

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 6

January 1960

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DONAL KELLY: DIED 16TH OCTOBER 1959

Just after the publication of our last issue the Committee of "The Irish Railfans' News" was deeply grieved by the sudden accidental death in London of Donal. Although his name has not appeared as a member of the committee since 1955, when he left Dublin to take up residence in London, he has been in constant close touch with us and was responsible for many of the items and ideas in these pages. Indeed, to Donal we owe the conception of the idea from which this publication sprang. In him the Committee and all who knew him have lost not only an invaluable colleague but also a lively and sincere friend.

EDITORIAL

The Compliments of the season to all our readers. With this issue "The Irish Railfans' News" enters upon its sixth year of publication and at this juncture the Editor and the Committee would like to thank you, our readers, for your help both in the form of contributions and suggestions. The questionnaire of October 1958 has proved invaluable in providing details of what you look for in each issue. As a result of it we have made a few changes during the year and more will be evident in this issue. It has been decided that, generally, illustrations will not be included in future issues in order to devote the space to our "Station Survey" sketch-plan. The latter feature and the "Loose Links" paragraph, which starts with this issue, have been directly prompted by your suggestions. "Journey Jottings" has been curtailed slightly during the year but is not being discontinued. In this issue the accent in our features is on freight traffic and industrial railways as a tribute to the late Donal Kelly whose last suggestion for "The Irish Railfans' News" this was.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Railway Magazine

October From Erin to New England (Photos of 3L and 5T arriving at Boston)

Trains Illustrated

November The Cavan & Leitrim (Letters)

IRRS Journal

Autumn The Castlederg & Victoria Bridge Tramway
Spectacular Timetables on the South-Eastern
Irish Railways in 1858 (1)

News Section

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Success Of New Policy

Speaking in Dublin on November 19, the Assistant General Manager of CIÉ stated that the new policy adopted in January 1959 had given CIÉ "a most auspicious start on the road to providing a self-sufficient transport service". Passenger receipts, both rail and road, had shown an increase of about £70,000 over the previous year. Efforts made to encourage a fresh interest in travel in Ireland had been most fruitful. Mystery tours by rail and organised educational tours by teachers and schoolchildren had proved to be immensely popular. Plans had been completed to carry 100,000 children on these latter tours in the coming spring. The "package deal" drive for new freight business was progressively proving very successful. Negotiations successfully completed with 214 firms had secured additional business amounting to £200,000 per year, while negotiations were in hand with a further 119 firms. The extra business secured had more than offset the loss of business due to the slump in livestock traffic and the severe fall in demand for ground limestone. Both these traffics, however, were now showing clear signs of recovery and the full benefit of the additional business secured by "package deals" would soon be felt.

£35,000 Grant

A grant of £35,000 is to be made available to CIÉ for the establishment of a development and research unit. This unit is to investigate the application of the most modern freight handling techniques, including the use of containers, for road-rail co-ordination. The unit will also investigate the modernisation of permanent way work.

Annual Report

CIÉ's loss in the year ended 31st March 1959 amounted to £1,798,917, compared with £2,588,074 in the previous year, according to the annual report published on December 3. Although rail passenger receipts for the year showed an increase of £129,601, the net result of railway working was a loss of £1,169,000 - almost £149,000 more than the previous year. This was mainly due to bad weather which adversely affected excursion and seaside traffic, together with a serious decrease in the number of livestock carried by rail. Coal traffic by rail further declined, although beet traffic carried showed an increase of 18,243 tons. The report, stressing that the year under review was transitional in that it included six months operation on part of the former GNR system, points out that the new policy launched in January 1959 could not have a significant effect on the year's results. It stated that it will take considerable time before "these and other contemplated measures" can be expected to show effective results.

Future Of Branch Lines

Official comment emanating from a number of sources within the past two months would seem to indicate that there is little hope for the retention of many CIÉ branch lines. On November 19 the Assistant General Manager stated in Dublin that CIÉ was now satisfied that it had the answer to the branch line problem. Experience gained in areas where rail services had recently been withdrawn had shown that the changeover from rail to road was possible, in many instances without loss of traffic. The traders approached by CIÉ in Leitrim and Cavan had expressed the opinion, without exception, that the new road services were superior to the old rail services. It was now recognised that CIÉ was merely substituting one type of transport for another and that the new road services were just as much an

integral part of the system as heretofore. Speaking on "Ireland's Internal Transport Policy" in Cork on November 20 the Minister for Transport & Power stated that it was an unarguable fact that we had an almost fantastic surplus of transport facilities in this small country. He emphasised that the present 17% subsidisation of public transport was, therefore, senseless, and for this reason, that the annual subsidy to CIÉ would end in four years. Finally, on December 16, the Chairman of CIÉ stated in Limerick that a radical reorganisation was taking place in CIÉ. Although many economies had already been achieved, and revenue had increased, a great deal remained to be done. Dr Andrews again said that "railways must be made viable". To do this CIÉ had to discard some of the branch lines and would, almost certainly, have to discard more of them and give more economic and more satisfactory services to the public by road. He did not think CIÉ presented an inanswerable problem organisationally. Modern methods of management, techniques of operational research, together with the goodwill and co-operation of the staff, would make a success of CIÉ. He gave warning, however, that unpopular decisions would be necessary before success could be achieved.

