

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 10

April 1964

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EDITORIAL

It is obviously inbred in every Irishman, particularly those living outside the cities, to arrive at their local railway station well in advance of the scheduled departure time of their train. One particular halt-keeper, now alas halt-less, used to complain that for two hours prior to each of the two daily trains, his parlour was not his own! A current manifestation of the phenomenon is the line of cars parked outside many country stations with their occupants whiling away the time before the train. It is, however, altogether wrong of CIÉ to presume on this trait of character to the extent which it does. On January 6 with the commendable splitting of the 18:45 ex Dublin into Cork (non-stop) and Kerry (with Cork connection ex Mallow), the 20:40 Thurles - Cork was altered to leave Mallow at 22:16 instead of 22:30. At the same time the Ballybroy (17:57) call of the 15:30 Cork - Dublin was cancelled and passengers have now only one evening service at 17:28. These alterations were advertised in the daily and local papers at the time. On March 30, the Wexford service was accelerated and again a very general advertisement appeared in all the main dailies and details in the provincial press. A timetable purchased in mid-April showed none of these alterations nor even a warning that it might be in any way incorrect!

We have written from time to time of the presentation of the CIÉ timetable - now much improved, but still capable of further improvement - but we find the indifferent attitude to what is one of their chief sales publications very difficult to understand. The CIÉ timetable is low-priced, handy and readily available during its validity, but we can recall only one occasion recently, in 1959, when an alteration leaflet to any timetable has been produced and from time to time a number of mainly minor changes have taken place in between issues. The UTA, on the other hand, go to the opposite extreme with their well-printed, clear, alteration leaflet every month and each one supersedes the previous one and contains cumulative information with the new items asterisked. The current one shows 23 altered calls since September 9 last and although it is hard to conceive that all these were really essential, it can never be argued that the UTA leaves the public without positive intimation of all the alterations to the timetable. To regard one newspaper advertisement, which could easily be missed or pass unnoticed in one's regular daily, as sufficient notice of rail service alterations, is leaving too much to providence and the sooner the UTA's admirable example is followed the better. Or do we, perhaps, read too much into the fact that in every case when we asked for a leaflet of the revised Wexford line rail service we were handed a folder giving the amended road passenger services?

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Railway Magazine

March Ulster Without Railways? (Editorial paragraph)

Modern Railways

February CIÉ Design Policy

Ditto et seq The Irish Scene

Railway World

February The NCC 2-6-4 Tanks

BOOK REVIEWS

“The Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway” by Dr E.M. Patterson (David & Charles), 35/-

From the prolific pen of Dr Patterson has come a companion volume to his “County Donegal Railways”. Indeed, the two are jointly sub-titled “A History of the Narrow-Gauge Railways of North West Ireland”. This - Part 2 - is a decided improvement on Part 1 and runs to 184 pages, with 1 colour plate, 69 half tone illustrations and many line diagrams. The text gives details of the line in both standard and narrow gauge days and imparts some of the spirit of the “Swilly” - always in trouble, but still carrying on. The diagrams and maps are clear and most of them are dated - a failing of the CDR book. Why the system map is hidden between pages 55 and 58 is hard to understand when it would have been much better placed at the front or back. This is, however, a detail and against it we must commend the facsimile reproduction of the working timetable of 1922. The illustrations are representative of the line and are arranged to cover the lines in logical sequence. Unlike Dr Patterson’s CDR book of 1962, this is one which can be highly recommended. Any enthusiast wishing to learn the story of the “Swilly” should not fail to obtain a copy.

“On the Narrow Gauge” by Mr P.B. Whitehouse (Nelson & Son), 30/-

The author admits that this book is a continuation, in part repetitive, of his “Narrow Gauge Album”. It covers the narrow gauge story in Britain and Ireland and concludes with a section on the surviving narrow gauge in Europe. The Irish chapters are well-written and illustrated and bring readers up to date on the eventual demise of all narrow gauge public working in these islands - the survival of the Welsh narrow gauge lines is, of course, mentioned. The book is written not to inform as a work of reference but to convey in a series of vignettes the aura of particular fascination of narrow gauge railways in which, paradoxically, there is today an upsurge of interest. This is definitely a book to be read by the fireside rather than studied as a comprehensive history.

News Section

CIÉ

South-Eastern Speed-up

After the last trains of Saturday March 28, 11 stations on the former D&SER Dublin-Wexford line were completely closed and a further 4 were partially closed. On January 27, CIÉ announced that Kilcoole, Newcastle, Rathnew, Glenealy, Avoca, Woodenbridge, Inch, Camolin, Edermine, Macmine and Killurin would close completely on and from March 30. On and from the same date Dalkey, Greystones and Rathdrum were closed to all save passenger trains and Ferns was closed to all save passengers, livestock, beet and wagon-load traffic. Alternative transport is provided either by existing road services or by several subtle altered and additional road services except in the cases of Macmine and Killurin. Killurin, indeed, will have a replacement bus on Fridays and Saturdays and hence

applications are invited from those wishing to provide alternative road services to the Killurin area on Mondays to Thursdays only! Advantage was taken of the closures to recast the timetable and to accelerate trains in each direction. Three trains are provided each way, the down trains leaving Westland Row at: 07:25 (2 hours 45 minutes), 11:15 instead of 10:15 (2 hours 40 minutes) and 19:15 (ex Amiens Street, 2 hours 50 minutes) - timings in brackets are to Wexford North. These represent savings of 35, 18 and 30 minutes respectively. A further development is the closure of Macmine Junction Signal Cabin as from April 1 and the section is now Enniscorthy - Wexford North, a distance of 15½ miles. Newcastle, Glenealy and Woodenbridge cabins remain but only at the last-mentioned are regular crossings scheduled and the other two are switched out. At Macmine removal of the down loop took place in mid-April. The sidings and the north end connection to the New Ross line are also being removed and it appears that only the south end access will be used for lifting, but this has not yet commenced.

