

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 11

April 1965

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EDITORIAL

With the introduction on April 12 of the new timetable on the Dublin - Belfast main line, passengers now have a service equivalent to the most extensive ever offered between the two cities and with the fastest overall average time. At last really frequent operation enables the railway to compete favourably with private transport over the same route, for with such a service even the most ardent motorist will be tempted to leave his car at home, particularly as parts of the road are by no means of high standard. The new "Enterprises" offer most attractive day trip facilities well suited to businessmen for whom the 09:15 was too slow and the 11:00 too late while the same could be said of the equivalent up trains. Now one can arrive in Belfast at 10:40 and remain to 17:30 or, from the North, reach Dublin at 10:10 and return at 17:30 - one wonders when, or whether, the 10 minutes can be pared off to give a 2 hour timing. CIÉ and UTA are to be highly commended on the provision of a rail service second to none between Dublin and Belfast.

As our report elsewhere shows, by far the greater proportion of the workings are by CIÉ stock. This is highly commendable as being of a much higher standard than UTA stock, more modern and lacking the "full gallop" sensations common to the BUT railcar sets. As regular readers are aware, one of the two all-firsts was working the 11:00 "Enterprise" link and it has now been transferred to the set operating the 08:30 and 14:30 down and 11:30 and 17:30 up. There seems to be a case for another such vehicle; indeed, two more could be gainfully employed, one on the Northern and the other on the Cork line.

The timetable and the more attractive stock are now geared to deal with business traffic. Possibly a temporary fare incentive might help build it up although such traffic is to some degree less sensitive to price than ordinary passengers. But how many potential passengers know about it? When the express bus service to Derry and Letterkenny commenced, it was advertised almost daily for weeks on end; there were leaflets, TV coverage, newspaper features and cinema advertisements - only a blind, deaf person could fail to know of it. Each bus has a maximum revenue potential of some £77 while a train of even four coaches, a first, two seconds and buffet car has a similar potential of almost £300 (plus buffet sales). In view of this one would expect an even more intensive campaign to sell the new service. True, it was advertised - once only to our knowledge - in the daily newspapers and a small timetable leaflet was produced, but there was certainly not the same impetus in the rail publicity that was noted for the express buses. While the issue on January 15 of a "Timetable Alterations" leaflet and on April 12 of a new "Express Trains" leaflet is most commendable the disparity in the two sales campaigns is difficult to understand. Even the UTA, with its now smaller interest in rail transportation, did as well with its press advertising, alterations sheet and a cheap, but not unattractive, folder on the revised services.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Railway Magazine

April Between the Irish Capitals (3 photographs)

Modern Railways

Feb et seq The Irish Scene

IRRS Journal

February The Hill Of Howth Tramway
Irish Railways in 1862

News Section

CIÉ

Double Enterprises

Since April 12 two additional “Enterprise” expresses in each direction have been provided on the Dublin - Belfast main line. This has resulted in the retiming of most cross-border trains. The full through passenger service is as follows:

Down Line (to Belfast, arrivals in brackets): 08:30 non-stop (10:40); 09:15 serving Drogheda, Dundalk, Portadown and Lurgan (12:00); 11:00 non-stop (13:10); 14:30 stopping at Portadown to set down and for connection with Derry buses (16:40); 14:45 stopping at Drogheda, Dundalk, Portadown, Lurgan and Lisburn (17:40); 17:30 stopping at Dundalk to pick up only (19:40); 18:30 (SO) calling at Balbriggan, Gormanston, Laytown, Drogheda, Dundalk, Portadown, Lurgan and Lisburn (21:40).

Up line (to Dublin, arrivals in brackets): 08:00 non-stop (10:10); 08:50 calling at Lisburn, Lurgan, Portadown, Dundalk and Drogheda (11:35); 11:30 non-stop (13:40); 14:00 stopping at Portadown to pick up only (16:10); 15:20 serving Lisburn, Lurgan, Portadown, Dundalk, Castlebellingham (CR), Dunleer (CR) and Drogheda (18:15); 17:30 non-stop (19:40); 18:45 stopping at Lurgan, Portadown, Dundalk and Drogheda (21:30).

Commencing June 19 there will also be an additional express from Belfast at 10:30 (SO) due Dublin 12:40. This new timetable will continue throughout the summer period to September 19 and is expected to continue all the year round. Certain local trains have been slightly altered in running as a result. An interesting feature of this working is that it almost abolishes completely the use of UTA rolling stock on scheduled cross-border services - four sets are required, three of which are provided by CIÉ. A CIÉ set and buffet car works the 08:30 down, 11:00 up, 14:30 down and 17:30 up. A UTA BUT railcar and buffet car works the 08:00 up, 11:00 down, 14:00 up and 17:30 down. A CIÉ set of coaches but with UTA buffet car works the 08:50 up, 14:45 down, changes the UTA buffet for a CIÉ one (which has worked down on the 09:15) and returns to Dublin on the 18:45. The coaches are then returned to Belfast by the 02:15 news train. Set No.4 consists of CIÉ coaches and buffet car which works the 09:15 to Belfast where the buffet is removed. The remainder of the train works back on the 15:20 to Dublin on which there is now no buffet car. An improvement which the revised timetable brings about is the reinstatement of the buffet car on the 18:45 ex Belfast every day. This facility was withdrawn in 1959 when the car was put on the afternoon train.

Summer Timetable

The CIÉ summer timetable of 1965 will operate from June 14 to September 19, two weeks later than usual. It includes several changes which will, in the main, improve services. The most noteworthy is the entire recasting of the Dublin - Belfast timetable, detailed elsewhere in this issue, which came into force on April 12. On the Dublin - Cork line there are few weekday changes; the 09:30 to Waterford

will revert to 09:35, the 11:25 to Tralee will leave at 11:30 and the 08:45 down will stop at Limerick Junction to give a Limerick - Cork service. On Sundays there will be a Kerry portion on the 10:30, formerly a Cork train only. This takes a connection at Mallow ex Rosslare, hitherto a duty of the 10:15 Cork - Fenit which, however, continues to run. The Sunday Waterford - Dublin train is retimed from 18:45 to 19:15. The Midland section shows several changes. The 14:55 Westland Row to Galway and Westport will run via Portarlington non-stop to Athlone, while in the up direction, in addition to the 08:00 and 09:30 ex Galway, the 17:30 up Radio Train and the 19:35 (the return of the 13:30 down) both travel via the Southern route.