Signalling Progress

The preliminary work for the installation of electric colour light signalling between Amiens Street and Howth Junction on the Dublin-Belfast line of the former GNR has been put in hand by the CIÉ signalling department. An underground power cable has been laid throughout the 4¾ mile section and it is understood that installation of the new signals will commence as soon as the necessary equipment is available. An unusual level crossing has been brought into use in recent months just south of the Wexford North Station. The crossing, which carries the main Dublin road from the new Slaney Bridge into Wexford, is unique so far as this country is concerned in that it is unprotected by gates or any form of barrier. A rail track circuit system has been installed, automatically operating flashing beacons which warn road traffic of any train movements approaching the level crossing. Another level crossing development is the installation of a continental type barrier crossing at Dundalk near the site of the former square crossing. Work is at present in progress on its erection.

Rolling Stock Developments

The five new brake second coaches, mentioned in our last issue, were completed in Inchicore Works during November last. They have been in traffic since the end of that month and are numbered 1909 - 1913. Construction of five of the ten new bogie vans has just been completed, but to date none of them has appeared in traffic. Repairs have recently been completed on railcar 2644 - the second victim of the Dundrum collision of December 1957. This railcar has been repainted with the now-standard large numbers on the front. Side numerals have been provided at both ends as on all coaching stock repainted within the last two months.

Dieselisation Progress

Two new items which escaped mention in our last issue concern the replacement of steam motive power by diesel-electric on two further branch lines. Since the commencement of the winter timetable last September a C class locomotive has been working the 11 mile branch from Roscrea to Birr, while another DE loco now also works the daily mixed train from Limerick to Foynes - the only service provided on the 9½ mile branch from Ballingrane. A more recent development is the fitting of ten C class locos with electrical connections to enable them to supply current for train heating. This arrangement is in connection with the "self-heating carriages", described in our January 1958 issue, which have now had the diesel generators removed.

New Diesel Locos

During October last, CIÉ invited tenders in the public press for the supply of 50 further diesel units. These are intended to replace the diesel locomotives transferred since May last to the sections of the former GNR now in CIÉ ownership, and to provide for dieselisation of the remaining CIÉ steam

workings. Tenders for these 50 units were invited in the following categories:

- 1) 15 mixed traffic bogie diesel locos of not less than 800 hp with top speed of 70 mph.
- 2) 14 shunting and transfer diesel locos of not less than 400 hp with top speed of 45 mph.
- 3) 14 sets of diesel engines and transmission equipment of not less than 400 hp suitable for installation in locomotives similar to those mentioned at (2) above.
- 4) 7 shunting diesel locos of not less than 160 hp with top speed of 25 mph.

The final date for receipt of completed tenders is January 20.

CIÉ LOCAL NEWS REPORTS

Cork Quay Siding

On December 9, Dáil Éireann confirmed the Transport Act 1950 (Additional Powers) Order 1959, which empowers CIÉ to operate railway lines on the North Quay, Cork. The lines in question consist of a double track siding connecting Glanmire Road goods yard with the recently reconstructed Penrose Quay, work on which has been completed since the previous report on it in our issue of April 1959.

SL&NCR Railcar

The ex SL&NCR railcar B, acquired by CIÉ in October 1958, finally emerged from Inchicore Works late in November after extensive overhaul. This duo-directional Walker/Gardner 59 seat railcar, now repainted in CIÉ livery and renumbered 2509, has been allocated to the Limerick area and since November 24 has been engaged on the Nenagh-Limerick local service as forecast in our July 1959 issue.

Curragh Siding

Track alterations have been carried out on this ½ mile siding which branches off the main Dublin - Cork line at MP 27½ to serve the Curragh Racecourse. The long loop which extended almost from the junction with the main line to the Curragh Racecourse has been removed and the small signal cabin at the latter point dispensed with. Although the siding is now single track it still divides into two lines on entering the racecourse station to serve both sides of the long island platform.

Mystery Trains Finale

Not until the end of October last did CIÉ finally conclude their highly successful series of summer "Mystery Trains" from Dublin. Further to the list given in our October issue, a mystery train ran to Avoca on Wednesday October 6, followed by another on Wednesday October 13 to Dundalk. Then as a finale to the series, a day excursion from Dublin to Cork for only 17/6^d was advertised for Sunday October 25. This attracted no less than 1,250 people which necessitated 3 special trains being run. Finally, in response to public demand in Cork another 17/6^d day excursion was operated in the reverse direction on Sunday November 8. This attracted over 1,150 passengers for whom 2 special trains were run. Before closing our account of mystery trains for 1959, we should mention that the list of trains in our October issue had one notable omission - the mystery train on July 22, which ran from Amiens Street to Cavan and back. The journey was made via Inny Junction in each direction.

Pullman Downgraded

An underframe from one of the ex GSR Pullman dining cars has recently undergone a transformation at the Dundalk Engineering Works. It has been converted into a flat wagon to be used for the conveyance of Heinkel mini-cars from Dundalk, where they are manufactured, to Dublin. The wagon, which can accommodate 12 cars, weighs 24½ tons.

