 46", maximum 48½ mph, then stops at Damhead, Moira and Lurgan produced nothing more than 54 mph to Portadown. From there our QL ran non-stop to Newry Edward Street in 26' 47", best speed being 60 mph. The return trip to Belfast was in three stages, No.127 to Newry, No.131 to Goraghwood and finally No.206 on the

6:00pm to Belfast.

Monday 19th August

This morning saw me up early for the 6:30am AEC railcar set 619/618 as far as Portadown. This connected with the 7:15am to Armagh and Glover tank No.116 had two bogies on it. This got me to Armagh in time for the 8:00am Keady goods. No.81, UG class, had four wagons and a brake van up to Keady, stopping only at Irish Street. I returned to Armagh in the brake van, arriving in time for the 11:05am local to Portadown which had another Glover tank, No.63, with two bogies and our maximum speed was 45 mph.

The next part of my plan was to catch the 11:15am Belfast-Derry train which would take me to Omagh and the main area for my operations. No.172 had 7 bogies plus a Y van and we took 25' 26" to Dungannon and 47' 05" from there to Omagh, where we arrived 20 minutes. late. I always regarded No.172 as the worst of her class although we hadn't dropped much time.



QL No.127 at Warrenpoint, a superb example of a small GNR terminus. Not well liked by crews, perhaps because their performance did not match the older Q class, the QLs seldom appeared on important trains. (W.T. Scott)

Now I was for the "Irish North" but not pleased to see No.132 on the 1:45pm to Enniskillen for I had been looking forward to a PP class. No.132 however had recovered 1 minute of our 5 minute late start by Bundoran Junction, where I left the train in favour of a trip down the branch. I was delighted to see No.73 with corridor bogies 448 and 349, Y vans 782 and 756 and an Inglis bread van (for Belleek) on the 2:40pm for Bundoran. Joe Gibson was in charge as far as Pettigo where we crossed PP No.50 on

the Up goods. Paddy Meehan took over No.73 and our arrival in Bundoran was on time, maximum speed being 55 mph.

The U class engine of the Down Bundoran Express worked back to Enniskillen on the 5:25pm, another of the same class reaching Bundoran for the following day's Up express by working the Down Goods that morning. So it was No.201 on two bogies (349 and 448 again) on this 5:25pm with Paddy Martin, the branch driver, in charge. It was only in 1989 that Paddy passed away in his nineties. At Belleek Paddy invited me up on the locomotive and indeed I was never to sit in a train again if Paddy was driving. A maximum of 57 mph was sufficient to clip 6 minutes off the booked time although we were 3 minutes late at the Junction. Here we joined up with the 6:15pm ex-Omagh, David Armstrong, No.204 and two bogies (474 and 64), the two engines and four bogies running into Enniskillen on time, maximum 56 mph. A quick look around the shed before retiring to Scott's Hotel found engines 74, 12, 196, 50, 119 and 59, with SL&NCR "Lough Melvin" arriving later from Sligo.



6'6" P class No.73 leaves the sharply curved station at Enniskillen in 1954. This class was similar in appearance to the PP class but, with smaller cylinders, could not match their performance. SLNCR "Lough Erne", now in RPSI ownership, is seen on the left. (A. Donaldson)

Tuesday 20th August

A leisurely start found me on the 9:45am Dundalk train which was No.205 and two bogies (349 and 448 yet again) plus three wagons. We crossed No.96, SG3 class, on the Down goods at Lisnaskea and after a brisk 56 mph down into Clones I chatted up the driver about giving me time to get a photograph at Newbliss. This turned out to be more than possible as we crossed the Down Bundoran Express, with No.203 in charge, there and so I had plenty of time to get a photograph of the whole station and yard

from the overbridge.

I rejoined No.205 as far as Monaghan Road where I photographed her leaving and later No.148 arriving from Dundalk on the 10:45am. I took this train back to Clones and then joined railcar C1 for the short trip to Ballyhaise. Here No.105 arrived on a coal special from Belturbet and later I photographed No.117 on a 30-wagon Cavan-bound goods. I had never timed a 5'6" P class and No.105 was my last chance so I joined the Belturbet "Mixed", consisting of bogie 57 plus five wagons and a goods brake. No.105 exceeded our 10 minute allowance by 3 minutes!



***No.105, the last to work of the 5'6" P class and rarely seen in Belfast, sits in Cavan station in 1956.
(W.T. Scott)***

As the Cavan & Leitrim was enjoying a boom in coal traffic I spent the next few hours photographing 12L on the 1:50pm passenger and 2L and 4T on coal trains. My plan was to stay in Clones for the night so I joined No.105 back to Ballyhaise and then No.72 forward to Clones with two bogies (446 and 80). Sammy Lee was in charge of No.72 and our maximum was 47 mph. At Clones 205 was back again on the 4.30pm ex-Dundalk so I boarded this 2-bogie train (315 and 61) plus four wagons. I only went as far as Lisnaskea by which point Bob Pirie had managed a little 47, but I had photographed Newtownbutler and Lisnaskea in the interim. Returning to Clones in railcar C1 had me listening to the famous bell for the next 13 hours!

However, a visit to the roundhouse produced the following locomotives: 79, 91, 140, 27, 107, 117, 72 and 56. The night was spent in the Erne Cafe where evening meal, bed and breakfast cost 13 shillings (£0.65).

Wednesday 21st August

Wednesday found me with plans to photograph the Up Bundoran Express at Shantonagh Junction so I joined the 8:20am Dundalk train which was No.196 at the head of three bogies and van, producing an excellent run with the small U class attaining a 60. At Cullolvile I left the train to walk to Blackstaff Halt but on the way I was overtaken by No.117 on the Up goods near MP 9¾. No.204 had the Down Bundoran Express which I photographed at Blackstaff, then joined No.149 with two bogies (244 and 39) and 6 vans. No.149 made a sharp run to Ballybay, maximum 58 mph, but an interesting crossing was made there in that, with only a Down platform, we ran right through the loop and, after the Dundalk-bound train had departed, reversed back to the station.



PP No.42 at Bundoran Junction on a Bundoran train with the usual vans front and rear. The bridge in the background crossed the Enniskillen-Omagh leg of this triangular junction. (W.T. Scott)

I then set out for Shantonagh but was interrupted on my way by heavy rain but, with plenty of time, I was happy to take shelter. No.201 had the Up Bundoran Express and, having this place in the bag, I returned to Ballybay. My next turn was the 4:30pm ex-Dundalk which had No.202 with two bogies (448 and 349) plus one wagon, as far as Clones, the maximum being 56 mph down into Clones. After some shunting we left for Enniskillen, still with No.202 (Bob Pirie again) and a load of two bogies and two wagons to Lisnaskea, but not before our train was raided by Customs at Newtownbutler.

