

THE

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EDITORIAL

In this issue is a report of the UTA's Bangor Line gamble; from January 1, as an experiment, there is a significant reduction in commuter fares in an endeavour to recapture those who motor regularly the 12-mile distance from Bangor, Belfast's most popular dormitory satellite town. Equally important, the former system of limited season tickets (valid for one journey in each direction per day) has been abolished and season ticket holders have the freedom of the line. The service frequency is reasonable, 40 trains per day down (41 up) on Mondays to Fridays, not wholly at regular intervals but based on a series of half hourly departures at 20 and 50 minutes past the hour. The reductions are of no mean order - the 34/- six-day unlimited fare comes down to 25/-, less even than the former 26/10^d five-day limited rate. This is an extremely praiseworthy attempt on the part of the UTA to resuscitate rail travel and the hint that, if successful, similar reductions will be applied on other sections is welcome. The danger, however, is in the lateness of the move. Many who have laid out capital on a car - some shipyard workers share a car between four - will be reluctant to leave it idle. On petrol alone 8/- will cover two return trips from Bangor to Belfast in a small car. Allow, say, a cost of 12/- per day, including tax, insurance and servicing, and if shared among four, the weekly transport cost is 21/- per person. But few thus take the true cost into account when comparing private car with rail travel as they tend to offset the fixed overhead costs against the convenience of private transport. It remains to be seen whether the disadvantages of parking and rush hour traffic delays will militate to bring this section of the travelling public back to rail travel.

At the same time could not the UTA, and CIÉ too, take a critical look at their ordinary fare levels? Basically they are the same, the 25½ miles from Belfast to Portadown and the same distance from Dublin to Newbridge costs 10/9^d first and 7/2^d second (Standard on CIÉ) class. The UTA does at least give a reduction on ordinary returns which CIÉ does not, often thus losing the return trip to private transport. Even these single fares at approximately 4.11^d per mile first and 3.04^d per mile second are a real deterrent. Just how much of a deterrent is indicated in the CIÉ average receipt per passenger mile of 2.21^d in 1964/5 - clear evidence of the popularity of cheap weekends, shopping trips and all other fare incentives. It is admitted that we have now the third highest rail passenger rate in Europe but our wage levels are certainly not on the same plane thus making transport extremely expensive to the man in the street. Could we not at lesser fares increase passenger journeys sufficiently to also increase revenue? The Bangor line trial will be watched most carefully for indications in this direction.

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May we wish all our readers a happy and prosperous New Year and extend our special thanks to those whose reports help to maintain the news value of "The Irish Railfans' News". We look forward to hearing from more readers similarly.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Railway Magazine

November Irish Railways in 1865

December Locomotive Notes

Modern Railways

November et seq The Irish Scene

IRRS Journal

October Diesel Trains in Northern Ireland
Irish Railways in 1863
B&CDR Coaching Stock

REVIEW

The Dublin & Lucan Tramway by Mr A.T. Newham (Oakwood Press)

Although it is in essence a condensation of his paper (IRRS Journal 27) this is Mr Newham's best book yet, mainly because of the 20 illustrations and the unusual story to be told of the changes of gauge and traction in the history of the D<. Our only complaint is the relative difficulty of finding the general information one expects, although one appendix is at least a move in the right direction. Why, however, when it lists 12 cars does the list of numbers on Page 35 contain only 11 as the "principal serials"?

News Section

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Modernisation At Cork

Glanmire Road railway station has been further improved since our last report a year ago. Work is at present afoot on the tiling of the floor and panelling in mahogany strips of the walls of the main concourse. The opportunity has been taken to provide a new bookstall, almost ready for occupation, and presumably the confectionery kiosk, at present in a temporary position close to Bury loco No. 36 on display, will be put in position where the present bookstall stands. The Cobh platform barriers are being set back and a ticket checkers' box is being provided at each entrance. The concourse tiling is in black, grey and white in squares of 16 arranged symmetrically with a white centre, grey edges and black corners.

Renault Special

A "Radio Train" special to launch the new Renault 8/1100 model seems a paradox but to take some 100 dealers and guests to visit the assembly plant in Wexford on November 23, this was the best method by far. The train was initially scheduled via the DSE line but as it was out of action due to floods (see feature article), it departed from Westland Row at 11:32 in the opposite direction via Cabra - Kildare - Kilkenny (reverse) - Waterford - Rosslare Strand (reverse) to Wexford South, a distance of 160¾ miles against 94¾ by the normal route. The composition was B170, HV 3101, 2403 kitchen, 1521 and 1538 standards, 2141 compo, RS21 radio studio and HV 3108. Return was by the same route at 17:15 due Westland Row at 21:30. One can sympathise with the studio compere who had to rewrite his route information, in all probability at the "eleventh hour".

Southern Survey

A market research survey similar to that undertaken on the Northern and Suburban sections took place between October 18 and 24 last on the Southern and South Eastern sections, on trains between Dublin and Cork, Tralee, Limerick, Rosslare and Waterford but not cross-country services. Some 20,000 passengers were interviewed and the questions posed were designed to establish the traffic pattern and the popularity of the various excursion fares. Questioners, in addition to asking the purpose of the journey, also inquired whether persons regularly required return journey facilities between any two stations in the one day and the time desired at destination. We ourselves feel that to ask this question of passengers was unrealistic; it should rather be asked of potential than actual rail travellers. Finally, passengers were questioned on their use of bus connections at either end of their journey. In previous surveys passengers were asked to complete a questionnaire whereas this time the work was done orally by interviewers. It seems to us, therefore, that little value can be placed on the comments in this survey as most people are unlikely to formulate points of complaint on the spur of the moment and will take the easy way out by putting none forward. None the less the indications of the survey will, when processed, shed considerable light on the public's travelling preferences.