Shelton Siding

On January 19 the main line turnout was installed for the siding to the Nitrigin Éireann Teo factory at Shelton, Co. Wicklow. Facing to down trains, it is just beyond MP 46¾, between Woodenbridge and Arklow. Some track-laying has taken place and it is evident that the line will be about 1 mile long. Apart from the formation and the concrete road and rail bridge across the Arklow River, both already complete, no major engineering will be required. A four-road marshalling yard is being laid between the siding and the main line.

Locomotive Developments

Movements of steam locomotives have altered the locations cited in our last issue and the revised position is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Athlone: | 159N, 593, 603 |
| Cork: | 118, 251 |
| Dublin (Amiens Street): | 130, 179, 183, 186, 198, 351 |
| Dundalk: | Cleared April 25 |
| Inchicore: | 131, 164, 184, 187, 249, 354, 463, 464, 85N, 132M, 255 |
| Limerick Junction: | 100, 125 |
| Mallow: | 109, 116 |
| Mullingar: | 13IN |
| Sutton (Tram Shed): | 132, 151, 197, 261, 461 |
| Thurles: | 104, 124, 195, 262 |

Also to be found in Inchicore are 42, Sambo and 365A (the ex GNR Crane Tank 31). None of these is in regular service except those in use for steam-heating in Dublin and Cork. It is learned that 131N will not be used in the June steam tour of Ireland but locos 130, 179, 183, 186 and 198 are being prepared for this task. Meanwhile some of the scrappings at Mullingar in recent months have been locos 172 February, 599 January, 574 December, 232 November, 162 and 253 October, 190 and 583 September. The movement of loco 800 "Maedhh" to Belfast is described in this issue elsewhere. In the sphere of diesels it is learned that two C class 550 hp locos (C201/2) are to be fitted with Maybach MD 650 12-cylinder 950 hp engines. A new locomotive livery has made its appearance since January and has been seen applied to A class, Sulzer, B, C and E class locos already. It is an overall black with red or orange buffer beam and the new CIÉ wheel device on the side. The loco number is painted in white, low on the side of each loco at each end in smaller characters than previously. Full size numerals appear on each end and the white band is retained. Work is in progress in Inchicore Works on loco A17, victim of the Mullingar accident of December 5. On March 19 and 20, A33 with apparatus in the cab and hauling five bogies was noticed on oscillation tests on the Midland section.

Fares Increase

CIÉ, to combat increased costs, raised all its fares and rates as from March 16. In the case of both rail passenger fares and freight charges the increase was 10%, although for the cheap weekends on March 20-23 and April 17-20 the old excursion fares remained in operation.

Signalling Developments

The closure of the station at Manulla which took place on 16th June 1963 is to be followed by its abolition as a block post and thus the closure of the signal cabin there. This is to be achieved by working the junction of the Ballina branch from Balla - 2¾ miles on the Claremorris side of Manulla. At present cable laying and track circuiting are being arranged for this installation which, when completed, will extend Ireland's longest block section from the 21¼ miles of Ballina - Manulla to the 24 miles from Ballina to Balla - the same length as former title holder, Muine Bheag - Palace East. Further cabin closures took place on March 1 when the cabins at Boher, Pallas and Oola, on the Limerick Junction - Limerick section, were semi-permanently switched out and the through running line at each has been spiked in position. The stations closed in 1963 and since then the cabins have been used little, if at all. It is possible that the cabins will be kept for use as extra block posts when heavy traffic peaks occur. Yet another complete closure is that of Macmine Junction cabin on and from April 1, closely following the closure of the station itself, described elsewhere in this issue. The ETS section is now a lengthy one: 15¼ miles from Enniscorthy to Wexford North. At Limerick a new colour light signal, the first in the area, came into use on March 16. This acts as a repeater for the up Home - a normal semaphore - for trains approaching Limerick Check Cabin from Foynes Junction, Limerick via the steeply graded Foynes loop. The new signal is fixed to the bridge carrying the Roxboro' Road over the line. Another alteration at Limerick Check since March 2 is the moving out and conversion to electric operation of the Outer Home from Ennis and the provision of a "limit of shunt" board. A new type of laminated plastic signal is also appearing throughout the system. Among other places they are sited at Ferns, Ballinasloe and Kilkenny and they are very similar to the pattern of signal installed at Port Laoise and Mountrath in 1960. Another innovation is the trial of a new type of warning board for temporary speed restrictions. The prototypes of these have been in use alongside those of normal pattern between Merrion and Booterstown on the Bray suburban section. Yet another development is the introduction of an electric tail lamp similar to the hand lamps tried out in Limerick as mentioned in our last issue.

Coaching Stock Developments

As mentioned in our report of the Rugby matches the new Kitchen car No.2403 went into traffic on February 22. It is 61'6" long by 9'6" wide and weighs 35 tons 10 cwts. It was also used on the Limerick - Lansdowne Road special of March 7 and the IRRS railcar railtour of March 17 to Warrenpoint and Portadown - its first border crossing. The first of the two new first class coaches went into traffic on the 18:30 to Cork on April 7. They are centre-corridor and seat 42 passengers in three-position adjustable reclining seats with a two/one arrangement across the coach. The interior decor is extremely attractive and is enhanced by the fluorescent lighting and the reading lights over each seat bay. Illuminated "toilet engaged" signs are provided, but the toilets - two at the same end of each coach - themselves are rather cramped by first class standards. A comfortable aura is imparted by the upholstery and a soft carpet in sage green. The coaches are 61'6" by 9'6" and weigh 31 tons 19 cwts. They are Nos. 1145-6. At long last the coaches designed by Cravens Ltd have emerged from the seclusion of Inchicore Works. On April 2 a demonstration special ran for the press from Dublin to Kildare and back. The features of these new vehicles are their fibre-glass sound insulation, double glazing, the wide fluorescent light strip in the roof and the fitting of modified B4 type bogies with Timken roller bearings. Illuminated "toilet engaged" signs are provided as are double luggage racks made of alloy which should reduce or even eliminate "rack rattle". The interiors of laminated plastic