On the Sligo line which, due to the Portadown - Omagh - Derry closure, will carry Lough Derg pilgrimage traffic this year, there is surprisingly no extra down train. A new up working at 13:35, replacing the poorly supported 10:05 of last year, will cater for the return pilgrims on weekdays. More interesting, however, is the provision of a Sunday train not only for the pilgrimage season but for the full timetable. It leaves Westland Row at 10:30 returning at 19:10 although up to August 15 it divides to give a second working at 15:20 - the Lough Derg train.

That it will be possible to visit Cork, Limerick, Tralee, Galway, Sligo, Waterford and Rosslare on summer Sundays is a far cry from the bad old days of 1948-1959 when only Cork was served. The remaining changes are consequent on the revised Rosslare - Fishguard sailings. The "Rosslare Express" will leave for Cork at 11:00 instead of 06:15. The return working at 18:20 is unaffected. On the Waterford - Limerick section the 07:30 from Waterford is discontinued and replaced by a 12:50 (11:10 ex Rosslare Harbour). More far-reaching alterations affect the former D&SER line. The later boat arrival will enable CIÉ to run an 08:15 Rosslare - Westland Row; much better suited to local needs. At 11:20 (Tuesday-Saturday) a train connecting out of the 10:15 steamer arrival will run to Enniscorthy only. It then returns some 40 minutes ahead of the regular down 11:15 ex Westland Row. There will be an 18:45 up this summer filling a long-felt want by providing reasonable day trip facilities from Dublin. Unfortunately the evening down train has had to be retimed to 18:25 and leaves from Westland Row not Amiens Street. The Sunday morning up train is put back to 11:30 for steamer connection thus killing up local day-trip traffic.

Winter Weather

Although less severe than last winter, the weather caused some disruption on the Sligo line and at Ballygannon, between Greystones and Kilcoole on the Wexford line. On the night of January 19 the River Shannon overflowed and flooded the Sligo line near Drumsna rendering it impassable. The following day the 08:20 Sligo - Dublin ran to Boyle only and buses transferred passengers to Dromod where a railcar set, sent from Dublin, took up the working. The 09:10 down terminated at Dromod and formed the up 15:00 from Sligo between Dromod and Dublin while the 18:15 down - B132, LV, 5 bogies and HV - similarly formed the up night mail to Mullingar, the down night mail thence to Dromod where it stabled to form the following morning's 08:20. This working continued until January 29 when the line was reopened by the up 15:00 which connected at Mullingar with the up Galway - Dublin mail. The train then resumed its proper link (18:15 ex Westland Row) as from Mullingar. The 19:25 goods ran via Claremorris to Sligo during the period. Meantime, all was not well on the Wexford line; high tides blocked the line at Ballygannon on January 20 and again the following day. On January 20 trouble also occurred at Seapoint where floods washed loose sleepers lying nearby on the down line and blocked the 13:03 Amiens Street - Dalkey. The net result was that the 13:32 Dalkey to Amiens Street - the reverse working - was 96 minutes late arriving back. The 14:00 Dalkey - Amiens Street was behind it but was blocked at Sandycove by the up Pier Trains! These should have run at 07:10 and 07:30 but the 03:25 Holyhead - Dun Laoghaire mail boat failed to dock normally due to heavy seas. The luckless Dalkey train, devoid of passengers, returned to Amiens Street 2 hours behind time. Ballygannon was again flooded on February 3 but only the mid-day trains were affected and the time

honoured expedient of running the trains to Bray and Wicklow and bridging the intervening section with buses was employed.

Waterford Area Projects

The CIÉ area manager, speaking on March 3 last, said that in addition to the £54,000 programme of 1964, expenditure of £65,000 was proposed for the current year. He said that this would include a new dormitory at Ferrybank, Waterford (£26,300), a modern staff mess room at Enniscorthy and Wexford (£2,500), and a 10 ton mobile crane at Waterford goods (£12,500). He referred to completed projects, among them the installation of new sidings at New Ross at a cost of £7,250. In view of the heavy sugar beet traffic in the area - about 90,000 tons last year - improvements had been carried out at Grange, Ballycullane, Campile, Kilrane and Waterford to increase loading facilities. This involved extra sidings and loading banks.

Signalling Developments

On March 1 the automatic barrier level crossing at Shelton was brought into use. It is the sixth such in service and protects the road approach to the new Nitrigin Éireann Teo fertiliser factory. The new goods yard diverges from the Dublin - Wexford line at 46 miles 73 chains, between Woodenbridge and Arklow but this is only now being connected to the siding across the bridge to the factory. A weighbridge is being installed at the approach to the bridge.

At Rosslare Harbour a new 7-lever cabin on the pier itself will shortly replace the present 6-lever frame locked by Ballygeary Cabin. New colour light signal heads have been delivered for erection.

Rathdrum

Preparatory to the demolition of the old D&SER Railway Hotel at Rathdrum which in its lower floor housed the normal railway station requirements, a new booking hall, waiting room and toilets had to be constructed. These are on a scale more in keeping with the traffic potential - in a single storey prefabricated concrete building about 45ft long. The hotel was intended to cater for both local traffic and tourists to Glendalough, but neither come to the stage of requiring a three storey building. The Hotel has been out of use, except for the station and bar premises, since 1933. Rathdrum goods yard is now completely lifted although most of the rails and sleepers are lying awaiting collection. The station is open to passenger traffic only.

Subsidy

The Minister for Transport & Power, speaking in Dáil Éireann on February 25, moved a supplementary estimate to permit the £2 million subsidy agreed by the Oireachtas to be paid to CIÉ for the current year. There was no question, he said, of this annual subsidy coming under review before the end of the five year period in 1969/70. Addressing the Economics Societies of the two universities subsequently, he said that the Government did not favour the payment of a subsidy for transport and only did so because they thought that, in the future, this country would need a railway system. He stated that but for the reorganisation CIÉ would now be losing over twice as much as at present.

