

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Everyone interested in Irish railways can not but have felt extreme elation on hearing the statement of policy made in Dáil Éireann on November 27 last, regarding the future of internal transport in this country. Mr Sean Lemass - the Minister for Industry & Commerce - affirmed the Government's intention to retain public transport and stated that in so doing we must endeavour to preserve our railways as an integral part of the national transport system.

The Minister announced that it is proposed to give CIÉ, and in particular the rail section of the undertaking, an opportunity to prove itself capable of operating within its means. To this end, legislation will be introduced early this year relieving CIÉ of many legal obligations which have hitherto been binding on the undertaking with adverse effects. As this relaxation in some of the obligations will permit greater flexibility in the competition with private transport the Minister hoped that CIÉ would thereby succeed in gradually increasing their traffic and improving their general position. Consequently the Government proposes to impose a statutory obligation on CIÉ to operate the national transport system without loss. An annual State subsidy, however, will be made available over a period of five years to assist public transport in adapting itself to methods of working which will eliminate losses.

Are these proposed measures for the revitalisation of public transport likely to prove adequate to save our railways? Mr Lemass, in the Dáil, concluded that nobody could give a confident answer to that question. The re-equipment of the railways in Ireland, he agreed, was all but completed and, undoubtedly, they were eminently suited for the handling of heavy traffic. The Minister issued a warning, however, that this country could not afford to be handicapped by an inefficient and unduly costly transport system. He made it clear that in some branch lines he saw "no economic justification whatever". Now, if never before, will CIÉ have to demonstrate that railways can be operated without the financial results that have been all too recurrent in recent years. The future of the entire railway network in the 26 counties will shortly be the sole responsibility of CIÉ and the decision as to whether this network can be retained in its entirety or not devolves wholly on the Board. It is now for the public to decree by their measure of support, in word and deed, whether the railways in Ireland can be saved for years to come. We sincerely hope that this support will be forthcoming.

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The Committee of "The Irish Railfans' News" would like to take this opportunity of wishing all readers the compliments of the season. As is usual at this time of the year we would like to remind you that a friend of yours may not know of "The Irish Railfans' News". Will you please tell him about it? Better still, send us his name and address and we will send him a specimen copy.

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In response to a number of requests for information regarding current locomotive and train operation we are introducing in this issue a new feature - "Journey Jottings". These jottings will give brief notes

of recent journeys with details of trains used and noted en route. These will, in the main, reflect normal operating conditions, as far as possible, and we hope that you will find some tit-bits to interest you in this new feature.

News Section

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Transport Policy

In Dáil Éireann on November 27 last, the Minister for Industry & Commerce made a comprehensive statement of Government policy on internal transport in the light of the recommendations made by the Committee of Inquiry into Internal Transport in May 1957. He announced that the Government had decided that publicly-owned transport facilities for passengers and freight should be retained, in preference to services controlled by private operators, and that an attempt should be made to preserve the railways as an integral part of our national transport system. To make effective the decision to maintain the railways, measures would be adopted to gradually reduce the gap between revenue earned and the cost of railway operation and, thereby, make the whole of the transport undertaking capable of paying its way within five years. Under a new Transport Bill to be introduced early this year it is proposed to relieve CIÉ of many of its present legal obligations, thus enabling it to operate in future with greater flexibility in its competition with private transport. The national transport undertaking will be placed in a position to pursue an aggressive commercial and rates policy, which will allow CIÉ to quote lower rates to those merchants who give them all their traffic. Capital liability of CIÉ will be reduced by transferring to the Exchequer their liability for £11,600,000 on Transport Stock. CIÉ will also be relieved of the common carrier and other, as yet unspecified, obligations imposed by old Acts. A statutory direction will be given to the undertaking to keep open railway lines and stations unless it is quite satisfied that there is no prospect of their economic operation within a reasonable time and the Board will also be given authority to close lines or stations as it may think fit without recourse to the Transport Tribunal and without the present obligation to provide a substitute service. It was the Government's desire that the responsibility for taking decisions to reduce railway services should rest on the Board. Under the proposed legislation, however, CIÉ will be obliged, in future, to operate without loss, but as it was appreciated that the undertaking could not quickly adapt itself to methods of working which would eliminate losses, arrangements were being made for the payment by the Government of a fixed annual subsidy as a grant-in-aid over a period of five years. CIÉ will be expected to work within the limits of its own revenue plus the subsidy during the period, but on its expiration will have to carry on without State assistance.

