

THE

# IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

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**EDITORIAL**

It seems that in Ireland we are incapable of full co-ordination of our rail and road passenger services. Throughout our transport history the two have been thrown into competition despite our pious platitudes - was not the infamous NIRTB set up to run co-ordinated rail/road services? Every student of transport knows how it succeeded in doing just the opposite. At least, however, it was a separate company while the rail and road sections of CIÉ and the UTA are not. Both these concerns seem to have caught the "Express Bus" disease; not necessarily bad of itself, but the methodical use of buses over railway routes is no credit to the timetable planners of either the UTA or CIÉ. The UTA have been running Express or Limited Stop buses for years but their current classic is on the Belfast - Derry route where an express bus leaves Belfast at 08:25 for Dungannon. Ten minutes later the 08:35 train departs for Portadown, makes an 8 minute connection into an express bus for Dungannon which arrives there one minute after the passengers who left ten minutes before. The same game is played in the evening at 17:55 and once a day in the opposite direction. The duplication of services is rather ludicrous if it did not suggest an attempt to deter passengers from rail travel for as much of the journey as it is still available.

CIÉ have more recently gone into the Express Bus business. Their Dublin - Derry and Dublin - Letterkenny routes fulfil a need, now that the "Derry Road" is closed, and although (despite the massive advertising campaign) we notice that they are seldom over-full, we have no complaint to offer. Others like Cork - Glengarriff; Cork - Clonakilty; Limerick - Kilkee and even Shannon - Galway have no parallel rail service. But the extension of the Dublin - Enniskillen bus to Donegal is a different matter. Why is CIÉ so reluctant to regard Sligo as a passenger railhead for South Donegal? Freight already uses Sligo extensively, as regular readers know, but the 09:25 gives a bus connection arriving Donegal at 15:10. This is 55 minutes longer than the express bus but with the large number of intermediate stops this is hardly surprising. In view of the additional Lough Derg traffic passing by the Sligo route this year there seems to be a case for an express railcar from Dublin as well as the regular train.

Again the Dublin - Shannon - Limerick - Killarney express bus appals. Even if only intended for intermediate sections its existence would be hard to justify. Would not express buses connecting out of the principal trains at Limerick be far better? Even on the ordinary service one can leave Shannon at 11:00 (30 minutes after the express) and reach Dublin at 14:35 (only 10 minutes later than it) and one can have dined en route. This is the kernel of the problem: attractive as the new buses may be they are no substitute for a seat in a train from which one can see the countryside far better than from any bus. By train the ability to move around, dine and avail of toilet facilities is always there, but the latest trends take scant recognition of the fact that there is still no substitute for the comfort and safety of rail travel.

## SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

### **Railway Magazine**

May                      An Old Ballycastle Railway Coach

### **Modern Railways**

June et seq            The Irish Scene

### **Railway World**

June                    Great Northern Finale in Londonderry

### **IRRS journal**

June                    Pre-War Reminiscences of the NCC  
                             CIÉ Catering Services  
                             Modern CIÉ Coaching Stock

## REVIEW

### **“Supplement To Steam Finale”**

The London Area of the IRRS has produced a small supplement to “Steam Finale” bringing the Northern Ireland scene up to date to March 1965. A list of locos to be retained by the UTA is also included as at April but even this is rendered incorrect by changes since.

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For the “Journey Jottings” in this issue we are indebted to Mr G.A. Wigham.

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# **News Section**

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## CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

### **Guinness Tramway Closed**

As predicted in our last issue the tramway which linked Kingsbridge with the Guinness Brewery was closed in mid-May. The last train actually ran on Saturday May 15, unusual insofar as Saturday working has been unknown in recent years. The motive power for the link line, some 600 yards of street track on St. John’s Road, has always since its opening in 1874 been supplied by Guinness, and the stud of locomotives at closure comprised 0-4-0 tanks No.2 (of 1914) and No.3 (of 1919) both by Hudswell Clarke, and No.4 (of 1949), a four-wheeled diesel-mechanical loco by the same firm.

It was fitting, however, that as No.4 was out of service over the previous two months or so, No.2 with nineteen wagons should bring the last transfer into Kingsbridge at 11:15. The loco returned light - if a locomotive with passengers can be described as “light”.

The last act was performed, however, by No.3 when on May 25 she hauled Nos. 2 and 4, both dead, into Kingsbridge Yard where at the time of writing all three lie. No.3 has been acquired by the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland.

In Kingsbridge the “Guinness Yard” has, as reported in April, been reduced from seven to three tracks with intermediate car-ways. Since May 17 all Guinness traffic has been brought by road tractor hauling a trailer. It is said that there has been no reduction in the traffic passing and no effect on the operation

of the “Porter Train”, the 13:15 Kingsbridge - North Wall, which goes almost en bloc on the 14:15 Northern goods from which the title, quite unofficial but everywhere recognised, originally stemmed.

### **Rosslare Harbour**

On June 11, Mr Erskine Childers, Minister for Transport & Power, officially opened the new CIÉ installations for the Rosslare - Fishguard drive-on/drive-off car ferry. The roadway mentioned in our last issue was completed early in May and the first vehicle to use it was a CIÉ lorry on May 12 carrying the ramp now in use at the mouth of the tunnel for unloading and loading cars. The tunnel was completed by May 22 and on this date the last “Motor Train” ran - C221 with a rake of six-wheel flat trucks. The end wagon at the seaward end was fitted with a drop side to permit side unloading as the former D&SER bay platform had not been available for the last four months for end unloading. The train is since lying out of use at Bridgetown.

The first vehicles to be unloaded by the tunnel and ramp method were on May 24 when the St. David arrived at 17:45. Vehicles leaving the vessel drive on to the adjustable ramp and, turning in the tunnel through 90 degrees, ascend to platform level. They drive along the pier on the site of the D&SER bay and then the roadway drops to rail level across the viaduct, swinging on to the concrete apron on the sands alongside at span “D”, the side girder having been removed for this purpose.

