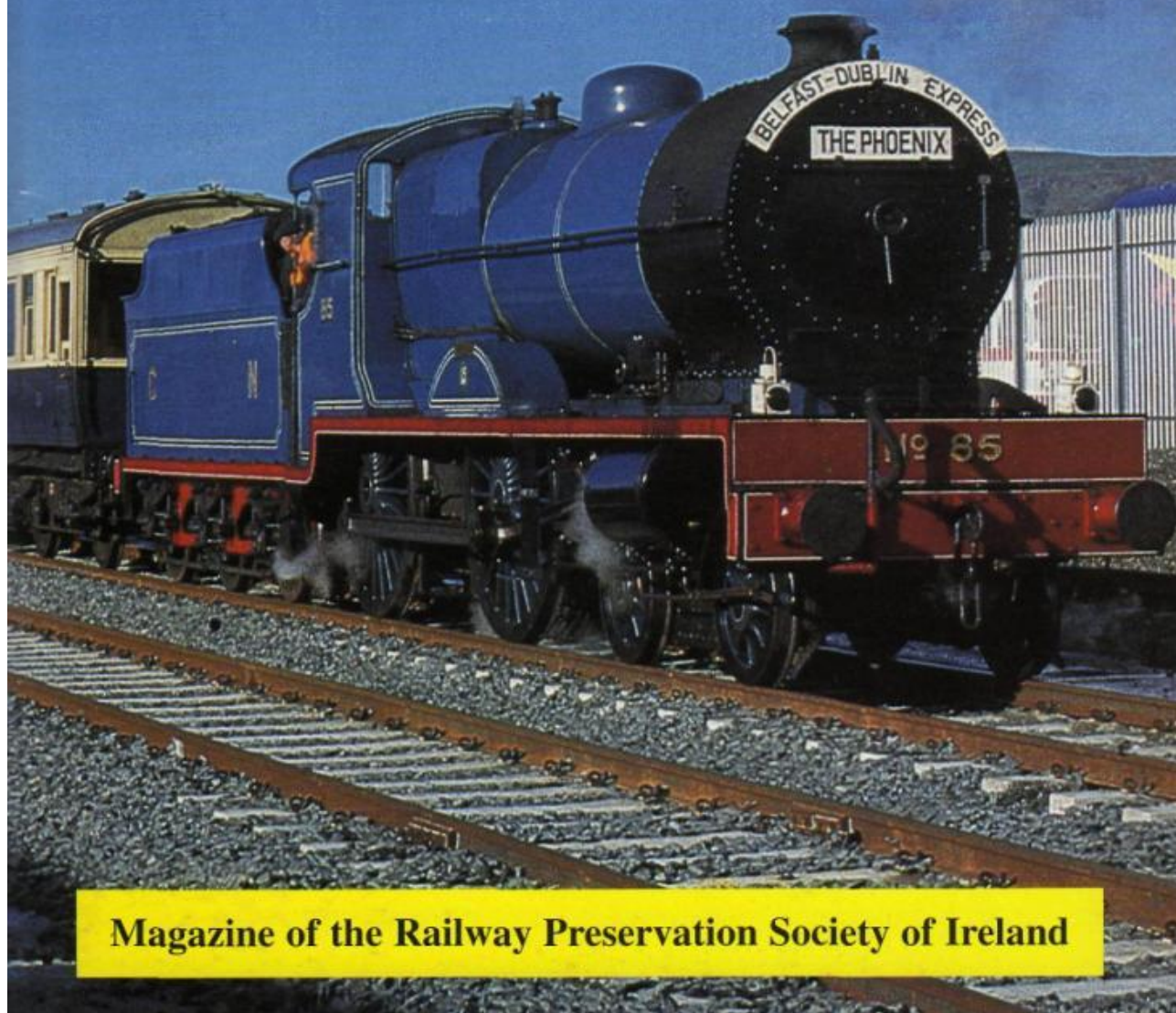


# FIVE FOOT THREE



Magazine of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

# FIVE FOOT THREE

## No.42

### Winter 1995/96

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: The Dundalk Trip on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1995, organised to mark the opening of the new station at Great Victoria Street, Belfast, turned out to be a successful and enjoyable outing. No.85 is seen here just outside the station. Behind the locomotive is GN Directors' Saloon 50. (N. Poots)***

#### EDITORIAL

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In the last Five Foot Three your Editor, perhaps kite-flying or casting his bread upon the waters, mentioned that the magazine had been submitted to the judgement of a body drawn from the railway press. This produced several letters from readers who, in RPSI (D. Donaldson?) terminology, would be classed as 'Sound Men' and who all said, "Keep it as it is." Many thanks, and apologies for not replying individually, to those who wrote.

Thus it is that this issue will only differ in content, but not in format, from its predecessors of the last few years. The timing fraternity, among whom the Editor - while not a practitioner himself - has

several friends, would probably like to see the publication of lots of logs over which they could pore. Since timers are a minority of a minority not many logs appear but in this issue they can get really stuck in (some already have), with Mr Weatherup's article on the Bangor line.

As will be seen in reports elsewhere, the Euro-money which rescued the Society from a potentially disastrous situation appears to have dried up, although the hope remains that some more money may become available. A proper locomotive workshop would be a blessing - and indeed a just reward - to those who have laboured over the last three decades. We have the equipment; all we need is a building to put it in.



***Great Northern 150? Almost that many years of railway service are assembled here as Jimmy Donnelly, Bobby Quail and, with back to camera, Peter McCann cover some well-trodden ground en route to Dundalk on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1995. (N. Poots)***

In the big world outside, the past year has seen the retirement of both the last NCC and GN drivers. The former, Willie John McConnell of Coleraine, has not featured in a RPSI context for many years and slipped quietly into retirement, only to become a media star as the result of investing successfully in a Lottery ticket. It had been hoped that Jimmy Donnelly could have been coaxed into taking the regulator of No.85 on the first steam working out of the new Great Victoria Street Station but this did not come about so Jimmy travelled in the train as a very welcome guest. In pre-reunification days he was something of a rarity - a GN man passed to drive over the NCC lines, by virtue of a period spent in York Road. One of the old school, he felt that the modern railway was the poorer for the loss of the comradeship which he had enjoyed in days gone by. We wish both him and the famous Willie John a long and happy retirement.

Still on age-related matters, our Antipodean correspondent, who was wont to describe himself as a

septuagenarian, has now become an octogenarian. Congratulations, Laurence!

And finally, what of NIR wherein there has been a quiet but not entirely bloodless revolution? In the 1960s the road transport-led UTA was disbanded and split up into railway, road passenger and road freight. CIÉ followed suit in 1986. Deregulated road haulage soon saw off the UTA's former interests in that field but road and rail passenger pursued their separate and presumably competitive ways under the new regime. Vast sums of money have recently been invested in NIR and one might well assume that this was with a view to ensuring the future and possibly the expansion of the railway system. However, hard on the heels of that came the news that we are to revert to a UTA type of body with the bus men again in the driving seat.

Since the said bus men have marketed their product, particularly its long-distance version, very successfully in recent times, what will be the position of the railways where their routes compete and where the buses are already ahead in terms of timings and fares? It would appear unlikely that successfully developed bus routes will be reduced to the status of feeders to the railway. To an outside observer it seems strange that the perceived wisdom of the 1960s (1980s on CIÉ) should now be thrown into reverse. Will Dáil Éireann, around 2015, realise that they have got it all wrong and reconstitute the old CIÉ? We can only watch and wait.

## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Sullivan Boomer

It is particularly satisfying to be able to report a good year, and all the more so when we have witnessed for the second year in succession an increase in the available mileage over which we can operate. The opening of Great Victoria Street Station has been well covered elsewhere, and with the upgrade of Belfast-Dublin to finish out in 1996, and Bleach Green-Antrim in 1997, the future for the railways looks good.



*Three Beyer Peacock locomotives at Inchicore at 5:45 pm on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1995, No.461 being a last-minute replacement for the failed No.171. (C.P. Friel)*

Operationally this has been a busy and successful year. Although we lost one "Sea Breeze" excursion out of Dublin due to the exceptional summer weather, and the consequent serious fire risk, some other trains were also threatened. Fortunately we have good lines of communications (most of the time) with the railway companies, and this allowed us to keep the situation under close review. The end result was a large number of very well filled public excursions throughout the year, which earned us some money.



A very successful International Raitour to Cork, during which the train actually ran to time on several occasions, was only slightly marred by No.171's failure two days before the trip on the way around Dublin to Inchicore. None of us can predict when 80-year-old components may fail, although the best techniques of non-destructive testing are regularly employed by the Society's maintenance departments. We have therefore still to get two GNR(I) 4-4-0s on the Cork main line; maybe by the time it comes around again we can get three of them!

The charter and special market was good this year, and this, with apologies to all concerned, probably accounts for our balance sheet showing a healthy surplus. Obviously the film contract was the best earner, although even it was touch and go with the dry weather, we may have to look at revising our hire terms to take account of problems that can arise when there is a prolonged dry period. Other charters out of Belfast, for Ulster Television's "Kelly Show" and North Down Borough Council in connection with VE Day, were useful for funds and publicity, as well as operationally, but we lost one or two potential charters along the way, usually due to cost.



***No.85 passing the closed station of Craigavad with the North Down Borough Council VE Day charter. (C.P. Friel)***

However, as always, there are the down sides to every high point, and I want to sound a few cautionary words here. This doesn't mean that I am trying to be a killjoy - quite the reverse! But if the Society wants to continue for many years to come, then we must be realists as well as enthusiasts. A sound practical approach works best. Which brings me to my words of warning. The Treasurer will tell the grisly story of the increase in our overheads for train operations brought about by a swingeing increase in insurance charges. Most importantly, there is no way we can avoid these charges, and no real way to reduce them. We could cut some of our cover, but it is already trimmed to the bone, and indeed the Council feels that some levels of cover should be increased - some already have been. It is, alas, symptomatic of the world we live in that we find insurance more necessary to guard against litigation, and often over allegations which are to, to say the least, of dubious veracity. It is getting to the stage where if the smoke "doesn't smell nice" we can, and possibly will, be taken to court, so that the owner of the offended nostrils can be financially recompensed, probably excessively!

Apart from insurance all our other costs will continue to rise as well, but our cost of operating is rising faster than it should. Why? Because of the shortfall of volunteer labour at Whitehead, Dublin and

Mullingar, and on the administration side. The pressures on our Operations Officers are a case in point. This is an area where more help is required, or the number of operations will have to be reduced, leading to very much higher fares on the trains that run, and less income to devote to restoration. It's a vicious circle! If you can, please help either on the 'practical' side with locomotive, coach or site work, or give us some 'theoretical' help, as some people see it, with the administration of the Society and its operations. And don't forget that the fund-raising side of the Society needs everyone it can get to make those extra pounds we desperately need!

You will also be aware that there has been an amalgamation of the public transport undertakings in Northern Ireland. Some people are afraid it is "the return of the UTA". It does mean however that there are new structures, and new faces, to deal with, and that we may have to adapt to the new company. Some people think that it is the best hope for the future, time alone will tell, so we wish the company well.

Similarly, there have been changes in Irish Rail, and many of the same strictures will apply while relationships are established with new personnel.

Fortune telling has never been my strong point, but I believe, as does the entire Council, that the Society has a viable future provided the members who live close enough to our centres of operation to give practical physical support do so; it is no longer enough to just send off the subscription annually. In the spiral of cost, only a greater volunteer input will achieve the success we all want.

## **NEWS FROM COUNCIL**

**Paul McCann**

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The past year has been as busy as usual, but in a humdrum sort of fashion. There was nothing of the highs or lows of previous years. This is okay by me as a secretary is quite happy to fulfil the wishes of the old Chinese proverb: "May you never live in interesting times". Council matters this year were not particularly interesting.

Probably the most significant item of note during the year was the contract for the filming of "Michael Collins", the story of the Irish patriot from the early years of this century. Although we derived a useful income from the contract, Council did not play a very big part in the negotiations. For that we have to thank David Humphries from the Dublin Area Operations Committee. David was involved in the early stages of winning the contract and remained with it until filming was completed in October. The Society should derive some useful publicity from the film as a number of star names were involved, such as Neil Jordan, Liam Neeson, Julia Roberts, No.461 and No.171.

Council has recently been considering the role of the Society in the coming years and into the next century. We can never be sure for how long we will be allowed to operate as we do by our two railway companies, our insurers or government legislation. Various proposals have been discussed, some of which are currently being followed up, and if any come to fruition the membership will be informed at the first opportunity.

One area where our future is gravely threatened is the dwindling number of steam drivers. NIR now no longer have any of the older generation of drivers at work, the only steam drivers being those trained on the spoil trains of the late 1960s and firemen trained on Society operations. The training of these men is continuing all the time. On Iarnród Éireann, however, the situation is grim to say the least. A training scheme has been agreed between the company and the Society but for various reasons has not yet happened. Needless to say, our representatives in Dublin are putting all their efforts into getting the scheme running as soon as possible, as our very future south of the border depends on it.

Allied with the foregoing is the question of funding and sponsorship. I reported in last year's magazine that news of the second phase of ERDF funding had been delayed from spring 1994 until mid-1995. Unfortunately, there is still no concrete evidence of any decision being made although it is reasonable

to expect some information in 1996. Council has submitted 5 potential project proposals, totalling £160,000 for approval: a luxury carriage; a workshop coach; the locomotive workshop; the restoration of No.4; the installation of a turntable at Whitehead. Other avenues are always being explored, i.e. the two national lotteries, the Millennium Fund, grants, sponsorship, etc. All are exceedingly hard to come by but our Fundraiser, Ernie Gilmore, is keeping in close contact with all potential sources.

Our AGM this year was held in Whitehead for the first time in many years. With the opening of the new Belfast rail links, it is much easier for members to travel to Whitehead from all over the country and it is hoped that we will return when the AGM is next due to be held north of the border.

As has become the case increasingly in recent years, more of Council's time has been devoted to the matter of insurance. This year saw another massive rise in our insurance bill, which is now around the £30,000 mark, i.e. 50% up on two years ago. It does not take much calculating to see how much each operation must take in fares before we even cover our insurance costs. Our operations committees are now having to consider our fare structure and some unfortunate increases are to be expected.



***No.171, then blue and with name, heads south over the River Bann at Portadown on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1995 with the stock for the William Dargan tour. (C.P. Friel)***

Similarly, an increasing amount of time is now spent in ensuring our locomotives and carriages are safe to run. The increase stems both from the greater scrutiny our stock is subjected to by the powers that be and by the fact that most of it is becoming increasingly ancient. Our youngest locomotive is now nearly 50 years old and our youngest coach is over 30 years old, not to mention our oldest examples of each. Locomotive No.4 has now been as long in Society ownership as she was with her various railway company owners.

The necessity of insurance was made clear to us after the destruction by fire of 2 coaches stabled at

Mullingar prior to restoration to running order. Whilst they did have insurance, we could not possibly afford to provide adequate cover to allow full restoration again - a sad fact of Society finances and the increased cost of insurance.

Fortunately 1995 was a happier year for the running coaches as we once again had a full train in Dublin. At Whitehead the situation is improved but not yet satisfactory - a full 8 coach train can be operated but not all coaches are of maximum seating capacity. From a safety point of view it is planned to have the bogies of all coaches removed and inspected, and overhauled where required, one at a time.



***No.85 leaves Belfast Central with the morning Santa train on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1995. The first half-mile, with the tortuous exit from the station followed by a sharp curve and a 1 in 60 climb on to the Dargan Bridge is a severe test and gives rise to a certain amount of banter between locomotive crews. (C.P. Friel)***

At long last, the Society has an agreement to take the Irish State Coach into its care with a view to restoration and operation on special trains. The coach will remain in CIÉ ownership but it is the fulfilment of the hopes and wishes of many members that the coach has been saved from further deterioration and decay. Our thanks to CIÉ for their vision, and generosity in providing a dowry of £5,000 to aid the restoration. David Humphries and Chas Meredith were instrumental in sorting out the legal aspects of the loan agreement for the Society.

One legal problem which we haven't yet quite managed to resolve is the licence for the extended use of the Mullingar site for our proposed FÁS carriage restoration project. Negotiations are still on-going in that regard.



The final membership figure for the year was 1,035, down 33 on last year. Once again there is a high number of new members each year, unfortunately balanced with an equal number of failures to renew. Hopefully the decrease in numbers is not the start of a trend.

Members will have noted from the delay in the News-Letter for December 1995 (it should have been issued in November) that we have had a computer failure. Such is the dependence on computers, photocopiers, fax machines, and mobile phones for tours, that it is difficult to see what we ever did without them. However, when one goes wrong, as it did for your Secretary over a period of three weeks, work virtually grinds to a halt. Letters are either written by hand or not at all, membership processing is suspended and the publishing of circulars is delayed. Admittedly, the length of time before repair was unusually long but the consequences can be severe when tour booking forms and publicity for operations are delayed, as was the case in this instance.

My thanks as always to Northern Ireland Railways and Iarnród Éireann for allowing us the use of their respective board rooms for our Council meetings - that of IÉ was formerly the meeting place of the board of the Great Northern Railway, so we meet in historical surroundings while in Dublin.

Posts of Special Responsibility to the Secretary for 1995 were: Charles Friel (Belfast Winter Meetings); Nelson Foots ("Five Foot Three" Editor); John Creaner (Legal Adviser); Johnny Glendinning (Museums Liaison Officer). Although not a PSR, I am indebted to Peter Rigney in Dublin who keeps me up to date with southern information, gossip and trivia for the members' news-letter. My thanks to them and to all the members for supporting us through another year.

## **BELFAST OPERATIONS REPORT**

**Heather Boomer**

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1995 was a year of many new problems for operations, the hot weather in the summer contributing to most of them. Never before have we had to face the possibility of cancelled trains because it was too hot and dry, and the thought of algal weed growth in the tender to me was unheard of. Nevertheless we managed a successful season of trains with only a few weak spots showing up.

In February we had the "Kelly Show" special, in May the North Down Borough Council charter and of course the International Railtour, all very profitable operations. In May we also had the Cancer Research Special. The Society donated the train, NIR and the NIR crews their time and facilities. The Society gained a lot of goodwill from this venture and it was the single biggest money maker for the new Ovarian cancer research centre at the City Hospital. The "Portrush Flyers" and the two Derry runs, although carrying I think record numbers of passengers this year, did not make a great amount of money for the amount of effort required. The only answer to this is to raise our fares next year. All our costs are spiralling upwards and we must pass this on. The peace process has provided us with a greater number of Great British public and overseas visitors all of whom think our fares are very low. One passenger told me it had cost him less to travel from England and pay his fare than his last one day trip in England. I think that we have reached the limits that the local public can produce; the population of the greater Belfast area is not that large.

The highlight of the year for all must have been the Phoenix Railtour. Normally when we send out a booking form for any train other than the International railtour I expect a return of only a few out of the full membership, but the return for this was almost overwhelming, turning into a celebration of the Great Northern Railway. It was wonderful to see some of the older faces grinning and saying, "We told you so." Keep it up please, if we want to keep on the rails we need you, to not only travel but contribute as well, bring your friends, spread the word to your workmates, social clubs, etc. Remember the fuller the trains the more we can keep the cost down.

On the whole the Belfast Operations did justice to themselves and most of this is due to a small number of very dedicated people, the Operations Committee, the Forsythe family and all the regular coach

stewards for their unstinting efforts on the day. Alan McRobert and his small team; their efforts as a rule are only noticed if something goes wrong. Trains are sent out clean and ready for the public, but like every other tourist attraction in the country we must raise our standards if we want to bring the customer back again. The Carriage Department, in spite of low numbers of volunteers, have made great steps forward, and of course the Locomotive Department ensured that engines showed up every time we needed them. If you feel able to devote even one weekend a year and can use a brush please turn up. Public image is everything, let's put our convictions out in front, turn out and support the operations of the Society at every event.



*First steam-hauled train into the new Great Victoria Street station; but not the first steam locomotive as No.85 had made an unaccompanied visit a week earlier for clearance trials. (C.P. Friel)*

## **SOUTHERN OPERATIONS 1995**

**Peter Rigney**

The structure of the Southern Season has altered little since its inception with the Dublin Millennium of 1988. Over the years, it has been modified by new product development and locomotive availability. The basic format is a season beginning with two short trips to Enfield, followed by three Wexford trips and three Greystones trips. An Autumn recess occurs and, since 1991, the year is completed by two Santa trips. Since 1992, the "Midsummer's Night Steam" has operated with the sponsorship of CBF, Down Farm Foods and the Army Catering Corps at Mullingar. Also, Guinness have provided their jazz

band for all three events to date. This venture has introduced a new concept to Society operations.

The structure of the season has varied slightly. The speed of No.461 has meant that destinations other than Wexford/Rosslare are not practical. So Sligo and Galway must await the return of a speedier locomotive to Dublin. The other factor committing us so much to the Wexford road is its sheer popularity with the Dublin travelling public.