Clonkeen Bridge

Since February the construction of an underline bridge for Bord na Mona has been proceeding apace at MP 53 $\frac{1}{4}$ on the Dublin - Cork main line. The bridge will permit a 3ft gauge Bord na Mona railway to pass under the main line between Port Laoise and Mountrath close to Clonkeen Level Crossing. The first indications of the work - a deep trench on either side of the line and at right angles to it - made their appearance late last year. On Sunday March 7 temporary girders were placed under each track while underline excavations were in progress. A concrete foundation was laid to take the eight prefabricated concrete sections forming the bridge walls and roof. On Sunday March 28 sections 1, 2, 7 and 8 - the two outermost on either side - were placed in position and the remaining four were inserted

between them on Sunday April 11. The technique employed was to break the up road and remove the temporary girders and insert sections in their place in a possession from 05:00 to 11:00. The two down and one up trains passed in the following hour and between 12:30 and 18:00 the two down side sections were dealt with similarly. The Bord na Mona line, which also involves two more bridges under nearby roads, will run from the new peat moss factory to the bogs on the west of the main Dublin - Limerick road. The 2½ mile stub of the Port Laoise - Kilkenny line will serve as a siding to transport the finished product from the factory now nearing completion at Cuil na Mona.

2509

Since our last issue the SL&NCR railcar has been employed spasmodically on driver training duties. It is to be used on one or more IRRS specials to Kingscourt in July.

Rosslare Harbour

The alterations to Rosslare Harbour mentioned in our last two issues are now beginning to take shape. At Ballygeary, the landward end of the pier, an area on the down side is being concreted and this will be a car park and customs examination centre. On the viaduct to the pier, 25 concrete slabs have been laid on the down side where the “goods road” was and these will form a roadway to permit cars being driven on to the boat. The concrete slabs were precast in Inchicore and were taken by two special trains - one on Sunday March 7 (B129, three bogie wagons and a ballast van) and the second on March 21. They were out of gauge and hence had to have the up line clear from Inchicore to Bray for their passage. The slabs were unloaded into position on the Mondays following their arrival.

Meantime the car ramp has been built into the pier itself where formerly the booking office stood. The booking office is temporarily housed in the tea bar section of the refreshment rooms. The ramp gives access to a tunnel which, turning an angle of 90°, will lead by means of a hydraulic ramp directly on to the vessel “St. David”. This has already been altered to accept cars loaded by a side door on to its lower deck. Cars will circle the vessel on being loaded thus preserving the first on, first off, precedence. Cars will continue to be loaded on to and unloaded from the “St. Andrew” by crane.

The new platform along the wall siding was completed, ready for use, on March 1 and at its landward end a 7-lever signal cabin is being erected. This will be locked by Ballygeary Cabin as the present 6-lever ground frame is. Four two-aspect colour light signals of standard Inchicore pattern await erection at the time of writing.

At the seaward end of the pier new office buildings are being erected behind the buffer stops backing on to the sea wall behind the lighthouse. This too, it is understood, is being modernised by its owners - CIÉ.

At Ballygeary preliminary work is in hand for the alterations in the yard detailed in our last issue. The new goods loop is complete and in use. It is to be crossed by a manually operated barrier level crossing at the foot of the “concrete bridge” to enable cars to reach the car-park opposite. Next winter it is expected that a new bridge will replace it and lead over the two lines direct to the car-park.

The steamer service will rise to three sailings each way every weekday from June 14 to September 25 and these will depart at 04:00, 12:00 and 22:45 (slightly different from the anticipated timings given in our last issue). The arrivals will be at 10:15, 17:45 and 20:15. The “St. David”, fitted for drive-on loading, will work all services except the 17:45 in and 04:00 out which will be the “St. Andrew”. Irish rail connections are unusual and are detailed in our summer timetable paragraph.

Steel & Steak

CIÉ rail services have achieved two important “Package deals”, one just concluded and the second in full swing. The former is interesting in that the traffic has been captured from coastal shipping which formerly conveyed the steel consignments from Irish Steel Ltd, at Haulbowline - an island in Cork

Harbour - to Dublin. Since February 17 this traffic is transported by lighter to Cork where at the new sidings at Hargreave's Wharf it is transferred to railway wagons for the 170 mile haul to Dublin North Wall. The railway appears to have won this traffic on two grounds, speedier transit and increased reliability. At present the tonnage passing is 30,000 per annum but this is expected to increase considerably.

At Roscrea, where we reported the construction of a new cattle bank last year, there is also a new electrically operated mobile crane. The equipment has a capacity of 13 tons and is used extensively to handle the container traffic from Roscrea Meat Products which recently had a consignment of 200 tons of boneless beef to Dublin North Wall for shipment to the USA. Roscrea also handles traffic, usually in containers, from the Roscrea Bacon Factory and from Nenagh Chilled Meats Ltd.

Lifting

The only lifting train working is on the West Cork section; all other abandoned lines (Macmine - New Ross, Athy - Ballylinan, Clonsilla - Fairyhouse Bridge and Clara - Streamstown) remain in situ.

West Cork: Chetwynd Viaduct is rail-less and the lifting gang is expected to reach Cork inside one week. The lifting will probably terminate in the vicinity of the Douglas Road overbridge leaving sufficient track for the longest train likely to shunt forward from Albert Quay goods yard.

Renovation

The renewal of overbridge No.51, which carries the Dublin - Mullingar road across the Dublin - Galway main line at MP 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ between Killucan and Mullingar, is almost complete. An extra pier has been erected on the site of the one-time double line to support the concrete beams forming the new floor. The new bridge at Clonhugh, between Mullingar and Multyfarnham on the Sligo line near MP 56 $\frac{1}{4}$ is also nearing completion. At Templemore the platforms are being raised to standard height to obviate the use of steps as at present.