The footway on to the pier is now moved to the roadway side of the viaduct, in fact, on the former cattle walk. On the concrete apron is the customs shed. Vehicles cross the line by a new non-automatic barrier crossing worked by lever 15 in Ballygeary cabin.

On the pier itself a new booking office is being erected on top of the car tunnel. Fluorescent lights on the catwalk railings illuminate the new platform and on June 10 the new seven-lever signal cabin was brought into use. The levers in this cabin are of unusual type, each with three positions. Normal is the central position; pushing it makes the points or signal for a departing train on the applicable line - pulling the same lever makes the road for an arriving train. All the new colour light signals are two-aspect, red and yellow, except ground signals which are red and green. The signal protecting the platforms has a route indicator for arriving trains. On the middle road - a carriage siding - a lever-operated flap acts in lieu of trap points.

It is understood that next winter the “concrete bridge” will be removed and replaced by a new bridge across all lines direct to the new concrete apron.

### **Summer Timetable**

The CIÉ summer timetable now in operation was described in our last issue but the public timetable booklet has been improved in several ways worthy of comment, many of them advocated from time to time in these pages. It is notable that there are far more bus connections shown in the main tables than heretofore. As a result the index had to be remodelled and now this indicates not only stations but also places served by rail/road connections. A handy reference to early closing day in provincial towns is given. The order familiar to enthusiasts is altered and the more logical system of working from Dublin clockwise around the country has been adopted. Most welcome feature of all, however, is the through carriage indications which are given by an asterisk at the point of change, unlike the BR “TC” sign or the continental “Through Carriage Bulletin”. And, for a change, the dining car page can not be faulted. One omission from the timetable pages is the “Sea Breeze” train from Amiens Street to Arklow at 14:20 on Wednesdays and Saturdays (except July 24 and 31). Although primarily an excursion train there are many holidaymakers who would use this service, at least in the down direction, as it fills the long gap between the 11:15 and the 18:25.

### **Locomotive Developments**

Two C class locomotives - C233 and C234 - are now being re-engined and should be complete by

September. They will both be fitted for multiple unit operation with each other and with the 950 hp General Motors locomotives. It is also expected that the B121 class may be fitted for operation in multiple. The 950 hp C class will certainly be of far greater value to CIÉ than they are with their present 550 hp capacity.

Considerable movements of steam locomotives are also reported. Loco 85N made the first stage of her journey north on May 13 when she was hauled from Dublin to Dundalk. On May 7 locos 593 and 603 were hauled by B151 from Amiens Street to Mullingar, and early in July the engines “stored” at Thurles - Nos. 104, 124, 195 and 262 - and Limerick Junction - Nos. 106 and 125 - were brought to Dublin for demolition. Already most of the locos in Inchicore, including 463, 464 (4-6-0T) and 365A (ex GNR 31 - the crane tank) have been cut up. On July 28 locos 132, 151 and 198 were removed from Amiens Street to Inchicore for scrap.

### **Signalling Developments**

A new signal has been erected at the end of Kingsbridge platform No. 2 - the main arrival platform. This is a double bracket 3-aspect colour light enabling a train to be signalled on the wrong line as far as Kingsbridge signal cabin. A new outer advanced starter has been erected on the up line from Bray to Dublin Amiens Street about 200 yards south of Woodbrook platform. This signal, worked from Bray, appears to be an aid to clearing trains from Bray platform at busy times without having to await the arrival of a previous train at Dalkey. Killiney cabin no longer switches in between 17:20 and 18:30 on Mondays to Fridays as reported in our January issue. The long section Dalkey - Bray (5¼ miles) can, and often does, cause blockage particularly of the 17:13 and 17:26 Amiens Street - Bray which have only one minute clearance at Dalkey. Colour light signals have been brought into use at Rosslare as described elsewhere in this issue. Alterations to signals in progress at Balbriggan include the moving out of both up and down distants by about 400 yards. They were altered on May 26 and June 23 respectively. The down platform starter is being altered to enable the old water tank to be used as a sighting board. At Athlone the up Midland signal UM2, formerly two-aspect, was altered to three-aspect on May 18. The yellow indicates that a train may draw up to the Moorings crossing. On May 4 some disruption was caused at Athlone East Junction when a ballast van damaged the points.

### **Standard Class**

On June 14 CIÉ announced that they proposed to rename the existing second class accommodation “Standard Class” and designations on tickets, carriage doors, etc., would be altered or in the case of the latter, be left unmarked. First class will naturally continue to be designated as at present.

### **Rolling Stock Developments**

The appearance of ex GSR steel-panelled stock in ex GNR railcar sets is worthy of comment. In mid-July compos 2116 and 2117 were noted working with ex GNR cars on Northern section suburban trains. At Inchicore works construction of the last few of the 500 wagons for palletised traffic is nearing completion while work on further bulk cement wagons is currently in progress.

### **Lough Derg Pilgrimages**

The closure of the “Irish North” and the Bundoran Branch in September 1957 forced the re-routing of pilgrimage traffic, formerly direct to Pettigo on the “Bundoran Express”, to Omagh whence UTA road transport gave connection to Lough Derg. Now the closure of the Portadown - Derry line on February 14 last has transferred pilgrims to an all-CIÉ journey - by rail to Sligo thence by road. The 09:25 regular train has been supplemented at weekends by an 09:00 special, non-stop to Sligo except for a crossing at Multyfarnham with the up 08:20. The new Sunday trains mentioned in our last issue have been operating and attracting a reasonably heavy traffic.