Locomotives Transferred

Further ex GNR locos have been transferred off their parent metals since our last issue. Early in November loco 145 (0-6-0) was allocated to Athlone shed and during the past months has been working the Kildare-Tuam (via Clara) beet special as between Kildare and Athlone. During November, locos 199 (4-4-0) and 203 (4-4-0), which had already worked on the D&SE suburban line to Bray during last summer, were again re-allocated to Broadstone shed for similar suburban duties. They were later joined by locos 148, 179, 180, 181 and 184 (all 0-6-0). Since their transfer these locos have mainly been engaged in working passenger and parcels trains between Westland Row and Dun Laoghaire Pier. As loco 143 (4-4-2T) has already been operating on the Amiens Street-Bray line since August last the total of ex GNR locos now attached to Broadstone shed has increased to eight.

Lifting Of Lines

The current position in the dismantling of the closed sections of CIÉ is as follows:

Harcourt Street Line: All trackwork has now been lifted between Harcourt Street and Dundrum (MP 3) and, except for one girder in each which carries a gas main, the underline bridges in this section are being removed. The three span bridge over the Grand Canal was removed at the end of October and work is at present concentrated on the bridge at Ranelagh Station. Since our last issue the double line junction at Shanganagh - where the Harcourt Street line joined the Amiens Street-Bray line - has been replaced by a single facing connection off the up line from Bray to Amiens Street. Shanganagh Junction Cabin has been semi-permanently switched out and Killiney cabin opened in its stead. The latter has been used only on days of exceptional traffic in recent years.

Tullow Branch: Considerable progress has been made in the lifting of this 34¾ mile branch line since our last issue. All trackwork has now been removed to within a short distance of Naas station (MP 2). This latter station, which has served as a bus office since the Tullow branch closed to regular traffic in 1947, has, since the end of November, been closed completely and all bus traffic in Naas transferred to a depot in the centre of the town. If dismantling continues at the present rate, the entire branch should be lifted within the next month or so.

Cavan & Leitrim Section: With the exception of approximately 3 miles of the Ballinamore - Dromod section from Dromod to a point beyond Dereen Halt, and the 1½ mile long extension from Arigna Station to Derreenavoggy Collieries, the entire trackwork of the 3' gauge Cavan & Leitrim system has now been removed. In addition to those mentioned in our last issue, loco 12L is at present being cut up in Dromod and when lifting of the remaining short stretch of track is completed the three surviving locos - 2L, 4L and 3T - are likely to be scrapped as well. Lifting of the Ballinamore - Belturbet section was completed in October and the two locos (4T and 10L) isolated in Belturbet were cut up there. In addition to loco 3L and coach 21L, loco 5T was bought by, the "Lady Edith Society" and all three are now preserved in "Pleasure Island", Wakefield, Massachusetts. Coaches 5L, 7L and van 16L are in Dromod and are the only coaching vehicles remaining.

Belturbet-Ballyhaise: Although the lifting of the 3' gauge line into Belturbet has been completed, little progress has been made in dismantling the 4 mile standard gauge branch thence to Ballyhaise. The roof of Belturbet station has been removed and work is now in progress on lifting sidings in the station yard. Lifting of the entire branch should be completed in the near future.

Hill Of Howth Tramway: The lifting of the Hill of Howth Tramway is virtually complete. On removal of the Summit - Baily section, no further use was made of car No.11. The remaining track to Sutton Cross loop was lifted by road, as was also the entire section from the Summit to Howth. At the end of 1959 only the section from the car shed at Sutton station to Sutton Cross and a very short length at Howth remained. Tram No.10 has been purchased by the Tramway Museum Society and was removed, partly dismantled, from Sutton on January 5 for transport to Crich, Derbyshire.

Ballinrobe Closure

The 12½ mile branch from Claremorris to Ballinrobe was closed to all traffic on and from January 1. CIÉ are operating an alternative service of one bus each way per day in replacement of the two daily trains. The bus service is being provided by the diversion of the Westport-Longford bus to serve Ballinrobe in each direction instead of running direct from Castlebar to Claremorris. Alternative road freight services are also being provided.

Kenmare Closure

The 19¾ mile Kenmare branch passed quietly on to the 'closed' list on and from January 1. On the last day of operation - December 31 - the service was worked by loco 188 (0-6-0) hauling six-wheel compo 185M, six-wheel second 45M and six-wheel van 9. On the 11:00 mixed working from Headford two six-wheel vans - 242A and 236A - belonging to the Signalling Department were attached, as well as 7 wagons and a goods brake van. On the 13:25 out of Kenmare the train was the same, in inverse order, with 5 wagons and goods brake van. Due, no doubt, to the inclement weather there were less than two dozen spectators to see it leave. CIÉ are providing alternative road services in much the same timings as the trains withdrawn but the buses will continue from Headford Junction to Killarney and vice versa. Patrons of the Great Southern Hotels at Kenmare and Parknasilla will in future be conveyed by station wagon from Killarney. It is ironical to note that the 11:15 bus from Killarney to Kenmare provides connection at Headford out of the 10:30 Mallow-Tralee train - the heretofore "broken" connection which prevented rail passengers off the Rosslare Express, off the 06:30 from Dublin direction, or from Cork from travelling thus to Kenmare.