Ramblers

In addition to the Rail Rambler and Rail/Bus Rambler tickets at present available on CIÉ services, an all-Ireland "Overlander" ticket valid for 15 days on all scheduled CIÉ and UTA rail and bus services will be available between April 16 and September 26. It will cost £15 in first class and £11 in second class.

Guinness Tramway

The tramway linking the Guinness Brewery with the main line system is to close in mid-May. The line passes in front of Kingsbridge station and enters a separate goods yard beyond the end of Platform No.3 - the "Military Platform". The tramway is of standard gauge and allows wagons loaded on the Brewery premises to be brought on to the main line. The yard in Kingsbridge where the tramway enters on railway property has now been reduced from seven sidings to three and in the space provided new car-ways are to be constructed to permit the loading of containers on wagons from road freight vehicles. It is understood that such of the Guinness traffic as continues to be handled by rail will use this yard. On April 21 what may have been the last accident to happen on the tramway occurred when a motor car matched itself against the 18:45 transfer hauled by loco 2 (a Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0 of 1914) with 22 laden wagons. The loco won!

Loco Developments

Ex GNR 4-4-0 No.85 "Merlin" has been in Inchicore since 1964. Recently a front buffer beam coupling was fitted and on March 29 the loco was hauled to Amiens Street shed preparatory to making the journey to the Belfast Museum. At the time of writing this had not been commenced.

Derailment

On April 14 a wagon of gypsum forming part of the 13:00 goods from Dundalk to Dublin North Wall was derailed on the south crossover at Malahide and blocked both the up and down roads of the Dublin - Belfast main line. The derailment occurred at 16:37 and the down 16:20 was stopped at the outer home signal and its passengers walked past the scene and were then taken forward by the 15:25 Dundalk - Dublin which was at Rush at the time of the accident. All main line trains were cancelled and Malahide took up temporary terminal status. Howth trains ran normally from Dublin and the Donabate and Drogheda local trains ran as far as Howth Junction. Meantime the set of the 18:20 down returned to Howth Junction on the down road, while loco A24 with breakdown train and van (which had followed the 17:50 local out of Amiens Street) propelled its crane to Malahide on the up line. Buses ran between Amiens Street and Malahide for main line departures and arrivals. The 15:20 ex Belfast turned and formed the 17:30 Enterprise ex Dublin as from Malahide to Drogheda where a CIÉ railcar set continued to Belfast. The 16:40 Dundalk - Dublin attached the 17:45 ex Drogheda there and ran as such to Malahide. The latter set returned at 18:50 as the 17:35 from Dublin. The up 17:30 Belfast - Dublin Enterprise worked from Dundalk to Malahide as the 18:50 local train arriving in Malahide at 20:19, closely followed by the 18:45 from Belfast which arrived at 20:36 comprising B130, LV, 6 bogies, HV and LV. The set of the 16:40 ex Dundalk made the 20:30 Dublin - Dundalk and left Malahide at 22:07, only four minutes after the buses arrived from the city. The line was cleared at 22:29, the remains of the damaged wagon having been dumped in Malahide Quarry siding about an hour earlier. The amount of disruption caused by this simple accident was, as readers will appreciate, out of all proportion to its seriousness.

Cement

The first few of the series of bulk cement wagons constructed by CIÉ are now in service. They are working from the Castlemungret Cement factory and eventually will form a special set for bulk cement transfer to the newly erected storage plant at Cabra Yard, Dublin. The older cement hoppers are in use on the regular Limerick - Athy cement traffic. At the time of writing there are 180 cement wagons per day leaving the Castlemungret branch.

UTA

Last Trains To Foyle Road

The "Derry Road" closed to all traffic after the last trains of Sunday February 14. On Saturday February 13 the regular staff said goodbye to those whom they would be seeing for the last time. The 17:00 from Belfast, made up of BUT set 122, 572, 127, 551 and 125, ran substantially to time crossing the up mail (16:10 ex Derry) at Dungannon - a 6-coach BUT with two vans at rear. At Pomeroy part of the "lost" goods - a consignment of containers for Derry, intended for Waterside which had somehow gone by the GN route - was crossed with loco 8, eight loaded and two empty flat trucks and van. The same set returned at 20:30 and ran well to time crossing the down 20:05 at Beragh - a three-coach AEC set.

On Sunday 14, this last-mentioned formed the 09:50 Derry - Belfast. The down train, however, almost refused to run. On departing from Great Victoria Street at 10:01½, the 8-coach BUT set - 123, 561, 595, 129, 584, 122, 562 and 135 - failed just beyond Belfast North Cabin due to gear trouble in the leading railcar. It returned to Platform 4 and the pilot engine came on, raised enthusiasts' hopes and dashed them by removing 123 and replacing 128 in its stead. The train left at 10:45½, a lateness which reduced bit by bit throughout.

The last regular up train was the same set and, despite photographers and TV men, left only 1½ minutes after booked time, 18:30, with 100 on board. The line to beyond the shed was laced with

detonators. At Strabane some 50 last-trip passengers joined for the run to Sion Mills. They were well despatched with detonators and some were almost taken on to Victoria Bridge but were found in time to reset to the platform. Leaving Omagh where a large crowd had congregated, there were 340 on board and this was 375 by the Dungannon departure, only 8 minutes late.

The 20:05 Belfast - Derry was an 8-coach BUT - 123, 573, 124, 594, 134 and two Y vans. It left Portadown at 21:08½, 14 minutes late. Everywhere on route crowds attended its passing and the detonators exploded defied enumeration at times. Lateness increased to 23 minutes at Omagh, 27 at Strabane and 29½ arriving in Derry, Foyle Road. The passenger complement varied considerably but only one incident - a pulled communication cord at the site of Derry South Cabin - was noted. The RUC were, however, in evidence throughout. At 00:21 on Monday morning the railcar set returned to Belfast as an "empty train" with a sprinkling of passengers for Strabane.

Pilot engines were in steam at Derry, Omagh, Strabane and Dungannon to Wednesday February 17 when a clearance of empty wagons was effected. Since then no trains have run.