## **Cork City Special**

Few Corkonians gave more than a passing glance to C203, six-wheeler 39M and bogie brake second 1895 on May 29, when they formed an IRRS (Munster Area) special from Cork Glanmire Road to Albert Quay, but the occasion was historic for several reasons. For the Munster Area of the IRRS it was their first special train outing ever; while for 39M it was probably the last run (she is already condemned to the scrap heap) and may indeed give this vehicle the claim to be the last six-wheeled coach to carry passengers in Ireland. The train itself is likely to be the last passenger train to traverse the Cork City Railway for, although no definite closure proposals have been put forward, there seems little likelihood of another passenger train being required to work into Albert Quay across the city streets and bridges. Indeed the demise of the Cork City line may well be dictated by the state of repair of the two lifting bridges across the Lee.

The special train departed from Glanmire Road at 15:15 and made its way behind the station out on to Alfred Street. It passed through the "cut" on to Brian Boru Street, crossed the bridge of the same name, and, clattering over the points of the now little used Anderson's Quay siding, ran across Clontarf Street Bridge into Albert Quay loop. For good measure the train went as far out the "Bandon" as possible - to the stop block near the Douglas Road overbridge at which point the lifting ceased on Good Friday, April 18. Reversing to Albert Quay the party detrained, photographed and inspected the remarshalling of the train for the return journey.

## **Kingscourt By SL&NCR**

An extremely unusual combination was achieved by two IRRS special trains from Dublin to Kingscourt; the second to accommodate an overload off the first. The reason was, of course, the 59 seat capacity of railcar 2509, formerly "B". The first trip on July 3 was delayed at Drogheda due to the failure of A19 between Navan and Beauparc with the 09:25 Kingscourt - Drogheda goods (11:50 ex Navan). The offending train was hauled in by B141 and cleared the section for departure at 15:33. Photographic stops were made at all stations and halts, including Factory crossing, Proudstown Park platform, and the Gypsum Industries siding near Kingscourt. Additional stops for summoning gatekeepers with a somewhat inadequate horn were frequent and on one occasion the interruption of an afternoon siesta by hammering on the front door was required! The return journey was made with only essential stops and Dublin was reached at 22:43.

The second trip on July 10 departed at 10:15 and had somewhat different timings to make Belfast connections. The stops too were varied and those at Kingscourt and Navan were of longer duration. The quality of the running was even better than the excellent performance of July 3.

## **Passenger Traffic**

Mr B.C. Murphy, Passenger Sales Manager of CIÉ, speaking to the Amiens Street Joint Consultative Council on "The Development of Passenger Train Traffic", said that the year ended on March 31 had been the company's most successful in the sphere of passenger traffic. Rail passenger receipts were increased by £125,000 - an increase of 9% in business. He said that the "Cheap Weekend" facilities offered during the slacker months had been a great success last winter and had alone reaped an additional £40,000 or so. Concurrently Sunday rail services had been improved and in addition to the regular Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway trains, the Rosslare line and the Sligo line have Sunday trains in the summer - the last-mentioned for the first time. On cheap weekends Westport had also been served. Mr Murphy pointed out that the present more speedy service was a great selling point for passenger traffic. He said too that an increase in passenger traffic was expected on account of the "Irish Homeland" special and that it would help combat the drain caused by the new car-ferry services.

## **Lifting**

The lifting of the West Cork Railway is completed and the other work in progress is as under.

Clonsilla - Fairyhouse: When the Clonsilla - Navan line was removed, the work, which was undertaken by a contractor, commenced at Fairyhouse Bridge (MP 12¼) northward to Navan. This left a spur from Clonsilla of just over 5 miles. In mid-May contractor's men commenced removing parts of this section working from Dunboyne. Rails and other material recovered are being removed by road. The remains of railcar 101, formerly GNR "A", are still lying in the GNR goods yard at Navan - extremely derelict.

Ballylinan: The Ballylinan branch was lifted in June from its terminus at MP 4¾ to Fortbarrington gates - MP ¾ from Athy. The stub remaining permits trains to the Asbestos Cement Factory to draw forward before reversing into the siding.

St. John's Siding: The 24 chain long siding diverging from the Dublin - Wexford line at MP 78½, to serve St. John's Mills near Enniscorthy, was lifted by mid-June.

Clara - Streamstown: CIÉ on June 25 gave notice of intention to make an abandonment order for the 7½ mile line between Clara and Streamstown. Regular passenger services ceased in 1947 and only spasmodic freight trains have run since. It was used for a long time for wagon storage but subsequently a passenger special organised by the IRRS ran on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1963 when loco No.151, five bogie coaches and LV traversed the branch in both directions. Lifting has not yet commenced.

Others: The lifting of the Macmine - New Ross line has not yet begun but it is expected to commence in the near future. The Ardnacrusha Branch has been effectively immobilised by the removal of the junction points. It is said that they may be replaced if required. Another ESB branch has also had its points removed - the siding off the Dublin to Cork main line just north of Kilbarry. Neither of these lines has carried recent traffic.

## **Strike**

Rail traffic was disrupted by a partial strike during the period from June 12 to 25 in support of the National Busmen's Union who, on the former date, staged a one day strike. CIÉ "locked out" the strikers who then picketed not only road but rail depots and achieved some success in disrupting rail services although at no time did the passenger services wholly cease. The chief difficulty was the uncertainty created regarding operation, which cost both CIÉ and the tourist industry a great deal of revenue and goodwill. The worst hit areas were the Dublin and Cork suburban trains, the Wexford line and the trains out of Rosslare. The whole affair caused considerable resentment among the public and as freight traffic was brought to a complete standstill the loss of traffic, some of it permanently, must have been considerable.

## **Renovation**

Work is nearing completion on a "face-lift" for the entrance to Mallow station. A new tiled entrance hall is being provided and a new modern glass-fronted office will replace the antiquated booking window previously in use. At Waterford a "new look" has been given to the entrance by installation of a slatted timber awning at the opening from the street. Amiens Street station roof is being painted and having further sections of corrugated perspex fitted, replacing the former glass panes.