The main programme is set out in the winter of the preceding year and has close regard to sporting diaries. We generally run on Saturday for the Wexford trips, and on Sunday for the Shuttle trips. Sunday was tried for the Rosslare trips but proved impractical on cost grounds and on the grounds that Sunday on the Wexford line gave too many hostages to fortune in the areas of PW work and the progress of Wexford in the Leinster Senior Hurling championship.

Each year, we normally have at least one extra charter operation. In 1994 it was the “La Touche” day between Greystones and Wicklow. This year it was the film work - so extensive that it is covered in a separate article.



*No.461, on one of the Greystones Shuttles, passes the closed halt at Bray Cove. (I.C. Pryce)*

The 1995 operating season thankfully saw the end of the coach availability problem which bedevilled us in previous years. Our first trip, to Greystones, saw a consist of seven RPSI coaches - 2421 making its debut and an IÉ GSV. The trains were filled to capacity and the only jarring note was the breaking of a window by stoning at Shankill.

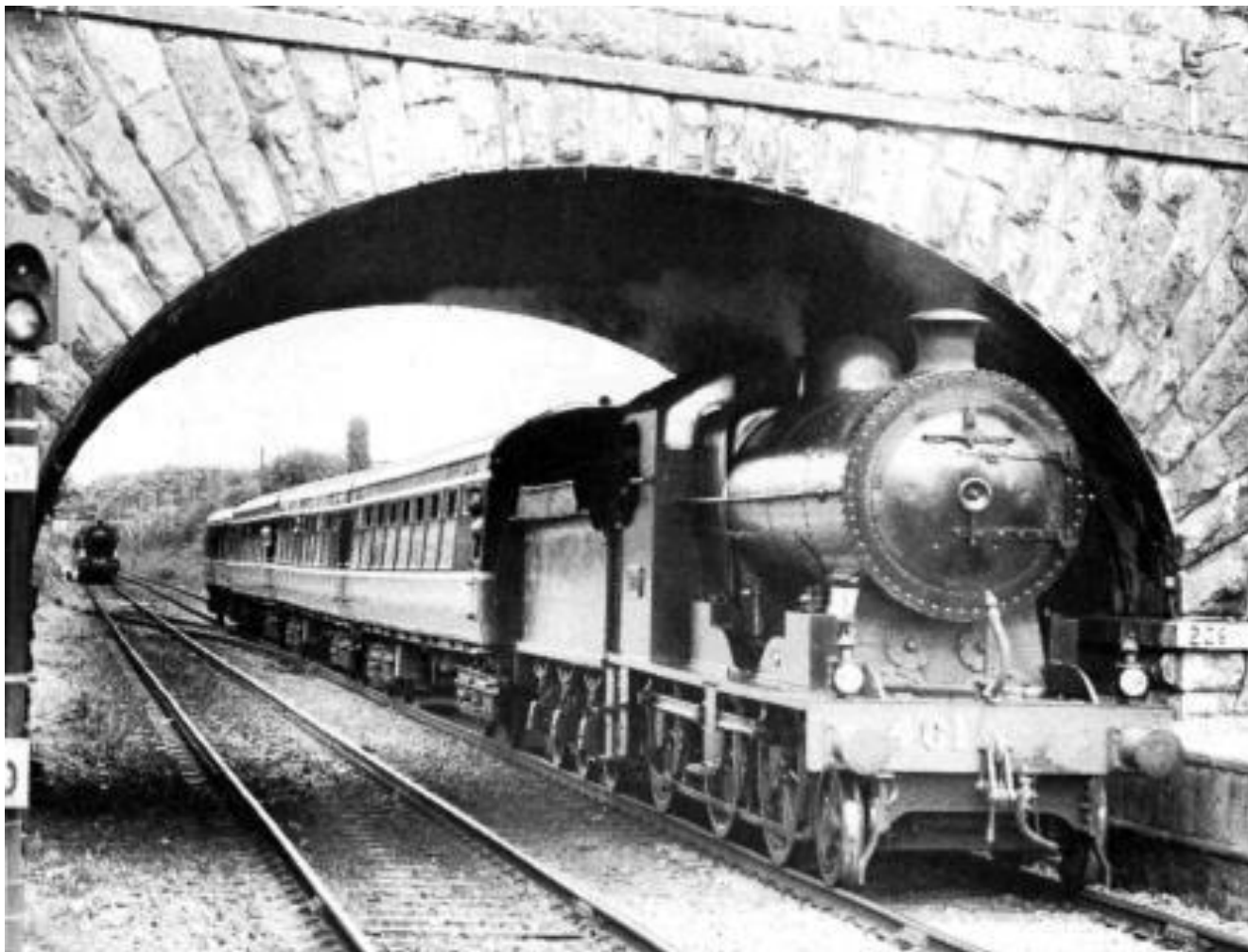
Our next trip was the Midsummer Night's Steam, with our eight RPSI coaches again filled to capacity. Since the Greystones trip, the Heuston team had transformed 2421's interior and constructed a long bar. 88 served as a second bar on this trip but reverted to a tea bar on other trips. The two-diner strategy has been a great success.

The Wexford trips commenced on 8<sup>th</sup> July. These excursions normally fill well, and the Enniscorthy or Wexford to Rosslare extensions are a useful addition to Society coffers. The main operational

constraint on these trips is the need to thread our way through DART paths on the way out. Once we cross the Ammonia in Greystones we have the line to ourselves. This gives no excuse for slack working however, as Rosslare is very busy, with as many as three ferries in port on our arrival, all unloading over a level crossing.

At Greystones we must shunt the locomotive before the Ammonia crosses. While this is not welcome from an operating point of view, it allows the customers to see more of the locomotive.

An out of the ordinary event occurred on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1995 when No.461, out of steam, and Directors' saloon 50 went on show at Heuston's Platform 1 as part of the commemoration of 100 years of railway catering and the launch of IÉ's catering service under the new brand "Network Catering". Also in the train consist was an IÉ 201 class and two Mark III dining cars.



*No.461 overtakes No.85 at Thurles on the return leg of the May tour. The Cravens coaches always look well, in colour or monochrome. (C.P. Friel)*

Two of our Rosslare operations ran in 1995, the first one linked, as usual, with the Enniscorthy Strawberry Fair. The last Rosslare trip fell within the dry hot summer. The danger of fires - not so much in the scrubland between Greystones and Wicklow, but among the commercial forestry further south - caused the DAOC to cancel the venture.

The season drew to its close on 13<sup>th</sup> September with one Enfield trip. This involved two return workings to Enfield, sold as Dublin-Maynooth and Maynooth-Enfield. For ticketing purposes, we

actually sell four trains on the day. These depart from Platform 2, on the GN side of Connolly, as opposed to Platform 5 on the DART side which we use for Greystones and Rosslare.

At the time of writing, we are in final preparation stage for the Santas which run to Maynooth (3 return trips), departing from Pearse. This departure point is used because of its overall roof, a necessary precaution for December trips. From an operations point of view, a winter operation places additional demands. Steam heating must be overhauled and lights brought up to full service. This latter point is helped by the presence of a generator in 1916, which allows batteries to be kept in condition by regular charging. Another difficulty arises due to the necessity of draining and refilling all water systems between trips, to avoid frost damage, and the necessity to fully clean the train within a week - the shortest turn-round we have between trips. The Santas are, however, one of our best filling operations and the adverse conditions are seen as a challenge.

### **Watering Points For Locomotives**

Greystones Shuttle	Greystones hydrant
Sea Breeze (Down)	Rathdrum & Gorey tanks, hydrant at Rosslare
Sea Breeze (Up)	Avoca & Gorey tanks
Maynooth Shuttle	Enfield tanks
Santa Special	Pearse yard tank
Midsummer Night Steam	Enfield & Mullingar tanks

### **Watering Points For Coaches**

Heuston Yard, Connolly platforms 1 & 2, Rosslare, Pearse Boston Yard. Watering vehicles of any description is naturally forbidden under the wires. Tanks have had their supply restored by Society personnel at Rathdrum, Avoca and Enfield.

## **LOCOMOTIVE REPORT**

**Peter Scott**

### **No.3 “R H Smyth”, 0-6-0 ST shunter ex LP&HC. In traffic, Whitehead.**

Continues its somewhat unglamorous chores as Whitehead shunter and train rides locomotive.

### **No.4, 2-6-4T mixed traffic locomotive class WT ex LMSNCC, UTA and NIR. Boiler and mechanical overhaul, Whitehead.**

Major boiler repairs together with some mechanical examination and overhaul continuing. Undoubtedly our most useful locomotive, No.4's absence from traffic is frequently lamented and her reappearance is becoming ever more pressing as locomotives No.461 and No.171 approach the end of their current boiler certificates. To expedite matters, the Council has recently voted additional funding specifically for speeding up the overhaul. Some of this has already been committed to the purchase of the outstanding boiler stay material.

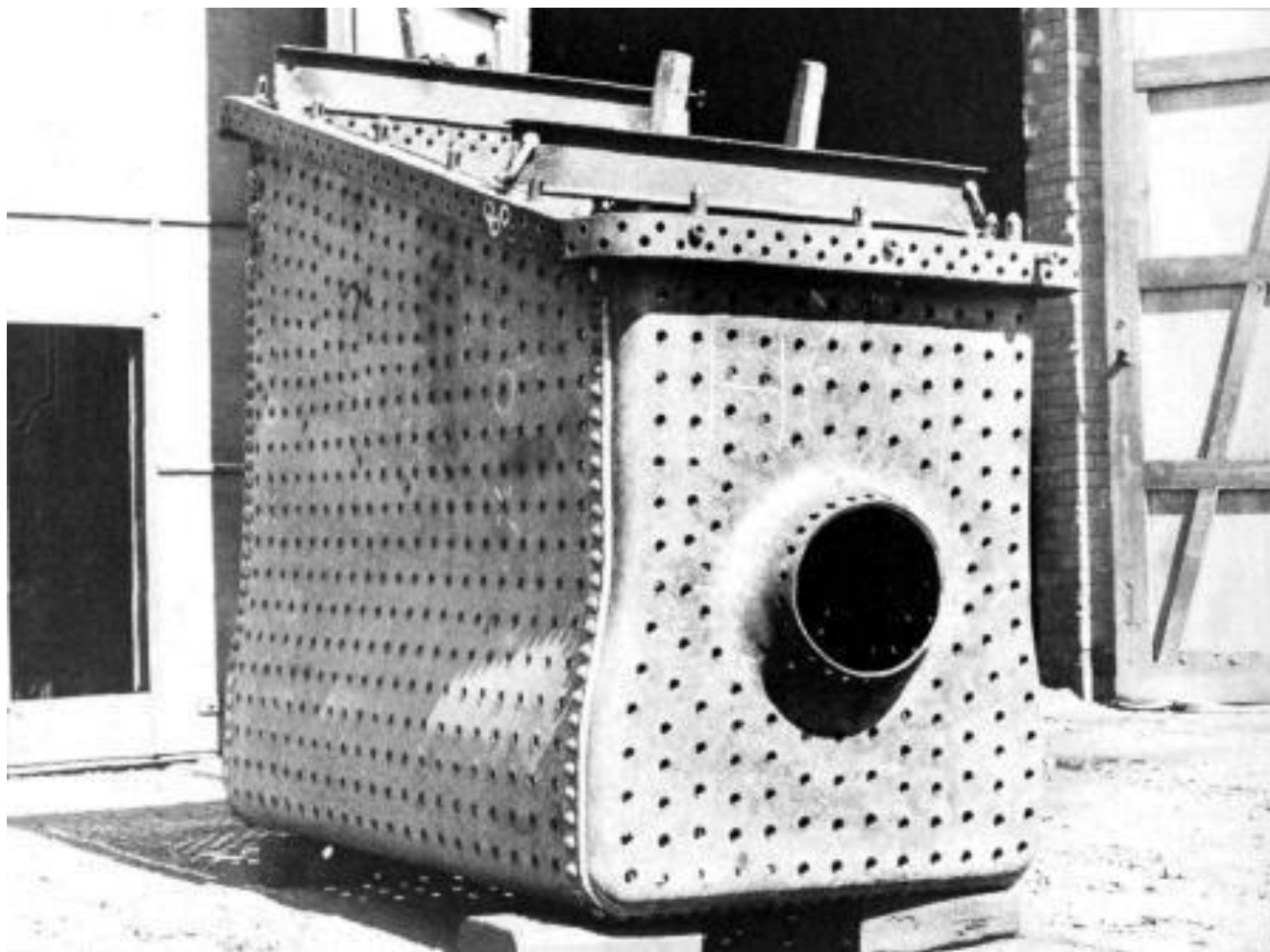
The inner firebox has been refurbished and fitted into the outer shell, and at present riveting of the foundation ring is progressing along with drilling and tapping of the water-space stay holes (all 1,054 of them!).

The front tube plate is being replaced, and at present the new plate has been profiled and set up for welding of its flange. For this job the wheel lathe has been pressed into service - the lathe faceplate provides a suitable substantial base on which to hold the plate flat and accurately set up the flange. It can also be rotated to facilitate the welding. A completion date for this locomotive is still some time away but we hope to be able to celebrate her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday - No.4 was built in 1947.



**No.85 “Merlin”, 4-4-0 compound locomotive, Class V, ex GNR(I) and CIÉ. In Traffic, Whitehead.**

Since return to traffic this time last year, No.85 has shared the Northern operations with locomotive No.171. Generally, the compound has worked well if somewhat extravagant on water. She has just completed the series of “Santa” trains between Belfast Central and Whitehead. Because of her axle load and unsuitability as a shunting locomotive, it has been necessary to keep locomotive No.3 available to shunt the carriages before and after the train operation. Unfortunately, No.85 came to grief during the Portrush Flyer on 29<sup>th</sup> July as a result of weeds in the water tank - these choked the feed-pipe strainers and prevented the injectors from working. As a result, the water tanks at Lisburn, Ballymena and Portrush have been checked and cleaned out as necessary - thanks to all who laboured with brushes, scrapers and buckets.



*The inverted inner firebox of No.4. The new outer door plate, in addition to flanging, had to have a bell-mouth fashioned to match that shown. Every black dot in the photograph, apart from the foundation ring (seen at top) which receives rivets, has to be threaded for the fitting of stays - and what you see is only half of the job! (C.P. Friel)*

**No.171, 4-4-0 express passenger locomotive, Class S, ex GNR(I), CIÉ and UTA. In traffic, Whitehead.**

I have deliberately omitted the name “Slieve Gullion” from the heading. This is because No.171 is currently painted black - the legacy of a small but worthwhile film contract. Although the film makers

have made provision for repainting the locomotive in the correct blue livery, it was decided to postpone this work until after the next boiler overhaul which will become due in less than two years. The paintwork would be disturbed at that stage anyway. In the meantime, the locomotive has been turned out as near as possible to pre-1938 rebuilding condition, i.e. unlined black with GNR on the tender sides. I am indebted to all who have helped with advice on the correct livery. As to the nameplates, these were not carried prior to 1938 so the locomotive is now just plain "No.171".

Although contributing meaningfully to the year's programme, No.171 has been dogged with problems. There is an on-going cylinder lubrication fault which defies detection. A component in the valve gear broke prior to the May Tour. Many of the locomotive's problems are age related, from slack frame rivets to wasted crown stays, worn slipper blocks and big end brasses that are more shim than brass. Although much refurbishment has been done over the years, it has been piecemeal and limited to essentials because of the old story - lack of interest and lack of money. As a result, the locomotive is now like the Curate's egg - good in parts - and unfortunately it only takes one bad part to cause a failure. The locomotive is crying out for a general overhaul - whether it gets it or not will depend upon funding and facilities. We badly need the Workshop development to get overhaul work away from the cramped and unsuitable running shed.



*In black and white the many hues of the coaching stock are less obvious while No.171, in 1930s livery, looks a treat as she nears the top of Ballyboyland bank on the return working of the North Atlantic Express on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1995. (C.P. Friel)*

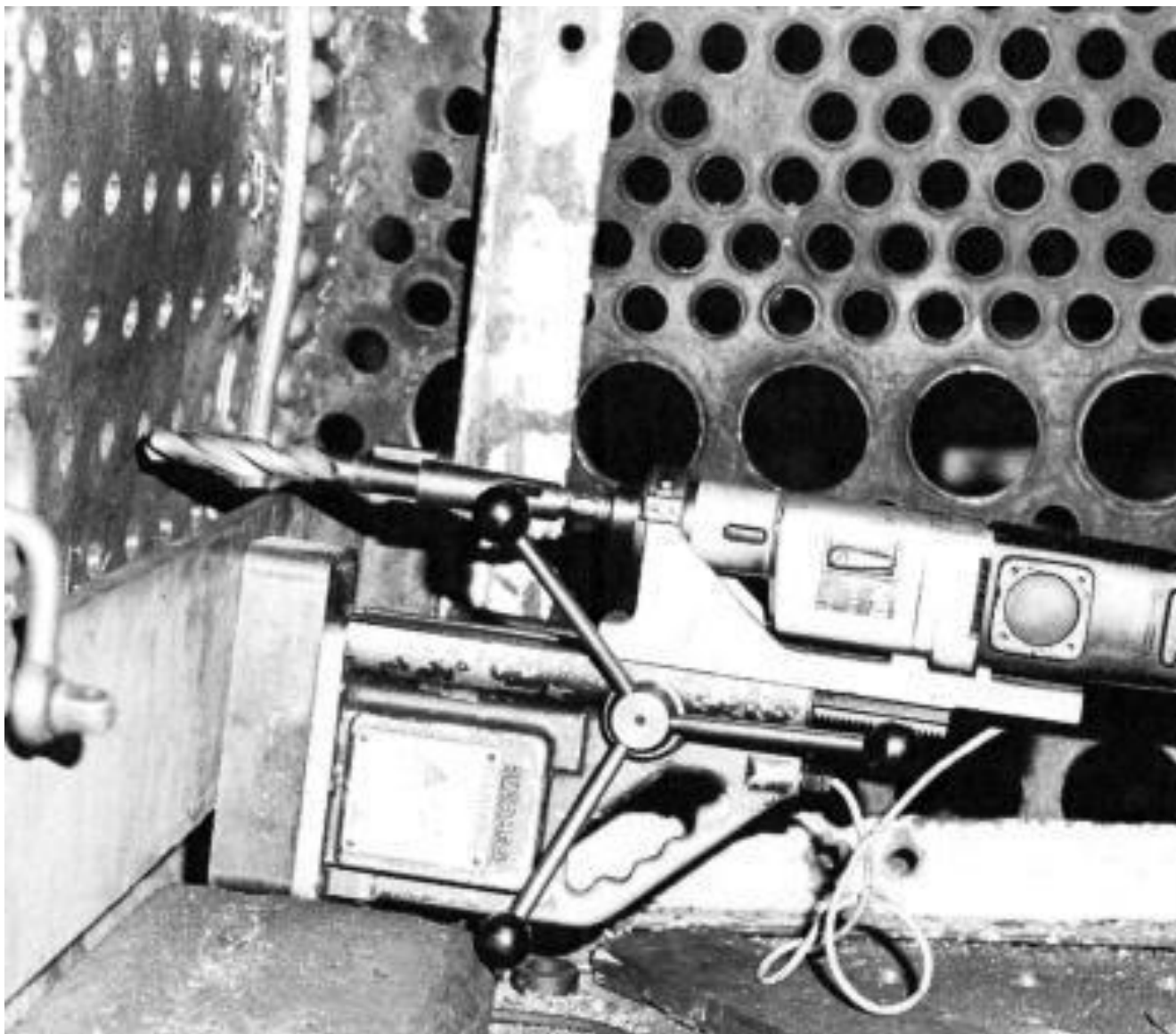
**No.461, 2-6-0 goods engine, ex D&SER, then GSR (Class K2) and CIÉ. In Traffic, Dublin.**

No.461 continues to plod her unspectacular but reliable way from Dublin to Rosslare, Maynooth, Mullingar, etc. She is due out of traffic shortly for renewal of boiler tubes and other boiler repairs that could not be afforded during her last overhaul.

**Carlow, 4 wheel diesel mechanical shunter, Rushton and Hornsby ex-Irish Sugar Board. Gearbox overhaul, Whitehead.**

We still don't know if this locomotive ever had a number - any answers?

The locomotive should have been in traffic by now, but unfortunately a fault in the gearbox means crippling lack of power. The top half of the gearbox will probably have to be stripped out to rectify the problem.



*Here the inner firebox of No.4 has been installed and holes have to be drilled through the inner and outer plates prior to tapping and fitting of stays. The magnetic drill is a great boon, but since magnets and copper do not attract each other, it was necessary to interpose the adjustable steel plate seen on the left. (C.P. Friel)*

**No.23, 4 wheel Planet diesel mechanical shunter, ex Irish Shell. In traffic, Whitehead.**

No.23 also has gearbox problems - almost every gearwheel is seriously worn. Until major renewals can be afforded, the locomotive is operating on light duties only with steam locomotive No.3 being used for any heavy or extensive shunting.

**No.27 "Lough Erne", 0-6-4T mixed traffic engine, ex SLNCR and UTA. In store, Whitehead.**

Requires major boiler and mechanical overhaul.