Portarlinton ESB Siding

Early in December a CIÉ lifting gang, using rail tractor and bogie flats, commenced the removal of the ESB siding at Portarlinton, which diverged from the Portarlinton-Athlone line at 43 miles 14 chains. This siding was first laid about 1941 but was then only some 5 chains in length. After the war, late in 1946 or early in 1947, it was extended to the power station giving it a total length of 1 mile 30 chains. At the same time the 3ft gauge Bord na Mona line, which had previously extended to allow exchange of traffic, was cut back. The extension to the power station was to enable turf to be brought into the ESB from the CIÉ system and for the entry of materials. At times, about 1950/53, a special pilot engine was in use to shunt the wagons to the transshipment bank; this in addition to the regular pilot at Portarlinton. At this time the narrow gauge system did not extend to Garryhinch and Derrycastle bogs and Clonsast bog itself was not in full production. The last freight trip was about 1959/60 but since then two passenger specials have run; the only passenger trains known to have used the line. On 16th July 1960 a party of REC members travelled it in railcars 2661/62 and the last train was the IRRS/RCTS/SLS Grand Steam Tour on 9th June 1964, when locos 186 and 130 worked the special to the siding for a visit to the Bord na Mona lines. At the time of writing some 20 yards of the branch remain in situ for removal of the rails and sleepers.

North Wall Fire

Dublin's worst dockland fire in history gutted the CIÉ Midland Depot at North Wall on the night of October 28. The fire destroyed the entire building covering 2,000 square yards, except the newly (1964) built west annexe, and caused damage estimated at £500,000. The fire was noticed about 19:15 and raged to about 22:00; at its height there were 13 fire brigades and two fire-fighting tugs in attendance - the first time tugs have been used to fight a fire on land. Although 38 wagons were destroyed, many others were saved by being hauled from the blazing store by the pilot engine. Goods traffic was disrupted on the following day and the reorganisation described in our last issue was thrown out of gear. From Monday November 1, however, temporary arrangements were made for the handling of traffic. All inwards traffic and outwards wagon-load traffic continued to be dealt with at the Midland depot. Outwards sundries for the Midland and South Eastern sections, normally handled at the Midland depot, were transferred to the ex GS&WR "Point Store" and sundry traffic for the South handled there was transferred to Kingsbridge Goods depot. The traffic for Northern stations to Balbriggan normally dealt with in the Point Store was transferred to Kingsbridge Granaries. No announcement has yet been made regarding rebuilding although CIÉ is insured against fire damage.

Lifting

The position on the lines being lifted is as under.

Macmine - New Ross: The tractor, lifting from Rathgarogue towards New Ross, ceased its operations at the north side of the Barrow Bridge, leaving the track thence across the bridge and into New Ross intact. Rails, chairs and sleepers are stocked along this section. The tractor and bogies were then taken by road to Palace East, rerailed, and used to lift from Rathgarogue towards Macmine. At the time of writing the work has reached Palace East.

Cork City Railway

On November 3 the vessel "City of Cork", when docking in the South channel of the River Lee, struck Clontarf Bridge and damaged the main girder. This bridge carries the Cork City Railway and a roadway across the river and both road and rail traffic was suspended. The road traffic position was not eased by the closure of the nearby Parnell Bridge for repairs at the same time. A temporary girder (recovered from the ex CB&SCR section near Desert) was fitted on Sunday November 7 but, apparently, Cork Corporation would not permit it to be even partially reopened. On December 4 a new girder, fabricated at Rushbrooke, was inserted and road traffic resumed on the night of December 5. The following evening, the temporary girder was removed but rail traffic could not be resumed as the east side footway still required repair. Since then no rail traffic has run and its resumption is problematical.

Silvermines Branch

On December 14, CIÉ gave notice of their application to the Minister for Transport & Power for powers to construct, maintain and operate a "Proposed Extension Railway near Silvermines, Co. Tipperary". Objections to the proposals are required to be made to the Minister on or before January 24. The branch is to diverge from the Ballybrophy-Limerick line at MP 35¾ on the Nenagh side of the erstwhile Shallee Halt (MP 36) in the Nenagh-Birdhill section. It is to be 1.27 miles in length and will face Limerick as the traffic - in the main, barytes - is to pass between Silvermines and Foynes for shipment. On leaving the main line the branch will curve for some 16 chains at 13½ chains radius on a grade of 1 in 50 to cross a public road. A straight about 50 chains long, graded at 1 in 450 for about 300 yards then at 1 in 50, leads into a 50 chain curve, still climbing at the same rate to the 70 chain point where it becomes level. On this level of nearly half a mile there will be a crossing of an accommodation road and a farm road. At its highest point - the level mentioned - the track will be some 264ft above Ordnance datum.