A postscript: Donaghmore and the three CIÉ stations, Porthall, St. Johnston and Carrigans, closed one day earlier as no Sunday trains call. On February 13, loco 60 with N318, N458 and van N646 worked the last local from Strabane to Derry suitably detonated at the three intermediate stops.

Locomotive Developments

Since the closure of the "Derry Road" on February 14, steam workings have almost completely ceased. On the GN section one engine, usually a 2-6-4T, is kept in steam at Portadown as a standby. It has also been used to pre-heat early morning trains. At Belfast Great Victoria Street one loco, usually 4-4-0 No.66, is in use as station pilot. On the NCC section, there is a pilot at York Road and the Courtauld's goods trains are steam worked. There are no scheduled steam workings on passenger trains.

For International Rugby matches at Dublin on January 23, February 13 and April 10, No.207 worked all-in specials from Belfast to Dublin. On the first two occasions the earlier special was steam between Belfast and Dundalk whence the train was in each instance worked forward by diesel-electric loco.

On February 27, for a football match at Ballymena, 2-6-4T No.52 was observed with 10 bogies. The following week a special to Derry with 11 bogies was double-headed out of Belfast York Road by 2-6-4T Nos. 10 and 4.

Up to recently, the following locos were to be found at Portadown shed: 0-6-0s Nos. 33, 35, 36, 37, 44 and 49; 4-4-0s Nos. 60, 170 and 174; 2-6-4Ts Nos. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 50, 51 and 56. On April 9 No.170 and on April 10 No.37 were transferred under their own steam to Adelaide and it is understood that the others will follow shortly. 2-6-0 No.97 has been to Duncrue Street works where it has been fitted with new cylinders. No.207 is shortly to undergo a hydraulic boiler test and this will decide her future. 0-6-4T No.27 has been returned to traffic after being overhauled. A number of locomotives are to be sold shortly and it is expected that they will include all the SG3 0-6-0s except one, all the SG and SG2 0-6-0s except one, 67 and 38 (4-4-0s), 45 and 47 class UG 0-6-0s, 58 class VS 4-4-0, 60, 62 and 63 class S 4-4-0s and 2-6-0s 91, 93, 99 and 104, leaving only 94 and 97 as representatives of that class. The former might be kept only for spare parts.

Moving Home

The headquarters of the UTA at 21 Linenhall Street, Belfast, has been closed and the offices transferred to Great Victoria Street, York Road and Duncrue Street. Attention was drawn to the move in Stormont when a member questioned the removal of furniture by an outside carrier. He asked if the UTA submitted a tender to themselves and whether they were surprised when they opened the envelope and found it was not the lowest.

Portadown Accident

On Sunday April 4, a three-coach railcar set was involved in a shunting accident at Portadown. It appears that the driver of the set, which was propelling some wagons, understood that he was proceeding along No.4 platform whereas he was, in fact, entering a short siding. The train struck the buffer stops with some force which caused severe damage to one of the railcar units. The driver was trapped in the wreckage for some time until it was cut away. He is understood to be seriously injured and detained in Lurgan Hospital.

Adavoyle To Close

Adavoyle - the bedroom signal cabin on the GNR main line - is to close and be replaced by a new block post at Meigh Gates (MP 63½) where signals and a crossover have now been installed. This is because Adavoyle is situated at the top of a sharp incline from which it would be difficult to restart down goods trains if blocked there. Meigh Gates are located near the bottom of a dip in the line. It is possible that Goraghwood cabin may close and the section become Adavoyle - Poyntzpass. The length of this section, 14½ miles from the present Adavoyle cabin, would increase the danger of being blocked at this point.

Ballast Trains

In connection with the laying of the new crossover at Meigh Gates, 4-4-0 No.207 was observed working a ballast train. An engineers' inspection train to the same point consisted of Directors' Saloon N150 which was propelled to there from Portadown.

A ballast train was also reported working on the closed Portadown - Annaghmore section. It is believed to have been in connection with the laying of fences across the line to provide temporary accommodation crossings.

Cross-Border Freight

Resulting from the closure of the "Derry Road" on February 14 and the withdrawal of freight services by the UTA the new cross-border freight services described in our January issue came into effect on February 15. There are four trains each way, two Dundalk - Lisburn (for Derry Waterside) and two Dundalk - Belfast. In addition there is a new 06:30 Dublin - Portadown mails train the loco of which returns light to Dundalk. Provision has been made for the two Derry goods trains to be fully fitted and specially equipped goods brake vans have been provided. From Lisburn to Derry these are worked by three multi-purpose railcar units. The passenger trains formerly steam worked between Dundalk and Belfast were taken over by CIÉ General Motors locomotives with CIÉ crews from the same date.

Transport Tribunal

Following the High Court decision in Belfast to refer back the authorisation of closure for the Portadown - Derry line to the Tribunal as reported in our last issue, the Transport Tribunal met again on January 15. Tyrone County Council contended that the Omagh - Derry section of the closure programme should be withheld until 1st January 1967 and the Portadown - Omagh section until 1st January 1969. The Tribunal, however, decided that the closure should take place without delay. A similar decision was issued in the case of the Goraghwood - Warrenpoint line which had, in fact, already ceased to operate. On January 18 the UTA announced that the train services between Portadown and Derry would be replaced by road services with effect from Monday February 15.

Steam At Coleraine

On February 6 Derry were playing an away match at Coleraine and this aroused considerable support, with the result that three packed specials left Derry at lunch time and returned after the match. All were steam-hauled and comprised loco 10 and 11 bogies on the first, loco 3 and 9 bogies on the second and

loco 52 with a similar load on the third.

Coal

Coal traffic formerly transported from Queen's Quay via the Belfast Central line is now being sent from Albert Quay and then to the GN via Antrim and Lisburn.

LOOSE LINKS

- The new CIÉ coaching livery has permeated the Catering Department which now provides black cups, and brown and white plates in its buffet cars.
- Fairview shed siding accommodation is being increased by the laying of an extra siding for the oil wagon.
- Almex ticket machines went into operation at Mallow on March 1 and at Killester on April 12.
- East Bridge Street cabin on the Belfast Central line has been demolished.
- The booking office at Bangor is to be closed after 19:00 and tickets for later trains will be issued by the guard.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

March 2: Tralee - Limerick

Loco B169, 21 wagons and a van forming the 12:40 goods over the North Kerry line were standing in the North Kerry yard while the diminutive Deutz G617 busily shunted a coal train which it had just brought in from Fenit.