Cavan Lines Closure

Goods traffic ceased to operate on 98½ miles of line centred on Clones, on and from January 1. The lines involved had all previously been closed to passenger traffic and the last regular trains ran as follows: Inny Junction-Cavan (24¾ miles), 25/1/1947; Dundalk-Clones-Cavan (54¾ miles) and Clones-Monaghan (12¼ miles), 13/10/1957; Inniskeen-Carrickmacross (6¾ miles), March 1947. Passenger specials have run on all these lines since closure but no one of them covered the entire 98½ miles until December 19 when a special two-coach railcar - C608N/C609N - carried a party of 63 IRRS members and friends on a farewell tour Dublin - Dundalk - Carrickmacross - Inniskeen - Clones - Monaghan - Cavan - Mullingar - Dublin. On the last day of operation - December 31 - railcar C1 worked the parcels train Dundalk - Cavan and back. En route it crossed the last train from Carrickmacross - A16, 15 wagons and van - at Inniskeen. In Clones loco 161 was preparing to work the last goods train into Monaghan and back. C1 departed from Cavan on her last journey to Dundalk amid exploding detonators while the last train on the former MGWR line from Cavan to Inny Junction was being made up by loco C219.

Forthcoming Closure

At the end of November last, CIÉ gave notice of its intention to close to all traffic, as from 1st February 1960, the 39½ mile branch line from Farranfore to Valentia Harbour. Although in the current winter timetable this branch has a service of one mixed train and one passenger train in each direction daily, it has been stated by CIÉ that the whole passenger traffic on the branch could be carried in two bus loads each day on an average basis. Similarly three lorry loads would suffice for the freight traffic. The rail passenger service is being replaced by one daily bus in each direction as from February 1, while existing lorry services in the area will be extended and augmented as required from the same date to cope with the freight traffic.

UTA GENERAL NEW REPORT

Reopening Of Halts

In response to repeated appeals the UTA has decided to reopen the halts of Marino and Craigavad, on the Belfast (Queen's Quay) - Bangor line on and from January 4. On Mondays to Fridays 5 down and 7 up calls are made at Marino while on Saturdays there are 4 down and 5 up calls. At Craigavad only one train each way stops every weekday. Prior to their closure on 10th November 1957 the down calls at these halts were: Marino 20 (22 Saturdays), Craigavad 14 (17 Saturdays) although some of these were conditional stops. The halts at Kinnegar and Cultra, closed at the same time, are not being reopened.

Diesel Developments

With the introduction into service of power car No.62 the Multi-Purpose railcar construction programme is complete. Railcar E of the former GNR has been acquired by the UTA from CIÉ and was transferred from Dublin to Belfast early in January.

Lisburn Locals

Early in December, UTA twin railcar set No.6/7 with intermediate coach 528, which has been working on the Belfast - Larne line, transferred to the ex GNR section and is in use on local trains between Belfast and Lisburn. This is the original three-car unit introduced by the UTA in 1951 and, unlike the later cars, has AEC, not Leyland, engines. A portion of the locomotive shed at Adelaide is being set aside for the housing of diesel railcars.

Belfast Auction

On December 16 an auction was held in Belfast at which the following items were put up for sale: GN locos 121, 125, 157 (4-4-0), 108, 109, 119, 160, 162 (0-6-0), ex NCC locos 100 and 103 (2-6-0) and ex SL&NCR locos "Lough Erne" and "Lough Melvin" (0-6-4T). The two last-mentioned engines were sold to the UTA for £700 each and it is expected that they will be used as shunters on the Belfast docks. Most of the other engines were sold for scrap although 119 has since been observed in steam at Adelaide. In addition to the above, 25 passenger carriages, 57 wagons and three horse boxes were auctioned at the same time.

Aldergrove Experiment

Plans are at present in hand for the adaptation of Aldergrove RAF station - situated on the up side of the Lisburn-Antrim line, south of Aldergrove station - for use as a civil airport. In view of the possibility of rail connection being provided, a special test train was run from Belfast to Aldergrove and back last November. The time for the journey was just over 30 minutes.

Liftings

The dismantling of the UTA ex GNR branch lines to Markethill and Banbridge has been almost completed - in the latter case the short spur to Newforge siding is being retained. Lifting of the line from Portadown to Tynan is also complete to within a short distance of Portadown. Work is in progress on the lifting of the Newtownbutler - Omagh section as reported in our last issue.

Single Track To Trew & Moy

On the Portadown-Derry line the double track section between Portadown Junction and Trew & Moy (10½ miles) has been singled. Single line working was instituted between Annaghmore and Trew & Moy on November 15. The remaining section - Portadown Junction to Annaghmore - was completed on December 13. Track layout at Trew & Moy has been somewhat simplified and a crossing loop has been provided at Annaghmore.

Maysfields Diversion

The line from East Bridge Street Junction, Belfast, to Donegall Quay has been partly re-sited due to the construction of a new bus station at Oxford Street/Laganbank Road. To reach the tunnel to Donegall Quay the line now follows closely the contour of the boundary wall of Laganbank Road.

CDRJDC

Closure

The CDRJDC announced on October 30 that its entire railway system including the Ballyshannon branch and the Strabane & Letterkenny Railway (85½ miles) would be closed on and from January 1. This, the most extensive narrow gauge system remaining, brings to an end travel on the 3' gauge in Co. Donegal, and leaves the West Clare Section of CIÉ as the last surviving narrow gauge railway in Ireland other than industrial lines. The CDR was also a pioneer in the introduction of diesel rail traction, No.7 railcar (scrapped 1949) which went into service between Strabane and Killybegs in September 1931, being the first regular diesel service in the British Isles.