Altered Calls

Dundrum halt, between Goold's Cross and Limerick Junction, has now only two services each way on weekdays as from December 6 the 20:40 night mail's call was cancelled. In the down direction the 12:40 ex Kingsbridge "calls if required". From December 20 the 08:00 Tralee-Kingsbridge calls additionally at Banteer.

Signalling Developments

The newest automatic barrier crossing on CIÉ, at 106 miles 3 chains on the Athlone-Westport line between Donamon and Ballymoe, is already in operation. It is not, however, officially (or actually) open yet as the section of roadway leading to and from it has not been connected with the present Roscommon - Castlerea - Claremorris road. Another new road crossing is to replace a low underbridge at 49 miles 4 chains on the Limerick-Athenry line near Ardahan. So far only the preliminary earthwork has been done. Since November 24 the points giving access to and egress from Limerick Loco shed have been electrically operated from Limerick Check cabin. These points were previously hand operated. Signal protection is given by a 2-aspect colour light shunt signal in the trailing direction

and by a similar 3-aspect one in the facing direction. On the Great Northern section the policy of moving out distant signals has been continued at Rush and Donabate. Foynes cabin has been taken out of use since November 19 as described elsewhere in this issue.

Dunkettle To Close

CIÉ have given statutory notice of their intention to close, as from Monday February 7, the halt at Dunkettle on the Cork-Cobh suburban section at MP 168. The details of bookings for the year ended 31st March 1965 are given as: 346 departing (realising £21.6.9) and 325 arriving (valued at £54.13.3). The last train scheduled to call will be on Saturday February 5 when the 18:25 ex Cobh is due at 18:49. It is likely, however, that the 00:05 Cobh-Cork of Saturday/Sunday night will “call if required” thus prolonging Dunkettle’s existence into the early hours of February 6.

Beet Traffic

Sugar beet traffic by rail this season was in some ways unorthodox. Apart from the supplying of Carlow from stations Kilrane to Bridgetown inclusive, the traffic was very heavy initially due to favourable weather conditions and very slow later due to the opposite extreme. An unusual feature was the closure of Thurles factory early and the diversion of South Wexford line tonnage to Mallow via Dungarvan. The Tuam input was low and growers in the area have been appealed to as closure of the factory is threatened unless supplies of sugar beet improve in quantity in the next season.

Sandycove Bridge

Sandycove station building (the renaming “Glasthule and Sandycove” has never stuck) is astride the double track Dublin-Bray suburban line on a bridge which also carries Summerhill Road. The entire bridge was replaced by a modern pre-stressed concrete one between Monday 18 October and Monday 6 December. Its replacement ends the extraordinary anomaly whereby CIÉ placed a restriction on the weight of vehicles crossing it but none the less operated their own double decker buses, well over the limit, over it. The work involved the diversion of road traffic, including buses, for the period and also brought about a “face-lift” for the station premises. While work was in progress temporary entrances to the station were provided and a temporary booking office was sited on the up platform. The new station building is almost complete and will have an attractive tiled concourse and a glazed frontage replacing the former timber structure. One presumes that no symbolism was intended in the reopening of the roadway - the first vehicle across was the Corporation dust cart.

Chairman To Retire

Dr C.S. Andrews, the Chairman of CIÉ, has informed the government of his intention to retire in October 1966 on reaching the age of 65. His resignation has been accepted. He has been Chairman since September 1958. No successor has yet been named.

Locomotive Developments

The principal locomotive development has been the appearance of the rebuilt C class loco - B234 - in traffic in mid-December. She was working for some weeks, principally between Limerick and Dublin, on both passenger and goods trains but apparently suffered a breakdown just before Christmas and has been returned to Inchicore works for repair. The second locomotive, B233 - formerly C233 - having its Crossley engine replaced by a 980 hp Maybach one is reported ready for trials.

Loco 90 (0-6-0) has been repainted and placed on the bay platform at Mallow, as mentioned in our last issue, but still lacks protection from the elements, while 5C in Ennis was also repainted in early December. Loco 186 (0-6-0) left Amiens Street for Belfast on December 11. She has been presented by CIÉ to the RPSI giving them now three locos: Guinness No.3, GS&WR No.186 and the recently acquired GNR 4-4-0 No.171.

Foynes Rejuvenated

The Foynes branch has for many years been having periods of depression and periods of heavy traffic alternating. The oil was killed by the establishment of Whitegate refinery; the fertiliser traffic supplanted it only in its turn to fail. In recent months, however, oil traffic has again returned with the opening, on the old Shell site, of a Cement Ltd oil store. This is filled from tankers at the quayside by a pipeline and is then transported to Castlemungret Cement factory by rail. The former Shell siding has been lifted and a new siding on a slightly different alignment serves the plant. The traffic is to be to the order of 100,000 tons per annum. The new siding trails from the running line at 26 miles 38 chains and is about 20 chains long. At its divergence a new ground frame has been sited on the up side and this now controls entry into the station yard completely.

On November 19 the former signal cabin was closed, disconnected, and the ETS instrument moved into the stationmaster's office. At present the whole yard is being transformed for, in addition to the oil, barytes, lead and zinc concentrates are to be Foynes' diet of rail traffic when the Silvermines-Foynes ore trains commence operation. These will load at the new Silvermines branch mentioned elsewhere in this issue. Tenders were invited on November 19 for a tippler which is to be erected at Foynes. The specification called for a 35 ton side-discharge wagon tippler capable of unloading twenty 20 ton laden wagons per hour. The suppliers were asked for three alternative tenders for: a) tippler only; b) tippler with in and out haul wagon placing equipment (as in use at some ESB stations fed by Bord na Mona); c) a tippler with electric capstan placing equipment.