Leaving Tralee at 12:45 the goods struggled up the sharp incline and soon arrived in Ardfert where 6 wagons of fertiliser were added to be transferred to Abbeydorney. This traffic, along with grain, cement and livestock, are the four principal sources of revenue to CIÉ in this 70½ miles. From Ardfert to Abbeydorney the line undulates and curves sharply and 14 minutes were required for the 3½ miles. Abbeydorney is a block post and here the 6 wagons of fertiliser were left together with another van. Lixnaw, with its two signals on the one post, was reached at 13:56. Here the loco hooked off and ran on ahead to the County Council siding where a bitumen tanker was to be picked up. Access to the siding is gained by a key on the staff. Leaving Lixnaw at 14:30 the train ran to Listowel but took 16 minutes - the additional retardation caused by the tanker was extremely marked.

47 minutes of shunting was required here during which time B152, 11 wagons and van arrived on the Tralee-bound goods. Leaving Listowel with 23 wagons and van at 15:33, B169 passed Kilmorna at 15:52 and arrived in Abbeyfeale at 16:05 where 34 minutes were spent detaching 2 wagons and picking up 10. Devon Road was passed at 16:49 and then the 4 mile climb to Barnagh at 1 in 80 commenced. Even with such a light train B169 had to be worked hard on the bank although due care was taken to avoid slipping in the notorious Tullig wood after Devon Road. Barnagh Station was passed at 17:00 and then the train plunged into the short tunnel; on emerging, a magnificent panoramic view is to be seen which the driver had little time to appreciate as he was descending 3 miles at 1 in 80 with the full weight of the train pushing him down into the dead-end station of Newcastle West, reached at 17:19.

Here 6 wagons were detached and 7 taken on, bringing the load to 32. Ardagh was passed at 18:11 and a 21 minute stop was made at Rathkeale to shunt and pick up three wagons. Departing at 18:45 the goods ran through Ballingrane, junction for the Foynes branch, but made a stop at Adare to pick up a consignment of cream. This took 9 minutes to 19:22 and Kilgobbin was passed in 4 and Patrickswell in 7 minutes from the start. The run into Limerick was taken easily and curving over the Foynes Loop the goods came to a stop at the Check cabin at 19:55 some 40 minutes late.

STATION SURVEY

Wexford North

Wexford does not cross one's mind as a junction station, but such at one time it was; for an end-on junction between the D&SER and the GS&WR existed at the south end of Wexford North Station.

The Dublin, Wicklow & Wexford Railway, predecessor of the D&SER, opened its line to Wexford on 17th August 1872 - quite a late date in Irish railway annals. This was to a terminus at Carcur at the end of the "New Bridge", now demolished and replaced by the modern (1960) structure. The Boat Club now stands where the first station was. In 1874 the station on the present site was opened as a terminus but on 24th June 1882 the Wexford & Waterford Railway was opened to near Rosslare and made the end-on junction referred to above.

The line was worked by the DW&WR until it closed due to financial troubles on 17th May 1889. On 6th August 1894 it reopened, worked by the GS&WR, and continued thus until it became part of the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours scheme in 1906.

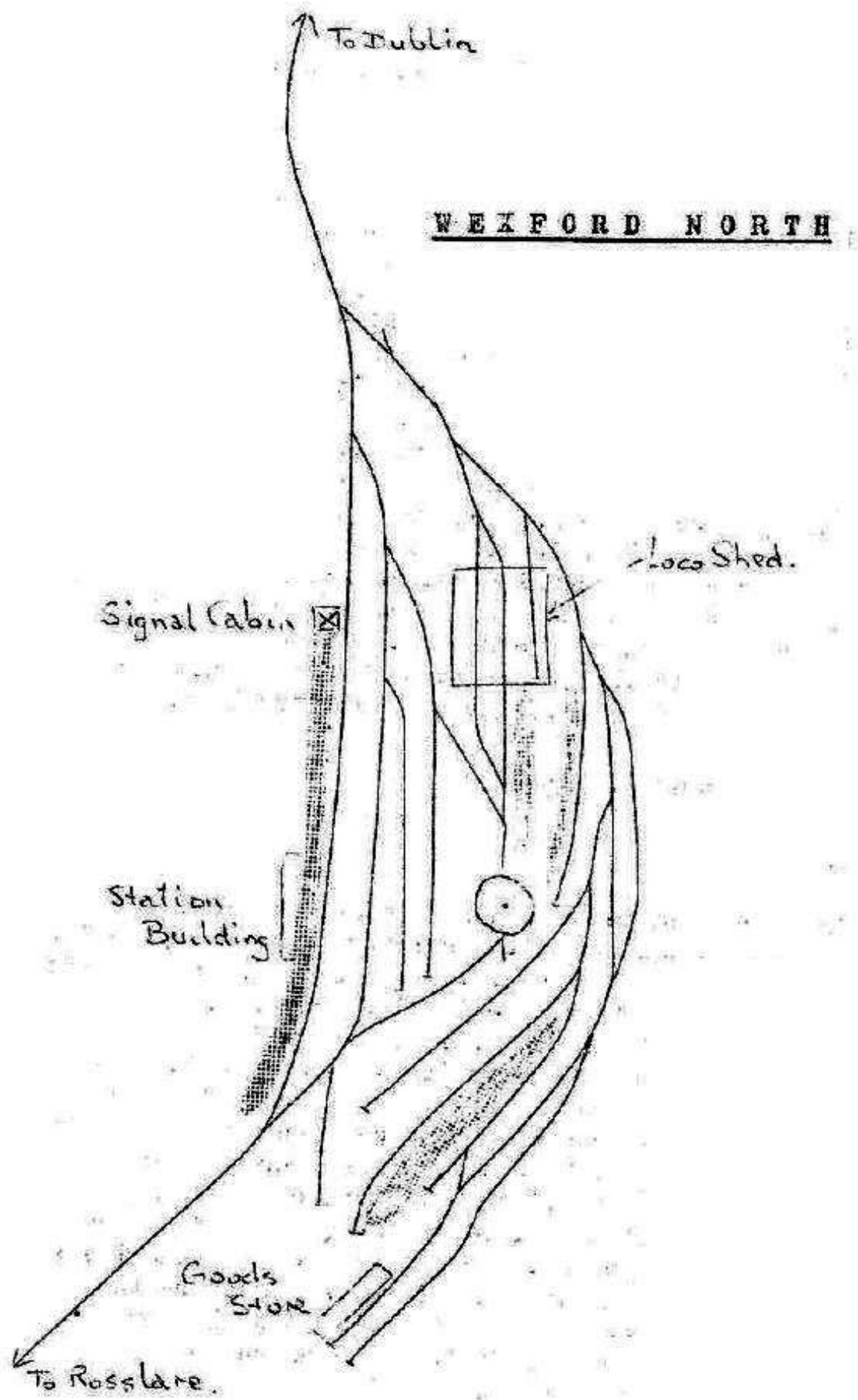
The North Station assumed its present form about 1889-90 and the glass awning, indeed, bears the date 1891. There is only one platform, on the down side, but a loop outside it enables a passenger and a goods train (or in exceptional circumstances two passenger trains) to cross. Two carriage sidings are beyond the loop outside while the goods yard, which diverges north of the signal cabin, extends alongside the River Slaney to the store. At the south end of the loop the track changes from chaired to flat-bottomed, the only indication of the boundary between the D&SER and GS&WR.