Annual Report

The CIÉ annual report for the year ended 31st March 1957 shows a loss of £1,723,209 on the year's working as compared with £1,625,542 in the previous year. The loss for last year includes a provision of £1,471,700 for depreciation and an amount of £982,000 is included in the capital account in respect of renewals and replacements. The loss in railway working of £1,013,667 shows a welcome decrease of £209,555 attributable mainly to increased fares. The report warns, however, that fares and charges have now reached saturation point. Passenger traffic receipts increased by over £105,000 while goods traffic receipts fell by over £317,000. The latter was due mainly to a decrease in cement carried although carriage of cattle and beet increased by comparison with the year ended 31st March 1956.

Turf-Burning Locomotive

Since our last issue, this loco has continued its trials on the Dublin - Cork main line but to date it has not been reported working any service train other than an empty wagon special. When observed, quite recently, the locomotive was painted in a dull grey-blue livery with the number CC1 on front and sides.

Dieselisation Progress

Since our last issue, delivery of the order of 12 B class 960 hp Sulzer locomotives has been completed. The last arrival - B112 - has just been painted in Inchicore and is now in traffic. To date of writing only 31 of the 34 C class locomotives on order have been delivered and the last of these arrived in November. This last locomotive, C231, has been painted in a green livery with light green waistband and numerals - a great improvement on the silver livery on the earlier locos. Construction of the 19 E class 400 hp Maybach DH locos has now been almost completed in Inchicore and up to E410 has already been observed in traffic on shunting duties in Kingsbridge while some of the others are employed in the North Wall marshalling yards. On November 18, the running sheds at Inchicore were closed to steam locos and such motive power as was formerly based there has been transferred to Broadstone, which depot is now the principal steam running shed of CIÉ in the Dublin area. Part of the former running shed in Inchicore has been converted into a wagon building shop while a further part houses some of the diesel railcar sets. For the time being, however, some steam locos remain on shed at Inchicore awaiting disposal.

Railcar Modifications

Further to the nine AEC railcars mentioned in our last issue as having been fitted with suburban bus-type seating, another car, No.2647, has since been similarly treated. This latter railcar, the victim of the fire near Dundrum station on August 7 last and also the accident at the same place on December 21 (see later) had undergone extensive reconditioning before its recent brief return to traffic. It may be of interest to mention that railcar units 2625 and 2638 used on the main line services have been painted experimentally with yellow and black "zebra" stripes on the front roof panel above the driving cab. This will enable permanent way workers and crossing keepers to identify more easily the approaching green-painted railcars.

Locomotives For Sale

Since September last a number of redundant CIÉ steam locos has been put up for public auction in Dublin. On September 20 last the following 5 locos in working order, complete with tenders, were thus auctioned: 86 (4-4-0); 391 and 395 (2-6-0); 445 (0-6-0); 502 (4-6-0). At the time of writing some of these locos are still at the North Wall awaiting shipment. On December 12 eleven further locos were auctioned comprising 8 complete with tenders and 3 tank engines as follows: 107, 135, 158 (0-6-0); 313 and 314 (4-4-0); 397 (2-6-0); 586 and 595 (0-6-0); 34, 36 and 41 (2-4-2T). Of these all except 135, 586 and 595 were still in Inchicore on December 16. During September last also the boilers of the locos listed hereunder were put up for auction:

4	147	269	336	433	556	656
9	160	295	358	444	605	666
14	163	299	369	446	614	667
57	175	305	370	500	623	702
60	192	320	403	544	631	802
61	202	321	405	548	635	Argadeen
87	241	330	406	550	641	Jumbo
88	242	333	407	553	643	7C
103	243	334	432	555	645	6C

In addition to the above the following 4 locos are reported to be in process of being cut up: 259, 291, 633 and 638, while there are a further 22 standing semi-derelict in the sidings at Inchicore:

20	184	345	455	602	661	701
65	328	374	543	603	672	710
167	331	387	561	651	674	712/3

Although it is quite possible that these latter may not be destined for scrapping for some time.