On the last day of operation there was, at first, little to suggest that this was not just another routine day. The 11:10 goods from Stranorlar to Strabane hauled by loco 11, "Erne", left on time with 14 wagons and van. The 11:10 railcar Strabane to Killybegs was worked by car 12 and had on board a fairly large railway enthusiast fraternity. This car, hauling wagon 281, worked the 16:05 Killybegs-Strabane, the last train out of Killybegs, and was given a seven detonator salute on departure. A similar sound sped car 18, trailer 2 and wagon 28 on its way out of Ballyshannon on the 16:00 to Donegal, the last up passenger train on the branch. The same car made the return working at 18:10 from Donegal to Ballyshannon and returned light. The excitement mounted, however, for the last train on the Finn Valley section from Strabane to Stranorlar. On arrival of car 19 and van 28 - the last train from Letterkenny - at Strabane, loco 5 "Drumboe" backed five coaches, Nos. 56, 17, 53, 13 and 15, into the platform to make the last train to Stranorlar. At 19:32, this departed to an ear-shattering explosion - detonators had been placed under almost every wheel of the entire train and also along the line out of the station. Calling dutifully at each station and halt en route, Stranorlar was finally reached at 20:22, to the anticipated fusillade of detonators, and passenger services on the CDR were at an end.

Outside the station were standing the four CIÉ buses - P31/4/5/6 - painted in the CDR red and cream livery and bearing the CDR crest, ready to take over the replacement services the next day. These services are being run in conjunction with existing CIÉ bus services in the area. The Strabane - Stranorlar section of the railway is to remain open to goods traffic for a period of about a month while the Strabane-Lifford railway bridge is being made suitable for road traffic.

LOOSE LINKS

- On October 15, ex GNR BUT railcar No.904, hauling brake second 1905 made a trial run from Dublin to Cork and back.
- A sale of property belonging to the SL&NCR was held at Manorhamilton on November 4 when all the remaining station buildings, houses and sheds were sold.
- Pre-war bogie TPOs 2950 and 1M have recently been completely repainted and were in traffic during the Christmas period.
- Restaurant Car C401N appeared in traffic during December repainted in CIÉ green livery - the first of the former GNR dining cars to be so treated.
- Following track alterations at Sligo station a number of colour light shunting signals have been brought into use.
- The first instance of an ex GNR dining car in use off its parent metals, on a CIÉ train, occurred on

December 19 when 268 was worked on the 12:45 special from Westland Row to Galway.

- An unusual train composition noticed recently near Westland Row was loco 625 (0-6-0), HV, 2 suburban “Park Royals”, ex GNR 268, 3 wagons, loco A34, 2 wagons and brake van - some mixture!
- Railcar 2601, repainted in October last, has had its original upholstery replaced by the standard green first class and maroon second class moquette.
- UTA 552 ex 88, the first and so far the only ex GNR diner to be repainted in UTA livery, has appeared in traffic.
- A59, with illuminated headboard, worked the all-in, non-stop opera train from Westland Row to Wexford on October 28.
- A welcome improvement to the Dublin bus guide since January is the inclusion of details of suburban rail services to Howth, Drogheda and Greystones.
- On January 6, CIÉ announced the introduction this summer of a 15-day “Rail-Rover” priced at £6 - second class.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

November 7: Dublin - Kildare - Ballylinan & Back

On the ‘dot’ of time loco A59, with 7 bogie coaches, a bogie van, HV and LV, pulled out of Kingsbridge No.1 platform with the 10:40 Dublin-Cork. Although admittedly the train tared only 205½ tons, A59 ran to such a purpose that Kildare (30 miles) was reached in 36½ minutes - 5½ minutes early!

While in Kildare some of the morning up line “procession” was observed as follows: 09:00 Cork-Kingsbridge - 4-coach diesel railcar; 09:20 Galway-Westland Row (via Portarlington) - 3-coach diesel railcar (two cars of which originated in Westport at 08:10) towing two “conflats”; 08:00 Tralee-Kingsbridge - 3-coach diesel railcar; 05:00 Limerick Junction-Kingsbridge (the “Rambler Goods”) - A28 with 13 wagons and van. On the down line there was only the 12:40 Kingsbridge-Cork - A45 with 5 bogies, 3 wagons and HV. In Kildare four 0-6-0s were in steam: Nos.171, 258, 588 and 606.

Through the courtesy of CIÉ the writer travelled onwards on the footplate of BC 35 - the Kildare-Carlow beet special - which left at 13:46. Loco 171 was hauling 20 laden and 5 empty beet wagons and 8 other wagons containing such items as cars, tractors and general merchandise. As this special replaces the regular goods train it is required to work both beet and goods.

At Kildangan, reached at 14:10, a 25 minute stop enabled the 5 empty wagons to be exchanged for 6 laden ones and, without calling at Kilberry siding which serves the Bord na Mona peat moss factory, Athy was reached at 14:57.

This being Saturday, BC 35 was scheduled to work the 4¾ mile branch to Ballylinan for beet. This remaining section of the old Athy-Wolfhill colliery railway never had any regular passenger or goods services and is now closed completely, except for the thrice-weekly beet specials in season and trains to and from the Asbestos Cement Company’s siding at Barrow Bridge (¾ mile). At 15:48, 171 steamed out of Athy with 10 empty beet wagons and 2 wagons of merchandise (detached at the Cement siding) and a brake van. There are four level crossings - named Carlow Road, Fortbarrington, Drimroe and Ballylinan - on the branch and as all are unattended the train crew must open and close the gates. Hence the journey from the siding to Ballylinan took 43 minutes and the return trip, with 7 laden wagons and van, 48 minutes. Two laden covered wagons were picked up at the Cement siding and Athy was reached at 18:42 where loco 255 (0-6-0) on our opposite number - BC 36: Carlow-Kildare - was shunting.