The layout of the yard will be altered to provide siding accommodation for ore trains and a diagram of the altered layout will appear in a future issue. The previous layouts were given in the "Station Survey" in our April 1961 issue. It is understood that Inchicore works are experimenting with a prototype wagon for this traffic.

State Specials

Twice in the last three months have Presidential specials been operated. The first on October 31 ran from Dublin to Cork with locos B154 and B147 and 7 bogies bringing President De Valera to open the new Cork Opera House. On December 19 a train was run from Dublin to Waterford and back carrying not only the President but An Taoiseach, Mr S. Lemass. On each occasion the saloon was No.351.

Coolnamona

The branch from Port Laoise to Coolnamona opened without éclat at the end of September 1965. It is, perhaps, more accurate to say it reopened, as it is the 2¼ mile stub of the former Port Laoise - Kilkenny line which was not lifted when the branch was closed on 31st December 1962. The track was relaid with second-hand bullhead rail and at Coolnamona factory a loop was laid, one line of which passes through a loading shed. Production of peat moss commenced on a limited scale at the end of September and since then trains run each weekday as required. Locomotive power is provided by the Portlaoise pilot engine. The branch has two public road level crossings in its length of almost 2½ miles.

The Bord na Mona line was ready in July 1965 and came into operation gradually. It at present links the factory with Coolnamona bog only; about 2½ miles of 3ft gauge track which passes under both the Dublin-Cork main line and the Dublin-Limerick road. At first a temporary depot was sited alongside the latter but this has now been scrapped and the workshops and depot are at the factory. The system has four of the new Wagonmaster locos, one Deutz loco, and about 33 wagons, all of them 32 cubic metre capacity.

The other moss peat bog - Kilberry, adjoining the Kildare-Waterford line at MP 41 - produces 350,000 bales per annum, much of it shipped from Waterford to Shoreham, Sussex, by the vessel "Manta" which is on charter to Bord na Mona.

When the extra bog area at Coolnacartan begins delivering peat to the Coolnamona factory in spring 1967 the production is expected to rise to upwards of 400,000 bales per annum.

CIE's Future

In the course of a bus strike in north-east Dublin in early January and in face of a threatened strike by 1,700 CIE tradesmen, the General Manager, Mr F. Lemass, made the startling announcement that CIE was in serious financial difficulties and that the possibility of CIE being broken up and returning certain present sections of the undertaking to private enterprise was being considered. Mr E. Childers, Minister for Transport & Power, at a press conference on January 7 said that a major strike would be a desperately irresponsible act. CIE had been splendidly reorganised during the last five years and large freight traffics had been gained by the railway. This had been to a great extent lost by major strikes due to the failure of the unions to hold together and the refusal of the more reasonable staff to speak their minds. 50% of rail freight traffic came, he said, from 20 customers and the loss of any three of these would jeopardise CIE's existence. In the event of a strike all capital development work would cease and the staff would be paid off. He threatened that the future of the railway would be re-examined bearing in mind the disclosure of the Pacemaker report that it could be replaced by 425 buses, 760 lorries and 1,760 trailers.

UTA GENERAL NEWS REPORT

New Managers

New rail and road managers have been appointed by the UTA. Mr W.W. Heubeck was appointed road passenger services Managing Director - he was formerly the production manager of a paper manufacturing concern. The new Chief Executive and Managing Director of the rail system is Mr John Coultard. Mr Coultard, a native of Carlisle, is 36 years of age and entered British Railways as a traffic apprentice. From 1958 to 1959 he was Assistant to the District Goods Manager at Bolton. He was then appointed Assistant to the Director of Studies at the BR staff college until 1962 when he became Assistant to the Secretary General of the BTC. In 1963 he became Assistant Secretary to the British Railways Board. In a statement on the future of railways in Northern Ireland he indicated that he had confidence in the future of the Belfast-Derry line resulting from its fuller utilisation and that although the Belfast-Border line was not profitable he did not expect that its existence was threatened.

Fare Reductions

New and more attractive commuter fares came into operation on the Bangor line on January 1. The restriction on the number of journeys per day has been removed. Weekly tickets from Bangor to Belfast now cost 25/-, formerly 34/- unlimited and 29/3, limited to one return trip on each of six days. Monthly tickets cost 95/- and yearly ones can be had for £50. Smaller reductions in day excursion tickets came into effect during December. Fares on the NCC and GNR sections have not been altered and the UTA points out that the experiment is being confined to the Bangor line as it is self-contained and isolated from other railway services. If results prove satisfactory the Authority will consider similar action on the other sections.

Derailments

The 21:50 Belfast-Dundalk goods train of October 22 was derailed at about 01:30 on October 23, near Bessbrook. Part of the CIE goods train worked by a GM locomotive was derailed due to a metal key being placed in a trap points at 68 miles 57 chains. The locomotive and the first 22 wagons negotiated the obstacle safely but two wheels of the 23rd wagon became derailed; however, the coupling did not break. The axle of the derailed wagon sheered and the following wagons passed over it. The broken axle was dragged for 2 miles and 810 yards and broke 1,320 chairs before the train came to a halt near Cloughoge Church (Fr Murphy's). Single line working came into operation between Poyntzpass and

Meigh until the line was cleared in time for the up 18:40 Belfast-Dublin passenger train on October 24. Difficulty was experienced in finding replacement chairs as they were laid on concrete sleepers.