**No.184, 0-6-0 goods engine, Class J15 ex GSWR, GSR and CIÉ. Partly dismantled awaiting overhaul, Mullingar.**

Major boiler work and repair or replacement of corroded cylinder block is required.

**No.186, 0-6-0 goods engine, Class J15 ex GSWR, GSR and CIÉ. In store, Whitehead; tender at Mullingar.**

Requires general boiler overhaul.

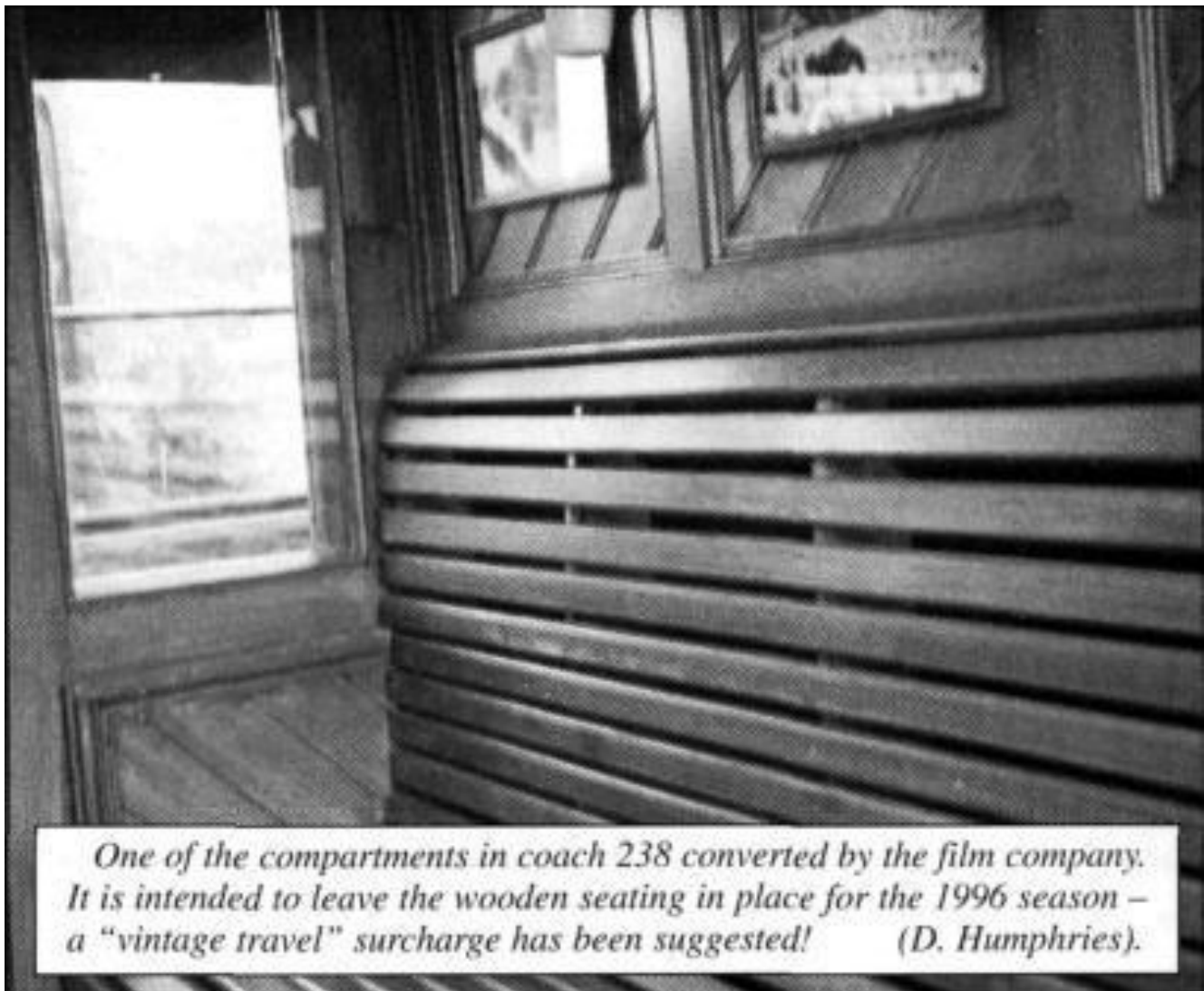
### **Locomotive Workshop**

Re-design to reduce the cost of this project is being progressed. Further grant aid is being sought.

## **CARRIAGE & WAGON REPORT**

**Mark Kennedy**

**GNR 9:** Gangway canvas replaced and roof repaired. Temporary battery lighting was installed for the Santa trains. This useful high capacity brake coach really needs upholstered but this would be fairly expensive.



*One of the compartments in coach 238 converted by the film company. It is intended to leave the wooden seating in place for the 1996 season – a “vintage travel” surcharge has been suggested! (D. Humphries).*

**CIÉ 1469:** As one of the widest coaches in the Northern rake, it gets a good ‘blattering’ from bushes every time it goes out. It would benefit from a repaint and the toilets are less than perfect. Should it be painted authentic luminous green or turned out in crimson lake to match the rest of the rake? I have

heard good cases for each option but my main concern is who will volunteer to apply the paint.

**GSWR 1142:** Looking more presentable now that it has been painted.

**NCC 87 Diner:** A new protective cover has been screwed over the steam heating pipes in the bar to replace the previous one which couldn't stick the pace. Double handrails have been placed over the bar windows to make it more difficult for punters to stick their bottoms through the glass.

**GSWR 1097:** The new shop in the half compartment is now complete and gives Caroline & Co. a secure area from which to sell their wares.

**NCC 241:** Running sweetly but really needs a complete cosmetic job.

**NCC 68:** Both new water tanks and lavatories now completed.

**NCC 91:** New water tank installed. Minor finishing is required to make the lavatory fully operational. New photographs installed in some compartments help cheer it up as does the new coat of paint.

**GNR 50 Directors Saloon:** In fine condition but the loose seating and the lino are near the end of their useful lives and would be expensive to replace.

**NCC 411:** This full brake vehicle became redundant on most trains when NCC 91 returned to traffic after its bogie overhaul. Ready to return to traffic whenever required.

**GSWR 1287 Sleeping Coach:** It is planned to replace the roof fabric and externally refurbish this useful vehicle after the Santa season.

**General:** It is pleasant to see a useful amount of profit from film contracts set aside for bogie overhauls.

If anyone has 30 leather armchairs cluttering up their attic then the Carriage Dept would love to hear from them.

In closing it is sad to report the death of Davy Marcus, the Society's full time joiner on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 1995. Davy had worked for the Society at Whitehead for about five years.

He worked on many projects including NCC 87 Diner, the Directors Saloon, the Disabled Saloon, and the North Atlantic Brake. One of the largest projects he undertook was the restoration of NCC 243, which is still unfinished. He was very popular and is sadly missed amongst the workers.

## **WHITEHEAD SITE REPORT**

**Dermot Mackie**

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This year has definitely been dominated by things concrete. January and February saw a determined effort to sort out the carriage shed and tidy up the site. The 'man trap' trench which ran the entire length of the centre of the shed was filled in and levelled by a gang including Johnny and Tim Lockett, Alan McRobert and Robin Morton. All was remarkably straightforward except for the dust and sweat it created. Tidying up produced aluminium and iron scrap worth £320. Work on the shed floor continued into late February with umpteen tonnes of stone being spread in preparation for the serious business of laying pre-mix concrete the following month. A combined group of Site and Carriage volunteers got together on this project and we became quite professional at the job, with 12 cubic metres on a Saturday morning being no bother. The last load was laid by Jim Bromfield, David Henderson and Paul and Gavin Maxwell on the 20<sup>th</sup> April and any of you who have visited the shed since will agree that the new floor has transformed carriage activities.

In early May we started pouring the foundations for the replacement water column. This unique piece of railway history was saved from Barrack Street, Dundalk by Paul Newell and came with LNWR stamped on its fittings. It was erected on a Wednesday night with the help of the hand crane, No.23, Thomas Charters, David Henderson and the Maxwell lads. Another couple of mid-week sessions fixed



the valve mechanism and fitted the water bag.



*Site and C&W workers combine to install the LNWR water column at Whitehead. (D. Mackie)*



*The JCB (driven by the photographer!) gets to the parts that other cranes cannot reach - relaying platform road in October 1995. (D. Mackie)*

Although we had completed most of the work on the sheer-legs in 1994 one of them still required replacement of its outside steel braces before both could be load tested. Fabrication from new steel was done using an old one as a model when both were de-scaled by Philip Lockett and painted in June. Fitting took place in late July using the hand crane with able help from Drew and Trevor Wood and Stephen Glass. The intervening month and the heat wave had been put to good use by Paul Maxwell who almost single-handedly cleaned and primed and repainted the JCB in its traditional yellow and red.

Following the problem with the weed contaminated water supply on the second Flyer, August was a month for cleaning out water tanks. Whitehead, Lisburn, Ballymena and Portrush all got a good 'red out' and I am particularly grateful to Johnny Glendinning for his organisation of the Lisburn work. The tank at Whitehead was connected to the mains supply at the end of the month but this only highlighted 2 major leaks in the supply pipe to the column which were subsequently repaired with concrete surrounds.

On 31<sup>st</sup> August the sheer-legs were load tested and passed with flying colours making bogie swaps on coaches a lot simpler and safer.

In September the Society acquired second hand palisade fencing which had to be stacked at the back of the site for erection in 1996. Unfortunately the derailment of an NIR set on the platform road in October meant a lot of very hard work for the site squad. Initially part of the offending turn-out together with 20 metres of poor track and worse ballast had to be removed. The new crossing timbers and, yes you guessed it, concrete sleepers were lifted into place from the platform with the JCB. This work could not have been completed without the sterling efforts of many of these already mentioned and others like Sam Somerville, Trevor Mounstephen and Bob Davison. All was completed in time for Santa and the new water supply for the engines gave a fast and efficient turn round.

In 1996 we envisage more track and turn-out replacement, fence repairs and the erection of the palisade fencing. If you like exercise in the fresh air, good company and a challenge why not join us. You will be very welcome.

## **THE LAST DAYS OF STEAM AT INCHICORE**

## **"Spare Link"**

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The recent delivery of the new General Motors class 201 diesel-electric locomotives and the sudden demise of the Metrovick A class locomotives in April 1995 gave me a great sense of déjà vu, of history repeating itself. For it was the arrival of A1 in September 1955 that sounded the death knell of steam traction on the CIÉ system. The most glaring difference is that today there is a great air of optimism, of a future for our rail network. Government policies are now much in favour of public transport and EC money has improved the Irish railway systems enormously.

But in 1955 the scene was so very much different. Lack of investment in track and rolling stock, branch line closures and the ever-present threat of redundancy combined to make even the most committed railwayman feel dejected. The arrival of the Crossley-engined A class led to great job losses among locomotive department staff. Many grades disappeared: coalmen, tubers, bar-men, boilermakers and engine cleaners became a thing of the past.

Initial trade union response was to black the introduction of diesel locomotives in main line service but certain union officials began a campaign of intimidation, telling men such horror stories of a railwayless country and mass redundancy if the Company's proposals were not accepted that eventually the diesels entered traffic. These union officials were rewarded with various fancy jobs such as Personnel Officers and Locomotive Inspector. Engine cleaners got the sack, firemen went into the Traffic Department as shunters, signalmen, porters, etc., and junior drivers were put back to firing.

To service the new diesels a maintenance facility was built in part of the Inchicore boiler shop. This four-road, three-level shop was known as the Ramps and was placed under a dynamic young diesel

engineer named Edward Holt. All the necessary requirements of diesel locomotives were provided for, including fuel, lubricating oil, chromated water, grease guns, etc. Spare-part stores, injector repair shop and used lube oil recovery and reconditioning facilities were also provided. Diesel was the future, steam was the dismal past.

When the smaller C class 201 Crossley locomotives began to arrive in February 1957 the motive power management decided to make Inchicore a steam-free area. They decreed that as from 18<sup>th</sup> November 1957 the last operational steam locomotives in the Dublin area would be based in Broadstone and so accordingly on that date the plan was implemented. The once proud Inchicore steam fleet was banished to the home of its great and traditional rival.



***“Sambo” in 1949. The double smokebox doors were later replaced with a conventional one as the ‘duff’ era highlighted their lack of air-tightness. Note the gas cylinder wagon behind the engine. (A. Donaldson)***

But like many other great plans, this one was flawed. And the flaw was just outside the planners’ door. Every day that they arrived for work it assailed their senses. The sound of it and the smell of it pervaded their offices. They raged against it but for the next 5 years they just had to live with it.

The Inchicore Works pilots were steam and no suitable diesel was available to replace them! A small link of about 6 drivers including Joe Slevin, Paddy Phoenix, “Doc” Byrne, Dick Halford and Dinny Murphy remained to service the steam pilots. Eight firemen mated with these six, the extra two being required for the original Sulzer diesels, 1100 and 1101 (class B2A) which, of course, were double

manned due to the train-heating boilers which they carried.

The Works or Premises Pilot, as it is known, was worked by the unique Maunsell-designed 0-4-2 saddle tank known as “Sambo”. No number was ever allocated to it and to this day this name is still used for the Premises Pilot. This job is also unique in that the driver enjoys a regular 13:00 lunch break. Instituted for Driver “Saddler” Jackson, who suffered from an ulcerated stomach and was required to eat regular meals, this engine stopped work when the Works hooter sounded.

The original “Sambo” was a rebuild of an old Wakefield locomotive but in 1912 Maunsell designed the saddle tank that I knew so well. The short, very flexible wheelbase allowed it to traverse all parts of the Works, especially around the back of the Foundry. In the period to which I am alluding, Tommy Noonan was firing regularly on “Sambo” (avoiding heavier mainline work, his mates grumbled) and Jimmy Fortune and Billy Burke were the shunters. Apart from the meal break, the engine worked from 08:15 to 18:00 each week day, with a 13:00 finishing time on Saturday. Sunday was washout day.



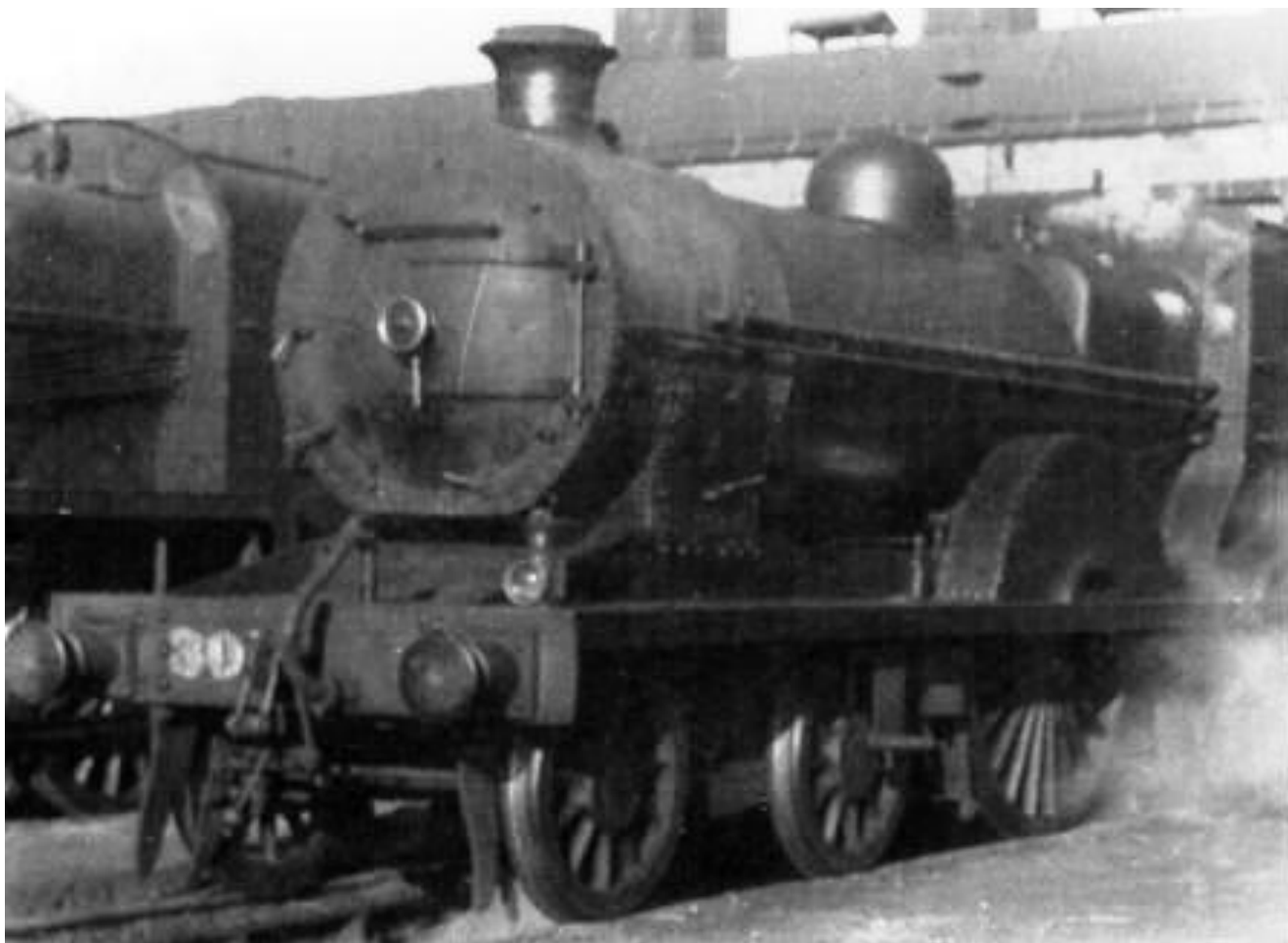
*Of the same class at No.42 in the article, No.33 was always a Cork locomotive and is seen here in 1957 at Baltimore on the former Cork, Bandon & South Coast Railway. (W.T. Scott)*

With the introduction of the E421 and G611 diesels in June 1962 “Sambo” was displaced to Broadstone Wagon Shop pilot, but G615 replaced both “Sambo” and Atock No.562 of 1894 on the Liffey Junction pilot and so, after 50 years constant work, “Sambo” followed the others to the scrapyard.



For the carriage shop pilot a tank engine was required and No.42 (2-4-2T Ivatt 1892) was the regular locomotive. She was double-manned, the early crew booking on duty at 06:30. They prepared the engine, crossed the main line to the “Workman’s Siding” and coupled on to the “Workman’s Train” which comprised two superannuated coaches of uncertain origin (the RPSI’s 861 was one of the last such vehicles). This was worked to Kingsbridge and stood in to No.2 platform. At 07:50 Guard Shay Courtney or Jack Doyle would raise the green flag.

Then it was hell for leather up the Gullet to Inchicore. Every driver tried to outdo his colleagues in speed. Of course, getting up speed was one thing, trying to stop such a small train was quite another and many a morn the unfortunate passengers had to clamber down on to the ballast.



***No.301, last GSWR passenger engine on CIÉ, at Inchicore in 1955. She was brought out of retirement to work from Limerick to Ennis through floods which had defeated the railcars. One of her last passenger turns was a rugby special from Limerick. (W.T. Scott)***

Shunting the train across the main line, the engine began its work of shunting the carriage shop. This involved placing coaches in the Lifting Shop, Paint Shop or Carriage Shop and removing repaired vehicles. Making up trains for trial, testing vacuum brakes, etc., kept the crew busy.

A relief crew booked on a 13:15 and worked until 16:40 when they ran down to the “Workman’s Siding” and worked the 17:15 train to Kingsbridge. In earlier days a midday train operated to convey the clerical grades to Kingsbridge for lunch. Like many such Works trains each passenger had his own seat and woe betide any stranger who inadvertently sat in it. Drivers going to book on or off usually travelled with the guard to avoid any unpleasantness. The late crew finished out their day by taking the

Boat Train engine to Kingsbridge.

In January 1962 the beautiful old No.42 was withdrawn and replaced by the even more beautiful No.301 (4-4-0 Coey 1900) as a stationary boiler, in the Works. She was replaced by No.673 (0-6 2T class 13, Harty 1933), the last of her class. This engine had a very short spell on the Carriage Shop pilot, being withdrawn and hauled away, along with 0-6-0s No.136 and No.711, for scrapping in Dundalk in June 1962.

To shunt the Stores a tender engine was necessary, for this duty involved working heavy loose-coupled trains between Inchicore and North Wall. Almost any type of locomotive could be used, from a J15 0-6-0 to a Woolwich 2-6-0. Very often a J4 was used, No.260 or No.261. The latter locomotive was among the last overhauled at Inchicore and ran with a green tender. After October 1958, when the break-up of the GNR was complete, CIÉ found itself with 82 well-kept former GN steam locomotives and by early 1959 these began to appear. I recall No.117N (Glover class SG3 0-6-0), with a blue tender, and No.159N (class QLG 0-6-0). The unique ex-GNR crane tank No.31N also appeared for Inchicore Works duty in October 1960.