## **Shelton Traffic Commences**

On July 26 the first consignment of sulphate of ammonia was despatched from the new factory of Nítrigin Éireann Teoranta at Shelton, Co. Wicklow. The initial consignment, totalling 300 tons, was destined to two places: the Albatros Windmill factory at New Ross and Gouldings Ltd at North Wall, Dublin. The five-road marshalling yard sited alongside the Dublin - Wexford line near MP 46 therefore

came into use for the first time in its rightful role. It had previously brought in some assorted materials for the factory. Loco G614 was used to shunt the laden wagons from the siding into the factory to the marshalling yard. Of the eight units comprising the factory, only one is yet in production and when, in October, all are at work the services of a full time pilot engine will likely be required.

## **UTA GENERAL NEWS REPORT**

### **Locomotive Developments**

Twenty four locomotives, one boiler and two railcars were sold by auction at Belfast on May 21 and realised some £21,000.

The locomotives were: class U 4-4-0s Nos. 66, 67, 68; class S 4-4-0 No.60; class S2 4-4-0s Nos. 62, 63; class VS 4-4-0 No.58; class SG3 0-6-0s Nos. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36; class SG2 0-6-0s Nos. 38, 40, 43, 44; class UG 0-6-0s Nos. 45, 47; class W 2-6-0s Nos. 91, 93, 94, 99, 104.

The railcars were the ex NCC Ganz railcar No.5 and ex GNR railcar E.

The repairs to 2-6-0 No.97 have not been carried out and it is not likely to be used again. The steam stock of the UTA now consists of: class VS 4-4-0 No.207; class W 2-6-0 No.97 (not in use); class S 4-4-0s 170, 171, 174; class UG 0-6-0s 48, 49; class SG3 0-6-0 No.37; ex SL&NCR 0-6-4Ts Nos. 26, 27; 2-6-4Ts 1-10 and 51-57.

It is expected that many of these locos will become redundant at the end of the summer timetable. Nos. 48 and 49 are only retained to work Bangor trains over the Belfast Central Railway which is to close on July 31 and it is thought that SG3 No.37 is being kept with a view to her use in demolition work on the "Derry Road".

All locomotives on the GN section are stationed at Adelaide with the exception of Nos. 9 and 50 which are out of use at Portadown. It is also understood that 2-6-4T No.7 has been partly cannibalised.

Another attempt was made to operate a tender coupled to a 2-6-4T on the Belfast - Dublin line when, on May 18, No.55 and tender worked the 10:30 "Tourist Train" to Dublin. The up journey was completed satisfactorily but on the return trouble was experienced when the water in the loco tanks ran back into the tender. The proceedings were further enlivened by the development of a hot small end which resulted in the loco's hurried retirement to Duncrue Street. The tender has not been seen since but loco No.54 has been observed with a built up coal bunker. The regular "Tourist Train" to Dublin continues to operate with loco 207 or one of the 2-6-4Ts. The 18:30 (SO) Dublin - Belfast was steam between Dundalk and Belfast from April 17 to June 19.

### **New Liveries**

On July 8 the UTA introduced the first train in one of their new liveries on the 14:00 Belfast - Dublin Enterprise Express. Henceforward, railcars of the GN, NCC and BCD are to have their own distinctive liveries, as also are the class A main line coaches. All other stock will remain in Brunswick Green. For those who were not forewarned of the new livery, the effect must have been rather eerie as the ghost of the Great Northern days traversed the countryside in blue, cream and silver colours.

On the GN section sets the livery consists of silver roofs and blue panels with a cream band. The cream band, 21 inches deep, is below the quarter lights except on the Enterprise set where it covers the full depth of the windows. The level of the cream band is measured from rail level in order to ensure continuity of line despite different coach dimensions. The buffer beams are light red. The new colours are officially described as Riviera Blue and Cream. There is a new interior decor in which Oyster Grey predominates in second class and maple type panelling in first. Brighter upholstery has been provided. The first train consists of railcar 134, brake first 562, diner 552 and railcar 127.



The new NCC section livery is dark red and grey/white. Corridor MPDs will have a deep grey band while non-corridor MPD and MED railcars will have but 21 inches of grey. No.63 is already in service.

The BCD section livery will be light olive green with the 21 inches of cream and MED No.26 is already in service. Class A coaches, except for railcars, still appear in unlined maroon.

### **Railcar Developments**

AEC railcar 115, damaged as reported in our last issue, is now back in service in new livery. N585 - an AEC driving trailer - has been overhauled with seats re-covered in UTA blue first class material and with much use of Formica panelling internally. BUT railcars 127 and 134 have been overhauled and with MPD No.63 have appeared in the new livery.

### **Learning The Road**

History was made on April 29 when VS class loco No.207 worked a ballast train to Annaghmore on the "Derry Road". Although the working of locos of both the V and VS classes on the Portadown - Derry line was officially approved they were never in fact used there hitherto. It is ironic that the first working should be after the line's closure.

### **Summer Timetable**

The summer timetable came into operation on June 14 and will operate until September 12, except for some trains running in July and August only. On the GN the main line timetable is the same as that which came into operation on April 12 with the addition of a 10:30 (SO) non-stop ex Belfast. The train is worked by BUT railcars which form the 18:30 (SO) Dublin - Belfast.

On the NCC the 17:30 to Larne Harbour is steam-worked as also is the 17:35 to Carrickfergus. There are no regular steam workings on the main line from Monday to Friday. On Saturdays the main alterations from previous years are that the 08:35 ex Belfast now goes to Portrush and is steam while an additional train departs York Road at 08:50 for Derry arriving at 11:25. It is also steam. The 08:20 (SO) to Derry continues to run and completes the journey in 100 minutes. There is no 09:40 to Derry during July and August, its stops at Downhill and Magilligan being made by the new 08:50. From Derry the steam workings are at 13:00 and 14:10, the latter calling at Bellerena, Magilligan and Downhill in addition to the usual stops. The 15:35 from Portrush is steam-worked arriving Belfast at 17:20. The 05:55 Belfast - Derry is also steam-hauled. On Saturdays only, a railcar leaves Derry at 17:15 and runs to Belfast nominally non-stop in 110 minutes. This train provides light refreshments from July 3. More interesting is the 20:35 ex Derry which likewise completes the journey in 110 minutes despite five intermediate stops totalling 11 minutes.