Limerick Junction Layout

A recent track alteration in Limerick Junction is worthy of remark in that it enables non-stop trains to run from Cork to Limerick by this route. This has been accomplished by the insertion of a crossover and turnout in lieu of the diamond crossing where the connection from the down line to the 'down' platform crossed the up line.

Rolling Stock Developments

Construction has advanced in Inchicore on the new four-wheeled 30' TPO vans, referred to in our April 1957 issue and at date of writing the first seven have already been put into traffic. They are similar in design to the existing four wheel heating and luggage vans and are also, similarly, in an unpainted stainless steel finish. On their sides they bear the standard TPO postage notice, in Gaelic and in English, in yellow lettering on a grey enamelled background plate and they are being numbered from 2962. It has also been learned that a number of bogie TPO vans will be constructed shortly in Inchicore. Standard new wagons are being put into traffic since November as their construction progresses in the Limerick wagon works. In all it seems that about 100 of these ordinary goods wagons are being built as up to number 18571 has already been seen in traffic. In December Diner 838 emerged from the works after extensive reconstruction which included exterior flush steel panelling and complete interior redecoration with glazed and veneered divisions giving a splendid modern appearance.

Self-Heating Carriages

Five former GSR side corridor, compo coaches have recently been fitted by CIÉ with twin cylinder horizontal Victor diesel generators to supply 220 volt alternating current for heating and lighting purposes. The coaches, Nos. 2089, 2094, 2096, 2097 and 2098, have been thus fitted experimentally to ascertain whether alternative heating can successfully be provided for DE hauled trains on branch lines whose light density traffic would not justify a separate heating van. The generators, slung beneath the floor of the coaches between the bogies, are reported to have been only moderately successful to date. Two of them are in use on the branches of the CB&SC Section to Clonakilty and between Drimoleague, Skibbereen and Baltimore respectively.

GNR GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Dissolution Of The GNR

The Great Northern Railway Board, formed jointly by the Dublin and Belfast Governments on 1st September 1953 as successor to the Great Northern Railway Co. (Ireland), is to be dissolved on 30th September 1958. From that date the GNR, which has maintained its independence since 1876, will be divided and CIÉ will take over the sections of line in the Republic while the UTA will operate the sections in Northern Ireland. No details have yet been announced as to how the Dublin - Belfast main line, which crosses the Border, will be operated under the two administrations but it is anticipated that the rolling stock of the GNR will be apportioned between them, probably on a mileage basis, while CIÉ will take over the GNR bus services in their entirety.

Closures Continued

Following the closure reported in our last issue of 114½ miles of cross-border secondary lines on October 1, passenger services were withdrawn from the remaining sections of the lines affected. These sections - all within the Republic of Ireland - are: Dundalk - Clones (39½ miles); Cavan - Clones - Glaslough (33¼ miles) and the branch from Ballyhaise to Belturbet (4 miles). The GNR have provided alternative road passenger services in the area although the lines mentioned remain open to handle goods traffic. This is being worked by two goods trains from Dundalk, one for Castleblayney and the Carrickmacross branch and the other for Clones, with in addition daily goods trains from Clones to Glaslough and Cavan, the latter of which also works the Belturbet branch. Railcar C2 is in service for parcels traffic between Dundalk and Cavan. This car was recently overhauled in Dundalk works and at the same time all seats were removed to provide for her utilisation on this service. During the Christmas period an extra parcels train was run from Dundalk to Cavan to cope with the heavy postal traffic. Loco 200 with 2 bogies and 4 vans was noted on this special on December 18.

Oldcastle Branch

In October the GNR made application to the Transport Tribunal for permission to terminate the passenger services on the branch from Drogheda to Oldcastle (39½ miles). Details were given of proposed alternative road services which, in addition to making rail connections at Drogheda, would give connections into and out of certain of the Board's bus services at Navan and at Kells. The branch, which has been twice threatened with closure in the past two years, is to be retained for the handling of goods and livestock traffic. The line is also responsible for a large portion of the total GNR sugar-beet traffic during the season. It is understood that the closure to passenger traffic may be early this year.