Apparently two American trunks were unclaimed by any person on the train and after much consultation they were removed from it. Lisnaskea market was on this day so our train got 8 cattle wagons added, an excellent load for Mr Pirie and he did manage a 50 before Enniskillen. I still had 13 minutes to catch the 7:40pm to Bundoran and how pleased I was to find No.50 on this with three bogies

(64, 474 and 4). It was Paddy Martin again and he made an excellent run the whole way. This may have been induced by several bottles of stout acquired at the Bundoran Junction refreshment room! Our arrival in Belleek was greeted by an Army and 'B' Special patrol who searched the train before we left. Bundoran was reached on time and I tried to find a place for the night. After a few failed attempts I returned to ask Paddy if he knew any guest houses and he put me on the right track. A Mrs Kerrigan, whose husband was a driver at Drogheda, put me up and even produced a fine supper.



Quite a distance from the Irish North, Glover Tank No.3 is seen here on the Howth branch at Sutton where, as the sign shows, one could join the Hill of Howth tram. The rucksack in the foreground looks very like one which for many years accompanied the photographer on his travels throughout Ireland. (A. Donaldson)

Thursday 22nd August

After breakfast, which, with supper and bed cost 12/6d (62½p), I joined Driver Meehan on No.42 for the run to Ballyshannon on the 10:30am and returned with him on the Down goods, this being No.203 with one wagon and brake van. The Up branch goods left before the Bundoran Express for Dublin so I walked out to photograph No.50 on the goods although the load was only a brake van! Frank Carty had No.203 with five bogies on the Express, coaches being 4, 195, 89, 175 and the through Belfast via Clones coach 464. At Pettigo we crossed the Down Express (No.201) and changed crews, McKeown from Dundalk taking over the Up Express. Our non-stop effort to Clones took 83' 35", the allowance being 78 minutes. Here we detached coach 464 and attached buffet car 254 for Dublin. Our final arrival was on time in Dundalk, the best speed from Bundoran being 53 mph. At Dundalk, Glover tank No.3 took over the Express and I photographed her leaving before I returned to Dublin on the 3:00pm ex-

Belfast. No.170 had 6 bogies on this and times of 33' 4" to Drogheda and 45' 27" on to Dublin shows how well we do nowadays.

My journey to Dublin was necessary in order to borrow some money to complete the rest of the week's tripping!

Friday 23rd August

This was the time of the "Derry Express" which left Dublin at 9:40am so I took the opportunity of timing it through to Portadown. No.206 had a load of just five bogies, only one of which went to Derry and the other four to Belfast, and I was pleased enough to pass Drogheda in 35' 45" and a time of 63' 25" to the Dundalk stop. We topped Rush bank at 50 mph and then had a maximum of 66 mph but after Drogheda we attained nothing more than 60 mph the whole way to Portadown.

My next plan was to get a photograph at Retreat Halt on the Armagh line so I requested that the 12:10pm railcar to Armagh be stopped there to set me down.

In a very short time UG No.80 appeared on the 12:43pm ex-Armagh with coach 19 and a P wagon so, having got my photo, I joined this for the journey back to Portadown, our best speed being 47 mph. Now this train connected with the 1:15pm to Belfast, the Clones PP working this turn, thus giving me the chance of a PP run on the main line. No.75 had three bogies and four vans, making stops at Lurgan, Moira, Damhead, Maze and Lisburn and producing a maximum of 55 mph.



*"Old U" (1915) class No.199 at Dromore Road - a surprisingly honest title compared to other stations no nearer to the towns whose names they unashamedly bore! The signal cabin and wooden waiting room are typical of the "other platforms" at the GNR's neat and tidy wayside stations.
(W.T. Scott)*

The next turn was the 3:00pm to Dublin, No.209 having just buffet car 97 added to the four bogies off the "Derry Express". A standard run was made to Dundalk where I left the train in favour of No.205 on the 4:30pm for Clones, the plan now being to get Inniskeen photographed. I returned to Dundalk with No.199 which had two bogies and 6 vans on the 6:25pm ex-Clones, our maximum being 54 mph after Kellybridge.

I then joined No.210 with 8 bogies on the 6:55pm ex-Dublin but this time it was Robinson driving and he made a good climb to Adavoyle, passed in 16' 32", minimum being 29 mph and a maximum of 64 mph down the bank, reaching Goraghwood in 28' 15". The Donegal P van was detached at Portadown, leaving 7 bogies forward to Belfast (including 88, now owned by the RPSI). A time of 8' 25" to Lurgan and 25' 19" into Belfast was reasonable, maxima being 56 before the Lurgan stop, 50 at MP 96 and 71 mph at Maze.

Saturday 24th August

This was the day of the "Mr Magill's Party" tour to Bundoran so I joined the party, although it was only on the return part of the journey that the complete party were together. The varied events of that day were covered in Five Foot Three Nos. 12 and 13 but my own part in the proceedings follows.

Davy Crone of Adelaide had Q class No.130 on the 8:25am to Derry as far as Dungannon where Paddy Clifford took over. Crone produced no more than 56 and Clifford 52 mph on their respective sections - very disappointing indeed. Changing trains at Omagh found me on the 10:50am to Enniskillen, J.J. Kelly having No.205 and five bogies on this and keeping time with a maximum of 51 mph. Next was the 12 noon out of Enniskillen, again J.J. Kelly but this time with PP No.12. A very spirited run with three bogies and two vans produced a superb 55 mph before Ballinamallard. At Bundoran Junction we found No.42 with Bob Pirie on the 10:31am ex-Bundoran so it was back to Enniskillen again with this train, maximum 40 mph.

Just time for a short ramble before boarding the 2:10pm to Omagh and Bundoran. Double-headed as usual with the Bundoran engine piloting, it was No.44 and No.203 with Davy Armstrong and Tommy Redpath respectively and a fine train of 6 bogies, one W van and one Y van. A little 50 before Ballinamallard was our best before we joined up with the complete "Mr Magill Party". The run to Bundoran is described in page 40 of Five Foot Three No.12 as is indeed the return firing turn for the writer with No.199 and my old friend Paddy Martin. No.197 to Omagh and finally No.125 on the 7pm ex-Derry finished off a fine day's trip.

Sunday 25th August

I returned to Dublin on the Sunday's 6:40pm - consistently a poor train for running but No.83 and Tommy Rowe of Dublin managed to reach Dublin only 3 minutes late on a 3 hour 10 minute booking, maximum being 68mph with the 8-bogie train.