### **Lines Abandoned**

The UTA has given notice that they were authorised on May 24 to abandon the Goraghwood - Warrenpoint branch, the Portadown - Derry line and the branch from Dungannon to Coalisland. No mention has been made, however, of the Omagh Market Branch! Messrs John Eastwood & Sons, the Belfast demolition contractors, have bought the Warrenpoint branch for £30,000 - already the connection at Goraghwood has been severed. It is not yet known whether the "Derry Road" will be sold in situ or lifted by the UTA.

### **Unstaffed Station**

The arrangement to cease staffing Bangor booking office after 19:00 has been postponed. It is understood that Carnalea, on the Bangor line, is now unstaffed after 14:30 each day and that tickets are dealt with by the guard.

### **Signalling Alterations**

The new cabin at Meigh came into operation on May 9 and has nine levers of which two are spare. The

cabin at Adavoyle (MP 62½), for which Meigh (MP 63¼) is the replacement, closed on the same date. A fence has been erected outside the station building which probably indicates that it has been sold. On May 23 the cabin at Goragwood was closed and since then Tanderagee has suffered the same fate. It is learned that Portadown Junction cabin is switched out and only opened when access to the loco shed is required. The block sections north of Dundalk now are Dundalk - Mountpleasant (CIÉ and only open if required) - Meigh - Poyntzpass - Portadown South. The lengths of the sections (with Mountpleasant switched out) are respectively 9, 13¾ and 10½ miles.

On the NCC section Templepatrick cabin has been closed while on the BCD section work commenced on May 3 on the erection of a new cabin at Queen's Quay.

### **Belfast Central Closure**

The Belfast Central Railway is to close on July 31 but in effect the last train ran on July 28. Thus the Bangor line will be completely isolated from the remaining portion of the railway system and through rail excursion traffic will cease.

### **Preservation Society**

A Society has been formed in Belfast with the intended aim of preserving Irish locomotives and rolling stock in working order and is named the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland. Already they have acquired loco No.3 - one of the Guinness Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0STs - and a load of spare parts from sister loco No.2. A difficulty in the transport of No.3 to Belfast is the contour of her flanges, designed for tramway and not railway rail. The Society is also negotiating with the UTA for purchase of ex GNR 4-4-0 No.171 and it is expected that this loco will become available in September. Meantime the Society is seeking a site on which their acquisitions can be stored and worked. In course it is intended to obtain passenger rolling stock (some goods vehicles have already been obtained) and to run occasional special trains over UTA metals.

### **LOOSE LINKS**

- "Through service by corridor train via Belfast Central Railway" - advertisement by UTA for a Bangor - Dublin excursion on July 15, 22 and 29: the year - 1965.
- Portadown - Bangor excursions have been running each Saturday and are worked usually by locos 48 or 49.
- Nos. 1 and 2 platform roads in Westland Row are being relaid and set in concrete.
- A new level crossing is being installed near MP 106 on the line from Athlone to Westport, between Donamon and Ballymoe.
- On June 13 Liffey Bridge Junction, Kingsbridge, was relaid with flat-bottom rail instead of the former bullhead construction.
- A G class loco was tried for a day at the new Shelton sidings near Arklow and will probably be allocated there on a permanent basis.
- The Shamrock Fertilisers factory at Foynes, which yielded considerable rail traffic, is to become a sawmill.
- Officers' Saloon No.352 is not yet scrapped but is in use as a time office in Inchicore Works, close coupled to six-wheel van No.18.

## **JOURNEY JOTTINGS**

### **June 2: Dublin (Westland Row) - Rosslare Harbour**

The train was the new 18:25 from Westland Row to connect with the revised 22:45 sailing of the "St. David" from Rosslare Harbour to Fishguard. The train had only started to run on Thursday June 24 instead of Monday June 14 owing to the bus/rail strike and had experienced late starts occasioned by heavy traffic of eels and/or salmon from the Northern section which had to be put in the vans of local trains at Amiens Street and off-loaded at Westland Row due to the Rosslare train commencing its journey there instead of Amiens Street as formerly.

It was with pleasure that on this occasion the train left only 3½ minutes late, despite the eels and the equipment of a Scout party going on annual camp to Devon. The train consisted of B122, seven bogies and a wagon of sea food. After starting at 18:28½ by the recorder's watch, the driver got going to good purpose, attaining 50 mph by Sandymount to a maximum of 60 mph between Booterstown and Seapoint, thus reaching Dun Laoghaire by 18:37½, a gain of two minutes. This was partially lost by a stop of two minutes instead of one.

Similarly, the driver gained 50 seconds to Bray with a minimum of 30 mph up to Dalkey and a maximum of about 57 at Woodbrook. Again at Bray heavy traffic caused a stop of 4 minutes 37 seconds instead of the too-tight two minutes allowed.

Down the coast to Wicklow the train ran at 54 mph to past Newcastle and gave a maximum of 64½ before Wicklow Junction. We left Wicklow 3½ minutes late, Rathdrum 4¾ minutes late (caused by the slow detraining of passengers) and reached Arklow the same 4¾ minutes late. Here we lost 2½ minutes due to heavy van traffic, both in and out.

Similarly at Gorey while the driver had gained 3¼ minutes the station lost almost 5 minutes making us 9 minutes late. Here we crossed the 18:45 ex Rosslare Harbour - a 3-coach railcar with about twenty four passengers - which was already standing awaiting our arrival. In the yard was the up day goods which should have been crossed at Ferns.