Here the writer bade farewell to the loco crew and joined the 17:00 Waterford-Dublin: A10, two bogies

and HV, which left on time at 19:17, having crossed the Dublin-Waterford of similar formation. The spectacle of four trains simultaneously in Athy was an interesting, although not, during the beet season, an unusual one. Some sprightly running was brought to nought by signal stops totalling 7 minutes at Cherryville Junction and Inchicore but, despite this, only 2 minutes behind schedule.

(For the above "Journey Jottings" we are indebted to Mr N.J. McAdams.)

STATION SURVEY

Carlow

The town of Carlow was, at quite an early date, linked to the Irish railway system as the Great Southern & Western Railway opened their first section thence to Dublin on 4th August 1846. Neither did Carlow long remain a terminus as on 14th November 1850 the nominally independent Irish South Eastern Railway extended the line from Carlow to Bagenalstown and Kilkenny. On 11th December 1854 the Waterford & Kilkenny Railway completed the line indicated in their title and there was thus a through connection - although, of course, no through trains - from Dublin to Waterford.

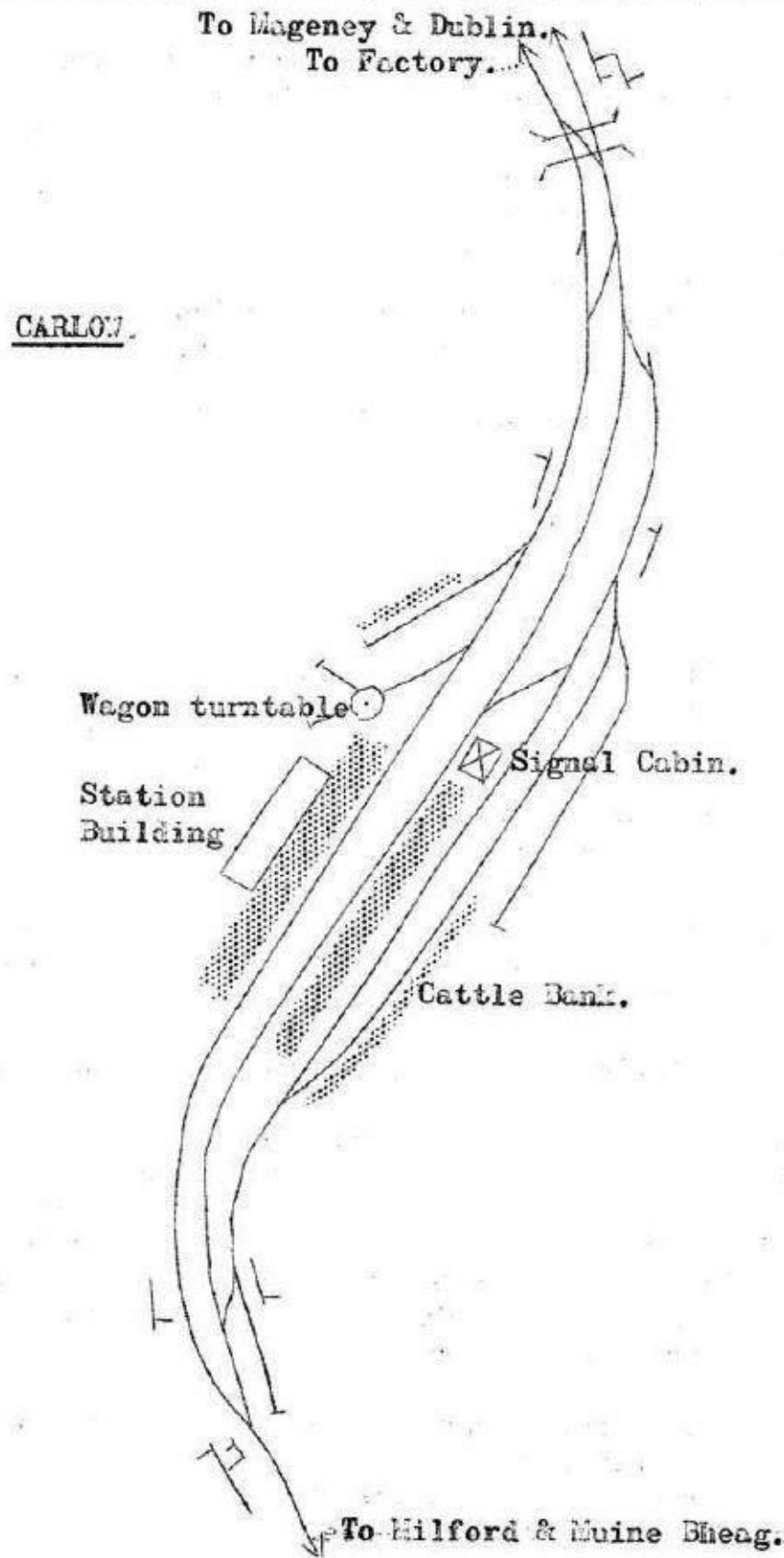
Carlow station is very symmetrical in layout as can be seen from the sketch plan. The station building stands on the up platform while the down platform is backed by a high stone wall which effectively conceals the goods loop behind. The cattle bank and an oil store are on the outer loop and an extra sidling diverges at its north end. Two short sidings trail off the up loop in the passenger station and the wagon turntable on one of these gives access to two goods bays for unloading sundries or for transfer of goods to road vehicles.