So here I was back home after nine days in which I had timed 1,468 steam miles on the Great Northern behind 33 engines consisting of 12 classes. Altogether I had been on 48 trains and it is only now, some years on, that it seems that it was only a small amount covered but then finance was a problem in those teenage days.

PARKMOUNT AND JUBILEE

W.T. Scott

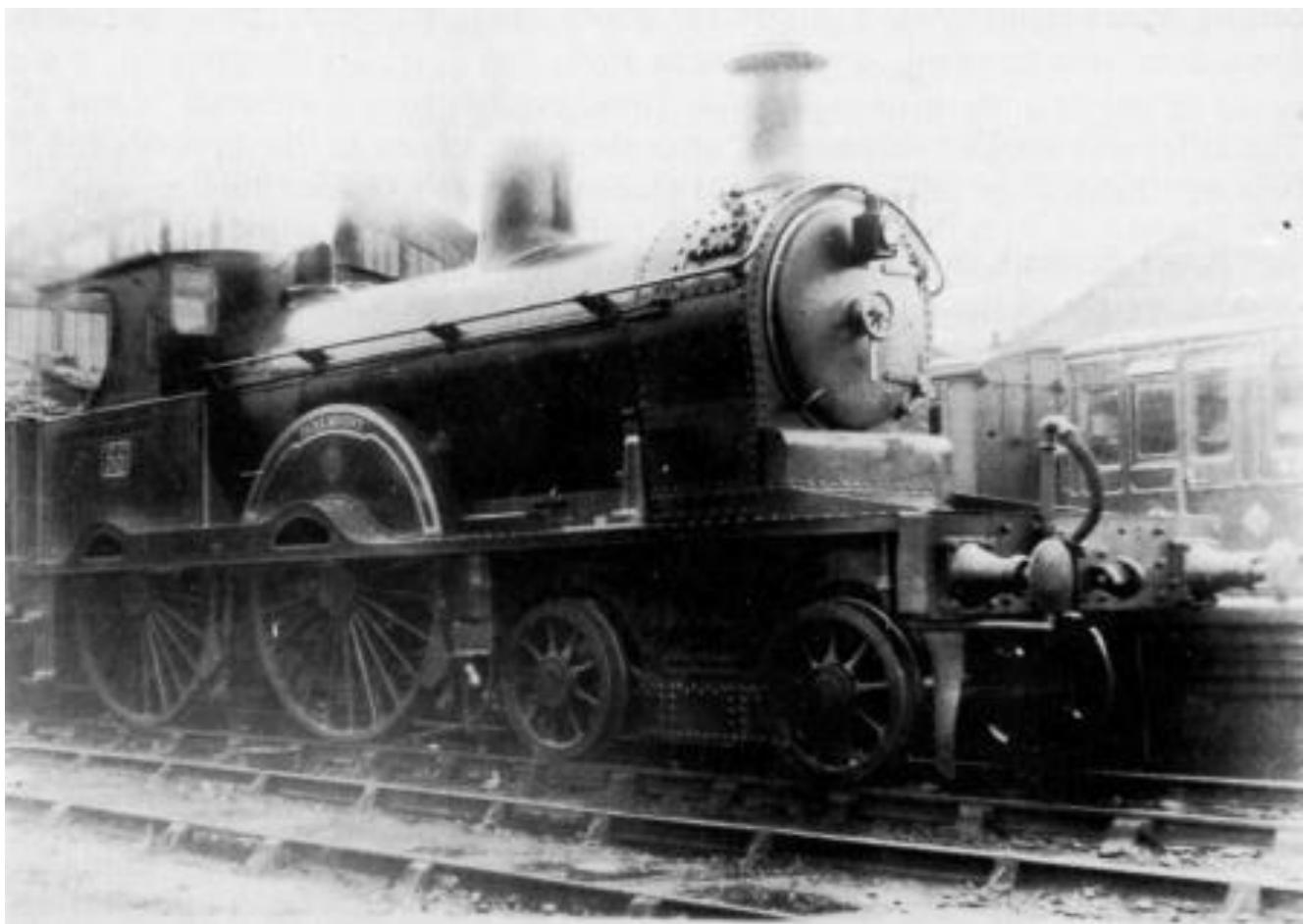
The NCC pre-1934 had little standardisation of locomotive design save in driving wheel diameter - 5' 2" for the goods and 6' 0" for the passenger locomotives. Even here, in a moment of weakness in 1895, two 7' 0" 2-4-0s appeared, a size never before or since used in Ireland. These engines were numbered 50 and 55. The latter was named "Parkmount" after the estate of one of the directors and 50 became "Jubilee" in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

Dimensions:

Cylinders (2)	18" x 24" & 26" x 24"	Boiler Length	10' 4"
Driving wheel diameter	7' 0"	Boiler diameter	4' 4"
Wheelbase	7' 8" & 8' 2"	Boiler tubes	199 x 1 ^{7/8} "

Boiler pressure	170 psi	Heating surface	840 ft ²
Weight	45½ tons	Firebox	106 ft ²
Tractive effort	13,700 lbs	Grate area	18 ft ²

Beyer Peacock supplied both engines, maker's numbers 3632 and 3633. The original weight of the engines was 43½ tons, heavy for a 2-4-0, the well known MGWR 2-4-0s were only 37½ tons and No.6 of the BCDR 37 tons. It was suggested that the engines, which had a reputation for speed, were prone to hunting from side to side and either because of this or because the load on the leading axle was excessive they were rebuilt as 4-4-0s in 1897. Bogies similar to those of the B class light compounds were used. Their appearance was vastly improved and they became the most striking engine on the NCC.