Beyond Enniscorthy (9¾ minutes late) the driver made full use of the 23 minutes allowed for the 15¼ miles thence to Wexford North, doing the journey in just under 19 minutes. We left Wexford North only 4 minutes late and with only one car obstructing the line of the Quays we passed Wexford South in 7¼ minutes, only 1 minute late.

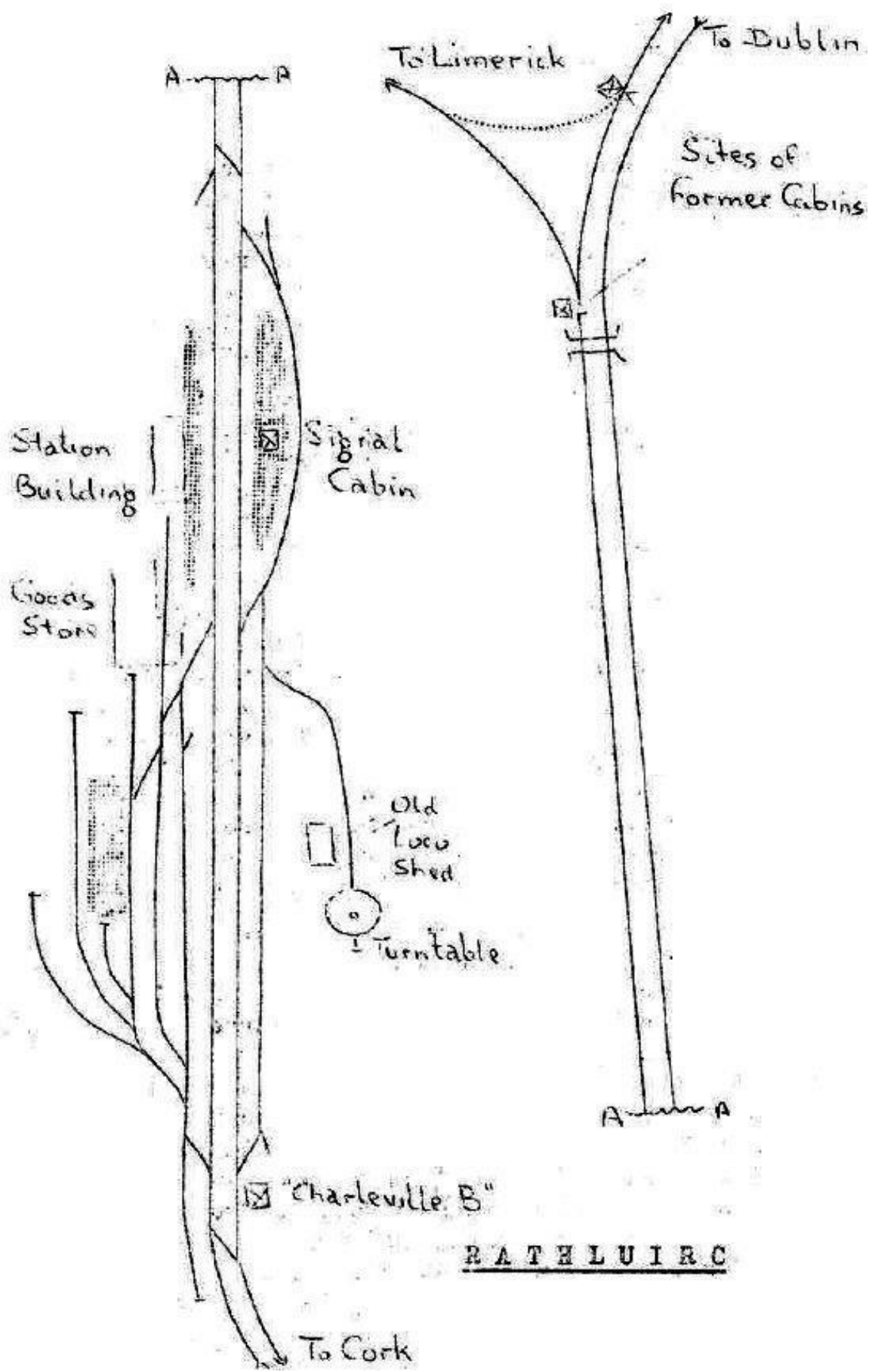
We waited for time for 1½ minutes each at Rosslare Strand and Kilrane and even after crawling down the pier from Ballygeary (taking 2¼ minutes) we arrived at Rosslare Harbour at 21:48½ - 1½ minutes early.

With the punctual arrival of the train from Cork the St. David sailed on time. This sailing carries the brunt of the traffic from Ireland although this summer the 12:00 is attracting an increasing complement of passengers to its train connections.

## **STATION SURVEY**

### **Rathluirc**

The timetables call it Rathluirc, so does the Post Office but spells it Rath Luirc and admits that it was "formerly Charleville". The recently erected nameboard has Rath Luirc as the Irish version and Charleville in English. Most people call it Charleville; you can take your pick! The town is in Co. Cork, so is the station - only just - while the junction is in Co. Limerick.



It came on the railway scene on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1849 when the GS&WR opened the Limerick Junction - Mallow section of its main line. On the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1862 it became a junction with the Cork & Limerick Direct Railway, a GS&WR sponsored concern, which by dint of running powers over the Limerick & Foynes Railway from Patrickswell to Foynes Junction, Limerick, enabled the GS&WR to gain access to Limerick - that stronghold of the Waterford & Limerick Railway.

The junction was over one mile north of Charleville and faced towards Cork. It had its own cabin and later, when the GS&WR absorbed the C&LDR on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1871, a direct north curve was laid to enable Dublin - Limerick goods trains to run by this route. In 1901 the GS&WR took over the WL&WR and the need for the curve disappeared. It was removed about 1908 but the site can still be clearly seen today with the base of the old North Junction Cabin just discernible.

In 1923 the cabin at Charleville Junction was burnt in the Civil War and it was decided to operate the junction from the station cabin, 1,850 yards away, instead of replacing the junction cabin - the North curve and its cabin had, of course, been dispensed with previously. Power point operation at such a distance was then unique and the methods employed aroused considerable interest when brought into use in 1924.