The Stores Pilot required three crews. The first booked on duty at 06:20, relieving an Up main line goods which it worked to Kingsbridge. It picked up the "Repairs Train" on the "Two o'clock" road and worked it to Inchicore. This train consisted of wagons for repair, oil tanks, scrap for the Foundry, stores material and any other material required by a busy railway works. Guard Paddy Gillespie had a very busy morning disposing of anything up to 60 wagons throughout the Works. He went to dinner at 13:00 and a relief locomotive crew booked on duty at 12:45 to relieve the early set.



*J4 No.261 on passenger work at Greystones on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1961. (I.C. Pryce)*

Work recommenced at 13:40 and all outgoing wagons were marshalled on the "Long Siding". I recall that the "Ballastman's Road", where permanent way materials were loaded, held 65 wagons and invariably the last few were loaded out. This led to much cursing from the shunting staff!

After the departure of the Workman's train at 17:15, the Stores engine ran around its train and departed from the Long Siding at 17:20. Always a full load train, great care was needed to keep it under control. On one occasion the very nervous Jack "Cautious" Courtney locked up the wheels on his locomotive as he entered the Third Road and she began to slide. Jack panicked and shouted to Fireman Christy King to jump down and run to the phone to ring for a clear road. Christy found it hard to get off his seat, never mind run to the phone! However, Jack's frantic whistling and much sand retrieved the situation

and the train stopped safely at the Bridge of Signals in the Gullet.

Usually a long wait ensued at the Bridge of Signals, awaiting entry to Kingsbridge Goods Yard so the can would be put in and tea brewed. The enginemen sat in quiet contentment eating their grub, the only sound being the sizzling and gurgling of the engine.

On entering the Goods Yard after the 17:45 to North Wall had departed, the engine pulled across the North Wall loop. The train was re-marshalled and, with banking engine to Cabra, continued to the Point Yard.

The Stores engine returned to Inchicore light or worked a special as required. The crew disposed of her down the coal bank and left her banked down for the night "take-off" crew.

The "take-off" crew booked on at 23:55. They prepared the locomotive, crossed the main line and stood into the Workman's Siding. When the first Up goods, usually the Thurles goods, arrived, the diesel-electric locomotive hooked off and went into the shed for servicing. The steam engine took over the train and, after exchanging hand signals with the guard, drew it slowly down the Gullet to Kingsbridge.

It returned light to Inchicore and "took off" the first Cork goods. This was always a very heavy train and included bogies of steel, fertiliser, stout, etc. Having been re-marshalled, it was banked up to Cabra and on to North Wall Point. Returning light or with an overload special as required, the locomotive got back to Inchicore just in time to relieve the Limerick goods and for the crew to be relieved by the 06:20 crew. The latter worked to North Wall, returned to Kingsbridge and worked the Repairs train to Inchicore. Thus the cycle continued.

Very occasionally, if the 01:20 goods diesel failed, the night take-off engine found itself working to Thurles. Thus Fireman Christy King, looking forward to an easy night, found himself on ex-GN 0-6-0 No.159N and heading up the bank for places south. But he came home the next day singing the praises of No.159N and everything that originated in Dundalk. He said he never enjoyed firing an engine so much. Fired light and often, she blew the stars out of the sky and gave him the trip of his lifetime.

To further annoy the diesel lobby, the "Gas Tanks" arrived from Westland Row each afternoon around 15:00. This train conveyed empty gas tanks from Midland and Dublin South Eastern stations to Inchicore gas plant and took away laden tanks. It also conveyed carriages for repair as well as wagons of stores. On one occasion it consisted of diesel A34 dead, a heating van, 2 Park Royal and 1 ex-GN carriages, 5 cattle wagons, 6 gas tanks and a goods brake van, the whole lot hauled by ex-MGWR No.625. Any spare locomotive available on the DSE could turn up but most often a tank was provided. DSE tanks of classes 428 or 455 were common up to August 1959 when eight ex-GNR locomotives were allocated to Broadstone for boat train working. These included No.199N and No.203N (4-4-0), and No.143N (4-4-2T). In July 1960 the diminutive ex-GN 2-4-2T No.91 worked the Gas Tanks to Inchicore and, if I remember correctly, she hauled eleven bogies to the Works.

Although any type of steam locomotive from the main railway companies of Ireland could be used, the crew was always ex-DSE for Broadstone had three separate sets of steam men. Inchicore men worked over the GSW, Midland men worked their own system and the DSE held on to their work. So jealous were each section of their rosters that when Jim Lecumber, a DSE man, was appointed shift foreman the other two sections rose up in open rebellion and threatened to strike. Jim went back driving and Bill O'Reilly restored calm.

The most exciting day of the week for Inchicore steam crews at this period was Friday for on that day the Works Trial train ran to either Portlaoise or Ballybrophy. Overtime was assured and light refreshments guaranteed. Almost every apprentice looked forward to his trip out, for as well as escaping the strict discipline of the 'shops', the chance of a footplate trip was his for the asking. Many

a young man clambered excitedly up on to the footplate under the benign smiles of the Trial crew only to end up alternately cursing and praying as the train dashed down through Newbridge at excessively high speed.

A signalman's decision to change train priority led to the wreck of the Works trial at Kildare on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1956. Driver Billy Lupton and Fireman Barney Calnan, working J15 No.122, arrived in Kildare Up Loop and decided to fill the tank. They had the road on arrival but proceeded to oil around and fill the bunker.



***LQG No.159, the engine which delighted Fireman King and on paper the strongest class of GN 0-6-0, on her home ground climbing the Wellington bank in 1955. CIÉ did not realise the asset they had acquired in the GN 0-6-0s. (A. Donaldson)***

The signalman was offered the Works Trial from Cherryville Junction and, seeing that No.122 was not ready to go, decided to allow No.328 (Coey class D2 4-4-0) to run ahead. Without informing Billy Lupton he threw back the Up Loop starting signal and pulled off the Up Main for Driver J. Conlon and Fireman Piercey Larkin.

Unfortunately, Billy failed to notice that his road was cancelled and pulled out of the Loop into the path of No.328 and the Trial. In the violent collision which ensued, No.122 was thrown on her side and severely damaged. Barney Calnan received severe hand injuries and subsequently successfully sued the

Railway Company.

But the J15 class were tough, long-lived machines and, using parts cannibalised from No.147, No.122 returned to traffic that October.

The Trials driver was Mick Kealy, who with Fireman Tommy Meehan, did all the out-road work on Mr. Bulleid's experimental turf-burning locomotive CC1. This, the last steam locomotive built in Ireland, emerged from the 'shops' in August 1957. Tommy Meehan recalled John Click, Bulleid's special assistant, timing her at 68 mph. She ran to Cork and back and in November 1958 was set to work on the North Wall branch. But the management were not interested in steam and the arrival of the 82 locomotives from the GNR put the finish to this great and novel experiment. CC1 was quietly shunted to the Top Yard to await her fate. The RPSI benefited from CC1 in that they got some of her mechanical lubricators.



*No.560 shunting the North Kerry yard at Limerick in 1957. The turned-in footsteps show that the engine has worked on the Waterford & Tramore line which had its Waterford terminus at Manor Street and was isolated from the rest of the system. Stock for the W&T would be taken to Grace Dieu Junction and then hauled over rails laid on the roadway. (W.T. Scott)*

Mick Kealy continued the Trials using No.636 and No.638 (J5 0-6-0s) in late 1959 and class J4 No.258 and No.260 (and, after overhaul at Inchicore, No.261) in 1960. Woolwich No.376 in faded green was used in January 1960. This was a parcels vans trial. But Mick's trialling days were numbered for when trialling GM diesel B133 in March 1961 he ran into a PW trolley at Sallins and failed the subsequent mandatory eye test. His replacement was Dinny Murphy, a noted hard runner and the dread of every fireman. It is said that some of the sparks he sent up have not yet returned to Earth!

He ran so hard that invariably by Portarlinton at least one hot box had appeared on the train. While the vice-man attended to this and the fireman filled the tank and bunker, Dinny adjourned to the Railway Bar nearby to replenish his body fluids.

Later, in November 1960, ex-GN locomotives began to appear on the Friday trial and No.158N (QLG class 0-6-0) and No.197N (U class 4-4-0) were among the first.

Incidentally, a survey of CIÉ steam stock taken in April 1960 revealed that 142 ex-CIÉ and 52 ex-GNR locomotives were available for traffic. These included two 800 class, two 400 class, one 301 class, eight 623 class, seven 257 class and sixty-three 101 class. Of the larger GN engines, one V class (85), one VS class (207), three S class (170/1/4), three U and two Q class were available.

Any one of these except the 800s or the Compound might appear on the Friday trial and Dinny treated them all the same. He had great fun with the 'Blue' engines for they were in good mechanical form and were in regular link working. I particularly recall the beautiful VS No.207 "Boyne" working the Thursday Tourist special to Belfast, coming around light to Inchicore on Friday morning for the Works Trial and on Saturday working the Belfast Shoppers Special. Great days, great memories.

The well-known Joe Murphy, no relation to Dinny, fired to him on the Trials and many Inchicore men felt that was where he picked up his method of driving. Joe loved to hear them talk!

Dinny never passed for diesel driving and retired as shed man at Amiens Street shed. His place was taken by Tom Foley, who was involved in the horrendous high speed derailment of Maybach diesel E421 at Newbridge.

On many occasions during the late fifties and early sixties another well-known driver, Nicky Moore, redundant from the Locomotive Department, acted as guard on the Works trial trains.

But the diesel brigade were gaining the ascendancy and the arrival of the B121 Yanks in January 1961, followed by the B141 class in November 1962, spelt the end of steam. Three trials in December 1962 (11<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>) featured 4-4-0 No.174N, while her sister engine No.170N worked the last steam trial in January 1963.

The last operational steam engines on the CIÉ system were ex-GN 4-4-2T No.143N on the Sheriff Street goods pilot and 0-6-0 No.15N on the North Wall banking pilot. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1963 they returned to Amiens Street shed after completing their duties and had their fires dropped. Apart from the filming of "Of Human Bondage" on 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 1963 and various other steam enthusiasts' specials, steam traction as an everyday form of motive power was dead.

Inchicore was at last steam free.

## **HALCYON DAYS AT PORTRUSH**

**William Robb**

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In the days from about 1930 up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 Portrush was (and arguably still is) the leading holiday resort in Northern Ireland. Private cars were few as compared with the present day and foreign holidays were only for the intrepid traveller. For both day trips and holidays Portrush was a Mecca. This was particularly so after the opening of the Greenisland loop line in 1935 when the railway service to Portrush reached a peak of perfection. Sadly, the railway scene in Portrush now is but a pale shadow of its former self but, thankfully, the branch is still with us - the only surviving real branch line on NIR.

The journey by train to Portrush was through pleasant, if unspectacular, County Antrim countryside but it was with a thrill that, approaching Portrush, the traveller got his first glimpse of the blue waters of the Atlantic Ocean with Ramore Head and the town ahead. On arriving he had only to walk a couple of hundred yards (probably metres now) to the eastern shore of the peninsula to get, on a clear day, a



panorama of Islay and, sixty miles away, the Paps of Jura. On detraining and fighting his way through the barrier he was faced by a crowd of porters from the various hotels and boarding houses each calling out the name of his hotel to attract the attention of its arriving guests. In my memory, one call reverberated above the others, "Skerry Bhan, Skerry Bhan ..." The railway-owned Northern Counties had its own minibus to meet the trains.



*Portrush station, 13<sup>th</sup> August 1937, in good repair and in full use as a terminus. Note the comparative absence of motor traffic, the war memorial and the Giant's Causeway Tramway tracks in the foreground. (W. Robb)*

The train service to Portrush from Belfast consisted (as it still does) of a mixture of through trains and branch line trains connecting with up and down Londonderry trains at Coleraine, but in those days there were many more, and much heavier, through trains.

The principal train for day trippers was the 9:20am from Belfast which in 1935 was given the name "Portrush Flyer" - inspired, no doubt, by such trains as the "Folkestone Flyer" or the "Cheltenham Flyer" in England. Non-stop to Portrush in 80 minutes, it regularly loaded to 12 packed bogies.

The excellence of the train service to Portrush in pre-war days may be attributed (apart from the absence of serious competition from private cars) to three factors: the opening of the loop line which eliminated the tiresome reversal of trains at Greenisland, the introduction of the new Mogul locomotives and the inspiring leadership of the General Manager, Major Malcolm Speir. A Scotsman from the LMS in Glasgow, Major Speir was a dedicated railwayman (as well as a keen supporter of Scouting and the Boys' Brigade) and when after some years he moved back to the LMS some sparkle seemed to go out of the NCC.

The principal innovation in the train service following the opening of the loop line was the introduction of what would nowadays be called a commuter train, up from Portrush in the morning and back in the evening (or at mid-day on Saturdays). Named the "North Atlantic Express" - surely the most

prestigious name ever for a train with a journey of well under a hundred miles - it was equipped with some magnificent new coaches modelled on those of the "Royal Scot". Happily, one of these coaches - 91 - still survives in RPSI care. Beginning with a schedule of 80 minutes which was gradually pared to 73 minutes (with an intermediate stop at Ballymena), it normally consisted of about 4 coaches, but my diary records that on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1937 I travelled on it from Belfast with seven bogies and Mogul No.90 "Duke of Abercorn". It ran to Ballymena in 35 minutes but at Ballymoney took on another three bogies and, stopping at Coleraine and Portstewart, was 25 minutes late in arriving in Portrush. It was said that the principal patron of the train was Sir Dawson Bates, the Northern Ireland Minister of Home Affairs, who could continue to live in Portrush and still attend to his duties at Stormont daily.

Firework displays are still popular diversions and in those days were frequently provided for the delectation of visitors to Portrush, particularly in the later part of the summer when the long Northern evenings were beginning to draw in. Special trains brought spectators also from Belfast, Londonderry and other stations on the NCC such as Cookstown and Magherafelt via the Derry Central line. Return trains left Portrush up to midnight and later, and on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1937 I recorded that one of the trains leaving Portrush was so heavy that it stalled on the 1 in 75 gradient at the Portstewart Road bridge and had to be helped to start again by a banking engine from Portrush (luckily they still had a spare engine there!).



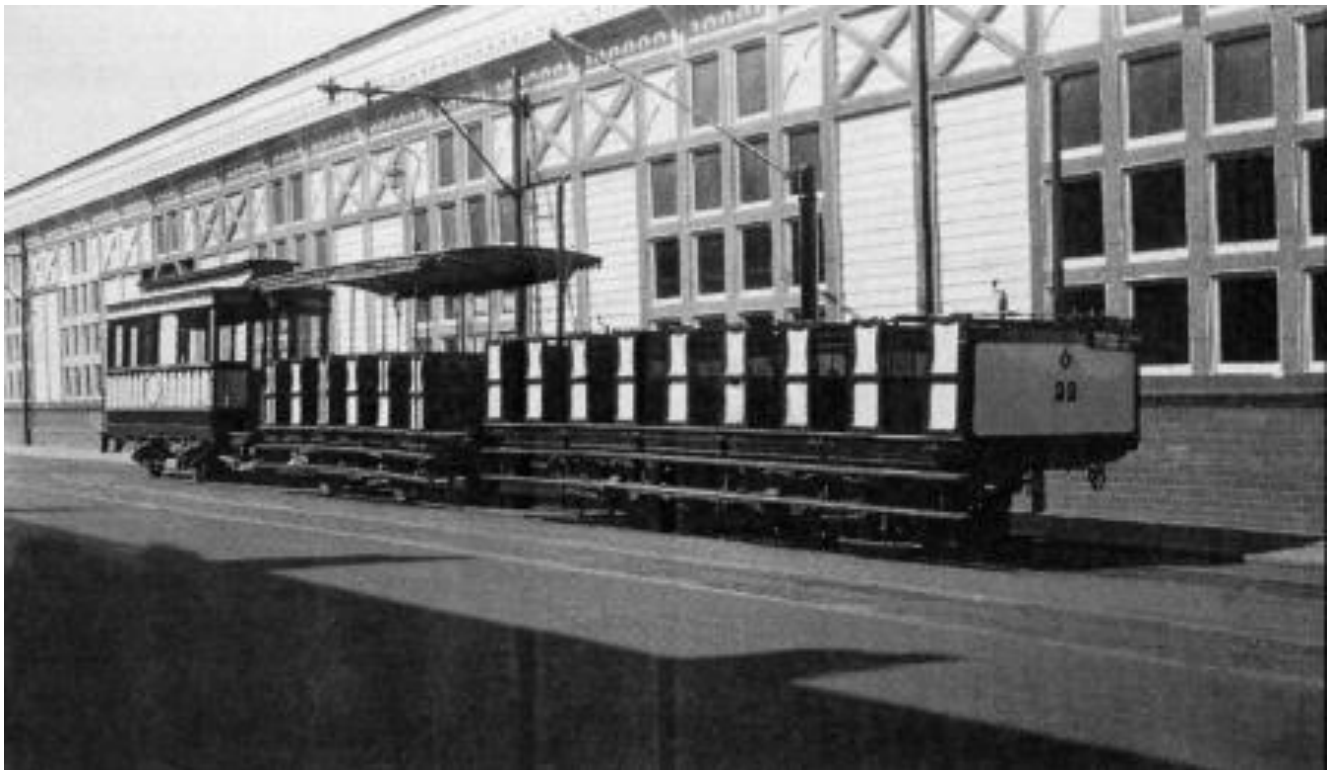
*NCC 2-4-0 No.23 with a branch train of typical straight-sided six-wheel coaches at Portrush on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1932. (W. Robb)*

Portrush was an ideal location for train spotters. From the end of the platform to the Portstewart Road bridge it was fenced off from the sand hills and beach of the West Bay by only a post-and-wire fence, so that on a good day one could obtain a close-up of everything that arrived, turned on the turntable or left on the railway, while still enjoying the sunshine and the sea air. Veritably, a photographer's paradise!

Again, in those almost car-less days, the annual Sunday School outing was eagerly anticipated by many children. Bangor and Newcastle were probably the main destinations from Belfast but for something a little more ambitious, Portrush was also a favourite. Added to the normal train service, these provided a spate of traffic, e.g. on one evening in August 1937 I recorded that between 5:55pm and 9:05pm thirteen trains left Portrush for all parts of the system. Excursions also came from the GNR, worked through to Portrush by GNR locomotives.

Anxious not to waste a day's leave (Saturday mornings were still worked in the civil service and were reckoned as a full day for leave purposes) I came back from Portrush on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August on the "North Atlantic Express" which consisted of seven crowded bogies hauled by No.95 "The Braid" and took 41 minutes, 23 seconds to Ballymena and 32 minutes, 6 seconds thence to York Road. I got to my office in Stormont at 9:45 am. One couldn't do that nowadays!

Portrush station was designed by the BNCR civil engineer and architect, Berkeley D. Wise, and was opened in 1893. Architecturally one of the finest station buildings in Ireland, it is now a listed building, but is no longer used for railway purposes and its present condition is somewhat less than pristine. NIR trains now use a small utilitarian station just outside the old station with one platform and a shelter built from some surplus steelwork from York Road.



***Giant's Causeway tramcars in Eglinton Street, Portrush on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1934. Note the choice of cars - open, semi-open and closed. (W. Robb)***

Finally, Portrush as a railway centre would not be complete without a mention of its other railway - the Giant's Causeway Tramway. The story of this is told in J.H. McGuigan's book and elsewhere and would be beyond the scope of this article. I need only include a photograph of a rake of Tramway cars in Eglinton Street outside the station awaiting the arrival of a mainline train. What a pity it was that the Tramway was thoughtlessly scrapped for want of a small subsidy when it would have been an almost unique tourist attraction now!

Lord Henry Benson, who died on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1995, was the London accountant who wrote the report that bore his name and which, in 1963, recommended the closure of much of Northern Ireland's railway system. The impact of his report and the longer term implications of its findings for both rail and bus transport have been covered elsewhere but for the railway fraternity, Benson, with former Stormont minister William Craig, was something of a *bête noire*.

Born in 1909 in South Africa, Henry Benson joined the accountancy firm of Cooper Brothers shortly after moving to London and served during the war in the Grenadier Guards. The post war "doyen of British accountants", according to Labour peer Lord Healey, Benson spent the 1950s making his mark throughout the British coal, iron and steel industries.

Whilst he undertook some minor work for railways outside the United Kingdom, his first major assignment was his appointment, along with several key industrialists including Richard Beeching, to the Stedeforde Committee whose brief was to undermine a report from the Westminster Select Committee on Nationalised Industries which concluded in 1960 that "there is no doubt that a large scale British railway system can be profitable".

Completed in October 1960, the findings of the Committee fell into two strands; those who felt that there was merit in railway modernisation and retention of more of the system than intended, and the second group who endorsed the Government's conviction that huge cuts were needed in the British railway system. Both Benson and Beeching subscribed to the latter viewpoint.

