

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Some twelve months ago, it was announced by the British Transport Commission that following consultations with representatives of the principle railway historical societies, it had decided to schedule 27 steam locomotives for preservation after their retirement from regular service. The locomotives selected were examples of outstanding developments in the history and progress of steam motive power. When ultimately added to the Commission's existing collection, the entire range of 71 historic locos will represent the development of steam traction in Britain from its earliest days to its replacement by electric or diesel power.

This timely decision by the BTC reflects a commendable move to preserve for posterity examples of the locomotives which have helped to establish the railways as the most reliable form of transport over the past century. Equally commendable has been CIÉ's reaction in recent months to the requests from the Irish Railway Record Society to preserve some unique examples of Irish steam motive power which were in danger of extinction. As reported in our last issue, CIÉ has agreed to preserve two locomotives: No.5C, an 0-6-2T of the now abandoned West Clare narrow gauge section, and the diminutive standard gauge 0-6-0T No.90, last used on the West Cork system. Adding Bury 2-2-2 No.36 which already stands in Cork (Glanmire Road) station the number of locomotives now preserved by CIÉ totals three. To obtain a complete picture of locomotive preservation in Ireland one can not but mention that admirable institution, the Belfast Transport Museum. Some most interesting locos have recently been added to this collection, including 4-4-2T No.30 of the late Belfast & Co. Down Railway, and 4-4-0T No.2L of the now defunct Cavan & Leitrim narrow gauge section of CIÉ. However, the total number of steam locomotives in the Belfast collection is only 7. When this figure is added to the 3 preserved by CIÉ one is suddenly aware of the striking contrast between the paucity of attempts at loco preservation in this country as compared with the methodical approach adopted so admirably by the BTC in Britain.

The history of the achievements and the character of Irish railways since 1834 scarcely deserve so poor a representation from the age of steam among our heritage of historical railway locos. The railways of Ireland have witnessed remarkable examples of locomotion which certainly deserve priority placing in any list of items scheduled for preservation. The magnificent 800 class express passenger locos of the former GSR come at once to mind together with the 4-4-0 "simples" of the erstwhile GNR. These are but two classes of locomotives whose few surviving members are obviously approaching the end of their active service on the railways of Ireland. The preservation of such supreme representatives of the steam train era, in addition to examples of lesser locomotives of the past century, certainly deserve the most favourable consideration if proper recognition is to be accorded to the achievements of steam in making possible the evolution of the modern dieselised railway systems of today.

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For the "Journey Jottings" in this issue we are indebted to Mr M.K. Belshaw.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Modern Railways

Jan et seq The Irish Scene

Railway Magazine

March Railways at Cork (Paragraph)

Railway World

January The Ford Railbuses of the DVLR (On the CDR)

March Cobh Line Centenary (Paragraph)

April Limerick & Castleconnell Centenary (Paragraph)

Modern Tramway

April Belfast Transport Museum (Detailed article)

News Section

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Further Closures?

Mr F. Lemass, General Manager of CIÉ stated in January last that a review of all existing rail services was being undertaken by CIÉ and that in its intention not to close further lines before 1964, CIÉ had been overtaken by events. The Minister for Transport and Power in February said that Dr C.S. Andrews, Chairman of CIÉ, had been told that there must be another major reorganisation in an attempt to make the system self-supporting as required by the Transport Act 1958. No details of the lines to be affected have been announced but reference made to the possible inclusion of secondary lines as well as branches suggests that the pruning will be fairly drastic. Although the loss of traffic due to the strike in Cork is probably partly responsible, it seems likely that the figures for 1961/2 when published will show a traffic decline on those of the previous year as the weekly figures for the rail section have not shown an increase for some time.

New Gs Arrive

By early February all seven of the new Deutz 160 hp G class locomotives had been supplied to CIÉ but as yet none of them has gone into traffic. They are numbered in a separate series (G611-617) to the three similar locos obtained in 1955 by CIÉ (G601-603). These latter were largely out of traffic since their displacement last September from the Castleisland and Newmarket branches. G601 has been shunting in Portarlinton spasmodically but it is understood to be awaiting shopping in Inchicore. No information as to the intended use or destination of these locomotives is yet available.

Rolling Stock Developments

Although complete, none of the new composites (2176-79) has yet appeared in traffic. 268N - the renovated ex GNR diner - is expected to go into service on the 09:15 Dublin-Belfast on April 2 although, as it is fitted to work with AEC railcars only this presupposes the substitution of such cars for the BUT set at present on this turn. The principle alteration in 268N is the fitting of a new modern cocktail bar. An increasing number of coaches has appeared in the new black and brown livery which has extended to ex GNR railcars, ex GNR coaches as well as four-wheel vans and most varieties of CIÉ

coaching stock including quite a number of passenger coaches on the “secondary” coaching list.

Modernisation Of Stations

Modernisation progress since our last issue is as follows:

Galway: The new sidings for the handling of bulk traffic at Galway (Lough Atalia Road) were officially opened by Alderman F. Coogan, Mayor of Galway on February 5. As a result there are no camping coaches stationed here this year.