Although the branch was single there was a double line junction but this was removed and the up main line was continuously track circuited from station to junction. Branch trains thus used the up line in both directions for this one mile stretch. The Westinghouse point motors at the junction are supplied with current by a hand generator and the points and branch home signal (moved out to the ¼ mile post just last April) are worked by two special slides in the cabin. These and the other signals allowing a train to enter the section are locked by the track circuits and, in addition, the branch starter is locked by the ETS.

The ETS too is unique. Since 11<sup>th</sup> June 1962 a special long-section manual staff for the entire branch to Patrickswell has been available. When the intermediate cabins at Bruree and Croom are in, normal working obtains but by an ingenious system of two divisible staffs; one electric, one manual; the two cabins can be switched out although a train with the manual staff can release either intermediate cabin frame for shunting.

Charleville Station is very typical of GS&WR construction of its period. As the diagram shows there are three platforms - the down side loop served the branch trains and formerly had an engine run round loop outside it. The platforms are typically low - about 1'6" over rail level - and steps are provided. The now unconnected loco shed and the 50' turntable, which dates from 1884, are on the down side south of the C&LDR loop, while opposite there is a six road yard.

The goods store was extended in 1964 by a corrugated metal erection without, however, altogether destroying its appearance. A new electric gantry crane was also installed for dealing with the traffic in containers.

There are two cabins, the station cabin, called Rathluirc on its diagram, with 31 levers, 6 spares and the junction point controls. The second is a ground frame at the south end with 8 levers (all used) which still perpetuates the GS&WR designation by being called "Charleville B". It still possesses a diagram dated 18/7/1890 - probably the original one. A point for those who say that individual pride on the railway is dead - we can not remember seeing a better kept cabin than that at Rathluirc or ever seeing such gleaming brasswork as its bells, repeater boxes and oil lamp.

Today services compare unfavourably with those up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1934 when branch passenger trains, usually 2/3 daily, ceased. Now only 4 down passenger trains (1 from Thurles only) call, but on the goods side 3 Dublin - Cork, 1 Limerick - Cork and the Limerick - Mallow Cement special also stop. Up calls are similar except passenger trains of which only two, the 07:40 and 17:15 ex Cork, call.

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# Feature Section

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## CEMENT ON CIE

One of the most interesting maps of recent years is that which was published at the time of the “Pacemaker” survey in 1963 (see IRN January 1964) in that it shows the extremely heavy traffic by rail into and out of Drogheda and Limerick. Indeed, the Limerick density of traffic stands out as, apart from the main lines out of Dublin, no greater tonnage is to be found on any series of routes serving one place. The “Pacemaker” also revealed that CIE depends largely on quite a small number of firms for the bulk of its traffic; 71% originated at a mere 5 stations. The incidence of cement factories at both Drogheda and Limerick does not leave any doubt that Cement Ltd is one of these customers.

The oldest established factory is that at Drogheda which has been in operation since 1938. In April of that year the factory was linked with the Dublin - Belfast main line by a siding 1¼ miles long. This diverges, from the up line only, in a trailing junction at 32 miles 48 chains, and curves sharply to a five road marshalling yard known as “The Field”. Here the wagons are sorted into trains and are worked at certain times of day into Drogheda to connect with main line goods in each direction. Much of the cement produced travels northwards to Belfast and Derry; most of the remainder goes to North Wall, Dublin. An average of about 80 to 100 wagons are despatched from Drogheda Factory each day although this rises to 150 in peak periods.

From the “Field” yard the cement siding commences to descend towards the factory. It crosses the Termonfeckin road on the level and, beyond, a long loop serves the Asbestos Cement Factory - a more recent addition to the area’s industry. Unlike the remainder of the line, which is bullhead, the loop is laid in flat-bottomed rail. Crossing another by-road on the level, still falling, the line curves sharply right entering a cutting to turn almost 180 degrees to reach the factory gate. Here one siding enters the factory buildings; another fans out into a four road yard where the wagons are loaded.

