

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 7

July 1961

No.3

Managing Committee:

L. Hyland (Editor)

B. MacAongusa

D. Seymour

B. Pender

EDITORIAL

During the month of June, the sharp contrast in the fortunes of Ireland's two transport administrations was sadly borne out by statements emanating from CIÉ and UTA. Dr Andrews, Chairman of the larger undertaking, when announcing a further cut of approximately £450,000 in the losses of CIÉ for the year ended 31st March 1961, emphasised that this was achieved notwithstanding substantial reductions made in certain provincial fares. The UTA on the other hand, had the unhappy task of announcing a 10% increase in all its return fares as from June 26 in a further attempt to arrest the steady deterioration in its financial position. This sad contrast once again reflects the fundamental difficulties under which the UTA must labour and the virtual impossibility of the Authority attaining self-sufficiency within the five year period ordained by statute, unless its financial obligations are completely rationalised in keeping with the potential earning power of a nationalised public transport concern operating in modern conditions.

Under the Transport Act 1958, CIÉ was relieved of two heavy obligations which had hitherto militated against all its attempts to attain solvency within a reasonable period. The "common carrier" obligations, under which CIÉ was bound to accept all traffic offered - no matter how uneconomic - and to charge uniform rates for all quantities of traffic, large and small, were finally repealed. Furthermore, the Board's annual liability of £632,000 for interest charges on capital completely unrelated to current operational activities was transferred to the Exchequer and CIÉ was only bound in future to service the debt incurred by public borrowing since 1950. In return for these reliefs CIÉ was obliged to pay its way before 31st March 1964. This has enabled CIÉ since 1959 to operate its services on a competitive commercial basis and to organise its finances on a footing which is comparable to that of its competitors. The results have been most striking. Losses have been reduced from almost £2,000,000 in 1958/9 to a mere £250,000 in the most recent period, while the staff morale - a most important factor in the successful management of any large organisation - has noticeably improved.

Under legislation in the North of Ireland Parliament, the UTA was, in 1958, also obliged to pay its way by 1964. The Authority, however, was not granted by Stormont the facilities bestowed by the Oireachtas on CIÉ and has had to make whatever progress it could within a far less flexible framework. Since the UTA took over the GNR undertaking within the Six Counties in October 1958 it has had to meet additional loan charges of some £315,000 mainly in respect of redundant capital of the former GNR Board. Thus, the UTA's financial position in relation to its trading activities is thrown completely out of perspective by wholly unrealistic loan charges which during the last period to 30th September 1960, amounted to no less than £524,192. The adverse effect of such a high charge on the trading balance must ultimately compel the Authority either to raise its fares or curtail its rail services still further, if a balance is to be restored in its overall financial position. The Authority, however, has no control over this hopeless situation. The interest charges have been settled by the Government of Northern Ireland and are maintained at this unrealistic level despite repeated requests by the UTA to remedy this position as quickly as possible. The UTA is furthermore bound by a rigid rates structure

and by all the antiquated “common carrier” obligations of which CIÉ has been relieved. Thus the Authority has no ready means of increasing its traffic and augmenting its revenue to keep in line with rising costs. Still higher rates and fares are therefore inevitable since they are the only source of increased revenue in the present circumstances.

The obvious remedy for the UTA’s plight - the writing off of the redundant capital - has not, alas, been applied by the Stormont Government. Demands for increased wages and improved conditions of service have, meanwhile, to be faced by the Authority and if these must be met in even substantial part the heavy additional costs involved will inevitably affect most adversely the nature and extent of the UTA’s services both rail and road.

-o-O-o-o-O-o-

We are indebted to Mr M. Belshaw for “Journey Jottings” and to Mr D. Mansfield for “Station Survey”.

REVIEW

Gradient Profile Sheets - drawn by Mr R.C. Flewitt

The first three sheets covering: 1) the D&SER; 2) the GS&WR main lines with several branches, and 3) the GS&WR secondary lines and the remaining branches, are now available. It is hoped that these will be the first of a series which will eventually extend to all Irish lines. The sheets are extremely informative and except for indifferent lettering - on sheet 1 only - are carefully drawn and attractive in appearance. They are produced by the “Dyeline” process and cost 4/3^d per sheet including postage and packing from Mr R.C. Flewitt.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Railway Magazine

May	The “Crewe Look” in Ireland (Plate) The Bray Line Irish Byways (6 photos) Sleeping Cars in Ireland (Paragraph)
June	Closed West Cork Lines (5 photographs) CDR Railcars for IOM

Trains Illustrated

April et seq	The Irish Scene
--------------	-----------------

IRRS Journal

Spring	Coaching Stock of the GNR Waterford as a Railway Centre Irish Railways in 1959
--------	--

News Section

CIE

Further Financial Improvement

At the end of May last, the Chairman of CIE announced that the provisional figures for the year ended 31st March 1961 indicate that CIE losses have been further reduced to "rather less than £250,000". This figure reveals a further substantial improvement in CIE's trading results when compared with losses of £709,006 last year and losses of £1,949,864 incurred during 1958/9. The improvement is all the more creditable when it is remembered that the Board suffered a loss of over £70,000 during the year ended March 31 last, due to the Dublin bus strike, and, in addition, bore the increased charges arising from higher wages and salaries without increasing rates and fares. CIE carried more freight by rail and road during the year than ever before and total revenue consequently increased by almost £1,000,000. It is most gratifying that railway receipts alone increased by more than £500,000. The Chairman of CIE attributed this "very significant and important advance" to the quality of the services provided which has enabled the Company successfully to increase its sales with great public satisfaction. He added that a relatively stable position in the railway system had now been reached and a basis had been formed on which the Board could plan for the future. Dr Andrews concluded that CIE were now fairly confident of being able to achieve the stipulations of the Transport Act of 1958 by providing satisfactory, efficient, and economical public transport services which will be paying their way by 31st March 1964.