The roadway from the new Wexford Bridge crosses the line just as it enters on to the quay and the crossing is unique in that it is ungated and is protected only by flashing beacons actuated by track circuits. This is permissible due to the speed restriction of 5 mph on trains passing along the quays to Wexford South. This remarkable section has a 10 minute allowance which is often cut considerably, or occasionally exceeded greatly as when someone parks a potato lorry on the line!

Train service is not as sparse as one might think because the Rosslare Harbour locals originate in Wexford North although a good proportion of passengers join and alight at Wexford South which is nearer to shops and in any event saves the quayside crawl.

The day starts early with the arrival of the night goods at 05:45 and 65 minutes later the three-coach railcar set on local duties heads for the Harbour. En route it crosses the boat train, a B121 class GM and the buffet car train of 4/5 bogies due at Wexford North from 07:12 to 07:27. The local set returns to arrive at 08:50 and then forms the 10:20 to Amiens Street. The day mail (a BUT railcar set) crosses the 10:20 at Wexford and continues to Rosslare returning as the 15:50 that afternoon.

Meantime the 11:15 Westland Row - Rosslare calls at 13:55/13:59, continues to the Harbour, and thereafter works the remaining local services (15:55 and 18:10 ex Wexford) and returns to stable in Wexford when it becomes the following day's 06:50 set. Two goods each way appear in the afternoon, the down day goods arrives at 15:10, the up one departing at 15:53 and the (Tuesday-Saturday) Waterford goods arrives at 19:05 and leaves at 19:30. The up night goods departs at 20:45.

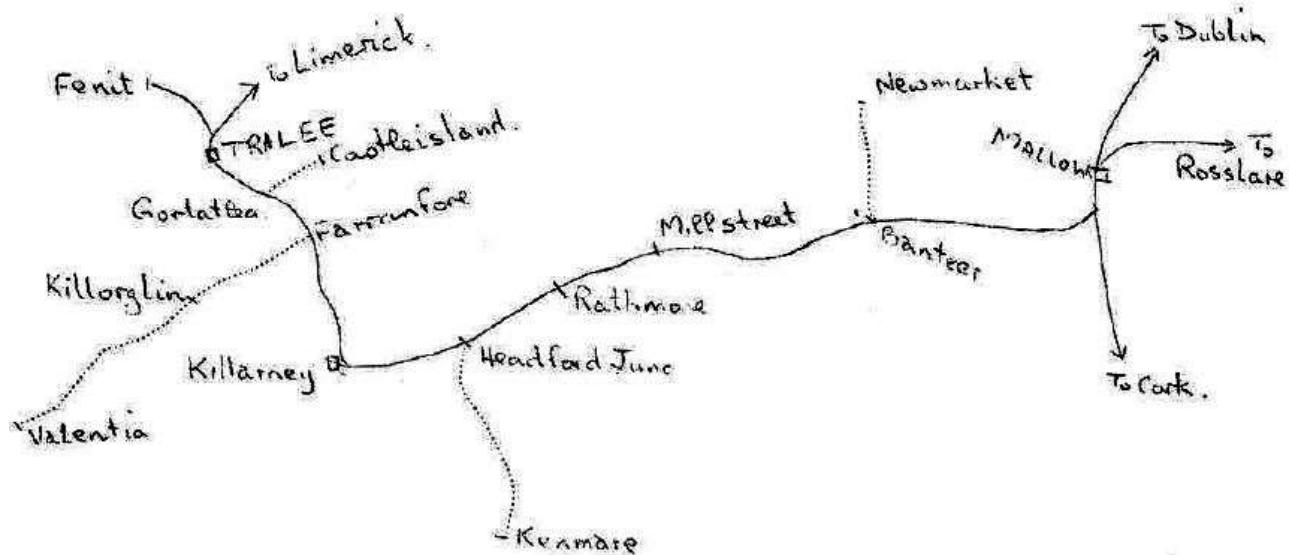


Feature Section

THE MALLOW - TRALEE LINE

County Kerry rates as one of the most popular tourist areas in Western Europe and it is not, therefore, strange that it provides some of the most scenic railway line of the erstwhile GS&WR system. The line from Mallow to Tralee is some 62½ single track miles in length. It was built by two railway companies but worked from the outset by the GS&WR. The Killarney Junction Railway was incorporated in 1846 to build a railway between Mallow and Killarney. Near the latter some difficulty was experienced in spanning a bog and this resulted in the two sections of the line on either side being complete before the middle. The first section from Mallow to Millstreet opened on 6th April 1853 and was extended on 25th May 1853 to a temporary station at Freemount, the remains of which can be seen today. It is situated almost at the top of the incline known as "The Bower" near MP 28 (all mileposts are from Killarney Junction, Mallow). After Quagmire viaduct was complete the entire line was opened on 15th July 1853.