Limerick: Having completed operations on the station concourse, a new modern glass fronted barrier is in the course of erection. This will have gates to each platform with accommodation for ticket checkers alongside. It will also house telephone booths and several display cases for use by advertisers. Revised arrangements for goods handling came into force on March 1 when traffic for onward conveyance by road commenced to use the “Top Yard Store”. A modern staff mess room and wash up is being provided in Tobin’s store which will now become a furniture store. The loco shed is being altered so that four of its eight roads can be used for light wagon repair and a new traverser - not the one from the present shop - will be installed there. The fan of sidings nearby is progressing but is not yet complete.

Dublin Suburban: Work is under way for the modernisation of some suburban stations. Seapoint has had its accommodation improved and modernised already and work is now in hand on major alterations to the up side buildings at Blackrock where a new booking office is to be provided. At Bray the main entrance hall is to be reopened and a booking office built to replace the present one. At the closed halts footbridges have been or are being removed and the down platform buildings have been removed from Booterstown and Salthill and all erections from Sandymount.

Ennis: Work on the renovated station premises at Ennis was declared complete and the ‘new’ station - described briefly in our last issue - opened on March 23, by the Minister for Education, Dr Hillery. The station presents a bright modern appearance but is devoid of the canopy formerly over the up platform. A monument to the poet Percy French has been erected in the precincts of loco 5C! CIÉ quote the cost of renovation as £30,000.

Fares Increase

On and from February 1 ordinary single fares on the CIÉ system were increased by 7½% and the reduction granted on ordinary return tickets abolished. Day excursions up to 30 miles are now 1½ times the revised single fare as are weekend returns over that distance, but two-day returns - not now valid Friday to Monday - are calculated as one third more than the revised single rate (rather less than the former 1½ times the old single rate). Seat reservations are now 2/- and cross-border fares are increased proportionately.

Lifting

The lifting of abandoned lines continues and the present position is as follows:

Valentia: Only about 4 miles of the branch remain to be lifted and in February loco 110 (0-6-0) was at work daily to the railhead just west of Molahiffe. The whole line will probably be lifted by early summer.

Cavan: Lifting progresses slowly and the railhead is still North of Ballywillin.

West Cork: Lifting of the West Cork lines commenced on March 12 at Baltimore, following abandonment of the court case as mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

Loco Notes

Loco 90 (0-6-0), repainted for preservation in Fermoy, as previously reported, is presently stored in Mallow. Following settlement of the Cork footplatemen’s strike loco 801 “Macha” (4-6-0) worked

extensively on special goods trains, including three into Limerick from Limerick Junction. She subsequently developed a defect and is at present standing in Thurles close to her sister loco No.800 "Maedbh". Loco 104 (0-6-0) was returned to traffic in late February after overhaul and at present 0-6-0 locos 179, 183 and 599 are in shops at Limerick for heavy repairs. Loco A31 has appeared in service in the new CIÉ colours of black and brown, similar to A6, but almost simultaneously A16 has been reported repainted in the former silver livery! At the time of writing none of the new E class locomotives has been reported in service.

Flooding

High tides driven by strong winds caused considerable disruption to rail services in parts of the country on March 7. The proximity of the main Dublin - Wexford line to the sea coast made it particularly vulnerable. The 06:40 Rosslare Harbour - Amiens Street was delayed at Wexford North by floods north of the station for some 2½ hours and even then only got as far as Wicklow due to flooding and sand at Newcastle and Ballygannon - the latter a regular trouble spot, where even the protection of the line by large concrete slabs chained together in rows failed to prevent blockage of the line. The 18:15 Amiens Street - Wexford only went to Bray and a bus link thence to Wicklow made connection with set held there, which left for Wexford at 21:00 but was unable to proceed beyond Enniscorthy. Much the same happened the following day except that the line was open through to Wexford. Goods trains were brought to a standstill and ran nearly a day late. Worst hit of all was Youghal where the high tides of March 7 and 8 washed sand and debris from the promenade, which was damaged extensively, into the station. Trains were forced to terminate at Killeagh and a bus link was provided to Youghal. Nearer to Cork, however, a portion of the line near Cobh Junction was inundated and this then caused the cancellation of all services to Cobh and Youghal. Three trains were, in fact, stranded at Cobh Junction overnight. On Thursday the Cobh line was reopened with the 12:30 down although the road to Cobh was blocked until late Friday. Youghal branch trains resumed that afternoon, but still only to Killeagh as the station at Youghal was unusable until Saturday March 10. Even a week later the bay platforms were full of sand, rubble and displaced rails but the principal and loop was in use. Another point on the system where disruption occurred was at Dungarvan where the sea flooded the line on the Waterford side of the station on the morning of March 8. This caused an interesting rerouting of the "Rosslare Express" to Cork over the former WL&WR main line to Limerick Junction and involved a reversal of the train at the latter point to enable it to reach its destination by the GS&WR main line.