Dundalk Works

In the recent announcement of Government policy for public transport, the Minister for Industry & Commerce - Mr Sean Lemass - confirmed that the GNR works would shortly become a separate company under the title of the Dundalk Engineering Works Ltd. In addition to tendering for contracts both at home and abroad the new company would continue to maintain the railway rolling stock of the Board until 30th September 1958. After this date, however, the Works would have to rely on its contracts as the railway maintenance will then be carried out by CIÉ in Inchicore and by the UTA in Duncrue Street. The Government has, meanwhile, approved measures which will guarantee the capital of £500,000 for the new company. The decision to withdraw railway work has resulted in considerable local protest, in particular from the workers who allege that the Works is not likely to survive on contracts without serious redundancy.

Erratum

In our last issue we inadvertently stated that a connection was given out of the Belfast - Enniskillen express to Bundoran. This connection was, in fact, out of the 17:00 from Belfast and Bundoran line passengers therefore had to leave Belfast before travellers to Enniskillen.

Locomotive Notes

Consequent on the closure of the cross-border lines and extending dieselisation many GNR steam locos have become redundant. Already locos 24, 45, 77, 120, 126 and 129 have been scrapped and a number of others are standing semi-derelict in Dundalk, although this does not necessarily indicate that they will be scrapped in the near future. They include:

5	26	41	90	115	128	157	198
6	30	42	93	118	130	160	"Lough Gill" (SL&NCR)
17	35	75	106	119	139	166	
25	36	89	113	124	144	169	

Railcar Reshuffle

As railcars C1, C3 and almost all the 1936 and 1938 articulated cars are in Dundalk Works under repair, railcar A has been transferred from the Omagh link mentioned in our last issue to the Warrenpoint branch where it is in use on the lighter workings. As yet no further new railcars of the 700 series have gone into service, although two more - 708 and 710 - have emerged from the works on trial runs.

CDRJC

Ballyshannon Branch

On December 2 the Committee applied for permission to withdraw all train services from the 15½ mile branch from Donegal to Ballyshannon and announced their intention, if this application is successful, of seeking an abandonment order for the line. Alternative road passenger and road freight services will be provided to replace the four return railcar workings on the branch per day. No regular goods train is worked on the line at present, as it is possible to handle the traffic by attaching a wagon to the railcar workings. It has been announced that the closure will not take place sooner than two months from the date of the Committee's application.

UTA GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Bangor Line

On November 11 a new timetable came into force on the 12¼ mile Bangor line and on and from that date Kinnegar, Marino, Cultra and Craigavad were closed completely. At the same time the number of calls at Victoria Park and Ballymacarrett Halt were reduced from 13 to 8 and 5 to 3 respectively and all short workings from Belfast to Hollywood abolished. On Monday - Friday there are now 45 instead of 48 departures from Queens Quay but only one train fewer to Bangor. The overall time for a stopping train, formerly approximately 30 minutes, is now 25 minutes on all trains except those which call at Ballymacarrett or at Victoria Park, for each of which an extra minute is allowed.

Derry Line Diesel

On Friday, December 20, an exhibition run for the press was made on the latest addition to the Authority's already extensive diesel railcar fleet. The first pair of new cars - numbers 36 and 37 - emerged from Duncrue Street Works in October and underwent extensive trials between Belfast and Derry on a 1 hour 45 minute schedule - 25 minutes faster than the present steam timing. These trial workings, which acted as a relief to the 10:55 down and 15:15 up expresses, carried passengers and are the more remarkable in that they included five stops on route. The cars, rebuilt from the 1951 "Festival" stock, are each powered by a 275 hp Leyland under-floor engine and have a leading car, guard's compartment and seats for 48 2nd class passengers. They are to operate in five car sets made up of 4 units with an intermediate refreshment car, the total seating accommodation being 18 first and 208 second class. Tables are fitted throughout and meals will be served to passengers wherever they are seated. The sets, unlike the railcars on the Bangor line, are finished in Brunswick Green - the standard livery for steam rolling stock. The new sets are said to be capable of attaining 90 mph and will be able to haul P wagons if required.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