THE MALLOW - TRALEE LINE



The Tralee & Killarney Railway built the next section which was opened to passenger and parcels traffic on 18th July 1859 and to goods on 28th August 1859. Branches were later built between Gortatlea and Castleisland (30th August 1875), Banteer and Newmarket (1st April 1889), Farranfore to Killorglin (5th January 1885), extended to Valentia Harbour (12th September 1893) and Headford and Kenmare (4th September 1893). The first-mentioned still operates a goods service. The Newmarket branch was closed during the 1947 fuel crisis but reopened with a Deutz locomotive on 1st June 1956 to be closed finally on 2nd February 1963. The Kenmare and Valentia branches were among Ireland's most spectacular railways but have, alas, been closed since 31st December 1959 and 30th January 1960 respectively. The modernisation of CIÉ also resulted in the closure of many small stations and halts. These were Lombardstown, Banteer (which remains open to passengers), Rathcool, Headford Junction, Ballybrack and Gortatlea.

A journey over the line in a railcar is most rewarding for the view afforded. Leaving Mallow, trains proceed over the up Cork - Dublin main line for ¾ mile across Mallow Viaduct to Killarney Junction

which is controlled from Mallow South cabin. Bearing sharply to the right the turnout to Webb's siding (a $\frac{5}{8}$ mile branch) is quickly passed at MP $1\frac{1}{4}$ as also is the sugar factory with its extensive yard at MP $1\frac{1}{4}$. A cabin is provided here which is switched in during the beet season.

The section to Banteer is liberally sprinkled with level crossings and the closed station of Lombardstown, scene of a serious derailment, is at MP $5\frac{1}{2}$. The accident occurred on 5th August 1912 when an up excursion train ran into the loop, instead of the straight through line, at speed. Loco 332 and much of the train left the rails and 90 people were injured. The 3 mile Lombardstown bank follows, reaching a summit at MP $8\frac{1}{4}$, and then the line falls towards Banteer, a block post, which is reached at MP $10\frac{3}{4}$. A short climb ensues up Banteer bank to MP $13\frac{1}{2}$ and then the line falls gently down a long straight through Rathcool, MP $14\frac{3}{4}$. Just here bridge No.27 is presently being replaced by a new concrete structure. Hereabouts the mountain chains of Kerry come into view and dominate the scene for the remainder of the journey.

Millstreet is situated at the 19 mile post and is unfortunately placed for down goods trains from Mallow, being almost at the bottom of a long 1 in 122 bank. It is a block post and has a curious narrow island platform between the up and down loops in addition to its main down side platform. The summit of the bank is at MP $21\frac{1}{4}$ and then the line falls for about a mile at 1 in 98 before climbing again towards Rathmore. Approaching the station, the siding to Fry-Cadbury's factory, from which heavy chocolate crumb traffic originates, is passed at MP $25\frac{1}{2}$. Rathmore has one down side platform, a mile further on, and is a block post. The climb up the bank known as the "Bower" begins immediately but it is comparatively easy in the down direction. From the summit near Freemount (MP 28) the line falls for 12 miles to Killarney of which nearly 4 are at 1 in 100 - a formidable obstacle to up trains. Quagmire Viaduct is passed at MP $31\frac{1}{2}$ and Headford Junction is at MP $32\frac{3}{4}$. Although the descent is continuous to Killarney (MP $39\frac{3}{4}$), the unusual layout prevents through running and was the subject of a "Station Survey" in our issue of October 1962.

Climbing out of Killarney the Fitzgerald platform is passed at MP $40\frac{1}{2}$ and two miles of 1 in 100 are commenced to "Madam's Height" passing under a magnificent three arch bridge in a cutting before reaching a summit near MP $42\frac{1}{4}$. Three level crossings are passed before running through the closed Ballybrack station (MP $46\frac{3}{4}$) to the crest 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles beyond. The descent of this bank covers 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles on which the ruling grade is 1 in 100. Two more level crossings are found before reaching Farranfore at the foot of the bank, MP $50\frac{1}{2}$. Farranfore is still the changing point for the Valentia direction but nowadays a bus rather than a J15 0-6-0 is to be seen. The remaining 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles to Tralee are fairly easy, passing Gortatlea, the junction for Castleisland, now controlled by a subsidiary ETS instrument, at MP $54\frac{1}{4}$.

Tralee itself is very spread out with a through platform and a bay facing Mallow in the passenger station. The loco shed and the ex GS&WR goods store are in the same area. Between the station level crossing and Rock Street Crossing is the former WL&WR yard where the lines to Fenit and Limerick leave the town in a north-westerly direction.

Present day services are diesel worked and almost all classes of loco can be seen on the line. A 160 hp G class diesel is stationed in Tralee to work the Fenit branch. The principal Dublin trains are usually worked by railcars. In steam days almost every type of GS&WR loco worked on the line but of special note were the Woolwich 2-6-0s which were allowed on the Killarney - Tralee section after 1950 and the 400 class 4-6-0s on the Radio Train to Killarney. The 360 class 2-6-0s were regular performers on the goods and night mails. For a period from 1939 Nos. 541 and 543 worked regularly on the auxiliary to the night mail, having been banished from their native MGWR heath by the load restrictions on the Loop Line at Dublin.

Up to dieselisation, overall journey times to Kerry were not very attractive. This was mainly due to the GS&WR practice of running a small number of trains with connections or through portions for almost

everywhere. In 1915 there were five trains on weekdays (one on Sundays) between Mallow and Tralee. The fastest train from Dublin took 6 hours 8 minutes, most others taking 8 hours. The present winter service has three trains on weekdays with a fastest time from Dublin of 4 hours 50 minutes while the slowest is only 5 hours 45 minutes. During the summer timetable there are two additional fast expresses between Dublin and Tralee.