A 'VS' In Cork

On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, the Irish Railway Record Society organised a most unusual rail tour to Cork and Youghal utilising as motive power the ex GNR VS class locomotive No.207 "Boyne" between Kingsbridge and Cork - the furthest penetration south of an engine of this class. The train comprised a six-wheel van, kitchen car 1130, two bogie seconds and a bogie van. The loco put up a very fine performance and the net time for the 165¼ miles is estimated at 3 hours 23 minutes after allowance for stops at Thurles and Mallow and for checks at Kildare and Fanstown Crossing (near Kilmallock). For the journey from Cork to Youghal and back 0-6-0 loco 193 was provided and the Cork locomotive department entered so enthusiastically into the spirit of the outing that they provided a special headboard bearing the arms of Munster, for the loco. Stops were made for photographic purposes between Cobh Junction and Youghal while on arrival the local council granted a civic welcome to the party. The return to Dublin behind loco 207 was less expeditious than the down run as a crew unfamiliar with the loco made heavy weather of the vital early stages out of Cork. Nevertheless, most of the passengers agreed that this unique locomotive working and the excellent outward journey fully compensated for the time lost on the homeward run to Dublin.

West Cork Case

The intended litigation regarding CIÉ's closure of the railways in West Cork was scheduled for hearing

in the High Court, Dublin on March 6 but when the case came up it was learned that it was not being proceeded with. The official reason cited was that the plaintiff wished it to be withdrawn "with a view to furthering harmonious relations between CIÉ and the West Cork community." Pending the hearing no lifting could take place but CIÉ lost no time in commencing operations at Baltimore on March 12. At the time of writing no lifting trains had been reported and the work being undertaken was merely removal of the yard. It is expected, however, that full scale demolition will commence in the near future. The section from Cork (Glanmire Road) to Albert Quay and to the Cork Milling Company's siding is still in use and some traffic - mainly tar and fertiliser - is being handled at Albert Quay.

International Rugby: February 24

Ireland met Scotland at Lansdowne Road on this date and special trains were run from Belfast, Cork and Limerick. From the first-mentioned there were two specials to Amiens Street: loco 98 (2-6-0) with eight bogies and loco 93 (2-6-0) with 10 well-filled bogies in addition to the normal 08:15 which arrived as a 10 bogie and HV hauled by B127. There was also an all-in special for Lansdowne Road made up of 10 bogies hauled by loco 59 (4-4-0) which arrived at East Wall Junction on time and Amiens Street only 2½ minutes late. The all-in from Cork was a well-filled 8 bogies (including kitchen 1130 and buffet 2402), HV and LV hauled by A6 in the new black and brown livery and was well to time. There were two trains from Limerick. The first, to Kingsbridge via Limerick Junction, was crowded despite its 6 bogies and HV hauled by A43 while the second all-in train was B101, LV, 6 bogies and HV and arrived 6 minutes early in Amiens Street, but was delayed to 14:15 before continuing to Lansdowne Road. On the local services from Amiens Street locomotives used were A14, 170 (0-6-0) and the two 197s (CIÉ 0-6-0 and ex GNR 4-4-0).

Belfast Excursion

On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, six special trains were scheduled to run to Belfast but only five of them operated. All were hauled by A class locos. The 08:15 down special was cancelled and passengers transferred to the 08:30 but this train unfortunately suffered a loco failure at Rush and a replacement had to be found. The delay (38 minutes) reacted on those following but the lateness had been reduced to 15 minutes by the passing of the last special. The return trains were delayed by Customs at Dundalk. From Belfast to Dublin the one special was hauled by loco 59.

Castlemungret Cement

Heavy cement traffic is being experienced on the CIÉ system and over 100 laden wagons are being hauled out of the Castlemungret branch each day by four trains. All these trains, which convey empty wagons and gypsum to the factory and return to Carey's Road yard (Limerick) with laden cement wagons, are hauled by steam - locos 101, 106, 124, 138, 164 (0-6-0). On account of this traffic several special goods trains have been run on Sundays to clear accumulated wagons out of Limerick.

UTA GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Closure Proposal

On January 26, the UTA gave notice of its proposal to close to all traffic "that section of the Belfast Central Railway between East Bridge Street Junction and the point adjacent to the railway subway under the existing Queens Bridge where the Authority's railway joins the tramway system of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners." This is stated to be on account of the proposed new road bridge over the River Lagan and will have the effect of severing the dock tramway from the GN section. The line is presently used about three times per day by trains transferring wagons to Grosvenor Road goods station. If the proposed closure comes about, as seems likely - only one objection was received by the Ministry of Commerce - it will probably mean that a considerable volume of goods arriving at Belfast docks will be loaded there for direct road haulage in order to obviate the double handling which will

then be necessary for transfer to rail. In passing it is interesting to see in 1962 the title “Belfast Central Railway” used officially to describe the line notwithstanding the purchase of that company by the GNR(I) on 5th September 1885!