Summer Timetable

The summer services which were introduced this year on June 12 - one week earlier than usual - include some deviations from the normal pattern. The most notable feature, perhaps, is the considerably increased service given to and from Limerick by connections with the Dublin - Cork main line trains at Limerick Junction. Compared with last summer 3 extra up and 2 extra down trains operate between Limerick Junction and Limerick thereby providing additional fast services between Dublin, Cork and Limerick. It may be of interest to readers that one of the additional new services to Limerick is provided by the down 08:55 Killarney express which stops at Limerick Junction instead of Mallow as in last summer, and subsequently runs non-stop thence to Killarney. Another interesting feature in this year's summer timetable is the extension of the morning up and evening down services on the Thurles - Clonmel branch into Waterford, thus making a day-trip from Carrick-on-Suir to Dublin possible. Suburban schedules on the Cork - Cobh section have been radically altered - not without arousing protests - and, although less trains are now provided, the services have been speeded up, mainly by the elimination of stops at intermediate halts. Two extra Sunday trains are provided this summer between Cork and Cobh and one between Cork and Youghal. Services on the Macmine Junction - Waterford line have been retimed to enable the full daily passenger timetable to be operated by the one railcar set. This has the effect of altering the former 11:45 Wexford - Dublin train to 10:00. Substantial accelerations - to the tune of 15 minutes each - have been made in the up Day Mail from Galway to Dublin (now at 15:45) and the evening trains to and from Sligo, while minor cuts in time have been made on certain trains on the Mallow - Tralee, Limerick - Galway, Limerick Junction - Limerick, Waterford - Dublin and Tralee - Limerick lines.

Lifting

The present position on the lines being lifted is as follows:

Cashel: Completely removed except for about ½ mile at Goold's Cross in use as a siding.

Tramore: Completely lifted.

Valentia: Lifted to Dooks Halt, MP 18. Loco still stabled in Killorglin, which is the depot for material recovered.

Cavan: With the completion of the “Irish North”, removal work is continuing on the Inny Junction - Cavan branch. The line is lifted some ½ mile south of the ex MGWR in Cavan. Lifting trains run about twice weekly from Mullingar and loco 161N was reported on this turn in early June.

West Clare: Lifted from Kilrush and Kilkee to Kilmurry. Two locos are in use, one of which works daily from Ennis to the depot station - at present Quilty - and back. The other loco is used at the railhead while coach 1L, now a sleeping car, remains at the depot for the demolition gang. At the end of May CIÉ advertised the four railcars, three trailers and one loco for sale and stated that a further two locos would be available in December 1961. Bord na Mona have bought several West Clare wagons for use on their lines.

West Cork: Although now rated as an “Engineer’s siding”, no lifting has yet taken place on the West Cork lines other than the few sidings removed prior to closure.

Cardinal’s Special

His Eminence Cardinal Agagianian, Papal Legate to the Dublin Patrician Congress, travelled by train from Dublin to Cork and back on June 20. In the down direction a special portion was attached to the 08:45 “Sláinte” express and this train was double-headed by two A class locos: A27 and A38. The Cardinal’s train was scheduled to return as a special in advance of the 15:30 Cork - Dublin “Mail” - deferred 5 minutes - and to be attached to the 13:40 Tralee - Dublin at Mallow. In fact, however, the Cardinal was delayed and his train ran as a special throughout, leaving Cork at 15:40 and, with a ten minute stop at Thurles, reaching Kingsbridge at 18:55. The Tralee train ran ahead of the special and the “Mail” left on time and was overtaken at Mallow.

For this journey the GS&WR State Coach - No.351 - built in 1902, was renovated in Inchicore Works. It was fitted with “Commonwealth” bogies, re-roofed and repainted. One panel on each side bears the Papal Coat of Arms. Inside, the woodwork of the three saloons - walnut, mahogany and oak, respectively - was polished, Donegal carpets fitted and the sofas and armchairs finished in gold brocade, except in the oak saloon - reserved for the Papal Legate - which had old gold velvet upholstery with red cushions. Cardinal red curtains with gold trimmings were hung and Waterford cut glass lamps were fitted. The occasional tables in the saloons served a dual purpose as they also housed the wiring and loudspeakers of the concealed public address system. The two toilets were attractively panelled in green and white marble.

Leaving Cork, the special comprised locos A27 and A38, bogie van 2558, Saloon 351, the new buffet car 2402 (described elsewhere in this issue), tabled bogie second 1361 and LV 2731. It will be noted that the locos were turned in Cork to enable A27 to carry a green shield inscribed “Carbad Phádraig” (Patrick’s Chariot) surmounted by the Papal, Irish and Patrician flags. Altogether CIÉ deserve the highest credit for the arrangements and the immaculate condition of 351 and, indeed, the whole special train. It is understood that the saloon will make a tour of certain provincial centres in the near future.

Irish Railtour

The largest and probably the most ambitious Irish railtour ever took place between June 4 and June 10. Organised jointly by the IRRS/RCTS/SLS as a “Farewell to steam”, it was preceded on June 3 by an IRRS day trip to the Meath branches, Clonsilla - Kingscourt and Drogheda - Oldcastle, on which a train of 5 bogies and LV, including Kitchen Car C272N, was hauled by ex GNR loco 132 (4-4-0).

On Sunday June 4 ex GNR loco 174 was used on a special train of LV and 5 bogies, including buffet car 2407, from Amiens Street to Cork. Stops were made en route at Kildare, Thurles, Limerick Junction

and Mallow and, due to permanent way renewals, the train was worked on the up line between Limerick Junction and Emly. From Cork a return trip to Cobh was made behind the ex CB&SCR loco 464 (4-6-0T).

The following morning loco 801, repaired as mentioned elsewhere, was used to haul the special from Cork to Mallow. The running time of 39 minutes, exclusive of a 3 minute stop at Blarney was kept without exceeding 59 mph. Loco 131 (0-6-0) was used from Mallow to Limerick which also involved a return trip over the branch lines from Banteer to Newmarket (goods only) and from Gortatlea to Castleisland (goods only). On the latter the train was hauled into Castleisland by loco 109 (0-6-0) and 131 followed light from Gortatlea to haul the train out again as the loop at Castleisland does not permit a loco running round there. Loco 560 (0-6-0T) was used for a journey to Fenit and back and calls were made at Spa and Kilfenora. Regular passenger services ceased on this line on 31st December 1934 and now Sunday seaside excursions in summer since 1959, beet and occasional coal trains provide the only traffic.

On June 6 the itinerary provided for a circle trip Limerick - Ballybrophy - Port Laoise - Mountmellick - Kilkenny - Waterford - Mallow - Rath Luirc - Limerick. Loco 125 (0-6-0) was used ex Limerick but, due to a minor defect which developed, had to be replaced by diesel power for certain stages of the journey. Loco 461 (2-6-0) worked the train over the arduous stretches beyond Waterford to Limerick.

125 was repaired and gave good account of herself next day between Limerick and Attymon where 654 (2-4-0) was waiting to take the train into Loughrea. For this nine miles the special ran in the path of the regular branch train with its passengers, and loco 610 (0-6-0) followed with the "empty" train. The 2-4-0 continued to Athlone and was replaced there by 588 (0-6-0) which worked to Claremorris, where it had to retire with a hot box on the tender. 603 - the 0-6-0 loco off the weed-spraying train - was utilised to continue to Sligo.