On December 17, 2-6-4T No.55 was derailed at Portadown. It had worked a train from Belfast and became derailed on a crossover at the South Cabin, blocking No.3 platform.

Locomotive Developments

On December 4, four locomotives were sold as scrap to a Glasgow merchant. They were: Class W 2-6-0 No.97, Class VS 4-4-0 No.207, Class S 4-4-0s Nos. 170 and 174. No.97 was without its boiler and firebox which were retained by the UTA. GNR 0-6-0s Nos. 37 and 48 are regularly in steam in Belfast, while the surviving GNR loco No.49 has been temporarily taken out of use. Although a number of 2-6-4Ts are currently out of use, it is expected that most of them will be required for service during the summer of 1966.

Railcar Developments

Work has commenced in Duncrue Street on the programme of construction of the new diesel-electric railcars. At the end of December there were four diesel-electric engines in the shops and two underframes for power cars were in place ready for mounting. One of the trailers, a side corridor second, is almost finished. The upholstery is of a tartan pattern and fluorescent lighting is provided in the compartments but not in the corridors. It is expected that two 6-car sets will be in operation by June next.

Railcar No.27 has resumed working on the Bangor line painted in that section's new livery and 17 is now undergoing overhaul.

Lifting

The position of lines being lifted is as under.

Belfast Central: Sidings in situ (approximately 3 miles 1,703 yards) at Maysfields and sidings at Ballymacarrett were offered for sale on December 1 but did not reach the reserved price. Although Ballymacarrett Junction was removed in September and Central Junction in October, the main running line has been left through Maysfields. No closure order has been granted.

Warrenpoint: Work on the demolition of the branch is almost complete. The section of line between the signal cabin at Newry Dublin Bridge and Newry Edward Street has not, however, been removed.

Portadown - Derry: On November 8, a contractor working for the UTA commenced lifting the rails near the loco shed at Foyle Road between MP 121¼ and MP 121½. This same contractor will remove the running line through to Portadown where he is expected by about December 1966. The yard at Foyle Road and the sleepers as far as the Border were sold in situ on October 8. The loops and sidings at each station will be sold in situ.

Early in January the lifting gang was working in St. Johnston station. Rails in Northern Ireland are being removed by the UTA to Belfast and rails in the Republic are being removed to Dundalk for CIÉ. The contractor removes the rails on his own wagons (purchased from CIÉ and the UTA) and takes them to the next available station where he transfers them on to UTA or CIÉ wagons. The UTA are working the materials back to Belfast, generally twice weekly. Worked by a 2-6-4T, the train usually consists of 3 wagons of rails and 2 wagons of chairs which represent a considerable weight.

The Contractor has amongst his equipment railcar No.101, formerly GNR railcar "A", which was used on the demolition of the Navan Junction - Fairyhouse line, and also railcar 104, ex GNR railcar "F". The latter is used as a locomotive and the former as a winch for drawing the rails on to the wagons. Railcar 104 also draws the materials to the despatch station.

Dungannon - Coalisland: Lifted completely during August and September 1965.

BUT type diner No.556 has been converted into a second class railcar trailer to assist the Enterprise diner at peak dates.

Block Trains

It is understood that the Authority has ordered 70 side-tipping 30 ton vacuum-fitted ballast wagons in connection with the movement of earth from Magheramorne to Belfast Lough. It is expected that the trains will be made up of three sets of 20 wagons and worked by a 2-6-4T at each end of the train. Work is expected to start in April and it is also expected that when sufficient spoil has been dumped beside the railway line a siding will be laid at Greencastle where such trains could clear the main line.

BORD NA MONA

Locomotives

In October 1965 the Hunslet Engine Co of Leeds completed the last of an order of 53 “Wagonmaster” 80 hp locomotives for Bord na Mona. They are all of 3ft gauge and are already well dispersed among the Bord’s bog systems. They weigh slightly over 9 tons each and are capable of a maximum speed of 15 mph.

Bord na Mona spent £488,275 on its railways during the year ended 31st March 1965 - an increase of £285,000 over the previous year’s expenditure. This is accounted for in part by the purchase of Wagonmasters and the extensive civil engineering on Coolnamona bog where in addition to running their line under the Dublin-Cork main line railway, it also had to pass under the Dublin-Limerick road. The construction of the rail bridge is described in our April 1965 issue and the opening of the factory and its standard gauge branch is detailed elsewhere in this issue.

The vastness of the Bord na Mona operations is indicated by the tonnages supplied to the ESB at the various power stations last year which were: Portarlinton 212,039; Allenwood 249,083; Lanesborough 125,941; Ferbane 460,975; Rhode 422,712; Bellacorrick 117,380; and the most recently opened, Shannonbridge 30,461.

The last-mentioned is fed by 1,500 acres of bog east of the Shannon and the 5,000 acre bog at Blackwater (Uisce Dubh) and deliveries of milled peat began in January 1965. The power station was commissioned later in the same year and the railways on to Blackwater bog are now almost complete.

The ESB station at Lanesborough is to have a 40 MW extension and 5,500 acres of bog at Knockdillon (Cnoc Dioluin) are being drained and will be served in course by rail.