Railcar Developments

Railcar G, which passed to CIÉ on the dissolution of the GNR was acquired by the UTA and left Dublin for Belfast in mid-March. It is not yet known whether it is intended for use or to provide spare parts for car 104 (formerly GNR “F”) of the same type. “G” has been out of traffic in Dublin (Fairview) for some time. It will be recalled that railcar “E” was also bought by the UTA from CIÉ in 1960 for spare parts only. The ex GNR composite AEC railcars (111-120) are being fitted for multiple unit working as they pass through the works. This will permit the operation of 8-coach sets as on CIÉ. A white diamond marking is affixed to the buffer beam to indicate cars with modified controls and so far Nos. 113 and 116 have been thus fitted. With the exception of Nos. 115 and 118 all ex GNR AEC and BUT railcars have been fitted with roof level exhaust pipes. Three brake composite ME railcars (Nos. 24, 26 and 28) have now been fitted with driving controls in the guard’s van thus enabling them to run as single units which they do, intermittently, on the Bangor line off-peak trains. Only 3 driving trailers remain as such: 504 and 509 on the Bangor line and 508 on the Larne line. The third single unit MP car No.65 mentioned in our last issue has entered traffic.

Great Victoria Street Alterations

The alterations to Great Victoria Street mentioned in our last issue continue. Platform 2 was lengthened and the track reconnected in mid-January. At the same time No.3 was disconnected so that it could be similarly extended, and this was completed by March 4 when the line was again brought into use. The hydraulic buffers of Nos. 3 and 4 platforms were removed and the tracks cut back about 20 yards to allow the concourse to be extended. Early in February a temporary booking office sited in a “long hut” erection in the centre of the concourse was opened and work commenced on construction of a new road/rail booking office in front of the previous rail booking office. It is understood that the latter will be used to house the traffic department control office. The entrance to No.1 - the “Motor platform” - has been moved back one arch and on February 28, following the division of platforms 2/3 for customs purposes, the “Enterprise” workings were transferred from No.5. The new No.2 can accommodate 9 bogies - the normal maximum on an “Enterprise” train. At its barrier end it has a new modern customs examination hall which is finished in a contemporary style and which was brought into use at the same time. On March 5 the former No.5 platform line was disconnected and subsequently removed while later the brick filled arches outside it were opened. From March 1 mechanical signalling was dispensed with and all trains had to be signalled by hand until March 13 when partial working from the cabin was resumed. In this period the lever frame was reduced from its former 90 levers to one of 60 levers (7 spare) which incorporates part of the frames from Hillsborough and Cookstown. The station area is to be fully track circuited with electric point locking and an illuminated cabin diagram is to be provided. A new home signal - a 4 arm gantry, each with a call on arm below it - has been positioned between the down line and the “third road” from Adelaide just on the station side of the railcar shed. The banner type signal, formerly engine release on No.5, has been erected as starter for No.3. The disused turntable behind the signal cabin was removed on March 15. The principal operating difficulty which the new layout seems to present is the reception of trains of 9 bogies or over as none of the platforms can now take more than a loco and 8 bogies. Long trains will be also difficult to store in the attenuated carriage sidings.

Loco Notes

Since our last issue locos 1, 56 (2-6-4T) and 47 (0-6-0) have entered Duncrue Street works for repair while those listed in the last issue (4, 8, 43, 44) are back in traffic. On March 22 another loco - 58 (4-4-0 ex GNR 208) was observed running light from Adelaide to Duncrue Street via Antrim for

repairs. An interesting movement not reported in our last issue was the visit of two Courtauld's locos "Patricia" and "Wilfred" to Duncrue Street for wheel turning in October and November last. The following locos were reported out of use at Adelaide in February: 23, 25 (0-6-4T), 31, 41, 46 (0-6-0), 61 (4-4-0), 97 (2-6-0) and ex GNR 42X and 135X (4-4-0). Also at Adelaide is loco 74 "Dunluce Castle" (4-4-0) which is awaiting painting before entering the Belfast Transport Museum.

Templepatrick Bridge

The NCC main line is carried over the Belfast - Antrim road at Bridge No.57 close to Templepatrick and since August last the UTA have been renewing the bridge to provide increased clearance for road traffic. The first materials train was worked on August 14 last and a speed restriction of 15 mph was imposed on the down line from August 18 and on both lines from September 9. This was first reduced to 10 and later to 5 mph as from October 7. The bridge is being rebuilt with pre-stressed concrete beams and to permit their installation single line working was in operation on many weekends and also on February 15, 22, 23, 27 and March 1. In addition complete possession by the engineers of both lines was required on Sundays January 28 and February 4 and on these dates the normal service was operated from Antrim to Derry with bus connections to and from Belfast, except the two evening trains which ran through. Since March 3, the speed restriction has been relaxed to 15 mph for diesels but remains at 5 mph for steam trains. On two days during the course of the work road traffic was diverted while the original bridge was demolished.

Inquiry Into The UTA

Mr H.A. Benson - a London chartered accountant - is at present conducting an enquiry into the finances of the UTA. It is understood that he has travelled to Derry and back and is now inviting individual submissions from interested parties although what case these are to defend or criticise is not clear.