There can be little doubt that the anti-rail government in Northern Ireland were seeking validation of their policy towards railways in the Province. The stage for widespread closure had been set by denying the Great Northern Railway Board the required capital investment, thus leading to increased losses. Having overseen widespread rail closures in the western border counties, the Northern Ireland government set in motion the second stage of the closure process, winding up the Great Northern Railway Board (the Dublin government watched but could do little) in 1958 and transferring GNR assets in Northern Ireland to the Ulster Transport Authority. The Act of Parliament authorising the transfer also made it obligatory for the UTA, which after some years of substantial loss reduction and modernisation on its own rail services was now burdened with the GNR, to axe any rail service which, after six years, prevented the Authority from paying its way. Thus by 1960 it appeared that the railways were finished.

However, not as anti-rail as commonly thought, the UTA in 1960 set up an internal committee to investigate how the system including former GNR routes might be placed on a profitable footing. Early in 1961, the committee reported back to the UTA Board with a £2.5 million (about £27 million in 1995) modernisation plan which included the GNR Derry Road and complete dieselisation of the GNR system (with, it must be added, MPD railcars). The committee were unable to make the railways profitable but suggested how the heavy losses (£497,956 in 1961) could be cut to £87,000 with only the Coalisland and Warrenpoint lines closing.

The Blue Book Report, as the railway rescue plan became known, represented the last hope for railways. It was no surprise however when the UTA Board, with one eye on government policy and reconciliation between that policy and a railway loss of £87,000, rejected the Blue Book Report and, in effect, cast the railways overboard. The close relationship between government and nationalised groups such as the UTA is worthy of note. Suffice to say that it is often in the interest of the managed to do as the manager says!

With both first and second stages of the closure process now in place, the third and last was to seek outside advice to validate them and recommend the funeral arrangements. On Richard Beeching's recommendation, Stormont in February 1962 asked Henry Benson to investigate the position of the

railways in Northern Ireland.

In his autobiography, published many years later, Lord Benson commented that he had the clear impression - but was never formally told - that Stormont wanted him to recommend a total shutdown of Northern Ireland's railways.

The fact that the railways did struggle through, even with the 1965 closures, was not due to any great change of attitude by government (the entire system was considered for the melting pot as late as 1986) but rather to a visit to Boston in the United States during the course of drawing up the report for Stormont. Encountering a serious traffic jam, the taxi driver told Benson that it was due to the closure of the transit system.



***In the 1960s the N.I. Government conceived the grand design of a new “City in the Country” based on Portadown and Lurgan. In 1965 their transport undertaking, the UTA, made its contribution by closing the line from Portadown to Derry. The connection through Newry to the developing port of Warrenpoint was not seen as a potential asset either and suffered the same fate. Here T2 4-4-2T No.69 runs round its train at Warrenpoint on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1956. (H.B. Priestly)***

Such was the severity of the traffic jam that Henry Benson, it seems, had second thoughts about the effect in Belfast were he to give carte blanche approval for what he suspected was government policy.

The Benson Report when published in July 1963, shortly after the Beeching Report was published in Britain, stopped short of advocating complete railway closure but did recommend. that the two main lines to Londonderry should be axed and that the remaining system be simplified with rationalisation counterbalanced by the suggested development of the Belfast Central line to enable Bangor rail services to serve Great Victoria Street station. The other positive suggestion was the recommendation that seven new diesel trains be built for the Portadown and Dublin services.

In considering the Benson Report, Stormont decided to retain the NCC route to Derry but concluded that both it and the rest of the system that Benson recommended be kept had only a limited life of about ten years.

The loss of the Great Northern's Derry Road, by no stretch of the imagination an underused line, was contested. A Stormont MP of the old Ulster Liberal Party, with a Co. Tyrone background, warned in Parliament in June 1964 that the loss of that line would be something both Stormont and the people would live to regret. That MP, more in touch with the pulse of opinion west of the Bann than was realised at the time, illustrated that railways have a social and economic role that must be taken into account in drawing up a financial report. This wider brief did not form any part of the 1958 Transport Act nor was it included in Benson's terms of reference.



***6'6" P class No.27 prepares to leave Derry's Foyle Road station with an afternoon train for Belfast on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1936. (H.B. Priestley)***

Although it may be felt that Benson was a Tory ideologue it is worthy of note that in 1981, on being made a life peer, he sat on the cross benches in the House of Lords.

Lord Benson enjoyed sailing, visiting Scotland and woodwork and, on reading his autobiography, the writer got the impression that he would have approved of the work the Society and others put into restoring the Great Northern Directors' Saloon.

Whilst the closure of the Derry Road was a fundamental mistake, it was ironical that this provided the impetus for the formation of the RPSI and that within weeks of Lord Benson's death there were stirrings in the Council chambers in Dungannon and Strabane for a fully comprehensive study into restoration of all or part of the Derry Road - the epitome of the Great Northern Railway.



As Henry Benson travelled through a peaceful Ulster in the Great Northern Director's Saloon in 1962, did he wonder how the Province differed from Great Britain and did he consider how the world of finance fitted into the world of technological change, finite fossil fuels, politics and cultural identity? Alas, probably not.

## STEAM OVER BELFAST LOUGH RE-VISITED

Colin Weatherup

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### Introduction

It is now over 40 years since the late Mac Arnold recorded the logs on the Bangor line published in his book "Steam Over Belfast Lough". These logs, meticulously timed by Mac, provide for posterity the speeds attained and loads hauled by the complete range of steam locomotive classes operating on the Bangor line at that time. They are therefore an important set of recordings for the student of locomotive performance enabling much information to be gleaned regarding the power outputs of these classes. In particular the timings of trains climbing the bank from Holywood to Craigavad provide a source of data to enable the relative performances of these locomotives to be examined since over this 2.2 mile stretch of track with a heavy train they were being worked to their limits. In this article Mac's timings of non-stop trains through Holywood heading towards Bangor are analysed with the aid of a computer (not available to Mac in the 1950s!) to determine the power outputs of their engines up this steeply graded stretch of line.

### Calculation Of Horse Power

The logs give train speeds at Holywood together with the times from this station to Marino, Cultra and Craigavad. Additional speeds are also recorded after Holywood. Though these have not been used in the calculations they have been used to provide a measure of the validity of the assumptions made by comparing them with predicted speeds.

There are 3 elements to the horse power calculation, namely the effect of gravity on the incline, the effect of carriage resistance and the effect of acceleration (or deceleration). The assumptions necessary to calculate these are considered separately in the following paragraphs.

#### 1. Gravity

On page 18 of his booklet "Twenty-Five Years Gone" R.J.A. Pue provides a gradient profile for the Bangor line. This indicates that the gradient was level from Belfast to just before Holywood and then climbed at 1 in 81 from this point to Cultra and at 1 in 73 from Cultra to Craigavad. Hence, taking these values to be  $G$ , the force needed to overcome gravity for a train of  $W$  tons, excluding the engine weight, is  $W/G$  and the horse power expended at a speed of  $V$  ft/sec is given by:

$$HP = W \times V \times 2240 / (G \times 550)$$

#### 2. Carriage Resistance

OS Nock quotes Johanssen's formula for train resistance on page 127 of his book "Southern Steam" as:

$$R(\text{in lb/ton}) = 4.0 + 0.017 \times V + 0.000744 \times V^2$$

where  $V$  is the train speed in ft/sec. This provides resistance values of 5.14 lb/ton at 20 mph, 7.56 lb/ton at 40 mph and 11.26 lb/ton at 60 mph. While this formula provides resistance values which may be too low for some of the stock in use on the Bangor line at the time when the logs were made, in the absence of a more accurate formula it has been used in the power calculations which follow. The horse power necessary to overcome resistance at  $V$  ft/sec for a train weighing  $W$  tons excluding the engine weight is:

$$HP = R \times W \times V / 550$$

### 3. Acceleration (or Deceleration)

Before acceleration can be calculated the distance between the timing points used in the logs must be established. Table B of Steam Over Belfast Lough provides distances of 0.9, 0.7 and 0.6 miles between the stations Holywood and Marino, Marino and Cultra, and Cultra and Craigavad respectively.

However, these do not necessarily represent the timing points used by Mac Arnold. The exact distances appropriate to the logs can only be determined from the logs themselves. The log of No.16 in Table B indicates that this train was proceeding up the bank at a steady 28 mph. The times taken between the above stations are recorded as 124 seconds, 82 seconds and 75 seconds from which the distances between stations can be assessed as being 4,910 ft, 3,367 ft and 3,080 ft respectively. However some doubt exists regarding the distance between Holywood and Marino since No.16 was recovering from a permanent way check before Holywood and may have passed Holywood at a faster rate than the 28 mph maintained later. Fortunately, there are other runs in Table C where a constant, or nearly constant, speed was maintained between these stations from which distances can be derived. Thus No.47 took 98 seconds at a steady 37 mph indicating 5,318 ft, No.7 took 56 seconds at 64 mph giving 5,256 ft and No.10 took 60 seconds at 60 mph giving 5,280 ft. Thus it would appear that the estimate from No.16 is too low and an average of the 3 latter runs of 5,285 ft has been assumed for this distance.

Having determined the distance between timing points it is now possible to proceed to determine accelerations. It is assumed that the acceleration is constant between stations. Considering the Holywood to Marino section first, the logs provide the speed at Holywood at the start of the climb. Call this speed  $U$  ft/sec. If  $T$  is the time in seconds taken to travel between these timing points which are 5,285 ft apart then the acceleration,  $A$  in ft/sec<sup>2</sup> is given by:

$$A = (5285 - U \times T) / (0.5 \times T^2)$$

In practice the value for  $A$  will be negative indicating a deceleration. Also the speed  $V$  in ft/sec at Marino would be:

$$V = U + A \times T$$

Using the speed at the end of the first section as the speed at the start of the second section, between Marino and Cultra, the acceleration over this section can be calculated along with the speed at its end. Similarly the acceleration during the third section, between Cultra and Craigavad, can be determined and the final speed.

The force,  $P$  in lb, necessary to accelerate a train of  $W$  tons, excluding the engine weight, at  $A$  ft/sec<sup>2</sup>, is given by:

$$P = (W \times A \times 2240) / 32.18$$

Hence if  $V$  is the speed in ft/sec the horse power needed to provide this acceleration is:

$$HP = P \times V / 550$$

The total horse power of the locomotive over a section is therefore the sum of the three component horse powers described above where  $V$  takes the value of the mean speed of the section.

### Locomotive Classes

There were 4 main locomotive classes in use on the Bangor line at the end of steam. All were tank engines and were generally known as Small 4-4-2, Large 4-4-2, Baltics (i.e. 4-6-4) and NCC 2-6-4. The first three classes were original BCDR engines while the NCC tanks began appearing on the Bangor line in the late 1940s. The Society's No.4 is of course an example of an NCC 2-6-4 tank. Also a small BCDR 4-4-2, No.30, is among the collection of the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra. The following are the main details of these classes:

	<b>Small 4-4-2</b>	<b>Large 4-4-2</b>	<b>Baltic</b>	<b>NCC 2-6-4</b>
Building dates	1901-21	1924-44	1920	1947-50
Cylinders	17x24	18x26	19x26	19x26
Driving wheels	5' 6"	5' 6"	5' 6"	6' 0"
Boiler pressure (psi)	160	170	170	200
Grate area (sq ft)	18	20	24.5	25
Weight	56t 15c	66t	81t 12c	87t
Tractive effort	14,292	18,443	20,550	22,160

Some inconsistencies exist in the literature regarding the diameter of the driving wheels of the Baltics. Thus while Mac and some other authors quote 5' 6", Pue and the "Irish Steam Locomotive Register" by J.W.P. Rowledge quote 5' 9". A broadside photograph of No.25 given in "Main Line Railways of Northern Ireland" by W.P. McCormick with a scale derived from the overall length of a Baltic of 43' 6" provided in "British Baltic Tanks" by C.E.J. Fryer, proved to my satisfaction that the Baltic driving wheels were indeed 5' 6".

### **Evaluation of logs**

All the 24 logs given in Tables A and B of "Steam Over Belfast Lough" involving trains not stopping at Holywood have been examined using the above formulas. In the following paragraphs the analyses of the logs with the highest power outputs for the classes are presented. The resulting horse powers are given under the above three headings so that, for example, if the reader wished to see the effect of an adjustment of a certain percentage in the assumed carriage resistance values this can be readily determined from the appropriate component.

#### **1. Small 4-4-2 Class**

The main contenders for consideration in this class are No.21 in Table A which hauled a train of 220 tons up the bank in 5 minutes 3 seconds, No.211 in Table B which took 3 minutes 33 seconds to haul 140 tons and in the same table No.3 which took 1 second more with 180 tons. The maximum horse power figures for these logs are 399, 378 and 490 respectively. Clearly the heavy load of No.21 did not compensate for its slow speed. Full details of No.3's run are as follows:

**Table B No.3 12/12/1949 Load = 180 tons**

	Holywood	Marino	Cultra	Craigavad
Time from Holywood (seconds)	0	83	147	214
Recorded Speed (mph)	49			29
Calculated Speed (mph)	49	38	34	29
Acceleration (ft/sec <sup>2</sup> )	-0.197	-0.090	-0.112	
HP due to Gravity	576	476	462	
HP due to Resistance	171	121	97	
HP due to Acceleration	-286	-108	-118	
Total HP	461	490	440	

The times from Holywood and the recorded speeds at each station have been extracted from the original logs. Average accelerations between the stations have been calculated from these times as described previously. Mean horse power figures for the three components of power output namely gravity, resistance and acceleration between the stations are provided together with their total. Note that as a result of a loss of speed up the bank the horse power arising from acceleration is negative and

subtracts from the other two values.

The agreement of the calculated speed at Craigavad with the speed recorded in the log indicates that the assumption of constant deceleration between stations is reasonable. Mac comments on page 13 of his book that No.3 “climbed in magnificent style for such a small engine”.



***1904-built small 4-4-2T UTA No.211 at Queen's Quay. Identical No.3 was built in 1901 and both were withdrawn in 1952. (C. Weatherup collection)***

## **2. Large 4-4-2 Class**

There are 3 runs involving 4-4-2s. Times to Craigavad and loads were 3 minutes 2 seconds with 100 tons by No.9 in Table A, 4 minutes 43 seconds (following a check before Holywood) with 130 tons by No.16 in Table B and 3 minutes 50 seconds with 200 tons by No.9 also in Table B.

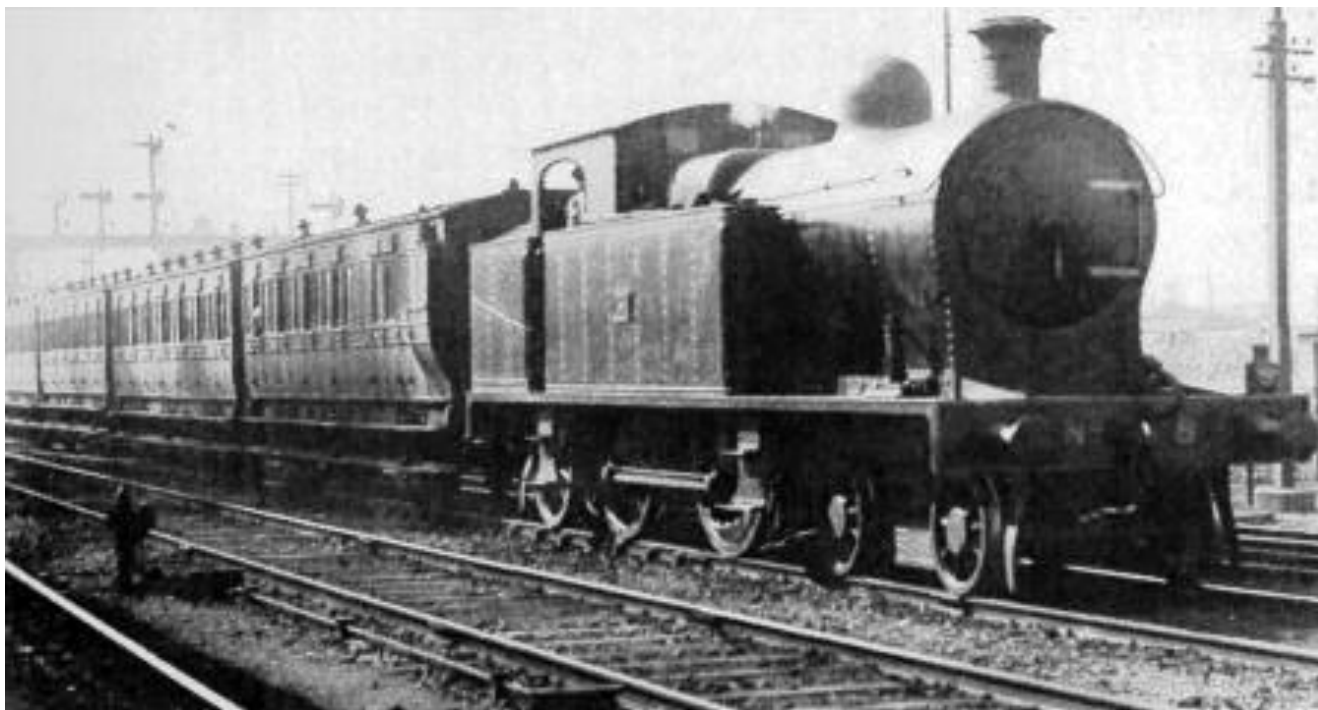
Maximum horse power figures are 380, 360 and 497 respectively. Details of the final run are as follows:

**Table B No.9 8/4/1949 Load = 200 tons**

	Holywood	Marino	Cultra	Craigavad
Time from Holywood (seconds)	0	86	156	230
Recorded Speed (mph)	49	34		27
Calculated Speed (mph)	48	36	30	27
Acceleration (ft/sec <sup>2</sup> )	-0.208	-0.126	-0.056	
HP due to Gravity	618	484	464	
HP due to Resistance	178	115	92	
HP due to Acceleration	-324	-153	-59	
Total HP	472	446	497	

As in some other cases to obtain an adequate fit to the station times a slight reduction in the initial speed has had to be made. Presumably the speed at Holywood was generally a little less than the

maximum speed before Hollywood provided in the logs because of the start of the climb just before Hollywood platform. A slight overestimate in the speed at Marino is seen though good agreement with the recorded speed at Craigavad is obtained. While Mac commented on “an excellent climb” it can be seen that the horse power maximum at 497 is only marginally better than that of the smaller 4-4-2 described above which, with 20 tons less, made the faster climb by 16 seconds.



***Large 4-4-2T No.8 leaves Belfast with a Bangor train of typical BCDR 6-wheeled stock. Of this small class No.8 and No.16 were built in 1924 while No.9 did not appear until twenty years later! (H.C. Casserley)***

### 3. Baltics

Logs of 4 Baltic runs are included in the tables. The times to Craigavad and loads of the 3 highest power output runs were 3 minutes 37 seconds with 170 tons for No.23 in Table B (the Hollywood time should be 7 minutes 45 seconds not 7 minutes 25 seconds as in the log), 3 minutes 50 seconds with 260 tons for No.23 in Table A and 3 minutes 39 seconds with 260 tons for No.24 in the same Table. Maximum power outputs for these runs are 500, 683 and 706 respectively.

Details of the third run are as follows:

**Table A No.24 18/11/1948 Load = 260 tons**

	Hollywood	Marino	Cultra	Craigavad
Time from Hollywood (seconds)	0	79	144	219
Recorded Speed (mph)	51	39		27
Calculated Speed (mph)	51	40	30	26
Acceleration (ft/sec <sup>2</sup> )	-0.200	-0.221	-0.094	
HP due to Gravity	875	677	596	
HP due to Resistance	272	170	117	
HP due to Acceleration	-440	-378	-127	

Total HP	706	470	585
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In terms of power output it can be seen that the Baltics were appreciably more powerful than the 4-4-2s. While No.24 climbed the bank in a similar time to No.3 the Baltic hauled an additional 80 tons. On page 20 of his book Mac comments that this effort by No.24 “probably represents the highest tractive effort recorded by a Baltic”. Of particular note was the fall off in power output after the first section. This represented a 33% drop in the second section though some increase occurred in the third section. An examination of No.23’s run 6 days earlier, also given in Table A, on the same train with the same load though with a different driver showed a drop off in power of 41% in the second section. These reductions in power exhibited by the Baltics are much more marked than with the other classes and indicate that it may not have been possible for the boilers of these engines to supply steam at the high rate for the extended time needed to maintain the initial power output throughout the climb.



*Baltic tank UTA No.223 at Queen’s Quay shed. The size of these engines was not matched by their performance. (C. Weatherup collection)*

#### 4. NCC 2-6-4 Tanks

The tables contain 4 runs with NCC tanks. In terms of power output the 3 best of these were climbs by No.50 in 3 minutes 10 seconds with 200 tons listed in Table B, No.53 in 2 minutes 36 seconds with 170 tons in Table B and No.10 in 2 minutes 58 seconds with 270 tons in table A. The corresponding power outputs were 640, 601 and 951 respectively. Details of the final run are as follows:

**Table A No.10 6/8/1953 Load = 270 tons**

	Hollywood	Marino	Cultra	Craigavad
Time from Hollywood (seconds)	0	73	125	178
Recorded Speed (mph)	56	45		38
Calculated Speed (mph)	53	46	43	37
Acceleration (ft/sec <sup>2</sup> )	-0.146	-0.089	-0.163	



HP due to Gravity	983	879	875
HP due to Resistance	330	265	217
HP due to Acceleration	-362	-197	-324
Total HP	951	947	768

The development in the steam engine from 1920 when the Baltics were built to 1947 when the NCC tanks were introduced can be clearly seen from a comparison between No.10's log and that of No.24 above. Despite having similar weight No.10 was able to generate 245 more HP. Also the sustained power output after Marino of No.10 is in contrast to the marked reduction in power output of No.24 at the same stage, presumably caused by a lower steam production of the Baltic's boiler. Mac commented on No.10's performance on page 24 of his book by pointing out that, "To take the summit at 38 mph with this load was exceptional".