are pleasing; in some the seats have blue upholstery in others grey, and a departure from the established practice is the mottled grey linoleum, instead of plain brown. The dimensions are 62'8" by 9'6", they seat 64, are numbered from 1504 upwards and weigh 28 tons 14 cwts. To date the highest number seen is 1520 but many more are now in Inchicore awaiting assembly. The total number on order, originally 40, has been increased to 70. The first set of these coaches went into regular public service on April 10 on the 18:30 Dublin-Cork and on the next day they also graced the 14:25 down. Four of a series of new heating vans are under construction in Inchicore works. These will contain two Spanner boilers and unlike the present 47 four-wheelers these are six-wheeled. They are on new frames, have a small guard's compartment, and all equipment is inside to make room for the middle axle.

Rosslare Day Boat

Not since 1915 has a regular day sailing operated on the Rosslare-Fishguard route. 1964 will, however, see the reintroduction of a twice daily service each weekday from June 15 to September 5, leaving Rosslare at 12:00 and 23:15 and Fishguard at 02:15 and 14:30. These sailings will infuse new life into the Rosslare - Waterford - Mallow line which in previous summers had but two regular trains each way per day. There will now be one additional train each way leaving Cork at 07:30 and Rosslare at 18:25. The running times of 4 hours and 3 hours 50 minutes respectively are very similar to the present "Rosslare Express" timings which, owing to the nature of the country traversed, would be quite difficult to better. The day sailing into Rosslare has no connection up the former D&SER main line beyond Wexford; a surprise in view of the popularity of Arklow with travellers by this route. But it is possible to reach Dublin Kingsbridge off this sailing by taking the Cork train to Waterford (arrive 19:22) and joining a new train at 20:00 via Kilkenny to Dublin (arrive 22:50). In the reverse direction connection into the day boat is made by the existing 07:25 from Westland Row via Arklow. Another interesting development is the introduction of a new 19:40 from Waterford to Limerick (arrive 21:55) presumably taking connection at Limerick Junction out of the down 18:55 Kingsbridge - Tralee.

Cement Via Croom

With the seasonal increase in cement traffic at the end of February, a regular special has been operating at 16:20 from Limerick to Cork. This is of interest in that the route used is via Patrickswell, Croom and Rathluirc.

Cement Wagons

Inchicore Works are at present engaged in the construction of a series of bulk cement wagons. These are four-wheel wagons and the loading and unloading of cement is effected by compressed air. They have been fitted with roller-bearing axle boxes, vacuum brakes and are being painted in a light gray livery with the new CIÉ emblem in light brown on each side. A similar type of container has been in use experimentally on road vehicles for some time. Cement traffic by rail has become quite heavy during last few years, due to a boom in the building industry. An interesting alteration is the relaying of the Drogheda Cement Factory yard.

Liftings

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

West Cork: Work has increased in pace and is now near Castlebernard siding at MP 22 between Bandon and Clonakilty Junction. C209 stables at Bandon for working the lifting train.

Castlecomer: Castlecomer Junction was reached by the lifting gang on April 12 and when the short 100 yard spur of the Port Laoise line is removed the lifting will proceed towards Kilkenny.

Palace East - Muine Bheag: Lifted to Goresbridge in mid-April. A large amount of recovered rail is stacked at Muine Bheag awaiting disposal.

Oldcastle: The ex GNR section from Oldcastle to Navan has now been completely lifted and operations are in progress in the MGWR yard at Navan Junction.

Stations & Sidings: Following the spate of station and signal cabin closures, loops, sidings and yards are being lifted in many places. Among those reported removed or being removed are: Borris-in-Ossory, Birdhill, Castleconnell, Lisnagry, Longpavement, Sixmilebridge, Ardsollus, Clarecastle, Crusheen, Tubber, Castlegrove, Ballindine, Drumsna and Newtownforbes. Belville siding, between Athenry and Ballyglunin, has one rail removed near the trap points which effectively prevents its use. This has, however, been so for some considerable time as the siding had beet traffic only. Foxford is completely lifted but Ballyvary remains intact.

Kingsbridge Platform

During April platform No.1 at Dublin Kingsbridge was paved with black and white tiles, similar to those in Limerick station concourse. In appearance these are pleasing, but they do not appear to be slip-proof on a wet day. It has not yet been indicated if such modernisation is to be extended to any further large stations, but it is hoped that it will, as any realistic attempt to break down the old picture of unattractive termini and bring railways into line with airports in the public mind, will be extremely welcome.