New Blood For UTA

The UTA has advertised for candidates to fill the three important posts of Chief Officer, Mechanical Engineer and Assistant Accountant. The Chief Officer will be directly under the General Manager and will be responsible for the entire working of the Traffic Department, both road and rail. The other posts are self-explanatory and the appointed candidates will be responsible to the Chief Engineer and Chief Accountant respectively. Two new members have been appointed to the board of the UTA: Sir Richard Pim and Lieutenant Colonel M. McCorkell.

LOOSE LINKS

- The 09:15 Dublin - Belfast presents a colour contrast with three railcars in green, one railcar and one coach in black and brown, the buffet in blue and cream and an unpainted silver four-wheel van in its composition.
- The Armagh County Council are to convert part of the lifted Goraghwood - Markethill line into a new roadway.
- Loco 117N (0-6-0), at present the Amiens Street standby, presents a peculiar appearance with the blue tender of 191N attached.
- Only one crossover remains at both Scarva and Tanderagee and the footbridge is being removed from the latter.
- At the end of January three test trains hauled by A26, C201 and a general Motors B class loco ran from Dublin to Mullingar to investigate oscillation.
- Dundrum station, on the former Harcourt Street - Shanganagh Junction line was sold by public auction on February 28.

- UTA dining car N552 (ex GNR 88) is undergoing extensive overhaul and alteration.
- The UTA are to demolish the viaduct at Keady but no final decision has yet been taken regarding that nearby at Tassagh.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

February 5: Crumlin - Antrim - Ballymena - Belfast

The 03:00 goods Belfast (Grosvenor Road) - Antrim arrived well to time in Crumlin and comprised loco 48 (0-6-0) with some ten wagons and van. About ten buses and four lorries were stored in the shed and yard, while the disused rail station buildings and signal cabin were in sharp contrast with the apparent prosperity of the road section. The goods proceeded to shunt to the one remaining siding, worked by a key on the Knockmore Junction - Antrim staff, for an exchange of bread containers, while the writer, complete with permit, joined the brake van for a jolting jaunt to Antrim.

Here the train set back on to the down main to interchange with the 04:25 Ballymena - Antrim goods - loco 52 (2-6-4T) with about 8 wagons and van - due at 04:50. Traffic on both goods trains was chiefly bread containers as ordinary freight traffic is normally absent on Monday mornings. Without wasting time loco 52 left for Ballymena at 05:00, a full 30 minutes early, whereupon loco 48 shunted the wagons ex Ballymena into the GNR yard ready for departure to Lisburn at 06:00. During the wait at Antrim only the 04:45 Ballymena - Belfast goods disturbed the silence - 3 MP diesels hauling 25 wagons and a van. The main line goods trains are limited to 60 wagons, normally hauled by 3 MP diesels. On two or three nights each week they load up to over 50 wagons although 30 wagons is the normal maximum taken out of Belfast unbanked.

The 05:55 passenger/mail was two MP cars - including single unit No.63 - and four vans (of which one was detached at Antrim) and left there with about 12 passengers slightly late as a result of the Templepatrick bridge slowing. Several passengers joined at Cookstown Junction and railcar 4 was passed on the 06:38 Cullybackey - Belfast, before arrival at Ballymena 5 minutes late.