One of the most important events in the history of Carlow was the establishment in 1926 by Comhlucht Siúicre Éireann (the Irish Sugar Company) of a factory for the production of sugar from sugar-beet. This factory is situated close to the railway about 1 mile north of the Station. This factory brings an amount of traffic to the railways throughout the year but during the "beet campaign", from mid-October to early January, a concentrated peak of traffic is experienced. Each of the factories - at Thurles, Mallow, Tuam and Carlow - is allocated a certain "growing area" from which beet is railed by goods and, more usually, special trains to the factory. The Carlow area embraces the D&SER from Wicklow to Wexford, the line from Macmine through Palace East to Carlow, north to Kildare and beet from Dublin off the former GNR lines. To handle these trains there is a six road marshalling yard on the up side of the line close to the factory and beet trains from the south are worked to the beet sidings on the second line which parallels the main running line out of Carlow station. Trains from the north can be run directly into the beet sidings on a crossover controlled by a key on the Carlow-Mageney ETS. The wagons are worked into the factory by one of the two CSÉ 0-4-0 Ruston & Hornsby diesel shunting locos which have displaced the three steam locomotives formerly in use.

In the winter timetable Carlow has two passenger trains in each direction every weekday, up at 09:02 and 18:53 and down at 10:38 and 19:41. In summer an extra midday train runs each way. Two regular goods trains each way serve Carlow: the through Dublin-Waterford goods and a Kildare-Kilkenny pick-up goods. The former operate by night and, indeed, cross in Carlow at 01:30 while the latter runs down by day and up during the night. During the beet season some alterations are made to accommodate the specials. These specials are of interest in that two work over the Palace East-Muine Bheag line which has no traffic at any other time of the year, except an occasional special passenger train. To the north the Athy-Ballylinan branch similarly comes to life and the thrice-weekly beet trains are the only workings of any sort on this line except for goods wagons worked the ¾ mile to the Asbestos Cement Company's siding.

As a prominent centre for GAA games, Carlow attracts quite a number of special passenger trains on Sundays. These necessarily vary according to the participants but occasionally cause the opening of the

Palace East-Muine Bheag line. However, it is on goods and particularly beet traffic that Carlow mainly relies for its prominence as a railway town.



Feature Section

THE RAILWAYS OF BORD NA MONA

Bord na Mona was established in 1946 to take over the production of peat - frequently in Ireland called turf - for both domestic and industrial uses. This followed the successful experiments carried out by its predecessor, the Turf Development Company. The Board, having acquired over 100,000 acres of bog land, initiated a development programme covering 34 bogs, all of which should be in production this year. The estimated totals of all areas when in full production will be 1,000,000 tons of sod peat and 3,000,000 tons of milled peat per annum. About half of the sod peat and most of the milled peat produced will be used in the Electricity Supply Board's power stations. 750,000 tons of milled peat will be reserved for the production of briquettes while the remaining sod peat will be sold as domestic fuel.

All of the bog areas now in production operate railway systems to a total of 255 track miles; 246 miles of 3' gauge and 9 miles of 2' gauge. Each bog is served by a railway system of fairly standard layout. This consists of a main line from the power station or disposal point running along the centre of the bog parallel to the cutting trenches. These lines are generally laid with 35-60 lbs per yard rail, in some places purchased from the Clogher Valley Railway or the Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway after closure. Every half mile or so branches diverge from the main line and run at right angles to it. From these are laid the temporary branches running parallel to the cutting trenches, where the wagons are mechanically loaded. These temporary lines are laid with rail weighing 30 lbs per yard and are frequently moved about the bog as turf cutting proceeds. In practically all cases metal sleepers are used. There are, however, sections of the main lines having wooden sleepers and sand ballast.

All Bord na Mona trains are worked by four-wheel diesel-mechanical locomotives of which the Board at present owns 164. Almost all of these are from Ruston & Hornsby and are of either 13, 20, 40 or 48 hp. There are also two non-standard locomotives: a Whitcombe and a Ruhrtaler. In 1949 three turf burning steam locomotives - Nos. LM43/4/5 - were delivered by Andrew Barclay of Kilmarnock (Nos. AB2263/4/5) for use on the Portarlington system. These are 0-4-0 well tank locos: cylinders 8½" x 12"; wheels 2' diameter; boiler pressure 180 lbs per square inch; tractive effort 5,527 lbs. They present an unusual appearance with their long chimneys fitted with spark arresters. They are at present stored in the Cushina shed, near Portarlington, having been taken out of use some 5/6 years ago as they were found uneconomical on fuel.

On many of the systems there is a varied collection of "railcars" ranging from modern-looking four-wheel covered cars seating about 12 and painted in a chocolate and cream livery, through four-wheel "motorised wagons" and 4/8 seat "toast-racks" to three-wheel rail-scooters. At the bottom of the scale there are even unmotored three-wheel rail cycles. The railcar stock is 46 but this includes only the larger cars. Of the 2,293 wagons several types are used according to the type of turf produced and the discharge facilities available. Generally speaking there are 8 cubic metres capacity four-wheel and 16 cubic metres capacity bogie wagons with slatted sides for sod peat. These are found in end-tipping, side-tipping and drop-side varieties, while the milled peat wagons are of necessity fully panelled. There are a few passenger coaches. At Portarlington there is a special bogie coach for parties of visitors while at Timahoe - one of the Allenwood system bogs - there is a "Shift Wagon" constructed by mounting a bus body on a bogie wagon frame. Other vehicles include twelve 1,200 gallon oil tank wagons, some water tank wagons and 459 bogie wagons for transport of rails. There is even an ambulance coach at Boora and a Fire Wagon, numbered appropriately 13, at Timahoe.