It is of interest that on the Boora and Derrygreenagh systems together there are 117 miles of permanent narrow gauge railway.

LOOSE LINKS

- The CIÉ “Trial Train” workshop coach is presently No.462A (formerly diner 74D) but is likely to be replaced by the former buffet car 838 in the near future.
- The 23:30 Cork-Cobh and vice versa was cancelled and replaced by a bus on November 17 as Tivoli Bridge had to be propped to permit a 63 ton tower to pass over it en route to Whitegate refinery.
- A CIÉ coach innovation is the appearance of standard No.1359 with fluorescent strip lighting.
- Recent repainting has provided Athenry with a chocolate brown station bell on a black post.
- The flashing red tail lamps mentioned in our last issue are now on trial on trains on the Dublin-

Cork main line.

- On November 15 it was announced that a West German sponsored factory was to be built on the site of Killorglin station.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

December 18: Limerick - Mallow - Waterford

Through connections are one of the railway's greatest advantages but if things go wrong they can also react over great distances. Hence, when a railcar and a light engine collided at Bridgend in Glamorganshire, blocking the line, the Paddington-Fishguard train was delayed by a bus-link around the obstruction; the 02:15 sailing for Rosslare was delayed for 5 hours; the railcar set from Limerick to Rosslare Harbour to make the 07:40 special back to Limerick was only nearing Waterford when it should have been leaving on the 12:15 Limerick-Waterford.

Hence, Limerick had to provide a set for this train comprising standards 1489, 1375, 1495, 1490, 2131 and HV 3106. The haulage was highly unconventional, A6 and A10 (the former and the first two bogies detached at the Junction as a relief to the main line connection), but despite the horse power concentration running was pedestrian in the extreme with only 31 mph at MP 14. As a result, arrival in Limerick Junction was 15½ minutes late and the 11:30 Cork-Kingsbridge was 6 minutes late away - B157 and B165 with 2 "dead" HVs, bogie van, HV, 8 bogies (including 2 compos, diner 2400 and brake standard 1904 in use as a refreshment vehicle) and LV. This train has CIÉ's only diner - as distinct from buffet car - and hence is sometimes referred to as the "soup train".

The down 10:45 Kingsbridge-Cork arrived before the departure of the up train and was well filled and double headed: B171 and B158, HV 3156, bogie van 2553, four standards, buffet car 2413, compo 2175 and brake standard 1911. Following a punctual departure, all concerned were given a demonstration of the abilities of a "double yank" with a 38 minute run over the 37½ miles to Mallow despite a PW slack at MP 123¾. 64 mph was attained by MP 112 up the 1 in 189 but the "piece de resistance" was the 72½ mph up Ballycoackerry Bank - allowing for the slack, net time was some 35 minutes.

Later that evening the journey was completed on the "Rosslare Express": B152, LV, compo 2120, 12-wheel diner 353, 4 standards, EV 3110, 2 bogie vans and LV. By comparison with the main line this train acquitted itself poorly losing 14½ minutes between Mallow and Waterford - most of it in the running. Indeed station work was very smart everywhere; most stations cut the allowance, some by half! Some traffic from Cork was set down while boat passengers were picked up so that the 110 passenger total ex Mallow unchanged ex Waterford, but was not the same 110 people. At Lismore a beet special was waiting to cross with A27, 15 wagons and van (4 empty and 11 laden).

Waterford was reached eventually at 21:30½ (23½ minutes behind time).