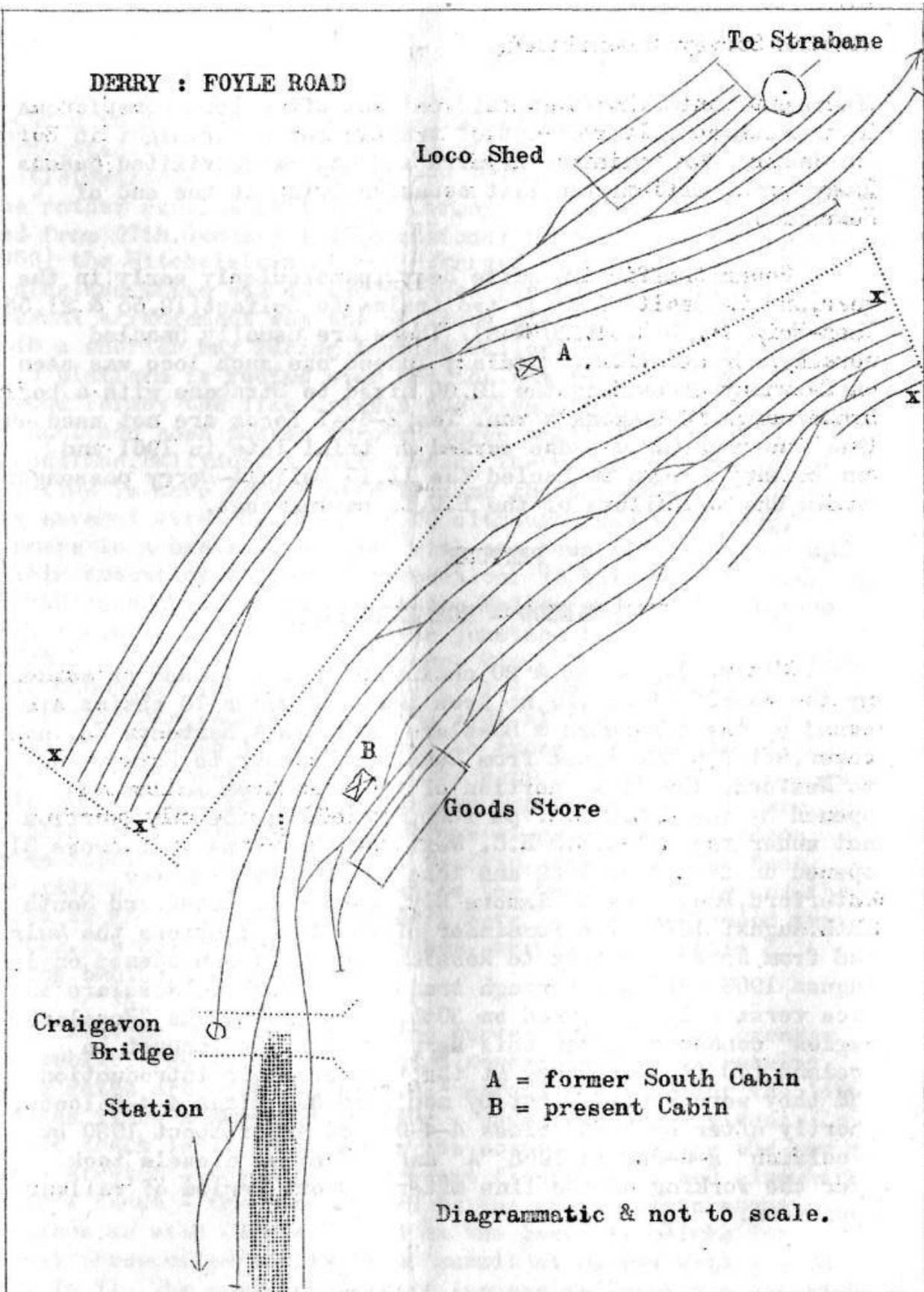
While mail and newspapers were unloaded 3 bread containers were attached by loco 52 which, having coupled up to brake compo 222 and second 293, left with some 15 passengers on the 07:00 to Antrim. The mail left at 06:59, still 5 minutes late, and when it cleared the section railcar 1 slipped away empty to form the 07:17 Cullybackey - Belfast. This car was well-filled on departure from Ballymena and Cookstown Junction and Antrim (but not Kellswater) each yielded some passengers. Muckamore and Doagh had 2 passengers each while despite the Templepatrick bridge slack a brisk run brought the railcar early into Whiteabbey and Belfast.

STATION SURVEY

Derry: Foyle Road

Of the four railways which served Derry, the two narrow gauge concerns have passed from us, but both the standard gauge lines continue operation. Of these the first was that into a temporary terminus from which this line was opened to Strabane on 19th April 1847 by the Londonderry & Enniskillen Railway. On 18th April 1850 the line was extended to the new Foyle Road station while from Strabane it reached Omagh on 9th May 1852. The arrival of the Dundalk & Enniskillen Railway at the latter point on 2nd February 1859 gave a link with the rest of the Irish railway system and the whole Dundalk - Derry section came into the GNR fold in 1883. The link with Belfast by means of the Portadown, Dungannon & Omagh Railway was completed on 2nd September 1861.

DERRY : FOYLE ROAD



Recently, however, the winds of change have blown on Foyle Road to some extent and the result is shown in the present track layout reproduced here. It will be noticed that alterations, which took place early in 1961, have abolished the second signal cabin - Derry South - and the double line section thence to Derry North at the station platforms. In effect, the up line has been split to make a loop in front of the signal cabin; the remainder of the up line has become the shed road by the removal of the crossover close by the South cabin. Similarly the goods yard has been divorced from the running lines at the South cabin and goods trains must now set back towards or into the station before starting. The Derry - St. Johnston ETS is transferred from the South Cabin to the former North Cabin now named merely "Londonderry".

The basic passenger service into and out of Derry is railcar worked. In fact, except the 10:30 (Mondays excepted) mixed to Strabane and the 21:45 (Saturdays only) arrival from the same point which are steam, the entire service is scheduled for operation by three sets. The first of these, based on Belfast, works the 08:25 down, 12:15 up, 16:50 down and 20:30 up; the second covers the 07:15 up, 11:15 down, 16:10 up and 20:05 down. Normally both of the foregoing are 5-coach BUT sets which are strengthened as required. The third "set" is the single-unit car 101 (formerly GNR "A" of 1932) and this works the 14:35 to Omagh and back and the 18:15 "local" to Strabane and back.

In recent months, however, this car has often been conspicuous by its absence. It was out of traffic for a fortnight in Derry in January for radiator repairs and has twice visited Queens Quay for attention, the last occasion being at the end of February.