Drogheda Accident

It was fortunate indeed that the derailment at Drogheda of the 22:30 North Wall - Dundalk goods of January 22 caused no injury. The train was made up of A9, 43 wagons and a 25 ton van and, approaching at speed, about 00:30, left the rails at the points of the diverging Navan and Kingscourt branch. The loco embedded itself in the ballast and 29 wagons of the train piled up behind it, blocking both lines. The Grand Canal Street breakdown train left Dublin very rapidly (about 02:30) in order to clear the up line which was least bestrewn with wagons and wreckage. During the morning of January 23 all local trains ran to Laytown and buses took passengers thence to and from Drogheda. The 09:15 (B135, 6 bogies and 3 vans) and 11:00 (B165, 4 bogies and HV) down also turned at Laytown forming the southern sections of the 08:15 and 10:30 ex Belfast respectively. It fell to the lot of the 12:45 Dundalk-Dublin to reopen single line working on the up line at 13:27. The 12:45 Dublin-Dundalk (a 4-coach railcar) worked through and returned as the 15:15. It was 28 minutes late on return but most later trains were less out of path. The 16:45 "Enterprise" from Belfast arrived 52 minutes late and was the 10:30 UTA set which returned light at 20:00. The restoration of order took place during the weekend January 25/26 and both lines were closed to all traffic, except for one special, from 21:15 on Saturday to 05:00 on Monday. An interesting move was the despatch of A10 to Drogheda on Saturday at 07:00 via the closed Clonsilla-Navan branch. This was to enable her to arrive from the Navan end but in the event little if any use was made of this approach. The Inchicore and Dundalk cranes were deployed lifting wagons and wreckage - a task not completed until late on Sunday. A9, buried in ballast, was not rerailed until Monday evening and double line working was resumed at 22:25 that night. On Sunday the only train to pass was a football special from Cork to Dundalk and vice versa and this was made up of B133, 6 bogies and HV.

Mullingar Accident Inquiry

On February 6 an inquiry took place into the circumstances of the accident near Mullingar on December 5. Apparently when A17 with the 15:00 Dublin - Galway/Mayo train failed at 16:14 near MP 49, the driver sent the "snatcher-man" - the porter carried on non-stop Midland section trains to exchange the ETS - to Mullingar with the 46 Mile Box/Mullingar staff. Passing 46 Mile Box the driver had asked the signalman to obtain loco assistance and accordingly A42 was despatched from Athlone at 16:40. This loco and the "snatcher-man" arrived in Mullingar within one minute of each other at 17:13 and the relief engine then went to the assistance of the disabled train and collided with it. The

whole accident clearly devolved on the protection of the train and the speed of approach of the relief loco. This was estimated by some witnesses to be 35 mph when $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from A17 - the point at which detonators and a red lamp had been placed. The question of interpretation of the CIÉ rules was also brought out by the Union representative present and he said that it was time the management's rules and regulations were amended and that the practice of sticking alterations in the rule book should be discontinued. The rule book should be rewritten in its entirety if necessary, he said. The inquiry adjourned and its findings have not yet been made public.

Chaos At Culfadda

The 21:15 goods from Dublin to Sligo of March 25 was wrecked when, in the early hours of March 26, 43 wagons of the train left the rails at Culfadda - an accommodation crossing near MP 117 between Kilfree Junction and Ballymote. Although one of the most destructive accidents ever in Ireland, no one was hurt as both the locomotive and van remained on the rails. Wagons were, however, piled in a chaotic heap on a low embankment, seemingly devoid of permanent way, with a string of five oil tankers hanging drunkenly on one side and a heap of biscuit and cement-bedecked wreckage opposite. Breakdown were on the scene with the Inchicore crane removing wreckage from the Dublin end but meantime passengers on the 08:05 ex Sligo travelled by bus to meet an empty train despatched from Dublin at 07:30. The railcar set at Sligo was liberated by way of Claremorris and Athlone but did not convey passengers. Goods trains from and to Sligo, however, used this route on Thursday and Friday. Passenger train services ran to and from Boyle with bus connections thence to Sligo. It was unfortunate that the heavy down Easter traffic was thus disrupted but as the line was cleared on Saturday evening the returning trains on Monday were not affected. The accident took place on a falling gradient of 1 in 200 but as yet the cause has not been stated.

CIÉ STOP PRESS

Future Transport Policy

The text of the Transport Bill 1964 (which has just been released as we go to print) secures the future of the CIÉ main line rail network and indicates an admirably positive policy by the Government towards public transport in the Republic of Ireland. Generally the proposed legislation provides for the continuation of CIÉ as at present constituted for an indefinite period with the additional assurance that its future capital requirements will be met directly from State funds rather than be raised as hitherto on the open market by way of public stock issues. The Bill provides for the payment to CIÉ of a £2 million annual subsidy (variable by ministerial order at 5 year intervals) to meet operating losses but with the obligation that, taking one year with another, the undertaking must pay its way with the aid of this grant. Indeed the size of this grant, compared with the £1,175,000 subsidy over the past 5 year period of reorganisation, is indicative of the Government's awareness of the value rendered to the community by the public transport service which is based, essentially, on the main line railway network. The Bill also provides that up to £6 million may be advanced by the State to CIÉ to meet its capital requirements but with the proviso that future capital expenditure by CIÉ must be restricted to essential expenditure for the efficient operation of its undertaking or in respect of projects which are themselves remunerative. To enable the Board to continue its efforts to improve efficiency by achieving reductions in manpower, the Bill provides for continued payment of compensation to persons rendered redundant as a result of further reorganisation of the railways or inland waterways, but in future the cost of such compensation must be borne by CIÉ and not by the State as has been the case since 1958.

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We must apologise for the late appearance of this issue but we feel sure that our regular readers will

appreciate the amount of late news contained in it.

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Owing to the pressure of late news our report of the rugby specials has had to be omitted and the transfer of Loco 800 to Belfast is described in abridged form below:

On February 21 Loco 800 "Maedbh" was brought from Inchicore to Amiens Street and on Monday 24 she was formally handed over to the Belfast Transport Museum by the General Manager of CIÉ, Mr F. Lemass, in a ceremony at Amiens Street station. On February 27 at 09:25 she started north hauled by loco B173 which took her to Portadown. The same train was used to transfer the "Dargan Saloon" of 1844 to Belfast for the museum. The following day UTA loco No.1 took the train from Portadown to Adelaide Shed, Belfast, where the exhibits are stored for the time being. On April 16 a ceremony of acceptance was held in Great Victoria Street station.