November 16/18: Dublin - Cork - Bantry & Back

On this fine Saturday afternoon, while 322 shunted in the carriage sidings, B108 headed the 14:25 punctually out of Kingsbridge made up of HV, 5 bogies (one a buffet) and two 10¼ ton four-wheel

vans. At Newbridge A16 was noted on an up goods working, while an arrival at Limerick Junction - 3 minutes early - revealed A52 with 3 bogies and a HV on the 12:30 perishable Dublin - Cork. The rear van of the 14:25 was detached for forwarding to Limerick by the 16:40 railcar. After a punctual start and a maximum of 72 at MP 138, Cork was reached in 1 minute under schedule. That evening A6 took 6 bogies (including 353 buffet) and HV out of Glanmire Road on the 18:30 Rosslare Express while later B103 was seen working the 21:15 night mail comprising HV, 2 TPOs, 3 bogies and 3 four-wheel vans. On Monday November 18 a lightly loaded 3-car diesel (2607, 1351, 2608) was on the 12:15 Albert Quay to Bantry. C218 with 3 6-wheel coaches (21M, 107M and 63), 3 wagons and van was observed on the connection to Skibbereen for which two PW vans at the rear of the railcar were detached. On the return trip C214 with 6-wheel van and a bogie compo 2089 made the connection from Baltimore into the same railcar set which had, however, a better passenger complement. The 18:00 Cork - Dublin the same evening was a 4-car diesel set which although very punctual in departing was harassed by PW checks to the tune of 17 minutes. As always this train was well filled, particularly out of Limerick Junction.

December 6/8: Dublin - Waterford - Limerick - Dublin

The 18:00 Kingsbridge - Waterford was made up of HV, 4 bogies (including buffet) hauled by A45. At Athy B108 was crossed on the 17:00 ex Waterford with HV, 2 bogies, 2 4-wheel vans and 2 empty bogies in rear. Arrival was 4 minutes late due to station work on route. On December 7 Loco 304 on the 10:40 for Macmine and Wexford left with a locked 6-wheel compo 545, bogie compo 489, a 4-wheel van and a cattle wagon. 15 minutes later 3-car diesel (2631, 1371, 2626) with a 4-wheel van departed for Limerick with some two dozen on board. At Cahir the Waterford goods was crossed - B110, 14 wagons and van - while at the Junction the Waterford passenger train was of similar formation to the 10:55. The up and down mid-morning Cork line trains with locos A47 and A45 respectively were met as usual. An interesting point was that their formations included 3 consecutive brake seconds, 1906-8, and the up train had SIX 4-wheel luggage vans - three either end! A four-wheel van was attached to the Limerick train by the station pilot C209 and, after arrival in Limerick, A42 was noted with 2 4-wheel vans and 5 bogies on the 15:20 for Dublin. The 15:15 to Sligo was a crowded 2-car diesel (2610, 2619) towing 2 6-wheel vans. On Sunday December 8 the return to Dublin was made by the 18:00 ex Cork which was delayed at Thurles as, due to relaying on the down road between there and Templemore, the down 18:15 ex Dublin had to first be passed on the up road to bring in the pilotman. Both trains were 4-car diesel sets which, between them, work the entire Sunday service on the main line during slack periods of the winter.

November 30/December 1: Dublin - Omagh - Derry - Belfast - Dublin

Precisely to the second of time the 14:30 steamed out of Amiens Street on November 30 with 210 in charge of its 6 bogies and 2 vans, and stopped in Portadown at 17:14, but a few seconds late. To a light train, however, the schedule is unexact. The 14:30 was, for a Saturday, poorly filled despite a fair influx at Goraghwood off the 16:22 ex Warrenpoint formed by 187 and 4 bogies. The Derry connection at 17:30 from Portadown was a crowded 4-car diesel (604, 188, 115, 611) with, in particular, many passengers for Dungannon and Strabane. At the former a 6-car diesel - one of the new sets - with 2 'Y' vans was crossed, while at Omagh 202 and 2 bogies arrived on the 17:30 ex Derry, and at Strabane a 3-car diesel (612, 95, 607) was on the 19:00 up. On Sunday the 10:00 from Derry Waterside had but 4 bogies and a bogie van but even so was lightly loaded throughout. Not so, however, the 10:00 down - 99, 9 bogies and van - with which we changed crews at Ballymoney. Running was brisk to convert the 4½ minutes late start here to a 1½ minute early arrival in Belfast. That evening 207 and 7 bogies comprised the 18:40 to Dublin. After a slow start the train was stopped at Dunmurry and worked wrong road thence to Lisburn due to work in progress on the raising of the underbridge at Derriaghy halt where loco 7 was in attendance with a ballast train. Very little of the time lost by this manoeuvre was

regained and the Dublin arrival was not until 21:53½. Principal item of interest noticed on the run was Railcar A on the Newry connection at Goragewood.