One of the General Motors diesels, B132, was used to Ballaghaderreen on June 8 and on its return to Kilfree Junction loco B129 continued to Mullingar where 0-6-0 719 was in readiness and made a good run to Athlone. After a return journey on the Banagher branch the train travelled to Dublin.

Next day, June 9, loco 184 (0-6-0), in GS&WR livery, was the motive power between Dublin and Edenderry and back and was replaced on return by ex GNR compound 85 "Merlin" for a sprightly run to Dundalk. The party went on to Belfast by ordinary train to take part in the concluding tour on June 10.

Leaving from York Road, Belfast loco 74 "Dunluce Castle" (4-4-0) worked via Greenisland and the "back line" to Antrim where ex SL&NCR 0-6-4T "Lough Melvin", now UTA 26, took the train over the Antrim branch to Lisburn and Belfast (Maysfields). Here another "Lough Melvin", UTA 65 ex GNR 200 (4-4-0), was waiting to run to Bangor and back. Bearing in mind that many of the locos have not worked passenger trains for a considerable time the railtour was, despite the several setbacks, acclaimed as a highly successful by the majority of the 125 participants.

Loco News

The most notable occurrence in the field of steam motive power was the fitting of new tubes to loco 801 "Macha" for use on the railtour in June. Of the three Bredin 4-6-0s built in 1939/40, 800 "Maedbh" is stored in Thurles, 801 is shedded in Cork and 802 "Tailte" has been scrapped. It seems likely that 801 will be used between Cork and Mallow during the 1961 beet season. Under repair in Limerick works during June were five 0-6-0 locos: 151, 172, 262, 574 and 583, while minor repairs were done to 195, 251 and 261. In Inchicore G603, the Deutz off the Banagher branch, was repaired and repainted in green during May. Loco 31, the ex GNR crane engine acquired by CIÉ from the Dundalk Engineering Works, was renumbered 365A in the "service vehicles" series in April. Loco 85 "Merlin" (4-4-0) returned to traffic on May 3, although since then she has only worked on Dundalk pilot duties and on

two passenger links, once, surprisingly, on the 12:45 Dundalk - Dublin and back on the 17:35 on June 16. Loco 603 (0-6-0) has recently received an overhaul and is working the weed-killing train. DE locomotive A44, the victim of the Kilfree Junction crash in June 1956, returned to traffic at the end of June.

Rolling Stock Developments

The new buffet car mentioned in our last issue has been renumbered from 2423 to 2402 and went into traffic for the first time on Cardinal Agagianian's special on June 20. The car is in a contemporary style and although of standard length - 61'6" - has a larger kitchen than the recent buffet cars, hence the allocation to it of one of the three vacant numbers in the series with the large buffet cars 2400/1 built by the GSR. 2402 is in three sections. First a bar with 8 seats ranging along the wall and two behind the draught baffle opposite the gangway door. Second is the kitchen section which is by-passed by a side corridor. The corridor/kitchen walls, decorated with vertical maple strips on a yellow plastic background, look very attractive. Third portion is the restaurant seating 18 on individual armchairs in red, blue and turquoise upholstery. The car has a charcoal and yellow carpet throughout and a white plastic ceiling and fluorescent lighting give it an extremely bright appearance. The four composites mentioned in our last issue - 2172-2175 - are almost complete and should be in traffic shortly. Also approaching completion are the first of the "intermediate" railcars. One - 2660 - is ready for traffic, four more are well advanced and it is understood that nine will be converted in all. The former first class section of 2660 is now taken up by a transverse gangway and a saloon seating twenty seconds. The normal 32 seat saloon is followed by a van fitted with heating apparatus but without exterior double doors. Bogie 1110 has been rebuilt as a Signal Department sleeping car and is now renumbered 379A. Railbus 2508, which has been stored in Waterford since its withdrawal from service on the Thurles - Clonmel branch in 1956, arrived in Inchicore in mid-June.

CIE LOCAL NEWS REPORTS

No Roof At Newcastle West

In mid-May work commenced on the removal of the station roof at Newcastle West; the dead-end dual-sided intermediate station on the Limerick - Tralee line. The roof, of timber construction, spanned the East platform on the one-time "Rathkeale & Newcastle Junction Railway" side of the station. It is understood that the timbers required replacement and the cost of this proved prohibitive. At one time, up to 18 months ago, there were two turntables here but one has now been removed.

Modernisation Of Stations

As mentioned in our last issue CIE are putting into effect a programme of station modernisation and the following results are to be noted.

Port Laoise: Work on the raising of the up platform and the provision of a new waiting room on it has now been completed.

Galway: Work is now complete on the extension of the platform and the provision of a second one. The new platform is a bay behind the existing one; at one time two platforms did exist in Galway but the down one was handed over to the road freight department in 1936. The new platform extends into what was the loco shed and on it has been erected a block housing the district offices of CIE. In the station building itself there is a modernised "Clifden Buffet" with pictures showing the progress of aviation based on the Alcock and Brown landing near Clifden in 1919. An up to date booking office and entrance hall was also provided some time ago.

Mullingar: On May 19 the buffet at Mullingar was reopened to the public renamed the "Newbrook Buffet". The opening ceremony was performed by Mrs W.H.E. Welsman who, as Mrs R. Smith, owned

“Quare Times” - the winner of the 1955 Grand National. The buffet has been completely redecorated and 30 photographs of famous Irish racehorses adorn the panelling on the walls. The furnishings have been modernised and separate bar and self-service counters are provided.

Limerick: Mr J.F. Higgins, Limerick Area Manager, announced on June 13 that Limerick station was to be developed and modernised by spring 1962. The station is to be fitted out in a most up to date manner providing greater passenger comfort and better staff amenities. The “Top Yard” goods store is to be extended to include a road freight store and there will be a new road freight depot. The ex W&LR wagon works is to be rebuilt, enlarged and equipped to deal with all types of wagon building and repairs. The whole project is expected to cost approximately £200,000 and to be started shortly.

Loughrea Trial

Despite the trial mentioned in our last issue, the branch remains steam worked and railcar 2509 is still in use on the Limerick - Nenagh local trains. The Loughrea and Ballaghaderreen branches are the only ones now regularly worked entirely by steam although the Thurles - Clonmel goods trains are also steam hauled.