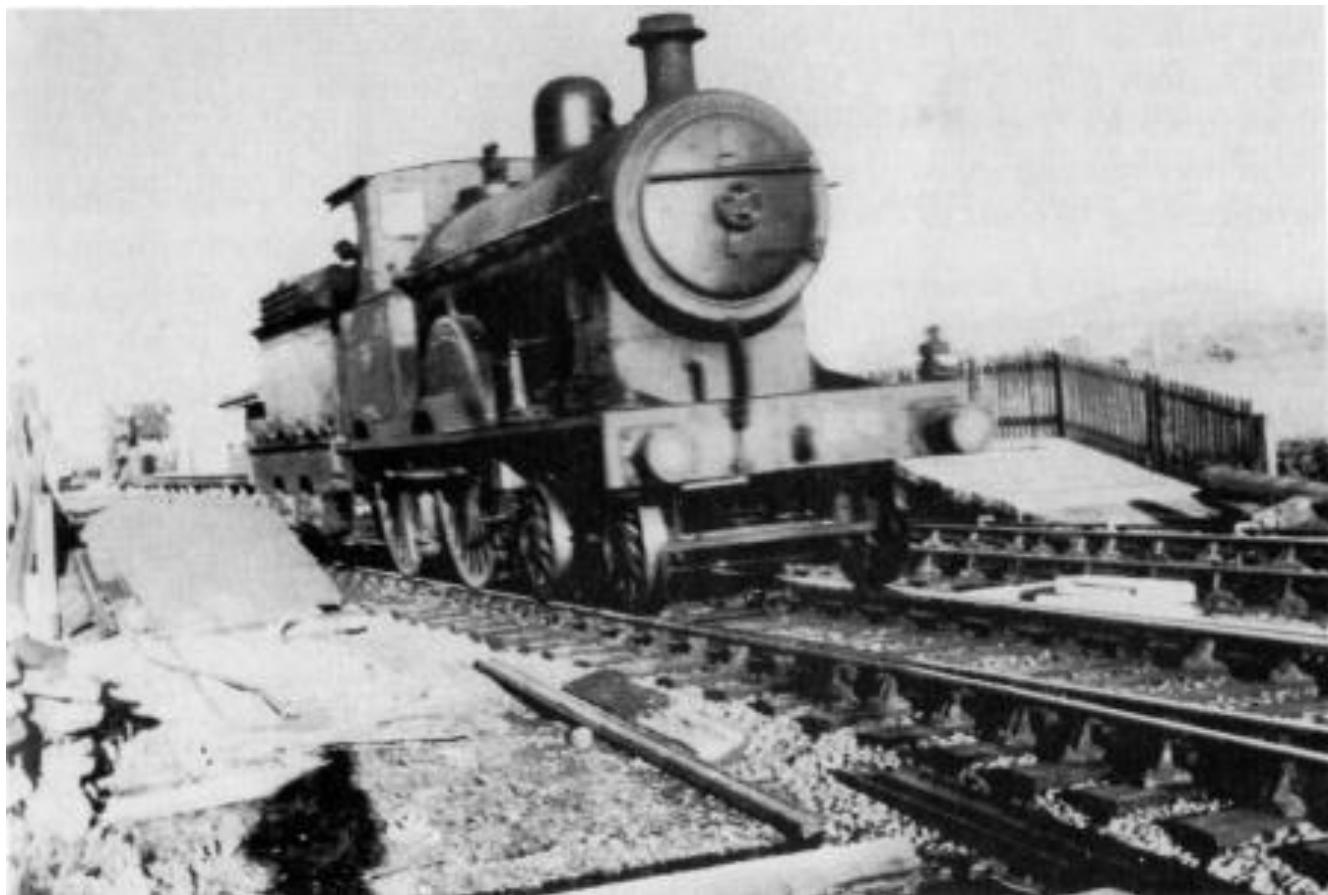
No.55 "Parkmount" at York Road in 1921, the style of chimney and splasher beading indicating her Beyer Peacock ancestry. The original station roof, destroyed in the 1941 air raids, can be seen above the locomotive's cab. (W.T. Scott Collection)

The cylinder dimensions are worthy of comment. The high pressure (HP) cylinder was 18" in diameter and the low pressure (LP) 26", both having a stroke of 24". In the 19th century engineers believed that to allow the steam to expand as fully as possible between boiler and exhaust steam pressure was beyond the range of expansion available in a single cylinder. In the compound the steam was expanded through another stage. The BNCR compounds provided no greater range of expansion than that available in a modern simple expansion locomotive. The thrust from both cylinders was approximately

the same - high pressure steam in the small cylinder being balanced by low pressure steam in the large cylinder. The problem with a 2-cylinder compound was to get a high ratio between high and low pressure cylinder volumes, i.e. how to make the LP cylinder diameter great enough. The ratio on the BNCR engine was 2.1:1 and to get even this modest figure the LP cylinder was very large. On the GNR compound No.85 the ratio works out at 2.4:1. The low pressure cylinders must be of great enough volume to deal with the steam exhausted from the high pressure cylinders. The French compounds bought by the GWR had a ratio of 2.74:1.

The BNCR engines had, for the 19th century, a high boiler pressure, 170 lbs, and this illustrates another problem of compounding - to get anything approaching equal work from high and low pressure cylinders needs a high boiler pressure and 170 lbs was a large step forward. Indeed, with the exception of the Moguls and Tanks, it remained the NCC standard throughout the 20th century. Another feature of the boiler was the excessive number of tubes, which did not make for a free-steaming boiler.

Tractive effort is often a meaningless figure but for a compound is calculated using the LP cylinders only.



No.50 "Jubilee" at Ballyclare Junction in 1938, having piloted a train up the Loop and now crossed over to return to Belfast. By this time No.50 had been rebuilt to a 2-cylinder simple and has the boiler and extended smokebox from a U class which had been rebuilt as a "Scotch engine".
(A. Donaldson)

Unlike No.85 the BNCR engine could not be worked as simple, with the first turn of the wheels the engine assumed compound working.

Before leaving the dimensions it is worth pointing out that the boiler details are taken from the $\frac{1}{4}$ " diagram supplied by the works to the civil engineer and the heating surfaces on it do not tally with

those which might be obtained by calculation from known dimensions. The NCC calculated the tube heating surfaces in a different manner to other railways and the discrepancy may have originated with the apprentice given the task of working this out.

Walschaert's valve gear was used in both engines because Malcolm believed it gave good distribution of steam. Also, because only one eccentric was needed, it gave ample room for long journals - 11" in BNCR engines. No.50 and No.55 were built before the days of long travel valves and the travel was only 3½" for the HP and 4" for the LP.

Prior to World War I Parkmount spent a lot of her time at Ballymena; in the 1920s she moved to Coleraine and was used on the Portrush and Limavady branches. For branch line working she received a tender weatherboard in September 1935. She was re-boilered in 1908 and 1934. Her biggest annual mileage was run in 1907/8 and her total mileage was 1,300,000.

The outbreak of World War II saw her back in Belfast after a short spell in Cookstown. She was used as station pilot - not a job which suited a 2-cylinder compound. Little work was done in 1939 and none in 1940 but in 1942 she was shopped, possibly because the accountant complained of engines which existed on paper only. Finally in 1944 she was scrapped, the last 2-cylinder compound express engine in the British Isles.

Sister engine Jubilee worked as a compound until 1926 when she was converted to a 2-cylinder 19" x 24" simple engine with a 4' 4" superheated boiler. Whoever drew out the rebuild must have had some thoughts of Crewe in mind as she took on a LNWR appearance though retaining a Derby chimney. She did little work in the late 1930s but in 1939 she appeared from the shops with the boiler from No.13 and painted black. She finally finished in 1946 with 1½ million miles to her credit. She was the first engine to cross the new Bann bridge in 1924.