UTA

Loco Developments

Since our last issue the following locos have had a general overhaul at Duncrue Street Works: 49 (0-6-0), 3, 53 and 55 (2-6-4Ts). Minor repairs were carried out on Nos. 170, 171, 174 (4-4-0s), 32, 34, 36 and 47 (0-6-0s). As a result of the Government decisions on the future of the railways in Northern Ireland the locomotive maintenance policy has been drastically cut as only a small number of steam locos will be required. It is more than likely that any steam locos retained will be of the 2-6-4T type and consequently only these locos are having heavy overhauls carried out. All other classes of loco have had their maintenance cut to a level consistent with safety and which will keep them going until the Government plan is implemented. 2-6-0s Nos. 95 and 98, which have been in store for some time, have had their boilers and fireboxes removed. It is expected that these will be reconditioned for use on 2-6-4Ts. On March 20, four locos were sold for scrap. These were Nos. 5X, 187X (4-4-2Ts), 10X (0-6-0) and 61 (4-4-0). Thus the once numerous 4-4-2Ts of the GNR have become extinct and No.10X was the last of the small GNR goods locos. No.61 is the first of the famous GNR "S" or 170 class to be scrapped. Formerly No.173, she was reputed to hold the most conclusively proved Irish steam speed record. 2-6-4Ts Nos. 1 and 8 have been transferred to the GN area to replace Nos. 53 and 55 while they were being overhauled.

Railcar Developments

Railcar No.1 was overhauled at Duncrue Street in February. Railcars Nos. 6 and 7, damaged in the Lisburn crash in 1963, have been repaired and are now back in traffic following trials. Railcar 104, ex GNR 'F', has been out of service at Queen's Quay since January.

Coaching Stock

MED control trailers Nos. 506 and 507 have been modified to ordinary trailers, giving 4 more seats. Dining cars Nos. 550 and 552 have been overhauled while ex NCC No.170 has been sold for scrap. Ex diner 162, converted to an all second class coach in September 1961, was reclassified all first in April 1962, repainted all second in June 1963 and is now again all first. The accommodation has remained unaltered throughout!

Colour Light Signalling

A system of colour light signalling, replacing the semaphore type, came into operation between Belfast (Central Junction) and Lisburn on February 2. The section is divided in two: Central Junction - Dunmurry and Dunmurry - Lisburn. The cabin and semaphore signals are retained at Dunmurry. The electric signals are two-aspect automatic colour light distant, home and starting signals controlled from the box in the rear. Basically they replace existing ones but are more evenly spaced to provide a smooth

flow of traffic at periods of high density. The cabins at Adelaide, Balmoral, Finaghy and Lambeg have been closed. Access to Adelaide locomotive shed is by the former "Third Road" only, as the connection with the main running lines has been removed. The permissive line working between Balmoral, Adelaide, Central Junction and on the Central line to East Bridge Junction has been withdrawn. Control of movements over the third line between Central Junction and Adelaide is under the Central Junction signalman and a colour light signal has been placed at the entrance to Adelaide loco yard. The normal indication of this signal is amber, but it shows red when there is a locomotive on the "Third Road" between Adelaide and Central Junction. The Belfast Central line is being operated as a single line while the sidings at Maysfields are retained with a few modifications and a loop provided to accommodate 50 wagons. Entrance to the loop at each end is operated by a ground frame which is controlled by a "Pinkerton Box". A third ground frame operated in a similar manner controls the entrance to the Gas sidings. The section from Central Junction to Ballymacarrett Junction is controlled by a tablet. The new "Pinkerton Boxes" are worked by placing the tablet on a revolving tray which locks the tablet in and releases the ground frame. With the advent of colour light signalling on this section, all rail approaches to Belfast are so controlled.

Takeover Bid?

On April 2, a special diesel train conveying a party of CIÉ officials was run from Derry (Waterside) to Antrim and thence over the former GNR branch to Knockmore and on to Belfast. This is the route by which it has been suggested that Donegal-bound freight from stations in the Republic will be sent following the impending closure of the ex GNR line from Portadown to Derry.

Five Engines In Steam

Easter heralded the resurrection of the Newry - Warrenpoint section for what, it is expected, will be its last season. The Easter Sunday train to Warrenpoint of last year did not materialise this year, but 5 trains were scheduled to work to Warrenpoint on Easter Monday and Tuesday. It used to be the practice of the UTA to revert to ETS working at such times, but the "one-engine-in steam" system is evidently very much in favour and every effort is being made to prevent reversion to ETS. The manual 'Staff' in use consists of the handle of a carriage examiner's hammer with two small plates bearing the legends "Newry" and "Warrenpoint" tacked on.

The Live Corpse

The Transport Tribunal has accepted UTA fare increases of last October after the UTA claimed that their revenue had been increased by 5%. The Chairman of the Tribunal, pointing out that the Tribunal had no option but to approve of the increases, added "so far as the railways are concerned, it is like a coroner holding an inquest before the corpse is actually dead." Objections to the forthcoming closures will be heard before this Tribunal.

Timetable Alterations

Commencing on February 2, the 07:25 Derry (Waterside) - Belfast train has called at Magilligan thereby providing the halt with its first up direction winter service since 1958, although two down direction request stops had been maintained. Downhill continues to be served by two down trains only.

Portrush Awakens

The Portrush branch returned from its winter hibernation briefly over the Easter period. It reopened from Good Friday March 27 to Easter Tuesday. The journey time for the 6 mile branch has been extended from 12 to 15 minutes. Portstewart remained closed and this station is not to reopen during the coming summer.

Engineers Propelled

On March 18, UTA engineers made an inspection of the line from Belfast to Adavoye, the last block post before the border. The party travelled in the ex GNR Directors' saloon N150, which was propelled from Lisburn to Adavoye.