Perhaps the most interesting systems are those which comprise several bogs and serve the ESB power stations at Portarlington, Allenwood, Lanesborough and Ferbane. The Portarlington system is the oldest

(1950) and at first was supplied by Clonsast bog only. In 1954 an extension which twice crosses public roads and passes underneath the CIÉ Portarlington-Athlone line at MP 45¾ was constructed and linked Clonsast with Garryhinch bog. The single line between the two is controlled by manually operated colour-light signals. A third bog, Derryounce, is now included in the system. The loco works is at Cushina, some 1½ miles from the power station and here Bord na Mona's first and only semaphore signal protected the gates but was recently reported out of use. Bogie wagons are used exclusively and are emptied by a travelling crane, situated on the power station roof, which lifts the wagon off its bogies and tipplers its contents into the bunkers.

Allenwood - opened in January 1952 - has a very large rail system to supply its needs. The bogs of Timahoe, Glashabaun and Ballydermot are linked by rail, the two last-mentioned being reached by a manually operated vertical lifting bridge spanning the Grand Canal. Colour light stop signals are provided on the railway and on the canal - an incongruous sight! Discharge arrangements are similar to those in Portarlington. The Lanesborough lines are remarkable chiefly in that Bord na Mona's largest railway engineering work - the 368' long, seven span steel girder bridge across the River Shannon - is used to join two of the three bogs developed.

The Ferbane system is the newest - opened in 1957 - and largest bog area and unlike the others mentioned above supplies milled peat. The nerve centre of the system is the headquarters works at Boora. The rail layout on this bog differs somewhat from the normal as it is in the form of a large rectangle with branches at three corners and also along two of the sides. The trackwork both at Boora and the other power station includes a diamond crossing with four "slips" or cut-off lines. On two sections there is double track one for laden and one for empty trains. A normal "six foot way" is not maintained and in places the up and down tracks diverge from each other for a short distance. An interesting feature is the working of trains on the right hand or "wrong" road in preference to conventional practice. At the power station, wagons, which are all of 16 cubic metres aluminium sheeted type, are emptied in a rotary tippler which is completely automatic in operation, wagons being fed into it by a continuous chain arrangement. At three places lines cross the public roads on the level at fully gated crossings while one line passes under the Tullamore-Clophan road by a concrete bridge.

Of the smaller systems two - Glenties, Co. Donegal and Kilberry, Co. Kildare - are worthy of remark in that they use the unusual gauge of 2 feet. Glenties produces sod peat for domestic purposes while Kilberry produces peat moss. Wagons at Glenties are of normal four-wheel type, but are side tipping, while at Kilberry they are of drop-side pattern for ease of unloading. Another feature of interest occurs on one of the smaller bogs - Lemanaghan - where the 3' gauge line has been carried across the CIÉ Banagher branch which is standard gauge. The crossing, which was brought into use at the end of March 1959, is worked in the same way as a normal road level crossing and is protected on both lines by signals. This mixed gauge crossing thus ranks with that at Ennis as the only such in Ireland. Lemanaghan is not, however, linked to the adjacent Ferbane system.

In conclusion it may be briefly mentioned that Bord na Mona have under construction two new briquette factories at Croghan and Derrinlough and are also arranging to supply a new ESB station to be constructed at Rhode from their Derrygreenagh bog. Thus it can be said that despite the closure of the Cavan & Leitrim and the County Donegal Railways the three foot gauge is expanding considerably in the service of Bord na Mona.

Bord na Mona Bog Systems

Portarlington	SP	Co. Offaly - ESB Power Station
Allenwood	SP	Co. Kildare - ESB Power Station
Ferbane	MP	Co. Offaly - ESB Power Station
Lanesborough	SP	Co. Roscommon - ESB Power Station
Turraun	SP	Adjacent to Ferbane but unconnected

Lemanaghan	SP	Co. Offaly - Crosses Banagher branch
Lullymore	MP	In Allenwood area but unconnected
Black Water	MP	Co. Offaly - East of Shannonbridge *
Derrygreenagh	MP	Near Rhoda - NW of Edenderry **
Lyrecrumpane	SP	Co. Kerry - South of Listowel
Ballivor	SP	Co. Meath - North of Hill of Down
Attymon	SP	Co. Galway - North of CIÉ station
Littleton	SP	Co. Tipperary - Near Horse & Jockey
Templetuohy	SP	Co. Tipperary - Near Templemore
Coolnagun	SP	Co. Westmeath - East of Inny Junction
T.A.E.	SP	Co. Mayo - West of Crossmolina
Glenties ***	SP	Co. Donegal - South of Glenties town
Kilberry ***	PM	Co. Kildare - Adjoins Kildare-Athy line

* Serves Nitrogenous Fertiliser Factory.

** To serve ESB power station at present under construction.

*** 2' gauge.

SP Sod peat.

MP Milled peat

PM Peat moss