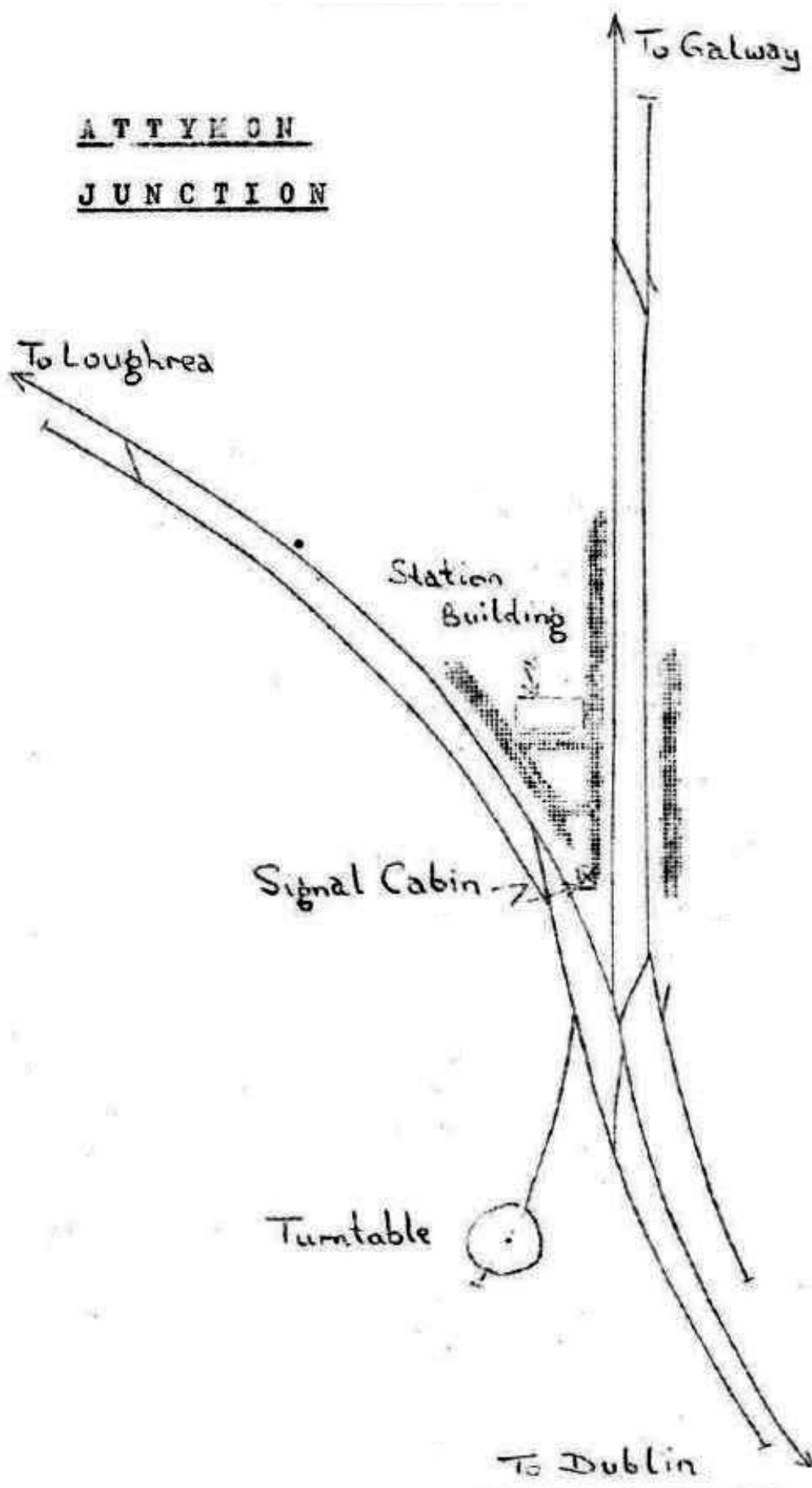
In passing, a word of commendation is due to the buffet car crew of 353, not only for the excellent fare provided but also for the tasteful Christmas decoration of the car, which was brought about en route.

STATION SURVEY

Attymon Junction

The Midland Great Western Railway has the distinction of having, on 1st August 1851, opened the longest stretch of railway line in Ireland ever opened at the same time. The section is that from Mullingar to Galway, 76 miles, and had stations at Woodlawn (MP 101½) and Athenry (MP 113½).

ATTYMON
JUNCTION



On the 24th April 1885 the “Loughrea & Attymon Light Railway Co. Ltd” was formed under the provisions of the 1883 Tramways (Ireland) Act to construct under a Baronial Guarantee a line 9 miles long from Attymon to Loughrea. Thus Attymon Junction came into being when, on 1st December 1890, the branch was opened for traffic.

Up to the Amalgamation the line was worked by the MGWR and is now the only CIÉ branch to have regular “mixed trains”.

As can be seen from the diagram reproduced the junction faces down trains from Dublin and diverges from the main line before the station so that a separate platform is required for branch trains. This arrangement also permits branch trains to terminate at Attymon, turn if necessary, run around and depart without ever fouling the main line.

Approaching from Dublin there are sidings on both sides of the single line - that on the up side was extended for turf traffic during the last war but has just been cut back by about a quarter mile. On the down side are the water tower and turntable while in the “V” formed by the diverging lines is the signal cabin - a typical MGWR structure with an inside staircase to the cabin floor. It has 38 levers (4 spares) - the station is signalled for two way operation on either loop. On the main line side there are two platforms, one on either side of the loop, the down one having been extended in 1894. An unusual sight is the two 107½ mileposts, one branch, one main line, almost side by side just beyond the cabin.

Traffic on the Loughrea branch is now handled by G613 with the passenger portion being made up of the unique brake standard 1910. This has 50 seats (44 of them bus-type), all but six of them face Attymon, and three storage heaters which are plugged in overnight and in the middle of the day while standing at the platform at Loughrea.

The branch train makes four trips each way each weekday connecting with the 08:00 Galway - Portarlinton, the 08:40 Westland Row - Galway, the 15:50 Mail Galway - Dun Laoghaire and into the up night mail and out of the down “Cu na Mara”. The 11:45 and 21:45 ex Attymon have “Limited passenger accommodation” but as the same one coach works every train the limit is not of great consequence. First class is provided by putting antimacassars on the six standard class seats in what would, normally, be the non-smoking compartment, and by keeping the children off them.

There is heavy season ticket traffic, in on the 08:45 and out on the 15:35, amounting to 35 passengers each day each way for the schools in Loughrea. Is it coincidence that the boys seem to occupy the up side and the girls the down side seats?

Feature Section

FLOODS

“The worst in living memory” is how they described the flooding of November 1965. It certainly was the worst experienced in Co. Wicklow, which bore the brunt of the damage, and this can be attributed to the blizzard of Tuesday 16 November followed by over 24 hours of continuous rain on the Wednesday and Thursday 17th/18th. Such conditions swelled even streams into torrents and brought debris rushing down the valleys in rivers swollen to many times their normal size. The railways, of course, suffered, but not, be it noted, in the expected places. Ballycar, on the Limerick-Ennis section was quite undramatic, so unlike its performance in January 1961 when it rose 35” over track level. There were three principal areas which suffered in 1965 affecting the Mallow-Waterford and Dublin-Wexford lines.