Closures Coming

On February 13, the Northern Ireland Government announced its decision to re-organise public transport by closing railway lines, building more motorways, replacing the Ulster Transport Authority and permitting private bus and freight services. Authority was given for the complete closure, starting in January 1965, of the Portadown - Derry line and the Goraghwood - Warrenpoint branch and the withdrawal of night freight services on the surviving sections of the railway system. After the reorganisation of the railways there is to be a review of the remaining lines including the Belfast - Dublin main line. The Government did not, however, give the signal for the complete abandonment of rail freight traffic. If the Authority finds that, having achieved the major economies which would result from withdrawing the night freight services, they are still able to provide a service which would bring a net operating profit, they are free to do so. What virtually amounts to free enterprise in bus and freight services will be possible under the new policy. The new Northern Ireland Transport Commission will be a holding body owning all the assets at present in the hands of the UTA. It will have divisions to operate hotels and workshops, run separately on commercial lines. It will keep separate accounts of all its activities. In effect, each division will have to pay for the services rendered by another division. Thus, the railway division will have to pay the workshops division commercial prices for work done. A separate company will be set up to run buses which will hire accommodation and assets from the Commission. Private operators will also be able to hire or rent accommodation from the Commission. Following this decision the UTA announced on March 4 that they intend to wholly terminate general goods train services between Belfast and the Border, Knockmore Junction and Antrim, and on the Belfast Central Railway. Notice of the actual date of termination (which will not be before October 1) has not yet been published. The closure of the Portadown - Derry line has particular significance to CIÉ because it will isolate Co. Donegal to which a considerable volume of goods traffic passes by this line. It is understood that negotiations are in progress between CIÉ and UTA concerning freight traffic and it is expected that CIÉ will operate a goods service from Dublin via Lisburn, Antrim and Ballymena to Derry and thence by road to Donegal. No points in Northern Ireland would be served if this system is adopted. It has been announced by CIÉ that, to relieve the passenger situation, they intend extending their Dublin-Monaghan non-stop bus service to Letterkenny and covering the journey in 4 hours 10 minutes, stopping at Monaghan only. The loss of rail traffic at Strabane will also seriously affect CDRJC bus services.

Airport Link

At Stormont, Mr Craig, Minister of Home Affairs, has stated that the Government has fully explored the possibility of using the Knockmore Junction to Antrim line as a rail link with Aldergrove airport and that it proved impractical. The Minister did not elaborate on the reasons which made it so.

LOOSE LINKS

- On March 18, floods at Dungarvan caused the 06:15 Rosslare-Cork express to be diverted via Limerick Junction.
- Crane 2M is under repair in Inchicore works.
- A new concrete loading bank is under construction at Roscrea on the down side at the Dublin end of the station.

- Cheap day excursions to Dublin offered on Thursdays by CIÉ from provincial centres are now also available on Tuesdays on the Waterford-Athy section.
- An interesting train run on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, was a passenger special from Carrick on Suir to Dublin routed via Clonmel, Fethard and Thurles.
- Remains of UTA railcar 103 (formerly D) sold at Newry have been seen in several parts on a site south of Carlingford Lough.
- The former 03:15 Portadown-Omagh goods train, cancelled last September, has been running as a special four days per week.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

February 25: Limerick - Ballina

Since the station closures of 17th June 1963 with their attendant accelerations, the Limerick-Ballina train, replacing the Limerick-Sligo working, has been regularly locomotive hauled. The GM locos are well-suited to this turn and B133 was to be found hauling HV 3140, second 1493, compo 2115, LV 2755 and horsebox 154 on the date above.

Departure was 2¼ minutes late but there was little difficulty in recouping this and a minute more on the 2½ mile stretch to Ennis with 37 minutes allowed. The effect of the closures is shown in the removal of loop and platform at Longpavement, sidings at Sixmilebridge, Ardsollus and the loop at Clarecastle. Ballycar is untouched and indeed the cabin was in for our passing.

At Ennis B166 was shunting the 09:00 Claremorris-Limerick goods. The 4 passengers on the train ex Limerick shrunk to 3 at Ennis but, having exchanged staffs at Crusheen, the train drew into Gort where 41 passengers entrained. Most of them were children 21 of whom travelled to Ardrahan and 13 to Craughwell. At the latter point the trackwork and cabin were intact but all signals had "X" markings - out of use.

At Athenry 3 more passengers alighted, A14 on the 08:50 Sligo-Limerick goods was crossed and A52 was noted on the 16:20 Galway-Dublin goods. Belville siding at MP 64 is rendered unusable by removal of a rail and did not come to life for the 1963/4 beet season. Leaving Tuam there were but 3 passengers aboard and a sprightly run was made to Claremorris with a near stop at Milltown to exchange ETS. Sidings at Castlegrove and Ballindine were removed but Milltown remains quite intact.

At Claremorris there was a wait of 32 minutes while the 15:00 Dublin-Westport train - B132, buffet car 2409, compo 2142, second 1430, HV 3147, LV 2729 and second 1446 - arrived, exchanged passengers with the Ballina train and detached 1446 which was substituted for 1493 in the latter by loco B149.

Despite these comings and goings, B133 left punctually for its 26½ mile non-stop run to Ballina.

At Balla bogie 377A gave evidence of the signalling department's presence and despite a crawl to collect the ETS at Manulla and a slack over the Moy Bridge, Ballina arrival was 2 minutes before time. Is it significant that the sidings and loop at Foxford have been removed while trackwork at Ballyvary remains intact? On arrival the loco turned and at 20:25 departed with the 20:20 goods, made up to 43 wagons and van.