Opera Radio Train

On April 15 CIÉ ran an opera Radio Train at 15:00 from Limerick to Dublin in connection with a season of Italian Opera in a Dublin theatre. During the journey excerpts from some of the operas, with suitable commentary, were broadcast to the passengers. This was the first occasion in which a radio train has been used in this way.

Electric Signals

In June the Signal Department commenced work on the replacement of the semaphore signals controlled by Inchicore cabin with three aspect colour lights. The Dublin area is thus entirely colour-light signalled except for the GN installation at Amiens Street Central and some lines in the dock area. The outer limits of colour-light signalling will now be at, or just beyond, Dun Laoghaire, Inchicore, Liffey Junction and Howth Junction.

UTA GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Fares Increase

The UTA increased their return passenger fares by approximately 10% as from June 26. This brings the average rate per mile to almost 3^d. Single fares were not generally increased.

Overhauls At Queen's Quay

To save the long detour via Antrim to Duncrue Street several ME railcars have been overhauled at Queen's Quay and have since appeared in traffic on the Bangor line. This is the first diesel repair work, other than routine repairs, undertaken at Queen's Quay.

Lifting

Removal of the “Irish North” has progressed and the demolition train is now in the vicinity of Trillick although it is understood that a few sections of the Bundoran branch have not been lifted.

Craigavad

For the second time Craigavad Halt, on the Belfast (Queen's Quay) - Bangor line between Marino and Helen's Bay, was closed to passengers on June 12. This halt was closed on 10th November 1957 and reopened on 4th January 1960 in response to public protests. The service provided was, however, but a token as only one train per day in each direction called and a “lack of traffic” was, in the circumstances, hardly surprising. Marino Halt reopened at the same time, remains open.

Circus Specials

The Bertram Mills Circus, now on tour in Ireland, arrived at Larne Harbour on Sunday June 18 and was transported to Belfast. The tour will last until September 30 and its July fixtures are: Derry 3-8, Ballymena 10-12, Coleraine 13-15, Bangor 17-19, Portadown 20-22, Newry 24-27 and Dundalk 28-30. Among the vehicles to be used are: CIÉ bogie coaches 162M, 166M, 113M and 49M; CIÉ bogie flat trucks 6021N, 5541N and 23650; UTA bogie flat trucks 72, 5419, 5420, N124 and N642; sundry UTA and CIÉ 4-wheel flat trucks; CIÉ 6-wheel van 1075 and 4-wheel C744N; UTA 10 ton van 676 and other goods brakes. Three trains were run to Belfast, the first at 23:05 on Sunday comprised 3 coaches, 8 bogie trucks, 13 4-wheel trucks and goods brake. The second at 04:00 on Monday had one coach, C744N, 8 bogie trucks 13 4-wheel trucks and goods brake while the third at 11:15 on Monday carried the animals and was made up of 20 ton van, elephant van, 9 horse boxes, UTA 10 ton van and CIÉ 6-wheel brake van.

Diesel to Portrush

The first of 3 CIÉ day excursions to Portrush this summer was scheduled to be worked by a CIÉ diesel loco throughout but rather surprisingly the loco employed was one of the new General Motors diesels, B121, hauling 4 bogies with some 100 passengers. The train, instead of reversing at Knockmore Junction as planned, ran to Belfast to enable the loco to turn. B121 was unable to turn at Portrush and travelled cab rearmost to Lisburn on the homeward journey. This is the first of these engines to run on either the NCC section or the Antrim branch. It is of interest to remark that the intermediate loops on the Antrim branch have been removed and that it is now worked as one section.

Border Bridge

Just before 01:00 on Wednesday April 26, Kilnasaggart bridge (No.162) near MP 60 between Mount Pleasant and Adavoyle on the main Dublin - Belfast line was badly damaged by an explosion. The bridge is about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile inside Northern Ireland. Both up and down lines were rendered impassable but at the time all the regular train sets were on their parent metals, except the 02:15 News train from Dublin to Belfast. This set was used between Dundalk and Dublin as the 08:15 ex Belfast and passengers were taken by road between Newry (Edward Street), not Goraghwood, and Dundalk. A similar procedure was adopted with all other trains including the "Enterprise" expresses in each direction. The following day, April 27, single line working was instituted between Adavoyle and Mount Pleasant and just north of the damaged bridge the down line was slewed into the up to enable trains to use the crossovers at each end of the section in a facing direction and obviate reversals. The 14:15 Belfast - Dublin (B131, five bogies and HV) was the first to pass over the temporary single line which was controlled by ETS instruments recovered from the abandoned Bundoran branch. The 17:30 Dublin - Belfast "Enterprise" was formed by the CIÉ set of the 11:00 and similarly the UTA "Enterprise" set worked the 16:45 from Belfast on this date. Both sets returned empty to base on arrival. Single line working continued up to May 19 when the double line was restored, although a speed limit of 5 mph was enforced over bridge 162 for a period afterwards.

Loco News

Locomotives 38 (0-6-0), 63 "Slievenamon" (4-4-0), 51 (2-6-4T), 99 and 104 (2-6-0) have emerged overhauled from Duncrue Street works and locos 60 "Slieve Donard" (4-4-0) and 95 "The Braid" (2-6-0) have been taken in for "shopping". Locos 72 and 84, both "Castle" class 4-4-0s, have come to Adelaide presumably for auction and it is learned that loco 74 of the same class, which worked the joint tour special on June 10 will hardly be used again. Locos 64 and 65 (4-4-0), 13 (0-6-0) and 19 (0-6-0T) have been marked with the symbol 'X' and will therefore be withdrawn when next needing heavy overhaul. At an auction on May 1 four locomotives were disposed of: Nos. 86X (4-4-0), 14 (0-6-0), 42 ex GNR 183 (0-6-0) and 30 ex GNR 6 (0-6-0). At the same time the UTA sold one bogie coach No.321

and 237 wagons.