Jubilee was something of a gipsy on the system, being a Larne engine in the 1920s when she worked the boat trains and Carrickfergus locals. She moved to Coleraine in the 1930s and became a favourite on the Derry line and also worked to Limavady. In the war years she worked from both Belfast and Ballymena, doing a turn on the Aldergrove passenger.

No records of performance of No.50 or No.55 seem to have survived but some reminiscences from the late Billy Hanley, locomotive inspector on the NCC from the war until 1963, provide evidence of their habits and work. They had the reputation of being slow up the bank but fast downhill. They were normally worked with the regulator almost full open. Comfortable to ride on, they had a slow rolling motion which never got any worse. Both engines had turns on the 6:30am and 3:30pm trains to Londonderry, picking up these trains at Greenisland after they had been pulled out from Belfast by the pilot.

The 3:30 slipped portions at Ballyclare Junction and Cookstown Junction and was a hard train for the long-legged but not very strong compounds to time. The line falls steadily from Kingsbog Junction to MP 23 but then climbs at 1 in 213 to beyond Cookstown Junction. The 7ft compounds therefore had to gain sufficient speed to carry them over this rise ahead of the slip carriage which was dropped near Carngranny level crossing to coast to Cookstown Junction.

Hanley left a description of the working: "She (No.55) was thrashed from Greenisland to Ballyclare Junction to drop the first slip. The water was nearly out of the glass and it was after Doagh before the boiler was right again. Speed built up to over 70 by Muckamore and after a slight easing for the curve the engine was again opened out to get over 70 by Niblock (MP 23 at the bottom of the bank). The slip was then released. The main train had to be running hard to make sure the slip had enough way to reach Cookstown Junction. If we weren't doing well enough then we had to stop at the Junction and detach the slip."

Slip carriage working broke one of the strictest rules of railway safety by having two trains in one block. It was only carried out by senior guards and never in fog or driving snow. Slip carriages also placed a responsibility on signalmen to ensure that the slip carriage had come off the main train and reached its destination before he gave "Line clear". The slip coach carried two tail lamps, one red and one white placed side by side, it also carried side lights. The main train portion carried the conventional tail lamp.

No.50 and No.55, together with the dimensionally similar A class 4-4-0s which followed them, represented the final and largest development possible in a 2-cylinder compound. Harold Houston of the NCC considered that Malcolm adhered too long to the principle; Malcolm himself seems to have abandoned it for in 1913 when new engines were needed he built the U class simple 4-4-0s. The day of the 2-cylinder compound was short, 1895-1914 was their high summer, and by 1933 only nine of the twenty-nine broad gauge compounds were left. It was fitting that No.55, the most famous of them, should outlive all the others and tragic that she was not spared for preservation.

FRANK DUNLOP

Robin Morton

It may be 40 years ago now, but Frank Dunlop can still savour the smell of the bacon and egg fry they used to cook up in the steam engine's firebox. He would hose down the firing shovel, get the bacon sizzling, crack a couple of eggs into the 'pan' and then thrust it into the fierce heat. "A fry never tasted as good as when it was eaten off the shovel, washed down with good strong tea," recalled Frank, a railwayman for 50 years. Out on the road, in the middle of a wintry night, with a goods train on behind, the footplate feast was the highlight of the shift for the locomotive crew.

Frank, who retired in September 1990 as chief locomotive inspector of Northern Ireland Railways, started his career in the age of steam. It was on 1st June 1940 that he was appointed engine cleaner at York Road shed in Belfast by the London Midland and Scottish Railway (Northern Counties Committee). His career on the railways was to span more than 50 years, during which time he drove more trains and travelled more miles than he cares to remember. His half-century also saw the province's railway system change over from steam to diesel traction, with drivers and firemen having to learn new skills.

"My father was on the railway all his days so it was the obvious thing for me to follow in his footsteps," recalled Frank. "We were from Coleraine but the only job available was as an engine cleaner at York Road shed - and it was all night work in 1940." The basic week's wages amounted to 24s (£1.20), but this could increase to 32s (£1.60) with overtime payments included. Out of the pay packet the cleaners had to fund their own train fare to get to work - the only concession being that it was a staff ticket at one third the normal rate. "Looking back, it was a tough life, but at the time we just did not know any better," he reflected.

In 1941, a vacancy arose at Coleraine engine shed and Frank was transferred back to his home town, still working as a night cleaner. The next step at Coleraine was to become a fireman, the arduous task of shovelling coal to keep steam up and the train on the move. Early duties included turns on goods and passenger trains to places such as Londonderry, Dungiven, Magherafelt and Limavady. "Although I was firing from the age of 16, because of insurance reasons they could not make me up to the grade of fireman until I became 18," he said. "The wartime was a very busy period on the railway and in particular I remember the American troop trains which used to operate when a ship would dock." Some of Frank's happiest memories are of the Dungiven branch and the Derry Central line from Coleraine to Cookstown both of which closed in 1950. "At various stations the staff would leave out a galvanised basin which we would fill with coal, and then at the end of the week they would give us maybe a box of eggs in return," he reminisced.

As a fireman Frank teamed up with driver Billy McDonald and their regular engine was No.96 "Silver Jubilee". No.96 was scrapped in the 1950s, but she remains his favourite engine, and he used to take a particular pride in keeping the footplate brasses in sparkling condition.

Frank and his wife May, a Coleraine girl, were married in 1950 and as she well knew, a railwayman was asked to work the most unsocial of hours. She recalled: "The worst shift was when Frank had to go out at 5pm and work until 3am or later - and he had two and a half miles to cycle home after he booked off."

In 1952 Frank was promoted to driver, and after a spell on relief duties, he was given his own position on the roster at Coleraine in 1956. The switch from steam to diesel started in 1957, and life on the footplate became a lot cleaner and more comfortable if somewhat more solitary. "Instead of a driver and a fireman working as a team you were there in the cab on your own, so you missed the crack."

In 1961 came further promotion to locomotive inspector, based in Belfast but covering the whole of the Ulster Transport Authority network from Londonderry to Warrenpoint, and he suddenly found himself on the opposite side of a table at which he had sat as a trade union branch secretary. "My job as inspector was to look after both the men and the machines, and to make sure everything ran smoothly, so it was quite a change," he recollects.



At a dinner attended by timers, and one non-timer, on 28th September 1990 Bill Scott presented Frank Dunlop with an album of photographs illustrating his railway career. (East Antrim Times)

Frank was the railway company's trouble-shooter and he was on call round the clock if anything went wrong. Holiday times such as Easter, the Twelfth, and the August demonstrations meant special trains, and long days for him. "But the big thing was that there was something different every day and I can

honestly say there was never a day when I did not want to go to my work," he said.