STATION SURVEY

Rosslare Harbour

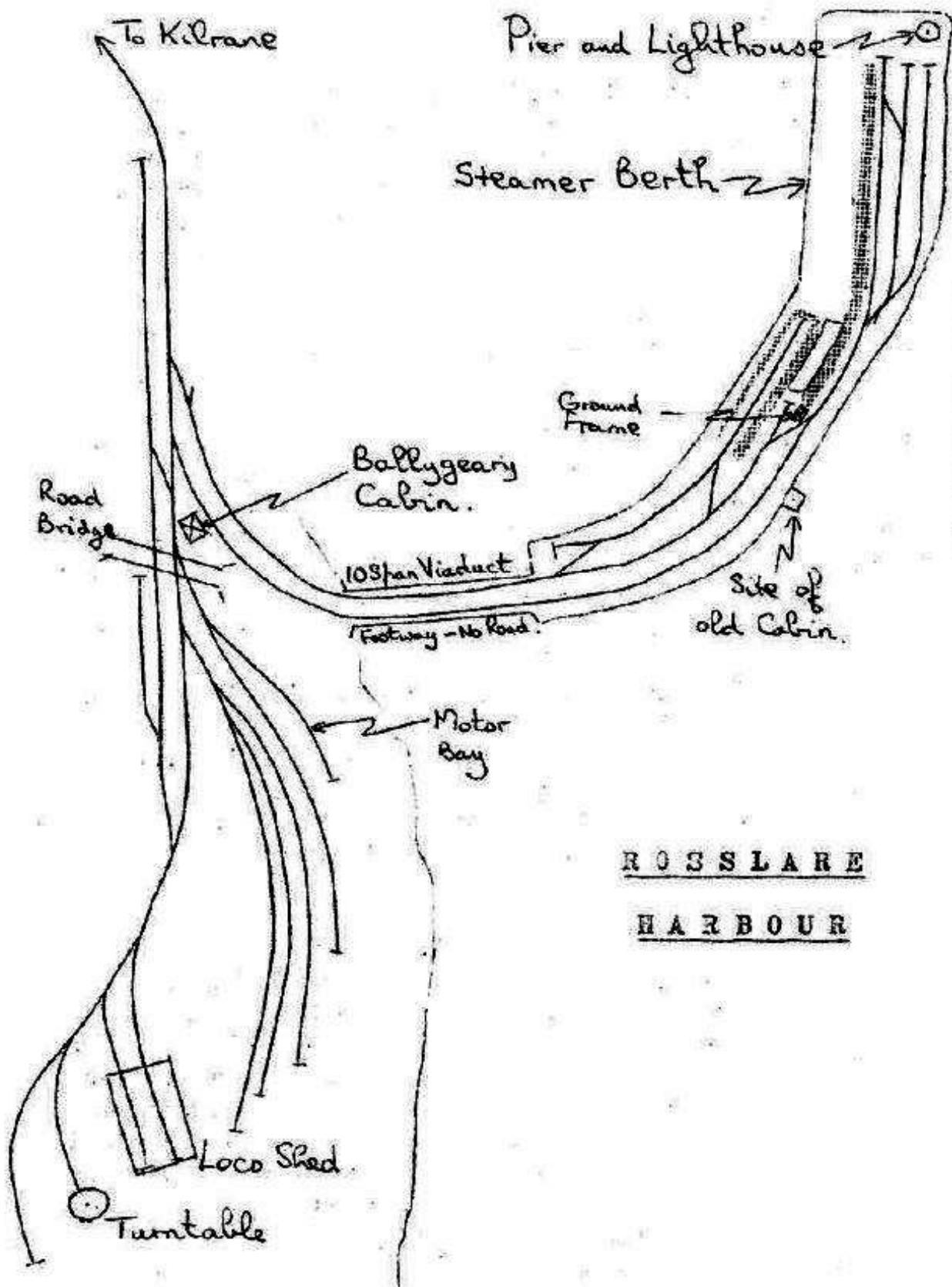
The railway era at Rosslare dawned with the opening of the Waterford and Wexford Railway on 24th June 1862. This linked Wexford and Rosslare - the only portion of its line to Ballyhack that this company ever built. The concern did not flourish and ceased operating about 1889 until its working

was taken over by the GS&WR on 12th August 1898. This set the stage for the Fishguard & Rosslare Railways & Harbours Co. who by an Act of that year was empowered to construct a railway from Rosslare to Waterford - nowadays often referred to as the South Wexford line - and to link the GS&WR with the Waterford, Dungarvan & Lismore Railway, south of the River Suir in Waterford to give a through route from Rosslare to Cork. On 1st August 1906 the GS&WR who worked all the F&RR&HC lines in Ireland commenced services from Waterford to Wexford over the direct spur from Killinick to Felthouse Junction and on 30th August 1906 the first "Rosslare Express" from Cork ran. From Rosslare this train usually comprised 4/5 bogies for Cork, one for Limerick and one for Dublin via Kilkenny. Initially this last-mentioned ran via Carlow and, with the introduction of a day service this summer, history will repeat itself as it is learned that the connection out of the day sailing from Fishguard will run via Waterford providing also a late evening service from there to Dublin. Regular Day boat services have not run to or from Rosslare since the first World War, about 1915.

Rosslare Harbour as we know it was built and opened in 1882 but it did not come into its own until 1906. Since this date it has altered but little to provide the station of today. Passing, at MP 113, Kilrane, the nearest station to the village of Rosslare, the line curves along the seashore to the junction at Ballygeary Cabin, MP 113^{3/4} (14 levers - no spares) which controls the landward end of the pier. All the servicing facilities - loco shed, turntable and a goods loading bank - are provided here. There are four long sidings although the goods store is on the pier itself. An end loading dock is provided where cars for shipment can be driven on to the train of flat trucks used to convey them to the pier, which has no road access. Indeed the approach to the landward end of the viaduct was by a highly dangerous level crossing until the construction of a bridge in the 1906 alterations.