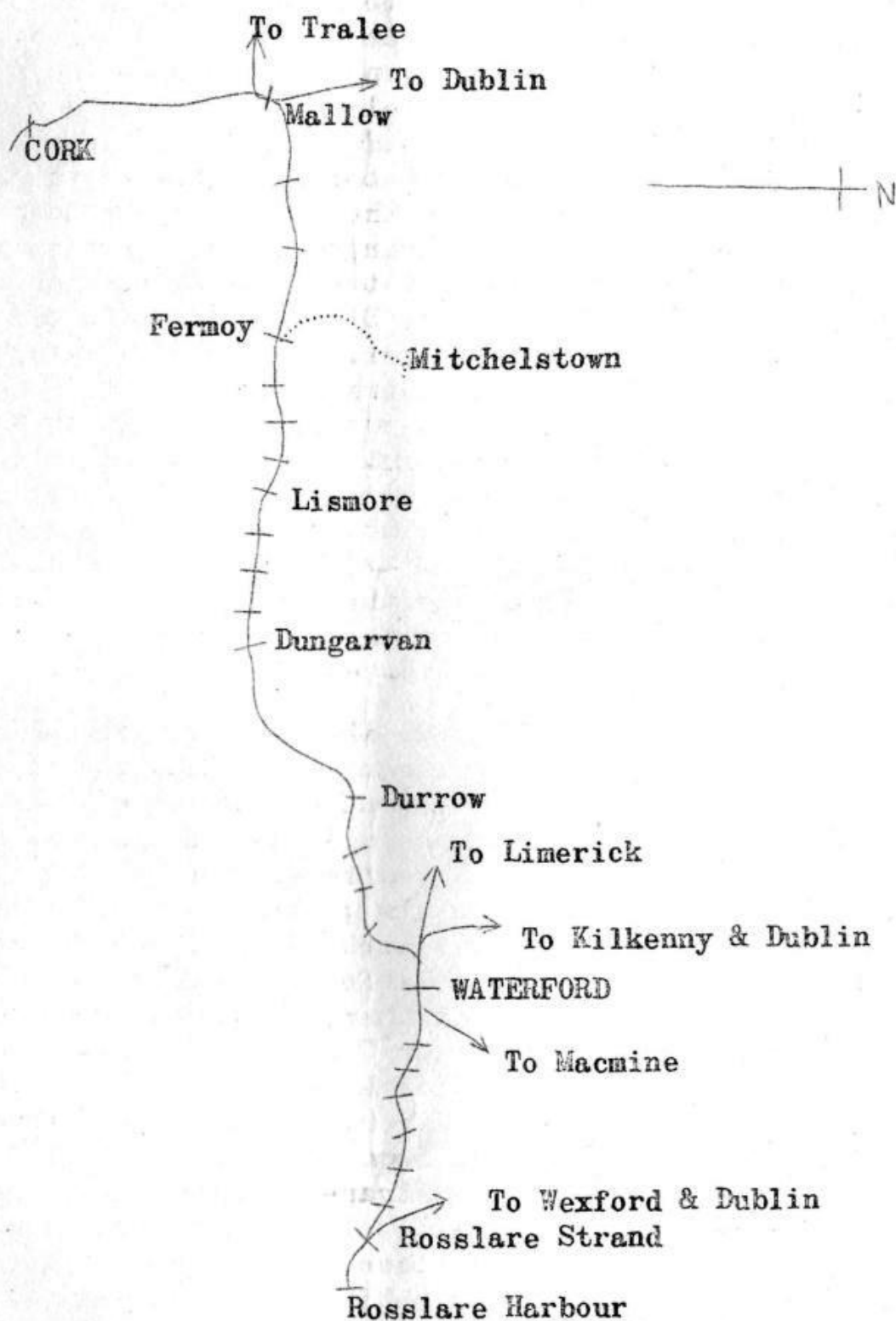
Goods traffic is quite heavy, particularly early in the year, and is dealt with by two trains to Belfast (19:55 and 21:55 Tuesdays-Friday / 01:00 and 01:20 Monday). These are usually handled nowadays by ex NCC moguls; indeed one such loco was seen on February 3 heading the 10:30 mixed to Strabane with a bogie brake compo, 13 wagons and van. The 2-6-4T locos are not used on the line regularly - one worked on trial late in 1961 and on January 1 loco 55 hauled the 11:15 Belfast - Derry passenger train due to failure of the BUT railcar set.