With lines closing and losses mounting, the railway system looked as though it was facing extinction in the mid-60s. But the birth of Northern Ireland Railways in 1968 saw a change in its fortunes, and the re-opening of the Belfast Central link in 1976 ushered in a positive new era. "The atmosphere improved and the railway started to believe in itself again," commented Frank. "We had new trains and through running from Bangor to Portadown which gave everyone a boost."

NIR might have finished using steam trains, but the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland kept the steam age alive. "When the last NIR steam train ran in 1970 it looked as though that was that. But the Preservation Society kept steam running and I must say I have been most impressed by what they have achieved," said Frank. Thanks to the RPSI specials, his career on the footplate was far from over, and every time a special ran he was there to ensure everything ran smoothly. "The Preservation Society trains always meant an enjoyable day out - there wasn't the same pressure on the footplate as in days gone by," he said.

In retirement Frank is looking forward to more time in the garden, walking his daughter's dog, and being able to take holidays when he and his wife want. In his front garden there is one obvious sign that it is a railwayman's home - a milepost which used to stand at the trackside near Kilrea on his beloved Derry Central. For Frank Dunlop, it provides a tangible reminder of a lifetime spent on the right tracks.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I was most interested to read Mr Scott's letter on carriage preservation, and also Tim Casterton's; I was delighted to hear that a number of historic vehicles which I had assumed were gone to their maker are actually still with us. Mr Scott is correct in at least one respect in that carriages do take an awful lot of maintaining and it is also true that to restore one from departmental condition is often as big a task as putting back in steam a locomotive which has resided in a scrap yard. I would question that the Cravens are "the last steam stock". They were not introduced until 1963 and then used only on the most prestigious services, all of which were by then diesel-hauled. As for English lines which "produce their historic vehicles only on certain gala days" last Thursday I took 43 children for a ride on the Severn Valley Railway and we travelled in a restaurant car of 1925, one of eight GWR-built carriages all superbly restored to chocolate and cream livery which formed our regular service train. The other rake running that day was made up of an equal number of LMS vehicles. The children were quite bowled over by the authentic GWR upholstery and the polished woodwork and would only eat their crisps in the vestibules for fear of spoiling the fabric. The other market leader in England, the Bluebell Railway, features rakes of Southern Railway and South Eastern and Chatham carriages, the Swanage Railway which runs behind our school has restored to service four former Southern Railway carriages, whilst across the bay the Isle of Wight has nothing later than 1924!

I don't get to ride in the RPSI Vintage train as often as I would like but whenever I do I take great delight, as I know do other English enthusiasts, in the splendid and varied interiors of its carriages. Carriage preservation has generally lagged behind that of restoring steam locomotives, and the RPSI has been a beacon in this respect, putting to shame many English concerns which have far more workers and resources than it has. My own personal view, and I realise that for some it sounds like heresy, is that offered the choice of a journey in a genuine vintage carriage pulled by a diesel, or one in a BR Mk1 pulled by a steam engine, I might well opt for the former - which is not to deny my love of steam.

Carriage restoration I agree is quite as time consuming and expensive as locomotive restoration and the

Great Western Society, which takes as great a pride as any group in its comprehensive collection of carriages, has many which remain unrestored after 25 years. But providing they can be kept under cover or at least as well protected as possible from the elements, there is no reason why the wonderfully diverse assemblage of carriages which has been saved from the breaker's yard throughout these islands, cannot one day be restored, carriage by carriage, however many generations it takes. Because the founder members of the RPSI had the foresight to save and protect so many distinctive vehicles just before the rich heritage left over from the old companies vanished for ever the Society now has a remarkably comprehensive collection. To my mind it needs cherishing every bit as much as do the beautiful blue 4-4-0s, the dear old J15s, the splendid 2-6-4T, the unique 2-6-0 et al. We are after all the RAILWAY Preservation Society of Ireland.

One last thought. Although I rather agree that headboards do sometimes detract from a locomotive's appearance I find the language Mr Scott uses to put his view across quite unacceptable. To write of "a diseased mind" is highly offensive and I would have wished such sentiments had not appeared in *Five Foot Three*.

Yours faithfully,

Michael H.C. Baker

Wareham, Dorset



Lest we be accused of being parochial, here is Westrail's 0-6-0T No.90 arriving back at Tuam after its first public outing to Athenry. Originally built as a 0-6-4 railmotor, the little locomotive was just about a match for its 2-coach train on 15th September 1990. (W.T. Scott)

Dear Sir,

I have just read with much interest your Winter 1989/1990 edition of "Five Foot Three", kindly loaned to me by a friend.

What memories it evokes of the years I spent in Islandmagee during the War, of how I would be aroused in the very early hours by No.95 "The Braid" (NCC mogul) making her way with the goods from Larne up the Slaughterford bank, bound for York Road. For some reason No.95 was allowed to run with very loose cranks and the noise of her big-ends gave the impression that she was about to fall asunder. The last three or four moguls on the NCC were built at York Road and I have often thought it a great pity that one of these was not preserved as an example of local expertise, to balance the examples from Dundalk and Inchicore.

I was especially interested in W.T. Scott's reference to the late Harold Houston's high opinion of the GNR 4-4-2 tank locomotive that operated on the NCC system during the pre-War 'engine exchange' with the GNR. I can confirm that when he compared this locomotive with the NCC's 4-4-0s Mr Houston had in mind not the "Glens", but the "Castles", the so-called Scotch engines, much thought of by their crews. Mr Houston told me that despite the fact that, following the exchange, they had one of the "Castles" just out of the shops, she took two minutes longer (with the same train) to reach Greenisland from York Road than the GNR tank. This despite the fact that the signalmen made every effort to give her a clear road.

Incidentally, Mr. Houston also expressed the opinion that the GNR people, in assessing the capability of No.96 "Silver Jubilee" - the NCC locomotive which participated in the exchange - made an error in calculating her fuel consumption. He said he thought they mistook her tender capacity of five tons of coal for seven tons, the capacity of the big tenders fitted to the later moguls.

Yours faithfully,

John McNutt

Carrickfergus



Some of the running-in trips were frustrating to the photographer as the train did not always reach his carefully chosen location, but No.461 was caught here approaching Greenisland on 11th November 1990. On future outings the locomotive will carry cab-side number plates and the oversized 'flying snail' will be reduced or removed. (C.P. Friel)

Dear Sir,

I must take issue with the statements made by Mr Scott in the last Five Foot Three, and endorsed by yourself in the Editorial. The membership should be aware that what has been presented as fact is a

mixture of half-truth, misinformation and plain untruth. It is significant that no representatives of carriage or operations departments were made aware of his letter before it was published, or given an opportunity to answer the criticism contained therein.