Before 1906 the signal cabin and loco shed were at Kilrane - the pump house is there to this day - not at Ballygeary, but the F&RR&HC scheme brought two cabins into use, one on the present Ballygeary site and one on the pier itself as indicated on the diagram. Although two tracks were laid on the viaduct one was only a goods line and all passenger trains used the seaward one as is the practice today. This 'single line' from Ballygeary to the Pier was controlled by electric tablet, not the more usual electric train staff, and this mode of working was also to be found the whole length of the South Wexford line. The pier cabin was removed about 1937 and nowadays trains on the pier are under the control of Ballygeary Cabin. For shunting there is an auxiliary 6-lever ground frame which can only be operated when released by Ballygeary.

The services at present involve at maximum 10 arrivals and departures on weekdays when the Express runs (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday up to May 30). Of these departures two run to Cork: 06:15 Express and 07:10 all stations; two run to Westland Row and a third, the 06:40, extends to Amiens Street as it provides the boat connection three days a week. Four passenger trains run to Wexford North. The remainder are the goods trains which both arrive from Waterford at 13:10 and 17:25 (Tuesday-Saturday); the former returns direct at 14:40 but the latter departs at 17:55 for Wexford and then makes the 19:30 goods Wexford - Rosslare Strand - Waterford. Although the direct curve from Killinick to Felthouse Junction was lifted about 1912 connections are still given from Wexford to Waterford and vice versa by arranging that a Rosslare Harbour - Waterford - Cork slow train will cross a Wexford - Rosslare Harbour train at Rosslare Strand.



Feature Section

CORK COMMUTER

A glance at the GS&WR timetable of any date shows that it was essentially a main-line railway; its clients were those who wished to travel from one town to another or to travel from country hamlet to the cities or to England. Indeed, as with so many Irish railways its services hinged on the steamer routes to and from this Island; to Holyhead from Dun Laoghaire, to Fishguard from Rosslare, to North America from Queenstown (nowadays known as Cobh). This last-mentioned was, however, a chink in the armour of the GS&WR where suburban traffic was concerned, for while Dublin, Waterford and Limerick had no local services of note, Cork has always had commuter trains. Locals on the main line were few enough, usually two or three trains a day to Mallow of which one survives today. But on the line to Cobh it was a very different picture, a busy suburban traffic has always been handled and was added to from Cobh Junction inward by Youghal trains up to the passenger closure of the Youghal line in February 1963.

The history of the Cobh line is very closely linked with that of the Youghal line as it was, in fact, a branch off the Cork & Youghal Railway. The line opened from Dunkettle to Midleton on 10th November 1859 and extended in stages to Youghal by 23rd May 1860. The branch from Cobh Junction to Cobh was opened on 10th March 1862 and was initially single track. In 1866 the Cork & Youghal Railway (including the Cobh line) was bought by the GS&WR for £310,000 and not long afterwards double track was extended to Cobh.

The access to Cork was gained on 1st October 1860 when the line was extended from Dunkettle to Tivoli and a temporary track worked by horses to Summerhill terminus was also brought into use at the same time. The latter was made suitable for locomotive working by 30th December 1861. Up to 1868 there was no connection with the GS&WR main line, but in that year a bridge and link line were made although it was not until 1893 that through Dublin-Cobh trains were run when the present Cork Glanmire Road was completed.

Nowadays, Cobh trains normally leave from one of the bay platforms (Nos. 1 - 4) in Glanmire Road unless a main line set is being utilised when it starts from No.5. From the platform ends a sharp climb takes the train over the Glanmire Road on a single span open girder bridge. The former up home signals were on a gantry at the Cork side of this bridge but were replaced early last year by a single post with a route indicator. Just beyond the bridge on the down side, the site of Grattan Hill Junction, where the Summerhill line once ran, can still be discerned.

The mileposts on the line are measured from Dublin Kingsbridge and at MP 166½ - 1 mile from Cork - the site of Tivoli station can be seen with its brick building on the down platform. The station was closed in 1931 although for some years prior to this trains called only "if required". Between the "double-track" road approach to Cork and the River Lee the railway squeezes its way to Dunkettle (MP 168) where the Glanmire River is crossed on a fixed metal bridge. Dunkettle today has diminished in importance and has only 11 calls per day, 4 of them down trains. On the other hand Little Island has a healthy traffic, possibly because the railway is nearer to the island than the main road.

At Cobh Junction the Youghal branch diverges on the down side by a double line junction although the branch singles shortly beyond the junction, while the Cobh line swings south on a causeway lending to the six-span Sletty Viaduct which crosses an inlet of Lough Mahon on to Foaty Island. This is a private estate and is served by the picturesque Fota Halt, its staggered platforms set in splendid sylvan scenery. Great Island, on which Cobh town is situated, is reached by the three-span Belvelly Viaduct and with

the town of Passage West in view on the opposite shore we are reminded of the days before 1932 when the Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway operated a fast suburban service to Passage, Monkstown and Crosshaven, which, after 1900, was on the three foot gauge. Steamers were run from Monkstown to Cobh and thus provided a competitor for the standard gauge line from Cobh Junction.

Beyond Carrigaloe is Rushbrooke, another pretty station with staggered platforms and which today handles a very heavy passenger traffic for the Verholme Dockyards. This is responsible in good measure for the present traffic boom and the 17:35 (17:20 on Fridays) is invariably crowded with season ticket holders returning from their day's work.

Cobh station is a most modern one having been fully rebuilt internally in 1950 and having had minor alterations since. There are two platforms with at the buffer stops a modern booking office facing a small concourse. An incongruous note is struck, perhaps, by the decidedly old-world finger board pointing to the "Next train to Cork", displaying the departure time by a clock face with adjustable hands.

A small goods yard is found on the up side of the line and a long spur trails away from the signal cabin to the 60ft turntable where up to the outbreak of World War II the 400 class loco which worked the Dublin Mail or the Ocean Liner Specials was turned. This, alas, is no more but Cobh still can hold its own and more in the handling of the Cork Commuter services.