Feature Section

THE MALLOW - ROSSLARE LINE

Of the 117 miles and 30 chains of "lines leased or worked by the Board" of CIÉ, no less than 103 miles 75 chains are owned by the Fishguard & Rosslare Railways & Harbours Co. and cover, briefly, the lines from Rosslare Harbour to Fermoy and to Wexford. The first portion of the line from Mallow was opened by the GS&WR on 17th May 1860; the only portion not under the F&RR&HC. Next was the Fermoy & Lismore Railway opened on 24th June 1869 and this was followed by the Waterford, Dungarvan & Lismore Railway opened to Waterford South on 12th August 1876. The remainder of the line, across the Suir and from Abbey Junction to Rosslare Strand, was opened on 1st August 1906 although through trains from Cork to Rosslare and vice versa only commenced on 30th August 1906. The "Rosslare Bogies" constructed for this service were the longest in Ireland (66 ft over body) at the time of their introduction and they were hauled first by modified 301 class 4-4-0 locos, shortly after by "333" class 4-4-0s and after about 1930 by "Woolwich" 2-6-0s. In 1958 A and B class diesels took over the working of the line after a short period of railcar operation.

"THE MALLOW-ROSSLARE LINE"



Diagrammatic

Not to Scale

The down journey from Mallow commences on a curve leading to a stiff bank at 1 in 103, although once this is surmounted, the line undulates considerably, passing Castletownroche & Killavullen and Ballyhooly before reaching the rather curious station at Fermoy. Up to its closure on and from 27th January 1947 (occasional goods trains ran up to 1953) the Mitchelstown branch diverged here, trailing to down trains, and there was an engine shed for the branch loco. An unusual arrangement was the one long platform on the up side with a shorter bay facing towards Mallow. A portion of the main platform is roofed over but the bay is not covered. Beyond Fermoy the line crosses the River Blackwater on a high viaduct and soon passes through three small stations: Clondulane, Ballyduff and Tallow Road. The undulating nature of the line is here accentuated by some sharp curves and there are several stretches of 1 in 90 although none is very long. Lismore is a handsome station with one down side platform and a fair amount of siding accommodation. To this day the site of the loco shed is visible at the Mallow end of the station for, of course, this was once the junction between the WD&LR and the Fermoy and Lismore Railway. There is a sharp fall into Cappoquin including a mile at 1 in 80 as the line, which up to this has been skirting the side of the Blackwater valley, comes down to river level to cross into Cappoquin and its neat two platform station. The next 10 miles past Cappagh Halt bring the line to Dungarvan, an important two platform station which handles a fair volume of goods and, in season, is an important place for beet traffic. There are two beet specials per day from Dungarvan to the Mallow factory and the quota is about 35 wagons per day. Here too are stationed two of CIE's Holiday Camping Coaches, normally parked in a siding behind the up platform.

Leaving Dungarvan the line curves slightly and crosses the public road at Abbeyside by a remarkable level crossing. Three gates are required to close across the road for the line crosses it on a skew but curving - undoubtedly the widest single track level crossing in the country. Skirting the sea for a stretch - scene of the recent floods described elsewhere in this issue - the line enters on one of its picturesque sections as, with Clonea Strand on the south, it climbs for almost three miles to its first summit at Durrow with grades of 1 in 71. The approach is very impressive involving the high four span Ballyvolie Viaduct. The present structure dates from 1923, the previous one having been destroyed in the "Troubles". Beyond is a short tunnel and the two platform Durrow & Stradbally station. More climbing at 1 in 66 - the ruling gradient - to MP 75 summit follows and splendid views of the Comeragh mountains are to be had on the down side. Kilmachthomas is in a dip and the last climb before Waterford, to MP 63 summit, brings the train on to the winding steep down grade, over many level crossings, through Carroll's Cross and Kilmeaden to the South bank of the river Suir which is followed closely for 3½ miles. At Grace Dieu Junction the old WD&LR line to Waterford South diverges. It is now a siding to the factory of Waterford Ironfounders Ltd. The Suir is crossed by a 9-span girder bridge and a junction is made with the Limerick line near Waterford West Cabin. The station at Waterford North is that opened in 1906 when the extension to Rosslare came into being. It has eight platforms of which two are now given over to diesel servicing. Platform 3/4 is the longest continuous platform in the country. From the station the double track to Abbey Junction, where the Macmine branch diverges, was once jointly owned by the GS&WR and the D&SER.

Now on its north side the Rosslare line skirts the Suir once more before burrowing through Snow Hill tunnel and crossing the longest bridge - rail or road - in Ireland. This spans the Barrow close to its confluence with the Suir and is 2,131ft long; 13 fixed spans and a centre pivoted opening span. Campile is the first station of the six, Ballyculane, Wellington Bridge, Duncormick, Bridgetown and Killinick, which are almost identical in layout. Each has an island platform, a goods loop and two sidings, an excellent layout in which there are no awkward shunts. There are several banks; those near Campile and Ballyculane are the worst at 1 in 71. From Killinick one can see where the spur to Felthouse Junction ran for direct trains to Wexford up to 1912. At Rosslare Strand the line from Wexford converges and there are two platforms. Passing Kilrane Halt the line reaches Ballygeary - the landward side of Rosslare Harbour where the signal cabin, goods yard and locomotive sheds are

situated - and curves on to the pier enabling trains to draw alongside the Fishguard steamers - the “raison d’etre of the line”. The railway is the only means of vehicle access on to the pier and all cars arriving have to be carried to the boats by a train of flat wagons from Ballygeary.