If I could address some of the more glaring inaccuracies in Mr Scott's diatribe:

- (1) The 'wooden body' ban in fact applies to all vehicles not conforming to UIC (Continental) standards. It makes no logical sense when applied to our operations and must rank as a classic example of bureaucracy run riot. We can but hope that common sense will prevail in the outcome of present negotiations.
- (2) The ban does not affect NIR and vintage stock will be used in the North for the foreseeable future.
- (3) The RPSI Operations Department requirement is for a basic nine coach set plus two spares. When extra specialised vehicles such as dining cars, saloons and workshop coaches are considered, and allowance made for vehicles under repair at any point in time, the basic requirement is around twenty carriages. This leaves a small number of additional vehicles at Whitehead which will be restored when time and resources permit. There is no "vast collection of surplus stock".
- (4) If the Irish Rail ban remains, the future of the Mullingar-based set is problematical. These coaches were purchased for practical rather than historical reasons.
- (5) We are advised by Irish Rail that Cravens are unlikely to become available before the end of the century.
- (6) NIR Mk2s may be available by the mid-1990s but would require to be vacuum braked - or all the locos air-braked. Being of monocoque construction, life-expired Mk2s would present acute maintenance problems.
- (7) BR Mk2s are becoming available at present. If Mr Scott is prepared to put up with the several hundred thousand pounds required to purchase, import, re-gauge and overhaul them this option could be proceeded with.
- (8) Operations Department inform me that the high cost of hiring coaches would devastate the precarious economies of many railtours; always assuming that the railway company could spare carriages for hire in the first place. These very same reasons led to the acquisition of our own stock in the early 1970s, a policy which has since paid for itself many times over.
- (9) I do not know what preserved railways Mr Scott has visited but many well-known ones spring instantly to mind which all use vintage stock and many others are currently restoring such stock. Having been involved in the maintenance of our carriage fleet for over 15 years, I can find no reason why they are "unsuitable" for our needs as stated by Mr. Scott. Neither, might I add, do our passengers, according to the results of an extensive survey in 1989. The Operations Department recognised that our vintage train is a strong marketing point; the locomotive is seen briefly at the beginning and end of the journey but the passengers are in the carriages throughout.

I find particularly offensive that Mr Scott presumes to dictate to the Society's volunteers what they "would be better employed" doing. As a regular volunteer at Whitehead from 1972 until I moved to England in April 1990, I can only remember Mr Scott's attendance on a couple of occasions. I seem to recall that he spent most of his time berating the efforts of others; what he described in a previous diatribe as "aimless carpentry exercises or useless tree-planting". Study of Mr Scott's various, and usually vitriolic, contributions to the magazine over the years is indeed illuminating. His sole interest appears to be running steam locomotives as fast as possible on the main line, regardless of the effect on the locomotive or on the Society's finances.

While I am all in favour of catering as fully as possible for those interested in locomotive performance,

it must be stated that the vast majority of our passengers are not timers. The Society cannot be run for the sole benefit of a handful of timers but Mr. Scott presupposes that it already is. Comparison of RPSI and SLOA in this context is arrant nonsense. No, Mr Scott, the Society welcomes members with a wide range of interests (including timers) and is mature enough to provide a niche for all of them.

To ensure the Society's future our Council must consider a wide range of possibilities. It would be the height of foolishness to put all our eggs in the basket of main line running - a situation over which we do not even have control.

One final point of issue: considering feats such as the Festiniog's deviation, the restoration of "Duke of Gloucester" or, on a much lesser scale, the restoration of our own vintage train from a state of decay and ruin, I would suggest that "Preservation is the Art of the Impossible".

Yours faithfully,

Alan Edgar

Carriage Maintenance Officer 1978-79

***Editor's Note:** Not surprisingly, the views of Mr Scott as expressed in his letter(s) to the last Five Foot Three, did not go unchallenged. The first point raised by Mr Edgar refers to myself and he is correct in stating that Mr Scott's letter was not referred to the departments quoted. This matter was subsequently the subject of Council discussion. As it is felt that both contributors have now had their say I will try to deal as objectively as possible with some of the points enumerated by Mr. Edgar:*

The ban, call it what you will, is the result of an Irish government directive, which makes negotiations somewhat more complicated. So far, we have managed to live with it by routing most of our Southern operations over lines to which it does not yet apply. The exception, both this year and last, was the International Tour which required the extensive use of hired Cravens as would the autumn Belfast-Dublin trips, had a locomotive been available. It would be preferable, for the various reasons mentioned, to use our own stock but unless and until negotiations are satisfactorily concluded our carriage situation must remain in a kind of limbo. The recently announced agreement whereby NIR propose to dual-brake a set of Mk2s, whilst not satisfying the aspirations of those who would prefer to travel in our historic coaches, will at least enable them to travel where they otherwise might not.

Should we after all be able to run our own coaches, opinions will still differ as to how many we should have. In this context, "vast" as used by Mr Scott might appear as an overstatement to Mr Edgar, whose use of "diatribe" might have a similar effect on Mr Scott! Be that as it may, there are several vehicles at Whitehead which, due to the effects of time, now require a complete rebuild for which we do not have the resources.

I cannot find any reference by Mr Scott to our carriages as unsuitable, although he did suggest that a number of them were unnecessary. Quite what he had in mind when referring to vintage coaches on English preserved lines is not clear. The point has also been taken up by Mr Baker and I am personally aware that not all of Mr Scott's travels on such lines have been in ex-BR Mk1s.

Is it really arrant nonsense to compare us with SLOA? At present all our eggs are in the main line basket with little likelihood of any other basket. Practically all our operations are now in the main line excursion train category and few of the passengers on them would be interested in dawdling around in search of railway exotica. In any case, apart from railtour ventures over lightly-trafficked branches, we have to keep out of the way of service trains and the sort of running required for this is no problem for a well maintained locomotive.

Whilst it is not unknown for Mr Scott to dip his pen in vitriol I think it is fair to say that such instances have been more than outweighed by his numerous informative contributions to this and other magazines. I can recall his "tree-planting" letter and can assure readers that, if he did not know it

then, he has since become aware that locomotive sheds can, in fact, be found in sylvan settings!

BOOK REVIEWS

150 Years of Irish Railways

Fergus Mulligan, 2nd Edition, Appletree Press, Belfast.

One really does wonder who bought all the copies of the first edition. The cover has changed but that is all. The NI Tourist Board photo of No.171 crossing Craigmore viaduct on a Steam Enterprise is captioned the “Ulster Flyer” - no doubt another one of Mr Mulligan’s very accurate, well researched facts.