Feature Section

THE SUGAR-BEET TRAFFIC ON CIÉ

Sugar is such a commonplace commodity in every household that it rarely brings to mind the annual transport problem known as the “beet campaign”. Yet the period from mid-October to December each year sees a traffic peak as important as the August Bank Holiday weekend. This year the total area under sugar beet was almost 69,000 acres, an increase of 10,000 acres on the 1956 season. The beet is produced by some 27,500 growers scattered throughout the length and breadth of the twenty six counties, although, as is to be expected, certain areas for various reasons have a better yield than others. A large proportion of the yield is transported by rail from the growing areas to the sugar factories at Carlow, Thurles, Mallow and Tuam and thus one can appreciate that the services operated must be rather ramified. Let us take a glance at the handling of a head of beet from the time it is unearthed.

First the beet is “topped” and then loaded into lorry or farm cart for transport to the railway station where it is reloaded into coal trucks. No haphazard business either, for each station has an allotted daily quota of laden wagons which may be despatched to the factory to enable Comlucht Siúcre Éireann - The Irish Sugar Company - to keep a regular constant supply of beet each day. The wagon with our beet is therefore attached to the appropriate beet special or, where there are few wagons, to the regular goods train. The laden beet specials travel, where possible, to arrive at the factory at hourly intervals throughout the night. They can then be unloaded and the wagons turned round for the return specials of empty wagons to the growing centres. The CIÉ loco leaves the laden wagons in the marshalling yard alongside the main line to be shunted to the weighbridge as required by the CSÉ locos. The wagon is weighed both into and out of the factory by the Sugar Co. to arrive at the net weight of beet and at the same time a sample is taken from each wagon to test for sugar content. Unloading is carried out by the powerful water guns which wash the beet from the wagons into a central trough leading into the factory where the sugar is extracted. The pulp remaining after processing is returned to growers for use as feeding-stuff. A few of the wagons are unloaded by crane as, although this method can only deal with about four wagons per hour against the 12-14 wagons per hour cleared by water, some beet is thus accumulated for use on Sundays when no supplies are delivered. During the harvesting period the factories work a 24 hour day including Sundays.

Each factory receives its supplies from a given area and as the Mallow area embraces two highly prolific beet growing centres - West and East Cork - it has the heaviest traffic. Mallow is supplied by stations west to Listowel and east to Dungarvan, on each of which lines there is a nightly special train serving these and intermediate stations. It is, however, the CB&SC Section which comes into its own during the campaign. Every day five empty 19-wagon trains leave Albert Quay, three to Clonakilty and two to Ballinascorthy. In return a similar number of up trains work the laden wagons into Cork, across the City Railway and into Glanmire for forwarding to Mallow. 4-6-0T engines of the 463 class were reported engaged on these specials initially but two of the C class Bo-Bo locos have since come into service on the line. On the Courtmacsherry branch there are no less than three specials each way per day. Loco 552 is working between Ballinascorthy and Courtmacsherry this year and is shedded at the latter point. On the other side of the county the East Cork stations also hum with beet-loading activity. Three specials per day are required although often these trains are of 30 wagons or more hauled by a

J15 class loco. Locos 140 and 262 have been seen on these workings. To lift these trains over the bank from Cork heavier motive power is required and here 402 with, occasionally, 801 and a couple of Woolwich 2-6-0s - 380 and 388 - are in use. Rear end assistance is given to the five trains per night ex Cork and another Woolwich 2-6-0 is usually employed as banker. As the Mallow factory is sited on the Tralee line all these trains must reverse at Mallow station for the 1½ mile run to the beet yard. CSÉ has one diesel and three steam locos at Mallow factory but one of the steam locos is seldom used.