Summer Timetable

The summer timetable which is operative from June 12 to September 10 shows few alterations from that in force last summer. On the NCC main line, services are shown in two tables; Belfast - Derry and Coleraine - Portrush, with the irritating subdivision into peak and off-peak periods confined to the latter. Monday - Friday services are almost all diesel and follow the normal pattern; there are three through trains from Belfast to Portrush and - an innovation - one from Derry. This gives an extra Derry - Belfast service in each direction by changing at Coleraine albeit with a 50 minute delay in the down direction. On Saturdays steam is slightly more in evidence as out of 9 down Derry trains 3 are steam and out of 8 down Portrush trains 1 is steam (2 in July and August). On Sundays, too, the 09:40 Belfast - Portrush is steam-hauled while there are now three down and four up services to Derry. The Saturday boat train from Derry and Portrush to Larne Harbour via the "back line" at Greenisland is also steam this summer. Two oddities are that Ballyclare Junction has no service in the down direction but has two up, Mondays - Fridays (1 Saturdays, 0 Sundays), while Culmore has two up trains Monday - Friday but none on Saturdays. The GN section shows very few changes, all of a minor nature. The 13:00 Newry - Warrenpoint has disappeared. Intermediate stations between Strabane and Derry have three down trains but only one up. The 07:15 and 10:30 Derry - Belfast, as usual, lack refreshment facilities; the latter and its return working at 14:45 is regularly steam-hauled - the only steam passenger train to Derry by this route.

Steam To Warrenpoint

Due to mechanical trouble being experienced with Warrenpoint railcar 104 (ex GNR 'F') the Goraghowood - Warrenpoint service has often been completely steam-worked in the last few months, except, of course, for the through Belfast railcar workings. Locos 42X, 111X, 135X and, occasionally, 67 were used. After some repairs, railcar 103 (ex GNR 'D') which has been out of use at Queen's Quay, was despatched to replace 104 but failed en route. Steam reigned supreme until 103 was repaired and put in traffic on June 26. It is learned that, contrary to the report in our last issue, only the Newry - Warrenpoint section of the branch is to suffer the curtailment of service announced for next winter; the normal winter timetable will apply between Goraghowood and Newry (Edward Street).

LOOSE LINKS

- The all-in Radio Train which runs to Galway every Thursday during the summer months is this year being worked by a General Motors B class DE loco.
- Lansdowne Road, one of the remaining halts on the Dublin - Bray suburban section, has recently been repainted in a bright red and white colour scheme.
- Railcar 2659, which worked on the Waterford & Tramore line up to its closure in December last, is now in use on the Amiens Street - Bray section.
- On the introduction of the summer timetable CIÉ withdrew the concession allowing holders of rail tickets to Bray and local stations to travel by bus after 18:45.
- To facilitate the accelerated workings between Limerick and Limerick Junction Manson staff exchange apparatus is being installed on the "long sections" of the single line between Killonan, Dromkeen and Limerick Junction.
- New rectangular lettering boards, affixed at right angles to each coach of the Radio Train, but detached before departure, replace the adhesive labels used last year.
- The passenger footbridge at the closed Booterstown Halt on the Dublin - Bray suburban section

was dismantled and removed during the month of June.

- The 18:15 Westland Row - Sligo operates between Amiens Street and Liffey Junction via Newcomen Junction in order to leave the Drumcondra Link line clear for a North Wall - Kingsbridge transfer goods train.
- To cater for first class traffic the 11:00 "Enterprise" - now loco hauled - frequently includes two composites.
- Railcar 101 (ex GNR "A") is having its engine replaced in Adelaide and is expected back in traffic shortly.
- The up platform at Jordanstown has been raised by about 1' to bring it to normal height while the down platform at Ballymacarrett Halt is being elongated.
- All the UTA 700 class BUT railcars and the AEC railcars are now in Brunswick green, as also is ex GNR kitchen car 166; all bear the new UTA crest.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

April 26: Belfast - Newry - Warrenpoint & Back

Consequent on the blowing-up of Kilnasaggart Bridge between Goraghwood and Dundalk in the early hours of the morning, the 14:15 Belfast - Dublin was operated by the 08:15 Belfast - Dublin rake instead of the usual CIÉ railcar set. Loco 98 (2-6-0) "King Edward VIII" - ex works in March - headed 7 bogies and 2 vans, all in Brunswick green, out of No.2 platform Great Victoria Street, one minute late. The train included first N180, tea car 170 and a bogie NCC parcel van. With steady acceleration Lisburn was passed in 13 minutes, 60 mph reached at Maze and, after a maximum of 65 mph beyond Lurgan, Portadown was reached only ½ minute late - 25 miles in 30½ minutes. Here 0-6-0 111X was noted in a new coat of black paint and with the 'X' missing from her number!

Following a 2 minute late departure at 14:52 brisk running was maintained through rain-flooded country but departure from Goraghwood was delayed to 15:19, after a 7 minute stand, in case of local traffic to Newry for the regular 15:20 branch connection. No passengers were, however, forthcoming. Arrival at Newry startled some of the passengers for Dundalk and beyond who were at first reluctant to leave the train. Two full UTA buses were despatched to Dundalk and transhipment of parcels, mails, etc., to a waiting lorry began.

Following the departure of the schoolchildren's 15:35 to Scarva - loco 42X (4-4-0) and two veteran GNR bogies - loco 135X took three more ancient GNR carriages on the 15:45 to Warrenpoint; indeed, more than one compared them to the superior stock of the main line train in the adjacent platform road. There was a further influx of schoolchildren at Newry (Dublin Bridge) whence the grimy 4-4-0 made good speed to Warrenpoint.

Traffic was sparse on the return to Newry at 16:10 where connection was made with the Belfast train instead of at Goraghwood as normally. The writer joined the 17:35 to Portadown - Loco 42X and her two bogies again - which had run back to Warrenpoint from Scarva. On her arrival loco 135X departed again for Warrenpoint at 17:30 but this time with only half-a-dozen aboard.

The departure for Portadown was delayed 4 minutes due to the arrival of the 16:45 "Enterprise" from Belfast - a four-coach railcar. With some 40 passengers aboard and the loco running tender foremost 42X pulled past loco 43 (0-6-0) shunting in the yard and railcar 104 out of service in the engine shed and vociferously mounted the bank to Goraghwood where passenger traffic was again nil. 9 alighted at Poyntzpass, 8 at Scarva and 1 at Tanderagee where 1 was also picked up. Two minutes were gained to Portadown where arrival was at 18:17.

The Belfast connection - 3-coach railcar - left at 18:19 and simultaneously loco 94 (2-6-0) arrived from Belfast with 6 bogies. The Newry train was shunted from platform 3 to 2 and the Derry - a five-coach diesel and van - arrived at 18:21 and was well filled too! Two more vans were added by loco 48 (0-6-0) which departed with 18:24 to Newry several minutes late. The up Derry departed at 18:28 (2 minutes late) and calling at Lurgan & Lisburn gained two minutes to Belfast arriving on time at 19:05.