*Ex-NCC 2-6-4T No.10 between Hollywood and Marino on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1952. With a lightweight train, the fireman is obviously taking it easy - perhaps too easy, as water is being lost from the injector. (S.C. Nash)*

## Conclusion

Expressed as horse power per square foot of grate area the above maximum power outputs of the BCDR classes equate to 27, 25 and 29 for the small 4-4-2s, large 4-4-2s and Baltics respectively. During the course of the preparation of this article Mr Irwin Pryce kindly provided me with logs made

by the late Drew Donaldson involving these classes. These indicate power outputs of the two 4-4-2 classes considerably in excess of those recorded by Mac and suggest that horse powers per square foot of grate area of around 30 were possible with engines of both classes. However they compare unfavourably with the maximum power output of the NCC 2-6-4 tank which with its higher pressed superheated boiler produced 38 horse power per square foot of grate area. In his book "British Baltic Tanks" C.E.J. Fryer states with respect to Mac's logs of the BCDR Baltics, "It comes as something of a surprise to discover that records of the running of these engines have been made." He then goes on to reproduce 4 of Mac's Baltic logs - the only British Baltic tanks, apart from the LBSCR Baltics, for which definitive records exist. Clearly these and Mac's other logs are of unique value as a source of information to put into perspective the running of trains on the Bangor line during the steam era.

## **FILMING 1995**

**Peter Rigney**

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Film work has always been important to the RPSI. A glance through the pages of "Steam's Silver Lining" shows a consistent pattern of film work, ranging from TV adverts to big screen feature films.

Most of this work has been undertaken in the Republic where the development of a film industry has been a feature of Government policy. The policy has been pursued with varying degrees of enthusiasm since the 1950s but most observers agree that it has come to fruition in the nineties. From a norm of 2 to 3 films per year, 12 films were completed in 1993 and 29 either commissioned or completed in the industry in 1995.

There are a number of cherished illusions about the film industry. Chief among these is the view that film companies have limitless budgets which they are itching to hand out to sub-contractors such as the RPSI. The second big illusion is that most films with a story set between 1850 and 1950 will need a steam train.

In reality, film-making has become as cost-conscious as any other industry. Productions are no longer exclusively undertaken by big studios but by companies set up for the duration of the film and financed by a combination of banks and tax-based investment, each film is tightly costed and if a steam locomotive proves too expensive the scene will either be altered or cut out altogether. In 1994, the Dublin Area Operations Committee was near to closing a deal with a film company for two days' work. When, however, the costings were done the scene was altered and the tearful farewell envisaged in the script took place on a preserved GNR bus!

As the nineties progressed, the DAOC became increasingly concerned that the film boom was passing us by, with no film work since 1989.

The "First Great Train Robbery" of 1979 with its fortnight or so of filming days maybe had us spoiled. This was a unique film, with the train in a starring role. Incidentally, the key decision to shoot this film in Ireland was the need to minimise Sean Connery's time in the UK for tax reasons.

In mid-1993 Dublin began to hear rumours about a big movie on the life of Michael Collins. As the year progressed, two projects were in circulation: one backed by Kevin Costner of "Dances with Wolves" fame, while the other was under the auspices of Dublin man Neil Jordon, best known for "Angel" and "The Crying Game". This latter project won through and a production company entitled Valek was formed.

After a series of preliminary discussions a site visit was arranged for Heuston. On 6<sup>th</sup> June the Dublin carriage set was hauled across the yard to the military platform to await the film crew, who eventually arrived by coach. Led by Neil Jordon, the various departments went over the train for their various requirements; "Can we take a door off?", "Can we get a generator in here?" Negotiations progressed and confirmed a requirement for three days:

- (1) “Granard”, otherwise Rush & Lusk, train arriving at station.
- (2) “Kingsbridge”, otherwise Pearse, departure of the Queenstown Boat Train.
- (3) A day of moving train scenes, including a fight scene.

The entire Dublin carriage set was required, except for Park Royal 2423. The main film train was to be 1916, 2421, 88, 1335 and 238. This latter coach was termed the “hero coach”. It was to house the interior scenes, with 1½ compartments being modified to wooden seating, which for the moment we have decided to retain. TPO 2981, along with the Park Royals 1416 and 1383, would be combined with No.171 to form a second train in Pearse. The film company undertook to paint all the carriages in a maroon approximation of MGWR/GSWR livery. Consideration was also given to hiring NCC 91 but in the event this was not done. What impressed the DAOC members present at the initial site meeting was the need to have a mix of vehicles in the Dublin set. It is doubtful if we would have got as much work with purely a laminate/Park Royal set, and the cost of transferring other vehicles from Whitehead and back would have been prohibitive for the film company.



***RPSI ‘extra’ David Carse, of comparatively recent vintage, in the company of two genuine relics at Pearse station during a break in filming. (D. Humphries)***

As soon as the contract was signed, the main train was transferred to Platform 1 in Pearse where, under cover, it was painted. Platforms 1 & 2 in Pearse have been Engineer’s Sidings since the track rationalisation for DART took place. The painting and lining took place with some speed as our first day’s filming was scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> July.

Our day on the GN main line was to do two scenes - one at Rush & Lusk and the other at Laytown Viaduct. The train was due on set at 08:00 so the locomotive was lit up at 02:00. In order to operate

wooden bodied coaches on the GN main line the filming took place within an Engineer's possession. At 06:30 our crew of Dan Renehan and Don McLaughlin booked on. Our first task was to pick up our coaches at Pearse. Delays caused by points failures held things up somewhat and we were 30 minutes late for our arrival at Rush & Lusk - re-titled "Granard". The fact that Granard never had a station need not bother one over-much. An accurate portrayal of Inny Junction or Street & Rathowen would serve only to confuse most audiences - such is showbusiness.

The scene required an arrival shot, the boarding of a train by a bridal party and the departure from the station by Collins in a Model T Ford. While filming company personnel set about preparations (including the spraying of synthetic 'dirt' upon the hitherto pristine paintwork) RPSI personnel, led by veterans of the First Great Train Robbery, located the catering facilities and wired into a substantial breakfast.

As the morning progressed, rehearsal shots were done in worsening weather. The steam effects produced by special effects were not quite sufficient to meet the director's needs, so the RPSI were pleased to oblige by laying on steam heat from the locomotive. This may have been appreciated by those in charge of production but much less so by the extras in the train, as the temperature rose to almost sauna levels.

The morning wore on and lunch was called at 13:00. RPSI and IÉ crew were given priority as we were to proceed to Mosney and await the arrival of the film company, who had to finish up in Rush & Lusk. With Mick McGuinness of Inchicore, as our second driver, and Inspector Tony Foley, we headed up the GN main line in a downpour. The weather had cleared by the time we arrived at Mosney. There we waited for the film company to set up in Laytown where the train was to be used as a backdrop, crossing the viaduct, while Collins stood underneath in conversation with Broy, his source in the Intelligence Service.

We loaded our extras, set back from Laytown and did a rehearsal shot. Great care is taken to ensure that no contemporary people are in shot. IÉ and RPSI crews in the train therefore sat on the floor of the van. The viaduct shot was co-ordinated jointly by Pat Clayton, the first Assistant Director, and Traffic Inspector Eddie Martin of IÉ who, according to the testimony of several observers, was at one stage holding simultaneous conversations on a film company radio, an IÉ radio and a mobile phone! At about 20:00 the last shot finished. The train ran on to Drogheda to turn and water before returning to Connolly which it reached at about 22:00.

With our first day's film work over, attention shifted to "Kingsbridge", as Platforms 1 & 2 in Pearse were to be titled. This was scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> July - a Sunday immediately following a "Sea Breeze" Saturday.

A second "arriving" train was required for this shot and arrangements were confirmed to bring No.171 South. When she arrived at Connolly she was coupled to TPO 2981 and two Park Royals and towed to the "painting platforms" in Pearse. The coaches were painted into the normal maroon, while No.171 reverted to her original black livery. Once painted, the ensemble was hauled back to Connolly, No.171 for lighting-up and the Park Royals for inclusion in the Sea Breeze set. On the return of the Sea Breeze a marathon shunt ensued to re-make the train for filming requirements, prior to it being diesel-hauled to Pearse.

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July No.171 and No.461 were lit at 04:00 - No.461 after some attention to a blowing regulator gland. The request for No.171 to be in steam came through at a late stage and, as she moved through Connolly yard in her new black livery she evoked images of that most unloved transport undertaking - the UTA.

At 07:00, with No.461 leading, the two locomotives headed across the loop line, crewed by Dan Renehan, Kay Kearns, Don McLaughlin and Tony Foley. After shunting the locomotives and stock to

their desired locations the film company set up, while RPSI staff scurried under coaches making up unseasonable steam heat connections.

# MICHAEL COLLINS

## Call Sheet

### Production Office

Valek Limited  
16-20 South Cumberland Street  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 661 2429  
Fax: (01) 661 2591

CALL SHEET NO: 46

DATE: Sun 27 August

DIRECTOR: NEIL JORDAN  
PRODUCER: STEPHEN WOOLLEY  
CO-PRODUCER: REDMOND MORRIS

UNIT CALL: 08:00  
Breakfast available from: 07:00 to 08:00

### \*EXTENDED DAY\*

Sunrise: 06:25

Sunset: 20:38

### Crew Coach:

To depart Jurys hotel (Ballsbridge) at 06:15.

### MOBILES:

2nd Asst. Director: David Carrigan

Mobile: 088 602613

Location Department: Des Martin

Mobile: 088 579325

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: PATRICK CLAYTON

LOCATION: Arklow/Wicklow Line  
Please see attached movement order  
Unit Base No. 1 @ Arklow Station  
Unit Base No. 2 @ Wicklow Station

**NB\* MICHAEL COLLINS ID BADGES TO BE WORN AT ALL TIMES.**

**NO PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE TAKEN ON SET WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION FROM THE PRODUCERS.**

The Train is unavailable from 10:46 to 11:48 and from 19:07 to 22:43

**When train departs Arklow Station, facilities/Standby vehicles to move to Unit Base No. 2 (Wicklow Station)**

**No mileage will be paid unless previously authorised by the Production Office.**

<u>SET/SYNOPSIS:</u>	<u>Sc No:</u>	<u>D/N:</u>	<u>PAGES</u>	<u>CAST NOS:</u>
INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - THROUGH COUNTRYSIDE (Collins tries to explain the meaning of paradox to Boland)	17✓	Day	5/8	1,2
INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR - THROUGH COUNTRYSIDE (They wrestle in the corridor of the train)	18✓	Day	2/8	1,2
INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT (As two soldiers enter the compartment Collins removes the holdalls from the seat)	29pt✓	Day	1/8	1,2
X EXT. COUNTRYSIDE AND TRAIN - 1918 (Poss. 2nd Camera) (A train moves through the countryside)	16	Day	1/8	-
X EXT. COUNTRYSIDE AND TRAIN - 1918 (Poss. 2nd Camera) (Harry's pained cries echo through the countryside as the train steams by)	19	Day	1/8	1,2
X EXT. COUNTRYSIDE AND TRAIN 1918 (Poss. 2nd Camera) (A train speeds through the countryside)	29pt	Day	1/8	-
X EXT. TRAIN - PASSING BURNING FIRES (Burning building in the foreground as train passes by, passengers stare from windows)	32	Night	1/8	-

<u>Cast No:</u>	<u>Artiste:</u>	<u>Character:</u>	<u>Trailer:</u>	<u>P-Up:</u>	<u>M-Up/Hair Wardrobe</u>	<u>On Set:</u>
1	Liam Neeson	Michael Collins	1	06:30	07:30	08:30
2	Aidan Quinn	Harry Boland	2	06:30	07:30	08:30

### Stunts

Stunt Co-Ordinator Greg Powell O/A - 08:00  
Stunt man Graeme Crowther O/A - 08:00

Kim Billings Dble for Michael Collins 9 06:15 07:15 08:00

### Special Crowd:

Jim Isherwood Dble for Harry Boland 10 O/A 07:15 08:00

SCENE 20

(1)



WIDE of  
STATION  
BRIDAL  
PARTY  
hurrying  
over bridge  
TRAIN  
approaching  
in B.G.



M.C.U.  
COWINS  
&  
BOLLAND  
disembark  
from TRAIN  
COWINS  
looks off



HIS POV.  
BRIDE etc  
RUN for  
TRAIN  
TILT UP  
(if necessary)  
to find the  
sinister  
figure of  
BROD.



After a large number of departures by No.461 and its train, carefully timed between DARTs, attention turned to No.171's train. Actors in the part of porters took over 2981, while the sound department took over the bar area in 2421.

Although most of the crowds were played by Equity actors, a number of IÉ and RPSI staff were kitted out by the wardrobe department for particular scenes. Messrs Renehan and McLaughlin swapped their IÉ overalls for imagined 1920s enginemen's garb, as did Ray Kearns and the RPSI's David Carse. In the Traffic Department the train guard was kitted out in 1920s uniform on each day, while for the "Kingsbridge" scene Brendan Zambra received a field promotion and was togged out as a stationmaster.

The call sheet mentioned a 16:00 finish; however the second unit stayed on to do some detailed shots (locomotive blowing off, guard waving flag, etc.). This continued until 19:00 when the two locomotives steamed back to Connolly hauling the two Park Royals, the TPO and a Dutch van to provide a brake vehicle. A long hot day finished.



*It was appropriate that GN Buffet Car 88 should be used for the filming of the Corrs video as they are all from one Dundalk family. The exotic decor has since been removed. (D. Humphries)*

The "main" film train remained in Pearse. 238 was required by the film company for interior shots, while 1335 and 88 had been hired by Dreamchaser, a video production company contracted to Warner Brothers and producing a video of a rock group called "The Corrs". This occupied a day's shooting on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Modifications were minimal, involving re-decorating 88 and 1335 in a style best summarised as "bordello pastiche".

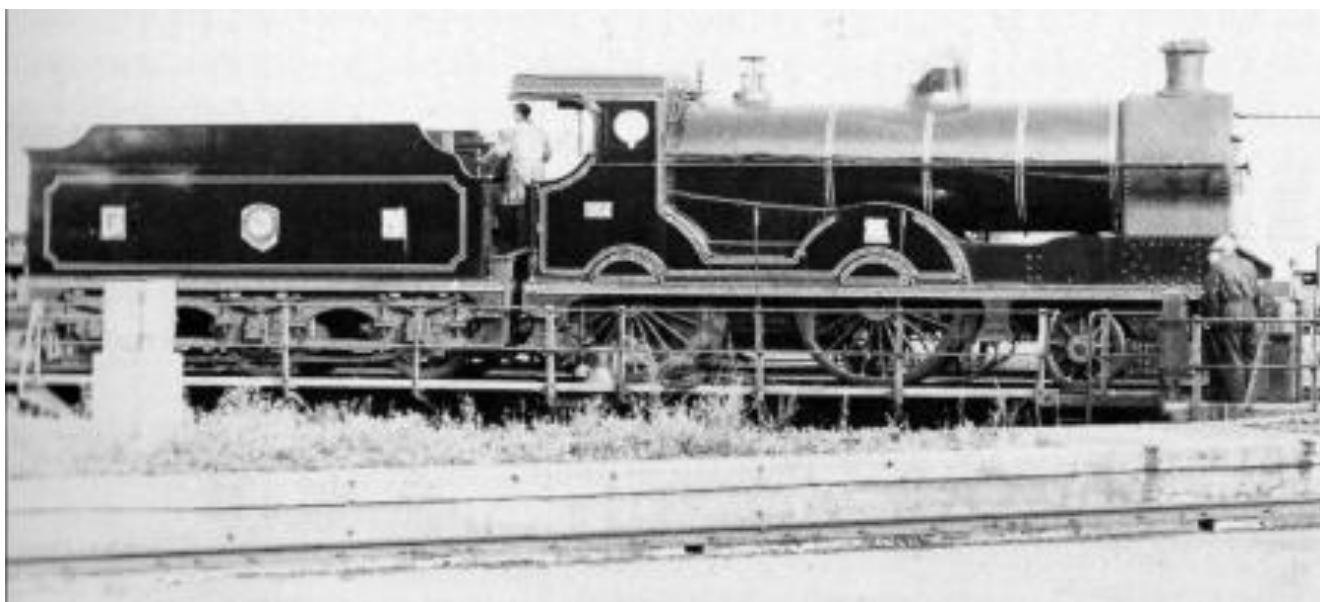
This day's work showed, in a way that a bigger movie never could, just how long it takes to make a

minute's film. With an eight o'clock start and a 23:30 finish, you end up with a standard length rock video!

As our third and final day's filming began to approach, the complexity of what was involved began to dawn on us. The train was to be available at 08:00 in Arklow, whence it would go to Wicklow, shooting two internal scenes, including the fight scene, as it progressed. At Wicklow the fight scene would reach a climax with a stuntman going out a door of 238. Two scenes would then be shot of the train passing through the countryside - one in daylight and the other at dusk. This would be a long day and would necessitate the train travelling down the night before.

As the week progressed it became quite obvious that the dry weather would pose a grave problem. Wicklow was suffering from a plague of gorse fires. When our operation of 19<sup>th</sup> August was cancelled some counter-measures were proposed, including having the train followed by a "fire-fighting train" of a diesel locomotive and a chemical train water barrier wagon. This proved to be impractical for a variety of reasons and eventually a compromise was worked out, involving the diesel haulage of the set south of Wicklow. Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> dawned with a watery sky - but one which did not disgorge a single drop of rain all day. 086 hauled the film train from Pearse, with a GSV for steam effects, arriving in Arklow at 07:30. By this stage the film company had arrived in Arklow and had consumed a hearty breakfast. There then ensued an hour of confusion as the film company loaded their kit into the train.

Each department, production, cameras, lights, electricians, make-up and special effects got their gear on board and commandeered a compartment. The caterers loaded up tea urns and we headed north to Rathdrum, where we crossed both the up and down Rosslare passengers.



***No.171 on York Road turntable during her transitional period. Although not painted over, her number and GN insignia had been covered with black plastic during filming. The lining, red valances and blue wheels were subsequently painted black and appropriate lettering applied. There is still some blue but only those on intimate terms with the locomotive know where it is! (C.P. Friel)***

We then commenced shooting scenes of in-train conversation looking out on to the countryside. This is made more complex by the fact that a film set in the years 1918 -1921 cannot include electricity pylons, golfers in 1990s attire, Hi-ace vans and the like. Stopping and starting, we moved slowly to Wicklow where we lunched and then headed back to Rathdrum where the process was repeated. In fact, dare one say it, an 071 was more suitable for this work. For internal work, the locomotive was not in shot but what was crucial was to get the train up to 40 mph as quickly as possible and the acceleration

characteristics of an 071 are much more suitable for this type of work.

As the day went on, it was clear that the shooting scheduled had been over-ambitious. Getting the interior shots proved slower than anticipated. Another worry entered the film company equation - that of fire. The last scene involved special effects "burning down" two derelict houses as a train passed by. Given the tinder-dry condition of the countryside, this was deemed unwise and the film company began to tentatively enquire about the possibility of an additional day's work.

We arrived in Wicklow and attached No.461 for the fight scene. This involved special effects rigging a door on 238 so that it would burst open and stay open and removing another door to allow a camera to be put in the opening. In a deft move involving much fishing line and piano wires this was duly achieved and the shot successfully done.

Hurrying on to Greystones, we left the film company, re-attached the door to 238 and headed home, with the prospect of another final day.

On other fronts, however, our commercial people had not been inactive. Tentatively scheduled for mid-September was a day in Heuston with No.461 and the Michael Collins train doing a commercial for VISA. This seemed to recede but when it returned it did so with a bang - it was to be in Killarney in the week immediately preceding 1<sup>st</sup> October, which was to be our final day with Michael Collins.

In the event, we were unable to offer No.461 for the VISA ad as the DAOC felt that a 360 mile round trip immediately prior to a long-standing filming commitment would be tempting fate. The coaches were then diesel-hauled to Killarney where a full day's filming took place. On the way back the train was turned on the Limerick Junction triangle to have it facing the right way for Michael Collins.