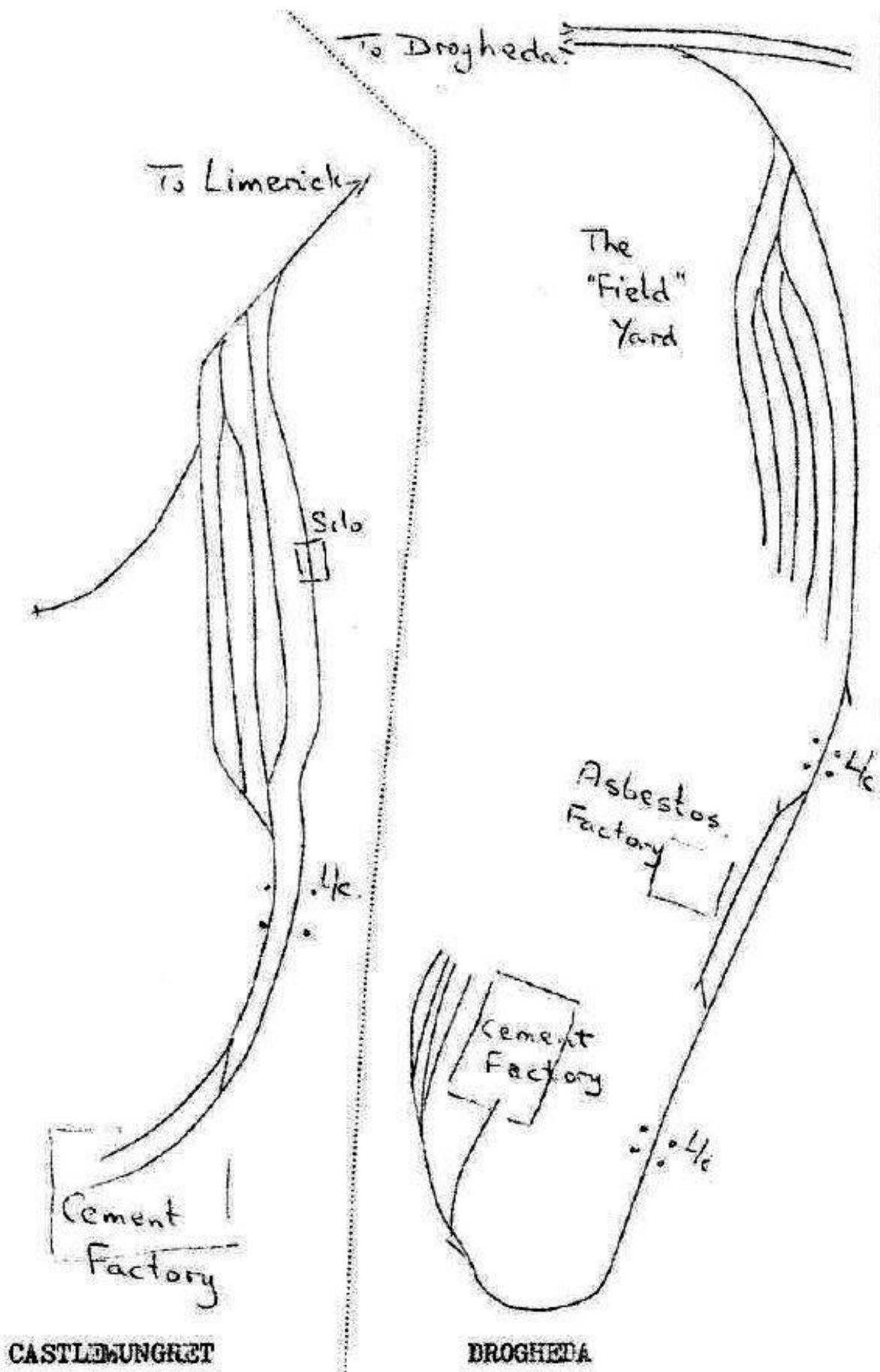
Signals abound. The junction, the “Field Yard”, both level crossings and the entrance to the Cement Company’s yard all have signals while, in view of the gradient, trap points are found at the Cement Company’s gate, the tail of the “Field” and, of course, at the junction.

The method of working is for an engine to commence shunting at 06:30 and during the morning it will work all the traffic from the factory to the “Field” and then bring the laden wagons in trains into Drogheda. At present a train of bulk cement wagons, each of which carries 21 tons, is in operation between Drogheda and Dublin. Although of lesser import, inwards traffic is also carried and some 5-6 hoppers of gypsum travel daily from Kingscourt to Drogheda another while another 10-12 open wagons go to Limerick.

The limestone required does not come by rail; in Drogheda it is conveyed by the well-known aerial ropeway which crosses the Dublin - Belfast main line near MP 33.

The Limerick factory, although now exceeding the Drogheda one in both size and output, is both more recent and has a less complex mode of access. It was opened in 1957 and a 3 mile branch linking it with the North Kerry line, at MP 2 between Limerick and Patrickswell, was constructed. The line was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1957 and cost about £53,300.

The junction which faces Limerick is worked from a ground frame in a concrete block hut on the down side. The line then curves to run at right angles from the North Kerry line to the first level crossing at Ballinacurra. This has just been relocated in course of a road widening scheme and is now some 50ft further from the junction than heretofore. Gates are still, however, opened and closed by the train crew.



The line then performs a series of wide “S” curves in the course of which it traverses Ballykeefe and Dock Road level crossings. Then, approaching the factory itself there is a marshalling yard which is currently undergoing considerable extension. Formerly there were three roads and an additional siding to serve the weighbridge. Now a further two have been added to cope with the traffic being handled - an average of 150 wagons per day, rising to 180 at peaks.

On the outer line there is a new storage silo which is fed by a pipe line from the factory, being erected by Tileman (Ireland) Ltd. This will discharge direct into the bulk cement wagons which are now working a shuttle service to Dublin Cabra where a new storage plant was recently erected; not, let it be said, without protest from the local residents. Cabra was the former GS&WR cattle depot which served the cattle market nearby.

Nowadays the bulk of this traffic goes by road, but it is interesting to note that new rail cement wagons are an attempt to reduce road cement mileage. The extreme weight made the operation of such lorries very costly over, for instance, the 30 miles from Drogheda to Dublin and it is expected that they will be concentrated on railhead deliveries when the rail scheme achieves impetus.

Five or six trains, sometimes more, work the Castlemungret branch wagons into Carey’s Road Yard in Limerick where they are divided into trains. The line to Ennis and Athenry carries a good deal of this traffic and there are now three regular and one extra “if required” goods trains on the section out of Limerick. On the “one train a day” Patrickswell - Rathluirc line there is now a semi-regular afternoon special from Limerick to Mallow to take overload cement. In addition the regular goods also carries further cement for the south of Ireland.

One further cement factory merits mention. It is the Asbestos Cement Works at Athy, to which a siding trails from the erstwhile Ballylinan and Wolfhill branch just beyond the latter’s crossing of the River Barrow and its navigation. This is quite short, some  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the branch and a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile siding, and is the reason why the lifting of the Ballylinan branch ceased at Fortbarrington gates. It receives raw material and despatches some of its finished products by rail although it is insignificant when compared with the tonnage ex Drogheda and Limerick.

In 1964, 591,528 tons of cement were carried by rail - the highest by far of any class of merchandise carried by goods train on CIÉ. Indeed the tonnage of cement just exceeds the total of the two next heaviest traffics - beet and artificial manure. It is clear from these figures that the CIÉ investment in new cement wagons is justified; cement comprises no less than one quarter of the rail freight traffic of today.

The diagrams depict the present layouts at the Drogheda and Limerick factories.