STATION SURVEY

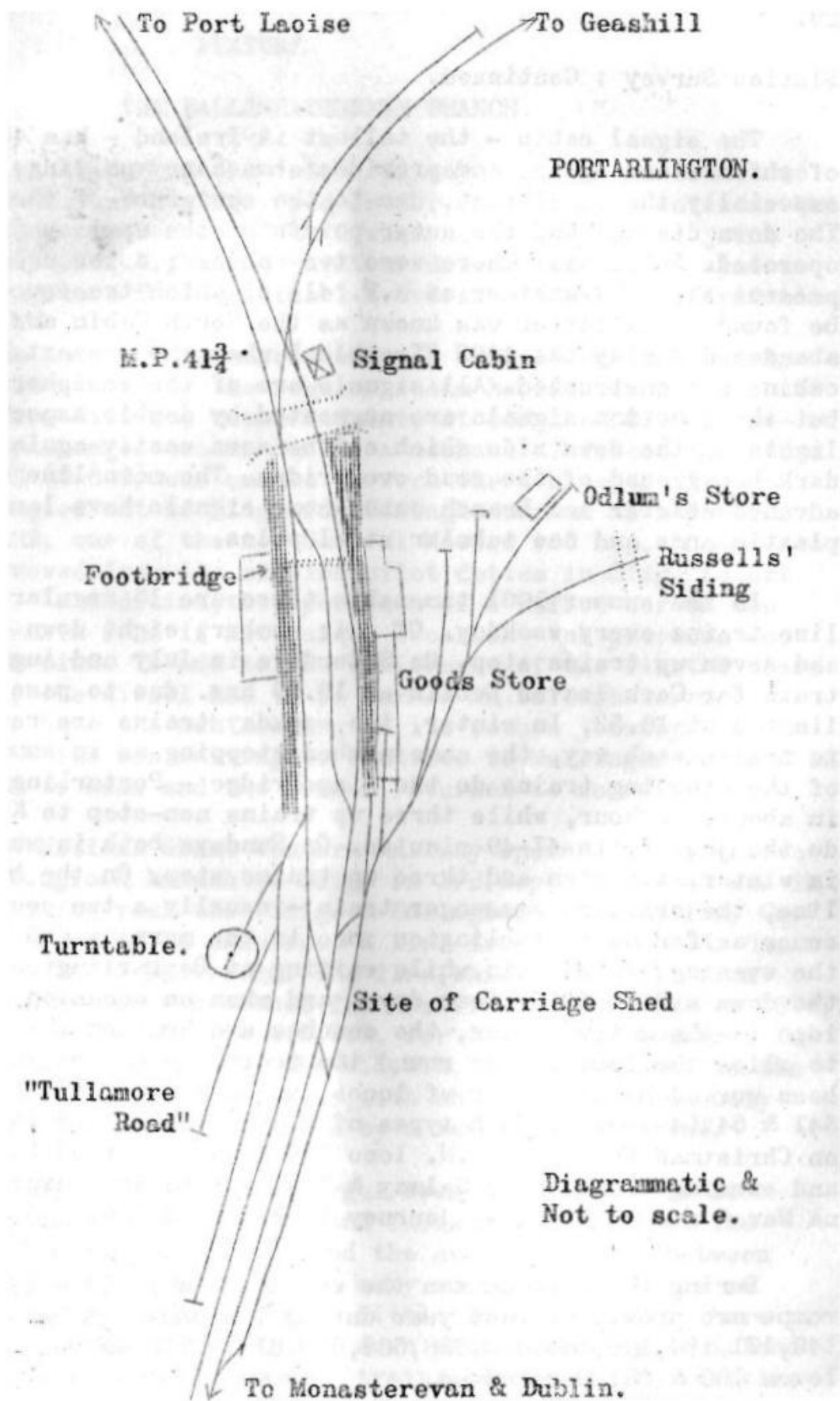
Portarlinton

Portarlinton station came into being at an early date when the GS&WR, on 28th June 1847, extended their Dublin - Carlow line by a branch from Cherryville Junction to Port Laoise (then called Maryborough). The station did not, however, become a junction until the GS&WR opened a branch to the old station at Tullamore on 2nd October 1854. The line was, after much wrangling with the MGWR, extended to Athlone on 3rd October 1859.

Portarlinton station consists of two low level platforms - 20 inches above rail level - with the junction for Athlone at the West and goods facilities at the East end. Approaching from Monasterevan the Dublin - Cork main line curves sharply $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the station and at MP 41 $\frac{1}{2}$ the up and down lines separate to make room for the "middle road". This results in two sharp curves at the platform ends which necessitate a speed restriction of 50 mph in each direction. In the Cork direction the line passes through a cutting, under two road bridges and straightens heading South West towards Port Laoise. There is a 10 mph limit over the junction points (MP 41 $\frac{3}{4}$) for trains on the single track Athlone branch which curves and rises to cross the derelict canal to Mountmellick before dropping to resume its north-westerly course. At MP 43 $\frac{1}{4}$ (measured from Dublin) the spur to the ESB power station, nearly one mile in length, curves away very sharply on the up side. The points are worked by the ETS from Portarlinton and the spur was laid in 1946 to allow material to be brought to the power station, then under construction.

Portarlinton is a town of some 2,500 inhabitants but by reason of its industries, there are quite substantial goods facilities at the station. Two concerns, W.P. & R. Odlums flour mills and the sawmills of Messrs Russell Bros., were built in the near vicinity of the station and both have private sidings. The latter firm, however, now prefer to haul their products, ladders, chairs, etc., to the goods store behind the up platform hence their portion of the siding is derelict. Odlums now have a large road fleet and their store in the station grounds is rarely used nowadays. There is a cattle bank and enclosure in the yard but traffic in this sphere has dwindled in recent years. There is an up loop extending beyond MP 41 $\frac{1}{4}$ which can hold 57 wagons, loco and van, while the line connecting it directly with the goods yard once had a carriage shed. On the down side is a long siding parallel to the main line which was a loop until a few years ago when the electric points at the Dublin end were removed. Diverging from this long siding is the "Tullamore Road" used to hold wagons for the branch, and next to this is the spur to the 45 ft turntable, still used occasionally. Close by there is a coaling bunker, once required for branch locos, but there is no shed; locos were kept in the open.

Both the up and down platforms can accommodate seven bogies. The large derelict building on the down platform was once a restaurant but is now hired by Messrs Russell Bros. Beside this are the water tanks supplying two columns and the station's needs. The handsome buildings, in a style typical of the GS&WR, contain the usual offices and the station-master's residence. Behind the platform is the goods store road and the goods store. Near the junction the remains of the station gasworks can be seen.