1<sup>st</sup> October was our last Collins day and we left Connolly with a day's shooting as far south as Rathdrum scheduled. The first "train through the countryside" shot was taken as the train rounded Bray Head. A re-take demanded that we run to Greystones, return to Bray and do it all again (no reversing in this section). Returning to Greystones, we picked up Neill Jordon, Pat Clayton and their crew and headed south to Wicklow, stopping occasionally to check out locations. Arriving at Wicklow for lunch, it was decided to go no further south than there. After lunch we returned slowly to Greystones, doing three shots en route and unfortunately setting fire to vegetation in some locations. The dry, dead autumnal vegetation was like tinder. Some of the outbreaks were tackled by RPSI personnel, and at the final scene, just north of Wicklow, the entire RPSI crew (with the exception of two people left for film company liaison) got down on the track and successfully dealt with a ½ mile blaze.

The finale of our involvement in Michael Collins happened at Killoughter, just north of Wicklow, when in gathering dusk No.461 and train were framed by two burning houses as they steamed through the countryside - flames courtesy of special effects' propane bottles. Continuing to Wicklow, a quick run-round ensued, followed by a fast return to Dublin.

Our final piece of film work for 1995 happened on 18<sup>th</sup> October in Heuston, when the RPSI set was used by a RTÉ/BBC crew to shoot a scene for the programme "Bookworm", transmitted on 19<sup>th</sup> November. The scene involved the poet Paul Durcan reading from his work and featured interiors in 88 and 238.

As 1995 nears its end, the Dublin team can look back on a busy year. Four days in steam for a film, two days providing coaches only and two days in Heuston. In retrospect, the Collins movie was only two days more than "Echoes" or "The Dead". What made for the hectic summer was the high-profile nature of the projects, the diversity of the scenes and the span of time commitment, overlapping the running season.

The returns for the Society have been huge. The cash is particularly useful in this year when ERDF funds dried up. Also of value was the professional re-painting of the Heuston set into a uniform livery.

What should not be ignored is the intrinsic value of raising our profile in the business. Success breeds success, and we look forward to more film work in the years to come.

## COMMENTS AND RECOLLECTIONS

Laurence Liddle

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The photograph on the front cover of our last issue raises an interesting question. What is the bird's nest arrangement between the headlamp and the right hand buffer of No.171? Is it perhaps the resuscitation of some long abandoned train description code of the erstwhile B&NCR? That said, congratulations once again to our editor on his photographic virtuosity as witnessed by this picture and the one of No.461 on the back cover.

At the risk of enlarging the editorial head I express my wholehearted agreement with the comments on page two regarding the criticisms of the contents and format of our magazine; I would also like to amplify a couple of points made there. First, on the restoration of No.461 Nelson wrote, "Perhaps we should have been blowing our corporate trumpet more loudly in relation to such things as the restoration of No.461 from a decorated husk (what an inspired phrase) to a competent main line engine," and went on to say that the former D&SER No.15 is only one of four preserved locomotives to have received reconstructed tube and/or flanged firebox plates in an "in house restoration".

When I was back in Ireland last summer I called in on my old friend and one-time neighbour Charlie Pemberton, former Maintenance Planning Superintendent of CIÉ/IÉ, who will be remembered by many readers for the enthusiastic and practical advice and help he gave us over many years. We got to talking about the RPSI and Charlie expressed not only his unbounded admiration, but also a certain degree of astonishment, at the amount and scope of the work carried out on No.461 by Peter Scott and his colleagues, particular reference being made to the flanged plates.

As for the comment that "Five Foot Three" is too historical in content", I need only say that on each of three consecutive steam outings in 1993, 1994 and 1995 (one to Enfield and two to Rosslare) I have been asked by members of the general public numerous questions about the background of our Society and for general information on railway operation in the days of steam. If lay people are so interested in the past it is surely reasonable to expect that many of our younger members/readers will have an even greater interest. Regular steam workings in Ireland ceased around thirty years ago, which means that no one under the age of thirty five can be expected to have any significant memory of seeing, much less travelling in, a revenue earning(?) steam train, nor anyone under forty to have any understanding of what such travel was like.

John Beaumont and Charles Meredith provided much food for thought in their timely and relevant articles on the financial aspects of rolling stock policy in recent News-Letters. These authors asked for comments; here are two. First; I agree with John's statement that the general public prefer to travel in our older vehicles, particularly compartment stock. On the last two "Strawberry Fairs" I, a genuine native born and totally dedicated Great Northern devotee, committed the grave heresy of travelling in an ex NCC side corridor vehicle. The bonus for this repudiation of my convictions was the great spirit of camaraderie between all occupants of the compartment on each occasion. We were out for a day's enjoyment, some of us were railway minded others were not, few had met before, but by the end of the day, united in our little eight seater world, we were all old friends and, I hope, the non enthusiasts had learned at least the rudiments of railway operation and the workings of the steam locomotive. On an ordinary railway journey give me a centre corridor coach every time, even if for no other reason than that for every eight seats there are four side window corners; but on a steam rail tour the compartment is your only man. My second point is just this; whilst we would all like to have our own steel set how many rakes of Cravens could be hired each year for the amount of the annual interest on the cost of such a set?

Our last issue carried several references to the reopening of Great Victoria Street Station. May I, and I am sure many of my and immediately succeeding generation may be forgiven for blending a certain degree of cynicism with our pleasure at this belated, albeit partial, remedying of an act of foolishness which should never have been perpetrated? To remove Belfast's main terminus from the city centre was an even more short sighted policy than the closure of the Harcourt Street to Shanganagh Junction section of the then CIÉ, another piece of foolishness which seems likely be at least partly remedied at considerable expense. Do I need to add that neither of these closures was carried out on the recommendation of practical railwaymen? Though there are operating reasons why, as Denis Grimshaw told us in his article on the Progress of Rail in Northern Ireland, Dublin-Belfast trains will continue to use Central after the reopening of their old terminus, it will be very interesting to see if eventually the sheer convenience of the latter station may not result in all intercity services running in and out of Great Victoria Street.



*The rumble of iron-shod wheels over square sets could still be heard in Belfast in the 1960s. Both horses are already pulling hard on the gradually rising ground before the nasty turn from Donegall Quay onto the Queen's Bridge. The dock lines, on which NCC No.13 was seen in the last FFT, ran out of shot on the right, under Queen's Bridge and on towards the present Central Station. The cart belongs to Harkness & Co. - who were also the last firm to operate traction engines in the city - and is carrying a deep fat fryer destined for a chip shop. (I.C. Pryce)*

Pages eighteen and twenty of the last issue provided readers with two nostalgic and typical shots of Donegall Quay workings, not just of a generation ago but of decades before that. For me the gem of the

two pictures, which set the seal of absolute authenticity on the photo of ex GNR No.166, was the bicycle just ahead of the left hand tank. I do not think that I ever saw an RT on the Quay lines without this adornment; I always assumed that the velocipedes belonged to the firemen; I doubt if any of the elderly drivers working out their final years in comparative ease on the Maysfields and Harbour shunters were ardent cyclists. The bicycles were as much a part of the Donegall Quay scene as was the "trace horse" (the equine equivalent of a pilot engine) waiting at the corner of the quay and the bridge, ready to provide extra motive power for the carriers' carts over the steep and curved approach to the bridge.

Did the V class 0-6-0s of the NCC, Nos. 13, 14 and 15, have a longer wheelbase than the GNR As, and later the UGs? If so, the former machines must have incurred a lot of flange wear on the Chapel Curve, the tight radius of which led the UTA to carry out major frame surgery in the vicinity of the bogie of our own "Lough Erne". An interesting feature of the Vs, one which they shared with the "Castle" 4-4-0s (NCC class U2), was the relatively large diameter of the cylinders, 19", in relation to their stroke of only 24". Not that these figures were in any way extreme, in their final form Ivatt's large boilered "Atlantics" of the GNR(E) had 20" x 24" cylinders. Anyway, whatever about their cylinder dimensions, the three NCC Vs will be remembered as doing quite an amount of intermediate passenger work as well as hauling good trains, for which latter however the "Castles" seemed to be used almost as much as the six-coupled machines. A final comment on the Donegall Quay pictures; the building behind No.13 housed the LMS (as opposed to NCC) offices for Northern Ireland.

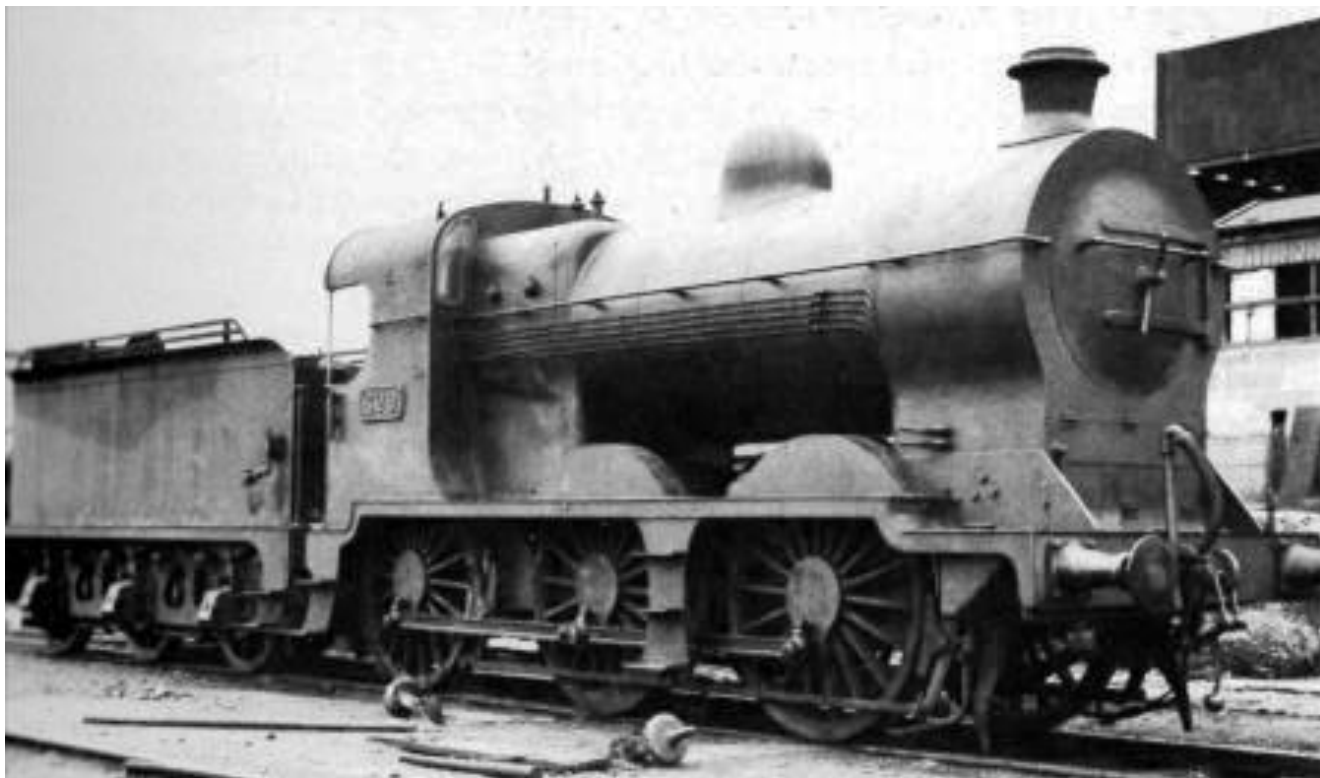
Congratulations to Conrad Natzio on his informed and sympathetic obituary for that doyen of Irish locomotive historians, and one of our founder members, Bob Clements. If ever there was a person who was his own man it was Bob, linguist, draughtsman, historian, practical mechanic and much more; one can only speculate on what he might have achieved had he had to use one or more of his talents in the task of earning a living. Bob was known to enginemen, senior railway officers and lay enthusiasts alike, from Derry to Cork and Westport to Drogheda; I never heard an unkind word spoken either of or by him. I am sure that his generous spirit will not be offended by my relating the following tale which I heard from a former Broadstone driver.

On a day of persistent and heavy rain the down North Wall-Kingscourt Goods stopped briefly at Clonsilla where R.N. Clements was awaiting it, having cycled from his home in Celbridge; he was soaked to the skin. No sooner was Bob on the footplate and the train under way again when he dealt with his dripping garments in what was, to him at any rate, an eminently satisfactory manner; he stripped to the buff and proceeded to dry off his garments on the hot faceplate. As my driver acquaintance put it; "There we were going along and he standing there in his pelt." The engine crew were more than a little concerned that their guest would end up with double pneumonia but seemingly Bob suffered no ill effects. I never thought to ask what type of engine was on the Kingscourt Goods that day; let us hope that it was a "mixed traffic", ex MGW class F 0-6-0 which had a decent cab, or failing that at least a "standard goods" with one of the later patterns of Midland cabs with extended roof and side pillars. The skimpy Inchicore cabs put on to most of the "standard goods" when they were rebuilt by the GSR would have done little to keep the rain off the naked third man on the footplate.

In view of Conrad's reference in this present issue to a hectic journey between Belfast and Derry in 1960 he may be interested in the following figures quoted to me by Bob Clements many years ago. PP 4-4-0 No.50 with a train of two bogies, three six-wheelers and two four-wheeled vans ran from Omagh to Dungannon in 37½ minutes and onwards from the latter town to Portadown in 18 minutes even. Q 4-4-0 No.121 with six bogies ran the Omagh-Dungannon section in 37:15 and Dungannon-Portadown in an almost unbelievable 17:25, with a maximum of 68 mph. I have no note of the dates of these runs, but judging by the make-up of the trains it is quite likely that the PP was in its original non-superheated state, whilst No.121 may well have been in its later guise with superheater and piston valves.



Conrad also mentioned that in the 1960 summer timetable the 17:00 Belfast-Derry train “shed its buffet car at Omagh, to be returned to Belfast on the 19:00 Up”, and suggests that I “might like to comment on this unusual if not unique manoeuvre”. In fact, although on the day CN travelled the buffet car on the 17:00 did come off at Omagh and was picked up and returned to Belfast by the 19:00, the more usual procedure when Belfast-Derry passenger workings were by railcars, was as follows. The buffet car staff on the 17:00 ex Belfast locked up the bar and kitchen before arriving at Omagh, detrained there and waited until the 19:00 ex Derry arrived, boarded this train and opened up its closed bar and kitchen. When these sections of the cars were closed the vehicles operated as ordinary passenger coaches. In the 1961 timetables (the 1960 ones may well have been similar) the changeover point for the staff of the 17:00/19:00 was Strabane, except during the summer when it became Omagh. This latter provision enabled catering facilities to be provided on the two trains even if one or both was or were steam worked, a not uncommon feature during busy periods. The 15:00 ex Belfast, which formed the 19:00 return working, did not offer catering facilities and hence when steam-worked would not have included a catering vehicle in its make-up. The dropping off of a buffet car at an intermediate station, there to await being picked up again by a returning train, was by no means confined to summer steam workings at Omagh.



***J5 “Cattle Engine” No.629, showing the ample cab within which Mr. Clements may have dried out while shielded from the public gaze (see also Inchicore article). (Locomotive & General Photos)***

From about 1945 until the closure of the Irish North the down Bundoran Express regularly left its car behind at Clones, the abandoned vehicle being collected by the Up train. Up and Down trains crossed at Pettigo and ran non-stop between there and Clones in each direction, to public times of eighty minutes down and seventy eight up for the forty five and a half miles. It was well said in the fifties that about the only express feature of the Bundoran Express was its name. We must remember however that on occasions the load behind the U, (or even sometimes the PP) might be seven bogies, that there were numerous hand staff exchanges, and severe speed restrictions through Enniskillen and Bundoran Junction.

Our old friend the mysterious Cork to Belfast special was still with us in the last issue, and our editor allowed himself a note about it at the end of "Comments and Recollections". I will put forward three further points about this topic, after which I promise to say no more. First: the likely reason for the two vans is that GNR regulations stipulated that all passenger trains over the Wellington bank had to have a brake van or brake coach at each end. The practice was not always adhered to during the second world war years, when such vehicles as ex GS&WR corridor bogies or even Great Northern non-corridor eight-wheelers might sometimes be seen immediately behind the tender of the Compound hauling a down main line express. I remember a Southern vehicle on the 09:00 ex Dublin and a non-corridor at the head of a Sunday evening Dublin-Belfast working. I travelled in the latter as far as Goragewood, just in order to have the unusual experience. Second point: the carriage truck; I cannot suggest a convincing reason for this four-wheeled unit being included in the make-up of the special, however here is a possible though admittedly unlikely solution to the puzzle. I seem to remember that the Northern had one or two "motor car vans", four-wheeled vehicles which could be loaded in a dock through double doors at either end. If my memory is correct and *if* the so-called carriage truck was in reality a motor van then the special might have been carrying a touring theatrical party, (albeit a very large one) from Cork to Belfast, the motor car van being used to convey the scenery, other stage equipment and general luggage. Three: I can confidently assert that General X, with or without other officers, did not travel third class, and hence that the special had nothing to do with him. Officers always travelled first class and other ranks third, as can be confirmed by a look at a military travel warrant.

James Scannell's "The Trouble With Third Class Passengers" reminded me of a story about the late Sir Herbert Walker, one time General Manager of the Southern Railway, when a deputation of regular travellers (the word commuter was unknown in England in the 1920s) complained about the filthy state and general discomfort of the trains between London and Eastbourne. After the disgruntled travellers had had their say the GM replied that the state of the trains was due to the filthy habits of the passengers. My source for this interesting little piece of railway history is O.S. Nock's "The Southern King Arthur Family", published by David and Charles in 1976. However, dirt and discomfort need not always go together. In the fifties and sixties the old compartment stock, some of which was still in use on CIÉ long-distance trains, was normally very clean, but far from luxurious. On the other hand it must be said that many of the old Great Northern wooden vehicles were even more uncomfortable than their Southern and Western counterparts, and not always as clean. It may well have been because of the retention of second class by the GN that that company's older corridor thirds were almost invariably spartan so far as amenities were concerned. Apart from the few third class compartments in the "high elliptical" bogie composites of the 1920s the Northern third class non-corridor accommodation was as uncomfortable and cramped as any standard gauge stock in Ireland, comparing eight-wheeled coaches with eight-wheeled and six-wheeled with six-wheeled. What could be said in the Great Northern's favour was that by the thirties its stock of the latter type of vehicle was very small compared to that of CIÉ and the Co. Down. There is no doubt however that in its provision for third class passengers in corridor trains, even the main line expresses which were so spectacularly timed in the early thirties, the GN lagged behind the GS and NCC. Fifty eight foot, eighty eight seater centre-corridor wooden vehicles seating ten per section with doors at every second section, and the three-window pattern of two quarter lights and one drop light at the non door sections, sometimes with lino on the floors but often just bare boards and, crowning infamy, only one lavatory per coach - these were not attractive vehicles. On balance the rather narrow hard seats with their stiffly upright backs were better than what was usually on offer in the non-corridor stock, but by no very great margin.

In fairness to the memory of the Great Northern, however, it must be recorded that the last batch of wooden corridor coaches, the K13s, were a great improvement on any of their predecessors. These vehicles had 8 compartments, side corridors and reasonably wide and very well sprung seats. There

was still only one lavatory per coach but nevertheless the K13s were much more comfortable than the roughly contemporary last GS&WR./GSR wooden stock. A few of the K13s were designated Tea Cars and classified K14; in these one compartment was utilised as a pantry from which an attendant, usually a girl, served (very) Light Refreshments on trays throughout the train. None of the seats of any of the three classes normally had table facilities, whatever your economic status you balanced your tray on your knee or, if the space was available, put it on the seat beside you. As an example of the difference in the value of money between the 1930s and today I mention that a “Plain Tea”, consisting of a small pot of tea, bread and butter, a couple of biscuits and a small piece of fruit cake cost ten old pence, 4½p in today’s money. But if the value of money was greater in those days than it is now, wages were not also absolutely but also relatively much lower. How else can one explain the fact that it was apparently profitable for a K14 Tea Car to be provided on the 13:30 Belfast-Derry service and the balancing return working? The entire train, to be noted, consisted of the aforesaid K14 and a 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> brake compo, plus a couple of four-wheeled vans, not exactly an overload for the usual Q motive power.



***UG 0-6-0 No.148 at Clones with the Bundoran Express in 1955. Although admirable in many ways, a UG could hardly be considered as “Express” material. However, the term as applied to this train denoted lack of stops rather than great speed and No.148 would have had no difficulty in coping. (A. Donaldson)***

One of the K14s, 254, became a small Buffet Car, one half of its length being given over to kitchen facilities and a small saloon seating twelve persons on movable chairs. In the mid fifties this car was often on the Bundoran Express, and thus came to spend a portion of each working day in Clones, an antic which has already been referred to. On page ninety four of Part One of Mac Arnold’s “Golden Years” (1979 edition) there is a photograph of 254 thus occupied.

Finally as regards GN Third Class accommodation, even when we got the K15s, from 1935 onwards,

there were still the doors at alternate sections and only one lavatory per coach though admittedly the ratio of necessaria (Hamilton Ellis's splendid word) to seats, had improved from 1:88 to 1:70. The relatively few K16s, eight-compartment side-corridor flush-sided vehicles, had very comfortable seating, particularly the first two, 66 and 67, but were cramped as regards leg room.