The text has not been changed, updated or corrected (this last point would result in a new book anyway). I refer you to the original review in Five Foot Three No.29 and you can make up your own mind. The book still offers nothing to justify a space among more serious books on a library shelf.

MMcM

By Rail through the Heart of Ireland

Padraic O’Farrell, Mercier Press, Cork.

Supposedly a guidebook to Ireland by rail, it starts off with yet again the solving of the gauge problem and an almost Mulligan-style treatment of the background history. We actually leave on our journey to Cork on page 21, such is the preamble! It does seem strange to refer to our destination as being 285 kilometres away - what about mileposts? According to the book, “Clondalkin Station is hard to trace” - strange, I photographed there in December. An awful lot of discussion takes place later in the book about places quite distant from the Dublin-Cork line, but many amusing stories provide great blarney for American tourists.

There is very little of pure railway interest in this book. For example, murder at Ballybroughy and arrest at Thurles are already well documented in the IRRS Journals. I would recommend this book as useful for passing the time and learning a bit about Ireland on your journey to Cork, but be prepared to board early and read quickly.

MMcM

The Cork, Bandon and South Coast Railway, Volume 2, 1900-1950

C. Creedon, published by the Author.

A fascinating subject covered by Mr Creedon who is very familiar with the railways of Cork. However, the layout of the book is haphazard with a very scanty index referring to quite often one topic amongst several on the same page which are in turn not relevant to each other. Indeed the book is more like a notebook under many headings.

Maps in the Appendix at the back are good but a rather obviously hand drawn map on page 64 does spoil the image. Photographs are numerous but quality is poor, e.g. Dunmanway on page 95 and the Brian Boru Bridge on page 129. Captions are ‘thin’ and have limited information.

At IR£4.50 the book is good value; the content is good but not laid out in an easily read order. Perhaps when Volume 3 is published, all three could be combined, re-arranged and issued as a good volume work on the CBSC.

MMcM

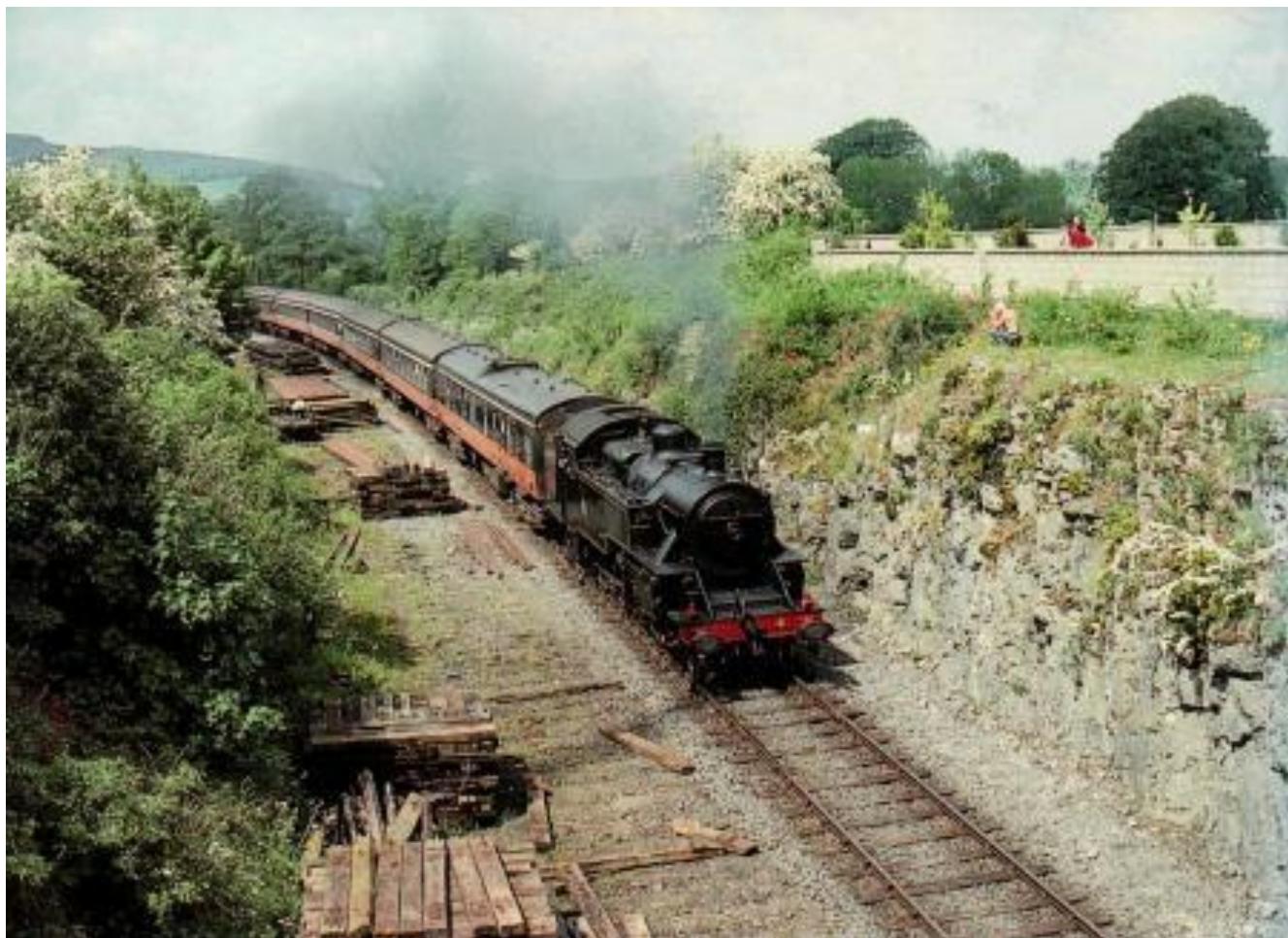
Railways Around Co. Armagh

Eddie McKee, published by the Author.

At last, a book which does not use Mulligan in the bibliography. A well researched work on the fascinating railways of Co. Armagh. The book is well written and provides many unpublished facts.

Although the book is dedicated to the victims of the 1889 Armagh railway disaster, a full chapter covers ground already well dealt with in the Museum book reviewed last year. Photographs are good, except for the modern day ones, and include many previously unpublished. I can recommend this book as good 'honest to God' type reading, with no waffle.

MMcM



About two hours before the end of the steam-hauled part of the Comeragh Railtour, No.4 makes a spirited departure from Cahir on her way to Carrick on Suir on 12th May 1990. (C.P. Friel)



Two restoration projects. On 9th September 1990 No.461 passes the White Harbour which is currently being restored to something resembling its former condition. Traces of the brickworks which it served can still be found among the nearby undergrowth. (N. Poots)