The signal cabin - the tallest in Ireland - has 45 levers of which 4 are spare, and provides some heavy pulling, especially the up distant, due to the curvature of the track. The down distant and the outer points of the up loop are power operated. Originally there were two cabins; a low one on the present site and another at MP 41½ of which traces can still be found. This latter was known as the North Cabin and was abandoned during the 1922 "Troubles" when the present high cabin was constructed. All signals are of the semaphore type but the junction signals are augmented by double aspect colour lights on the down side which can be seen easily against the dark background of the road overbridge. The main line down advance starter and the branch outer home signals have laminated plastic arms and new tubular steel poles.

In the summer 1961 timetable there are 15 regular main line trains every weekday. Of this number, eight down and seven up trains stop. On Saturdays in July and August a train for Cork leaves Dublin at 16:00 due to pass Portarlinton at 16:53. In winter, the weekday trains are reduced to twelve each way, the same number stopping as in summer. Most of the stopping trains do the Kingsbridge - Portarlinton section in about an hour while three up trains, non-stop to Kingsbridge, do the journey in 47-49 minutes. On Sundays both in summer and in winter, two down and three up trains stop. On the branch line, the ordinary passenger train - usually a two coach railcar - comes as far as Portarlinton once in the morning and once in the evening. This train, while waiting at Portarlinton, stands on the down side, but in steam days, and when on occasion a C class loco is the motive power, the coaches are kept on the middle road, to allow the loco to run round its train. In recent years it has been worked by a variety of locos, various 0-6-0s (MGWR), Nos. 541 and 542 (4-4-0), A, both types of B and C class DE locos, while on Christmas Eve 1959, GNR loco 145 (0-6-0) worked both morning and evening trains. The Galway and Westport railcar express, the "Cu na Mara", stops on its up journey to Westland Row.

During the beet season the wagon quota is 14-19 and two ramps are provided. Last year during the campaign 0-6-0 locos 149, 171, 184, 198, 354, 574, 588, 598, 606, 610 and 719, as well as ex GNR locos 163 and 181, were noted.

Feature Section

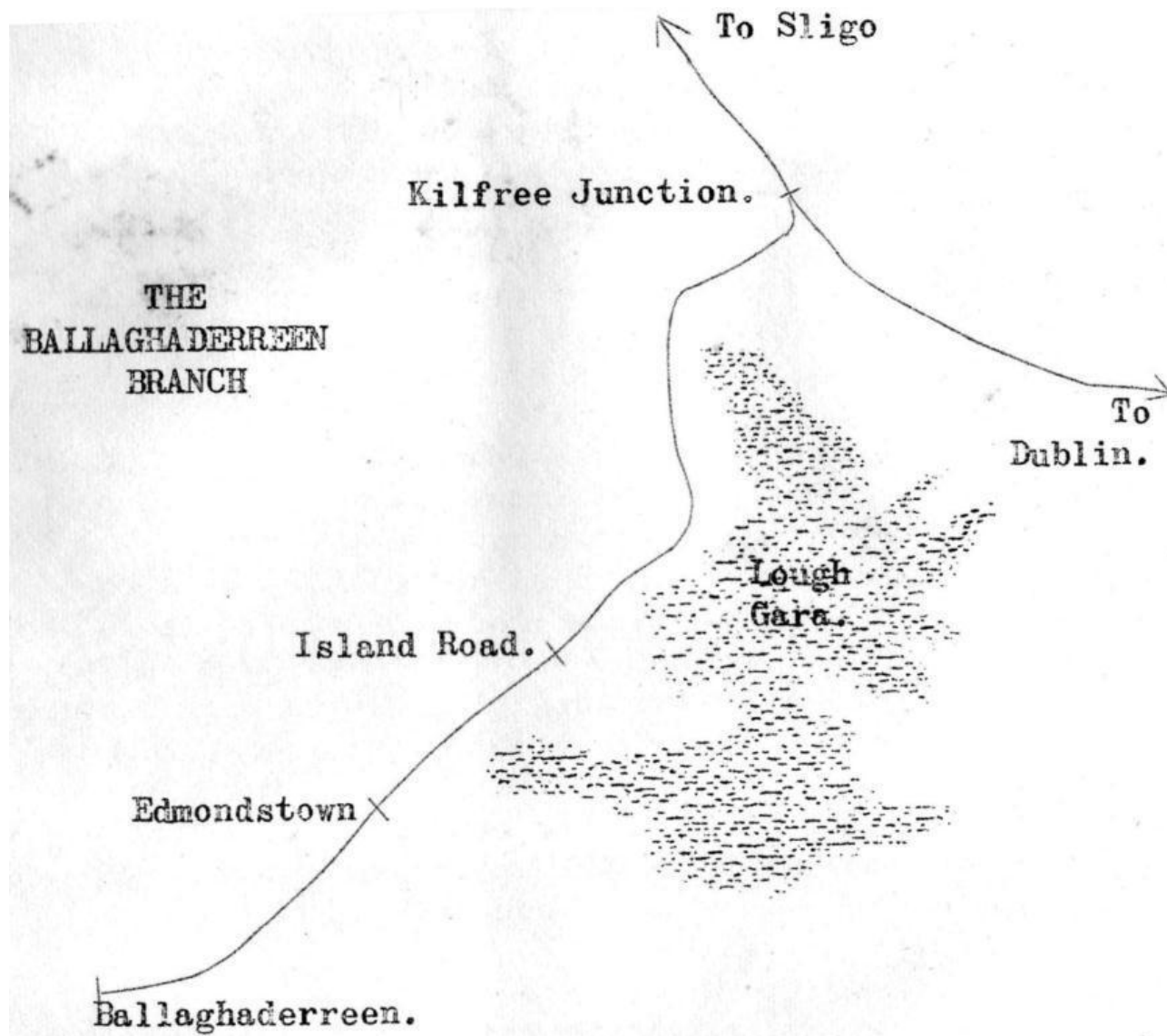
THE BALLAGHADERREEN BRANCH

A backwater of the Irish railway system, the branch to Ballaghaderreen has few "red letter days" on its calendar but surely one of them was June 8, when not only did the joint IRRS/RCTS/SLS railtour descend on it but also a General Motors B class diesel traversed it for the first time.