To return to the last issue of Five Foot Three, on page thirty five there is depicted a condemned CIÉ six-wheeler with the caption, "No guesses except that it looks as if it could have been better than a third." This forlorn looking relic was a lavatory first of the Midland Great Western Railway built to Martin Atcock's design either at the Broadstone Works in 1893 or by Ashbury in 1894. There are a number of features of this vehicle which identify its Midland origins; the most prominent is the unusual shape of the grab handles beside the doors, other points of recognition which can also be identified in the photograph are the rounding of the top corners of the quarter lights and the somewhat spindly looking buffers. Another feature by which to identify ex Midland carriage stock, though not visible in the photo, is the design of the door handles which were not of the common T shape but were oval rings. The coach lacks the row of "flower pots" on the roof which it would have carried in its non electrically lighted days; the tank on the roof as well as the arrangement of the centre windows identify it as having boasted lavatory facilities. I am indebted to an article "GWR Carriage Stock" by P. O'Cuimin which appeared in the IRRS Journal for June 1971 for information on alternative building dates and place for this old coach, and also for identifying it as a coupe, i.e. that it had windows in one end, a feature not easily discernible in the photograph.

The lower picture on page forty eight is particularly interesting in that it shows a type of locomotive about which very little has been written; the "Class 4" 0-6-0s of the B&CDR. From 1921 until the end of its days the County Down possessed just four 0-6-0s, of these the two largest No.10 and No.4, built in 1914 and 1921 respectively, were identical, having 160 lb Belpaire boilers, 18" x 26" cylinders and 5' wheels. Next in size was No.14, built in 1904 with the same vital statistics but lighter, its weight in working order was 41 tons as opposed to the 44 tons of the Class 4s. Finally there was No.26, probably the best known of the quartet on account of its being used for a fair amount of passenger work as well as for goods trains. No.26, which is illustrated on page 173 of Part Two of the "Golden Years", had 17" x 24" cylinders and a boiler with round topped firebox, working pressure being the same as for the three larger machines; it was very much a lightweight, 33 tons 18 cwt, 8 cwt lighter than the Great Northern As. Like all B&CDR locomotives this small goods engine was non-superheated and, as was the case with all the company's steam engines which survived until the UTA take-over, had been built by Beyer Peacock. In 1949 and 1950 I occasionally saw, and once travelled behind, No.14 on a Bangor passenger train, but the only time I ever saw either of the large engines at work was on the Main Line goods or livestock services. I have never come across any details of the performances of the Class Four locomotives; I wonder could William Robb give us any information.

## **BOOK AND VIDEO REVIEWS**

**Michael McMahon**

### **Irish Railways Past & Present (Volume 1). Michael H. C. Baker, Past & Present Publishing Limited.**

As I once contemplated a book on this very subject with this very title, this was going to be a worthwhile addition to my considerable library. Having over (I quote) "260 photographs in Black & White and Colour" I looked forward to a good informative read.

The first eyebrow was raised at the updated and untitled map on Page 2 which, I think, purports to be "lines still in existence at 1994", but leaves out Tralee-Fenit and Claremorris-Collooney while very strangely including New Ross to Macmine Junction and Killinick Junction to Felthouse Junction, closed 1912!

Photographic reproduction is very good, some scenes have three comparative photos with captions varying in detail.

A few of the captions and photographs require quite a stretch of imagination, but overall the end result is thought-provoking and informative.

The constant use of the term “MPD”, which in Ireland means Multipurpose Diesel, is irritating - please, authors do not use British Rail abbreviation terms for Ireland where they mean different things.

More careful proof reading could have avoided simple errors, e.g. Page 38 is Kingsbridge not Amiens Street; Page 99 surely those engines are a 121 & 141 not 2 x 121's; Page 109 Londonderry Waterside not Riverside.

These faults aside, the book is very good and a worthy addition to the thankfully ever-burgeoning Irish Railway bookshelf.



*No.85 at Poyntzpass, ready for the return of the “Mystery Train” of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1995. Local suppliers of refreshment were sceptical of advance warnings - until the train arrived! (C.P. Friel)*

**No.1 Merlin, C.P. Friel; No.2 The Derry Road, J.D. Fitzgerald; No.3 Slieve Gullion, C.P. Friel. Colourpoint Press.**

The first from Colourpoint Press - quite simply excellent - no - brilliant! Lets look at each briefly.

No.1 Merlin, C.P. Friel - 27 photos and a footplate diagram bring the life of this tremendous engine very clearly and concisely before the reader. Very clear, clean and easily understood text can easily educate the complete novice on steam matters.

The best (for me anyway) photograph is on Page 18(b) where No.85 storms up the bank to Kilnasaggart Bridge doing exactly what she was built to do!

No.2 The Derry Road, Des Fitzgerald - Containing many previously unseen photographs, this too is an excellent book which only whets the appetite for more and more.

Captions are good and informative, but space for a few spare lines on some pages could, I am sure be filled by some useful anecdotal information. The best photo has to be the CIÉ 141 engine on Page 9(b) - sorry steam men!

No.4 Slieve Gullion, C.P. Friel - The pride of the RPSI's fleet - sorry NCC men, but it has to be said. This fantastic machine (No.171) is very worthy of this detailed story. I feel that we should have a detailed history of all of our engines - not only in this form, but in a serious railway enthusiast format.

This story of No.171 gets similar treatment as No.85 (above) and my comments are very similar!

Congratulations from us all must go to the Johnston Team at Colourpoint Press who have clearly demonstrated their commitment to publishing on the Irish Transport theme.

It is up to you all to give them and the authors your support - buy several copies, they are fantastic gifts, and you will regret not doing so.

These books (all at 24 pages) are a must for anyone interested in Irish Railways.

### **Irish Railways In Colour - A Second Glance 1947-1970, Tom Ferris, Midland Publishing.**

Following in the footsteps of "Irish Railways In Colour 1955-1967" this very worthy book contains some excellent photographs. I did wonder what colour photographs could possibly be produced from as early as 1947; brilliant shots of the 800s are the answer!

Many varied subjects are covered, Narrow Gauge, Industrial, Railway Bus Services and tramways, through to what has to be the best chapter - Rhapsody in Blue!

Photographic reproduction is (in my copy anyway) a shade on the dark side, but I am happy to attribute this to the age of the negatives.

Tom Ferris has certainly encouraged those photographers with colour pictures to come forward and I hope that he continues his efforts. By the way, Tom, I am still looking forward to a whole big book based around that "Rhapsody in Blue" theme!

### **On The Move - Córas Iompair Éireann 1945-1955 - Míchéal Ó Riain, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin - £30.**

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of CIÉ is complimented by this 470 page work which gives a fascinating insight into Ireland's 'Modern Day' transport.

Twenty-four chapters deal with diverse subjects ranging from "Born in Controversy", "The Beddy Report", "The McKinsey Report" right up to "Three In One", the 1985 split into three separate business units.

Míchéal brings across clearly the struggle that CIÉ has had to make against the combination of politics, economics, trade unions and at times difficulties of its own making. Don't think that it is all a rosy picture Míchéal says it how it is and is critical where needed, giving a balanced viewpoint.

Nice features of the book are: a summary in heading form at the start of each chapter, and where specific quotes are made the author and source are detailed, saving considerable time using the comprehensive bibliography. Fergus Mulligan gets a wee mention, Míchéal describes on Page 25 how his description of a 2-week Cork Goods is the stuff of myth and legend - strange, I thought all Mulligan's work was that!



Mícheál Ó Riain writes at the end of his Preface "I hope this is a worthy effort at its rendition". I can certainly say it is, a most informative book, very well done.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Dear Editor,

Without a shadow of doubt the current edition of Five Foot Three is the best yet. It certainly is the most interesting and "exciting" issue that I have read. I would say your mix of history with "exciting developments" is just right and is what the majority of your readers would want. How wonderful it was (in many ways) to find an obituary of Bob Clements coming immediately after a great article on the upsurge of railways in Northern Ireland. And those great Recollections of Laurence Liddle ... long may he continue to reminisce.

Sincerely,

*Walter McGrath*

Cork

Dear Editor,

Reference my article in Five Foot Three No.41. I have now obtained a video, produced by some gentlemen in Comber, about the TT Race and entitled "Strictly TT". It clearly states that the accident which brought the TT Races to an end occurred in Church Street, Newtownards, opposite the Strangford Arms Hotel and just on the town side of the former railway bridge.

I am now satisfied that Conway Square was incorrect.

Yours sincerely,

*William Robb*

Belfast

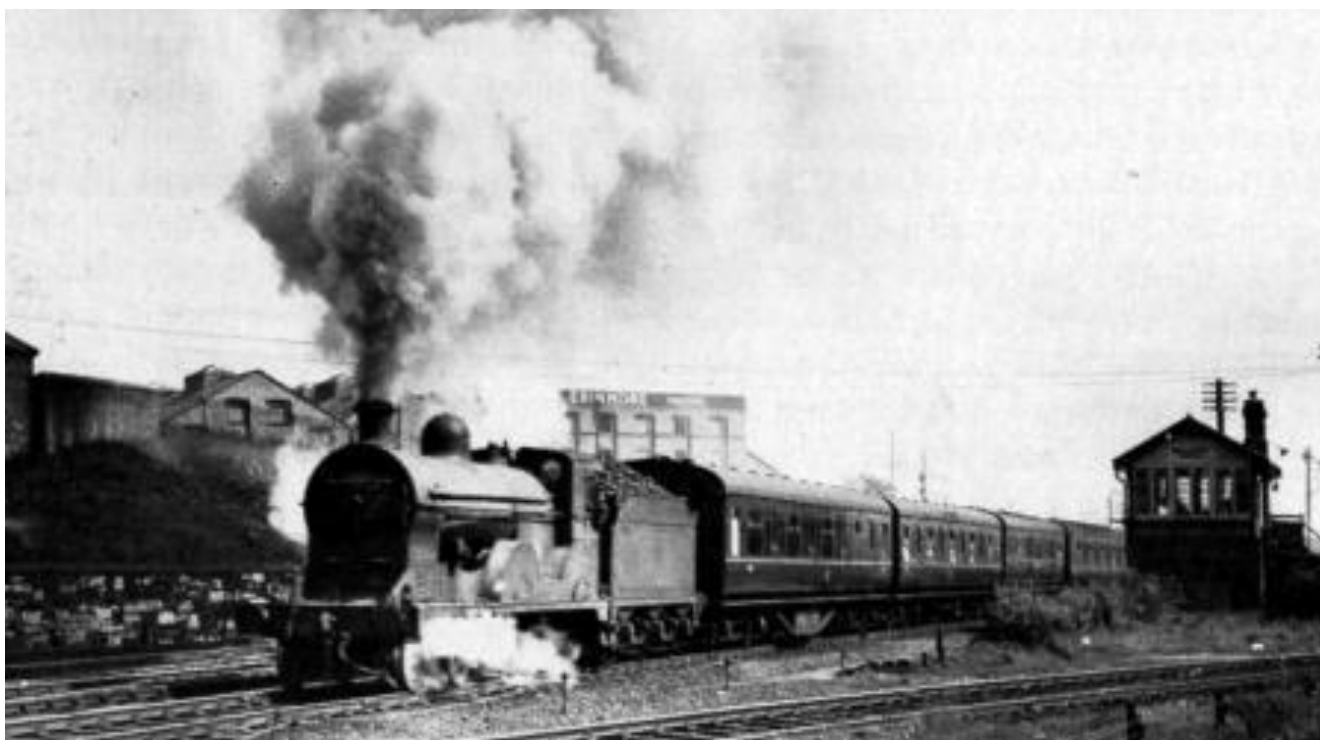
Dear Editor,

I'm grateful for the response from Laurence Liddle et al in Five Foot Three No.41 to my request for information about Great Northern matters. Laurence's recollection of a combination of a Q and an S double-heading out of Amiens Street early in 1959 is indeed correct; the date was 14<sup>th</sup> February, Ireland had played Scotland at Lansdowne Road in the afternoon (I have no note of the result - does it matter?) and the 18:25 down was made up of 12 bogies as far as Dundalk, say 380 tons gross. The engines were No.131 (driven by Tommy Rooney) and No.174 (Paddy Conlon). To Drogheda they were badly checked and did not exceed 60 mph, but ran creditably from there to Dundalk in 27' 38", attaining 43 at Kellystown and 70½ before Castlebellingham. Perhaps it's not unreasonable to hope that the combination of No.131 and an S may be experienced once more in the not too distant future.

I'm always interested in matters pertaining to the Derry Road and locomotive working thereon. On the face of it the U class was by no means the ideal engine - no real advance on the PP in boiler capacity - but I have to admit that my best running over this road was with No.68 (ex-205) on consecutive days (11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> July 1960) on the Lough Derg pilgrim train, i.e. the Dublin-Omagh which ran in summer as a lineal successor to the Bundoran Express. I neglected to get the names of the Portadown crew, but with 7 bogies, 212/225 tons, they did Dungannon-Omagh in 40½ and 40 minutes net (with a pw check outside Omagh) on the two days. The best work was probably a recovery from a hand staff change at Pomeroy up the bank to MP 26½ to 37 mph at the summit; before that there had been excellent

climbing up the bank before Pomeroy, averaging just over 40 mph up from Donaghmore.

There were some other features about that far-off Orangemen's Day which may be worth recalling. For me it started in Derry and ended in Portadown, with no less than five crossings of the Sperrins in between (all behind steam, for steam substitutions were of course rife that day). No.64 (ex-196, class U) had an 08:00 empty train to Strabane and special back to Derry; S No.61 (ex-173) gave us a lively run to Dungannon on the 09:40 from Derry, and then it was No.68 as described above to Omagh, and back to Portadown on an empty carriage train behind Q No.135, my only run behind one of the class on the Derry road, and not one to remember except in one respect - the train was not booked to stop at Portadown and did not in fact do so. Nevertheless the danger to life and limb in alighting was probably not as great as that which followed. The 15:00 Belfast-Derry was headed by No.62 (S2, ex-190, of sinister reputation which seemed only too likely to be enhanced). The driver, in triumphalist or possibly defiant mood which appeared, I'm afraid, to have been exacerbated by artificial stimulants, saw fit to steam the engine for some distance down the 1 in 100/72 from MP 26½ summit over the 30 mph restricted curves towards Carrickmore. A time of 2'49" for the 2.5 miles from MP 26½ (passed at 34 mph) to Carrickmore, and 7'29" for the 6.3 miles from the summit to the stop at Sixmilecross, are records I am glad to have no prospect of improving. After that it was uneventful to Derry, whence No.64 took the 19:00 through to Belfast. The run had one remarkable feature unconnected with locomotive performance. In the timetable current that summer the 17:00 Belfast-Derry, a BUT railcar train, shed its buffet car at Omagh to be returned to Belfast on the 19:00 up - in itself an unusual if not unique manoeuvre upon which Laurence Liddle might care to comment. On this occasion the 19:00 was of course made up of steam stock with which the buffet car's corridor fittings were incompatible; I was pleased to be amongst those summoned to their supper in archaic style along the platform at intermediate stops.



***Central Junction as it used to be. S class No.170 "Errigal" leaves for Dublin with the Tuesday Tourist Train in June 1964. (I.C. Pryce)***

Like Irwin Price, I should like to know a good deal more about the QLs, those engines of equivocal reputation. In theory they should have been the ideal engines for the Derry Road, with their big boilers,

no requirement for high speed, and incidentally a lower centre of gravity which might have been helpful on those curves. The fact that the Qs were preferred must say something about the bigger engines. I am sure that Irwin has put his finger on their Achilles' heel, if such a contortion is possible; any fouling of the already restricted ports and valves must have induced near-terminal constipation of the steam flow. Apart from this technical failing, they perhaps suffered, in reputation at least, from what we might call psychological disadvantages. Soon superseded by the S class in the top links, they had no clearly-defined role, unlike the Qs; they were called upon to deputise for unavailable S or S2s, but seem otherwise to have been employed on intermediate duties which would be unlikely to bring them to recorders' attention. Unlike the Qs which enjoyed an eleventh-hour revival (personified by No.131 and No.132) they faded from the scene too soon to attract a younger generation of enthusiast - I remember seeing, in 1959, only one somewhat comatose survivor (No.156, I think) and never travelled behind one. Why, by the way, was No.114 withdrawn as early as 1932?

Nevertheless, a determined trawl through such material as is available indicates that a QL in good order had quite a lot to offer. Bob Clements' even time run from Drogheda to Dublin is not to be despised, even with only 6 on. Elsewhere he refers (IRRS Journal 34, page 17) to a run of his on the Up Mail with No.113 piloting that marvellous engine No.174 with eleven bogies, when Drogheda-Dublin was covered in 30½ minutes. This seems to be as fast as anything the compounds did; even if it did not necessarily involve very high speed down Rush bank, No.113 must have done a fair share of the work, and the two engines must have been running at 70-75 mph on the give-and-take stretch of line from Laytown to Skerries. Cecil J. Allen dealt with Irish running in his Railway Magazine article for December 1930 and no fewer than four runs with QLs figure (as well as a couple of brilliant efforts with Qs). The numerical odd man out, No.24, appears in three of them, including one in which she worked eleven coaches, 345 tons, from Drogheda to Dublin in 36' 50", touching 69 at Donabate. On the 15:00 down Mick Russell, then the senior Dublin driver, had No.156 presumably in place of his regular engine No.172; he started slowly, with 270 tons, but reduced to 235 by slipping at Drogheda, reached 46 mph on the climb to Kellystown and 74 at Dunleer, and stopped at Dundalk in 61' 30" overall.

Perhaps it is now too late to retrieve much more information, and incidentally to retrieve the reputation of the QLs; they were nevertheless perhaps the best-looking of the Great Northern passenger engines, and deserve something better than oblivion.

Yours,

*Conrad Natzio*

Norwich

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**W.A.G. MCAFEE**

**W.T. Scott**

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The last link between steam and a chief mechanical engineer of a railway in the British Isles was severed this year with the death of W.A.G. McAfee. "Billy" McAfee was in the chair at York Road during the early years of the RPSI and through his kind and practical help many jobs were undertaken in the works which would have been beyond the infant Society. Much of this work was done as a goodwill gesture and cost the RPSI little or nothing. He tempered the youthful enthusiasm of Society members with practical common sense given through his good friend the late John McGuigan, then the RPSI engineer, to whom he would remark, "I like to see a few grey hairs on the committee."

Billy McAfee - always Mr. to his face - was a real gentleman to railway enthusiasts whose requests for information, work visits and footplate permits can really only have been a nuisance. Even after he retired and despite his wife's ill-health he travelled to places as far away as Londonderry and Coleraine giving talks about the railway. In 1994 he attended a gathering of railwaymen in Belfast - the oldest

NCC man present - and this was the last time I was to meet him.

Outside the railway he was involved in charity work and in this field was active in placing boys from the Masonic School in Dublin in public schools North and South after the Dublin school closed down. This task was time-consuming and involved much travel but was willingly undertaken.

In common with most senior railwaymen of his time, Billy McAfee knew and cared about his railway; a quality increasingly rare in these modern times.

# GREAT NORTHERN LOCO NAME WORDSEARCH

S	W	I	L	L	Y	D	E	H	E	E	S	K	N
S	L	I	E	V	E	D	O	N	A	R	D	L	O
L	U	I	A	N	O	C	L	A	F	R	N	K	M
L	G	D	E	P	E	R	E	G	R	I	N	E	A
I	N	N	U	V	Y	F	D	E	R	G	D	S	N
G	A	L	T	E	E	M	O	R	E	A	N	T	E
O	Q	T	F	L	I	G	M	Y	M	L	L	R	V
A	U	F	D	O	W	N	U	E	L	G	A	E	E
N	I	V	L	E	M	H	A	L	T	E	G	L	I
L	L	N	U	I	H	T	U	O	L	O	A	M	L
L	L	L	R	I	H	M	E	R	L	I	N	H	S
P	A	T	R	I	C	K	O	H	G	A	O	R	C
U	N	E	A	G	H	T	N	A	B	O	Y	N	E
A	R	M	A	G	H	G	U	O	L	R	R	A	C

In this puzzle are hidden the names of 27 Great Northern locos, as seen in the 1950's.

To find them you will have to read horizontally, vertically and diagonally - all in both directions! You will find that some letters are used more than once.

You will know that the GN had several locos named after loughs, but the word "lough" appears only once in the grid. Where a loco has two words in its name, these appear in the same line.

When you have found the 27 locos, there should be 37 letters left over. From them you can make the names of two missing locos - they are from the same class but one of the names may never have been carried! Lastly, with what's left, you should find the name of somewhere that all of these locos would have visited (further generous clue - it is two words).

Good luck !



*Readers of Steam Railway may have seen a similar photo - the little hump near the tunnel was rather crowded when the nameless No.171 left Whitehead to work the North Atlantic Express on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1995, her first public outing in the 1930s all-over black livery. (I.C. Pryce)*





*On a very damp Sunday morning No.461 pilots No.85 on the climb out of Cork on Day Two of the May Tour, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1995. (I.C. Pryce)*