Thurles is fed from the heavy beet-growing area on the South Wexford line, from New Ross and stations to Thurles via both Limerick Junction and Fethard. This pattern of longer hauls is worked into Waterford by steam locos whence it usually goes forward to Thurles behind a DE. Waterford shed, with as many as 10 locos in steam, thus presents an animated scene from 17:00 onwards. Most of them are J15 class 0-6-0s - 102, 116, 118, 224 - but there are also a few D class 4-4-0s - 304, 314 - in use. Specials also run from Birr and from Mountmellick - 138 was on the latter in November - to the Thurles factory which is located on the down side of the main line at Thurles Junction. A spur exists permitting trains from Clonmel via Fethard to run direct into the marshalling yard without fouling the Dublin - Cork main line. CSÉ has a diesel and three steam locos at this factory although normally only two steam locos are in service.

Carlow factory is at MP 55, just 1 mile north of Carlow station. Beet from Dublin, off the GNR, and from Kildare is worked in from the north. The Kildare special, in addition to clearing the intermediate stations, works wagons from Grangemellon siding (MP 47¾) and roughly twice a week from the Ballylinan branch which is, apart from this traffic, dormant. Into Carlow from the south beet comes across the Palace East - Muine Bheag line - another line dormant except for occasional passenger specials and the beet, amounting to three specials daily, during the season. These trains load at stations on the D&SE Section and also at Ballywilliam, Ballyling siding and Borris on the branch. Locos 149, 200 and 354 have been reported working beet specials in the area.

Although the smallest of the four factories, Tuam has not only the widest collection area but also the two heaviest beet-loading stations on the system - Ardahan and Tullamore. Each of these accounts for over 30 wagons per day, but, even so, can not match West or East Cork or South Wexford in bulk. Specials for Tuam come from as far south as Ennis and east as Liffey Junction and Portarlinton. During the 1957 campaign the G class DH loco has been withdrawn from the Banagher branch and replaced by a steam engine working the combined beet and goods train. While insufficient to justify a special train, we learn that the beet railed off the West Clare section on the daily goods shows a great increase on last season's loadings. This increase is, in fact, generally the case as it is in the Tuam area that the greatest increase has been evident this year. Among the steam locos involved in the area were 168, 187, 198, 592, 597 and 613. At the factory CSÉ have two steam and one diesel loco, although in practice the diesel - delivered in September 1956 - handles most of the traffic. Loco 1 is stored while a third steam loco, No.3, is partially dismantled.

As we write the 1957 beet campaign - probably the last in which steam will predominate - has drawn to a close and it is now certain that it has been a record year. It is to be hoped that CIÉ will continue to foster this very important traffic and that we can look forward to many similarly successful seasons in the future.

THE DUNDRUM COLLISION, 23 DECEMBER 1957

The closing days of 1957 were, unfortunately, marred by the rear end collision of two diesel railcars on December 23 near Dundrum, Co. Dublin. The trains involved were the 17:20 Bray - Harcourt Street, comprising railcars 2628 and 2647 with an intermediate coach (2166) and the 17:40 Bray - Harcourt Street made up of railcars 2644 and 2639 also with an intermediate coach. The accident occurred between MP 3½ and 3¾, just over a ¼ mile before reaching Dundrum station, when the 17:20 was

stopped to avoid a cow which had strayed on the line. Just as this train was restarting it was struck in the rear by the 17:40 which had entered the same section and, travelling at an estimated 40 mph, was unable to stop on rounding the curve and sighting the 17:20. In the collision the two railcars - 2647 and 2644 - were extensively damaged as the frame of the latter ran under that of 2647 derailing its rear bogie and destroying its rear cab. The cab and leading first class compartment - fortunately empty - of 2644 were completely devastated and the driver lost his life. Four of the twenty passengers in the two trains were slightly injured. All traffic on the line was brought to a standstill and an alternative bus service calling at all stations - an exceedingly awkward and circuitous route - was operated until single line working on the down line between Dundrum and Foxrock was inaugurated by the 11:25 ex Bray on December 24. To permit this the down line was slewed slightly to clear the wreckage of the two railcars and the crossover at Foxrock, normally used only by race trains to the bay platform, was clipped to allow up trains to use it as a facing connection to the down line. This arrangement continued until Saturday December 28 and normal schedules were adhered to. During that night and the morning of Sunday December 29, with A2, the two steam cranes, and C216 in attendance, the line was cleared.