The invasion commenced when an advance party of early risers, attracted by the regular steam-hauled mixed train at 09:00 from Kilfree, connected into it off the 08:00 Sligo - Dublin passenger train. Due to a mechanical defect the steam loco 603 (0-6-0) was unable to work the tour special of LV and 5 bogies out of Sligo for Ballaghaderreen as expected, and B132, one of the new General Motors 950 hp locomotives, was borrowed from its station pilot duties in Sligo to act instead. In addition, the operation of a buffet car on the branch was a rare if not unique occasion - no previous one comes to mind. To add to the excitement of the first B class working, the diesel had to be turned in Ballaghaderreen in order to have the cab leading on its return journey. At Kilfree B129 was waiting to continue to Mullingar while B132 returned to base and the branch to normality.

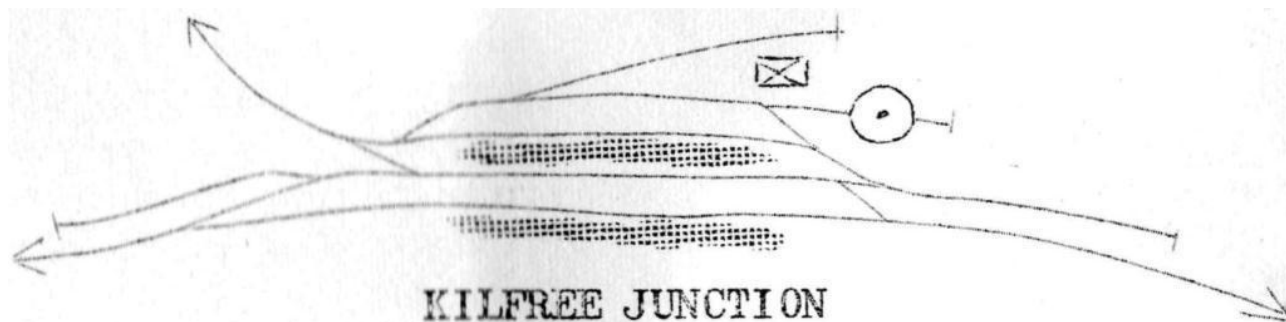
The Midland Great Western Railway opened the extension of its Longford branch to Sligo on 3rd September 1862 and in the following year the "Sligo & Ballaghaderreen Railway Co." was incorporated to construct a line from the MGWR "near Boyle" to Ballaghaderreen. The line, which was

built from Kilfree Junction, was opened for traffic on 1st November 1874, worked, of course, by the MGWR for the owning company. In 1877 it was purchased by the MGWR. The branch, unlike the Loughrea and Ballinrobe lines, with which it is frequently associated, was not supported by a Baronial guarantee.

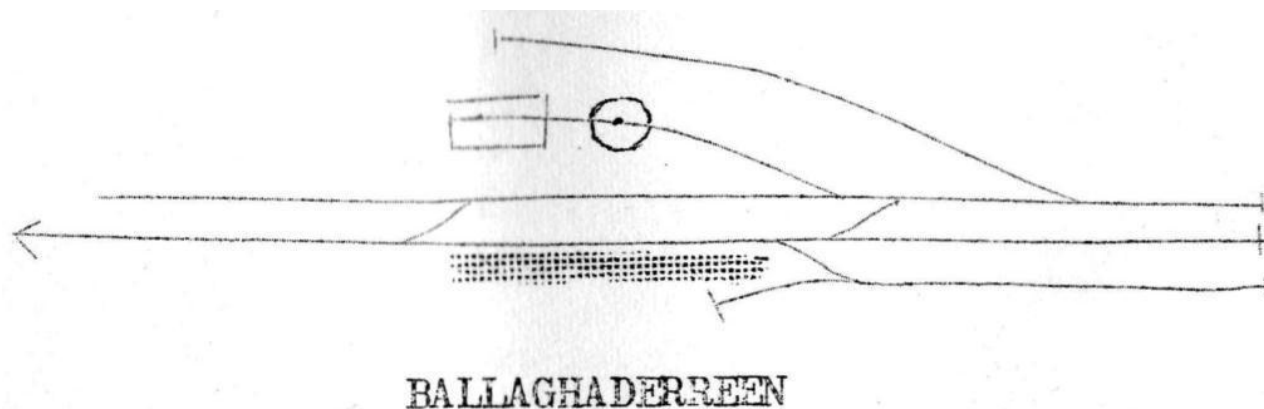


The 9¾ mile branch diverges from the Sligo line at Kilfree Junction (MP 112½) and faces towards Sligo. The junction is just a mile beyond the summit reached between Boyle and Kilfree and like so many on the MGWR is an interchange point having very little local traffic. There are three platform faces, the down platform being an island which accommodates the branch trains behind it. In practice the up platform is little used and the main line trains use the down platform in each direction giving cross-platform interchange facilities to branch passengers. As can be seen from the diagram reproduced there is a run-round loop for branch locos which does not foul the main line. The Ballaghaderreen branch curves away sharply and falls steeply to MP 2. Mileposts, on the down side, run from zero at Kilfree Junction. Good views of Lough Gara can be seen on the left before the one platform halt of Island Road is reached at MP 5. The platform, on the down side, has a shelter, a bilingual nameboard and a two-armed signal on a tall lattice post guarding the level crossing. Edmondstown, at MP 6¾, is very similar but still retains the MGWR blue and white vitrolite nameboard and has a most remarkable signal on the platform. The two arms of this signal are perched atop a wooden pole, but the spectacle

glasses are only about halfway up. Crossing wild boggy country, the branch reaches its destination at MP 9¾. One up side platform suffices for the sparse passenger traffic while beyond it is a goods store. The branch loco shed and turntable are opposite the platform and a long cattle bank is beyond that again.



Services on the branch are today the traditional two trains each way, connecting into the 08:00 ex Sligo and out of the down 09:25 from Dublin. No evening trains run and the last train movement is the 13:00 from Kilfree, due in Ballaghaderreen at 13:40; all trains except the 08:00 up are mixed. In pre-war days three or even four trains per day were run but during the “Emergency” this fell to one train per day. In the summer of 1946 three trains ran each day and in the extraordinary timetable of November 1946 four were scheduled; this lasted only for the two months prior to the six month coal shortage in 1947. Since the summer of that year two daily trains have been the rule. The branch locomotive in the early days was one of the J26 class 0-6-0Ts but the line subsequently became the preserve of the 2-4-0s of class G2 and Nos. 666 and 667 were regularly on it in rotation in the early 1950s. Since about 1955 locos of the 573 class of 0-6-0 have come to dominate.



On summer Sundays excursions to Sligo are often run. These are often diesel - usually a railcar set from Sligo, although DE locos are not unknown on the turn - and if the weather is fine, attract good crowds. The branch, which up to about 1948 had ETS, is now “single engine in steam”.