On the Mallow-Waterford line the severance took place at Ballymacmague between Cappagh and Dungarvan and on two days - November 16 and 18 - the "Rosslare Express" ran via Limerick Junction in both directions. The stopping trains operated from Waterford to Dungarvan and back and from Cappoquin to Cork and back, with a bus between the two railheads. This occurred on three days as, of course, the slow trains run daily while the express is only thrice weekly (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) in each direction. There were no other stoppages on this section.

The Mullingar-Sligo line was worse hit. On the 16th the 08:20 Sligo - Westland Row was delayed at Longford by fallen wires and in turn delayed the 08:35 "Shipper" Sligo - North Wall. Passengers off the 08:20 were brought by bus to Mullingar where they joined the 10:10 Westport - Westland Row which itself was 38 minutes late into Dublin. The abandoned 6-coach railcar left Longford about 16:20 and reached Amiens Street about 18:30; too late to form the down 18:15, which was made up of B173, HV, 6 bogies (including kitchen car 272N) and HV, and stuck on the slippery rail on the Whitworth Road bank between Amiens Street and Liffey Junction on the "low" (ex MGWR) line. A push from an E class loco restarted the train which returned normally as the 08:20 of the following day.

That night, Wednesday (17th) the 18:15 down (B152 hauling a 6-coach railcar) ran by the "high" (Drumcondra Link - ex GS&WR) line through to Sligo, although due to floods at Drumsna the morning train of the 17th had been turned at Dromod. That night everything happened. The up 21:15 Sligo - North Wall goods, running almost two hours late, was derailed by a landslide at MP 54 at about 06:00 on the Thursday morning. The loco and the first 20 wagons got through, the next three wagons left the rails and the remaining 20 stayed on the track - an extraordinary performance. This effectively blocked the Sligo line until 18:00 the same evening; the loco and front portion of the train were cleared about 14:30; the tail was brought back to Multyfarnham.

Meantime in the late afternoon, however, the rising River Shannon had caused severe flooding near Drumsna so that the northern end of the line was now impassable.

On the 18th the 09:10 (B125, HV, 6-wheel van and 3 bogies) ran, naturally, to Mullingar only, returning thence as the connection out of the up 08:20 which ran to Multyfarnham only (A38 hauling a 6-coach railcar - the set of the 18:15 of the 17th) which became the Sligo based train for the next few days. The 18:15 down (B123, 4 bogies and 2 vans) terminated that night in Mullingar and the passengers were taken by bus to Carrick on Shannon, thus establishing a pattern of working which continued with variations up to Monday November 22.

The procedure on the 19th was to run the morning train to Longford only and, as the 09:10 serves both Westport and Sligo, it was cleverly made up of B130, 3 bogies and HV for Mayo; a 2-coach railcar and SV forming the Sligo portion. This train returned from Longford as the 15:00 up, leaving there about 18:00 (1 hour 20 minutes late) and arrived in Amiens Street at 20:17. As there were 23 passengers for the 20:40 Dun Laoghaire - Holyhead boat, a bus was provided from Westland Row to Dun Laoghaire as then all the regular pier trains had gone.

The down 18:15 Dublin-Sligo of the night before made the Longford-Dublin section of the up 08:20 Sligo-Dublin and this train returned on the 18:15 Dublin-Sligo to Longford and did a round trip from Longford to Mullingar deputising for the night mail.

Saturday 20 followed a similar pattern although the Sligo ran at 09:25, separate from the 09:10 Westport, as a 3-coach railcar, SV and LV. The 18:15 down was B144, HV, 5 bogies and LV.

On Sunday 21 there was only one train required but on Monday 22 although the 09:10 railcar was turned at Longford the 18:15 down (B144 and its train of the 20th) reopened the road through to Carrick while the Sligo based railcar set came through to Dublin, working the 19:40 up night mail to Mullingar where, having discharged its passengers into the Galway - Westland Row night mail, it followed empty to Dublin.

For the duration of these emergency operations, on the nights of Tuesday to Saturday inclusive the two Sligo goods trains in each direction ran via Athlone, Claremorris and the "Burma Road" through Tubbercurry to Sligo and vice versa.

It must be said that the handling of the emergency services was extremely efficient and the loss of time was kept to a minimum - the boat connection was made each night; although on the tight side on the Friday.

But if the Sligo line was badly affected its tribulations were puny when compared to the plight of the ex D&SER Dublin-Wexford line. On the night of Monday November 15 Ballygannon, the perennial trouble-spot between Greystones and Kilcoole, was flooded by the high seas and delayed the goods trains; the down 02:25 goods of the 16th ran to Bray only. Tuesday evening's 18:25 Westland Row - Rosslare ran to Bray only and the 23:15 sailing to Fishguard was delayed 4 hours awaiting the connection off this and the Cork train (running via Limerick Junction as mentioned previously).

The gales and seas also damaged the coastal protection works near Rosslare Harbour and tore planking from the quays at Wexford, but these did not disrupt traffic.

On Wednesday 17 a special goods was organised leaving Worth Wall at 11:15 which at Bray attached the goods lying there since the day before and made a 37-wagon train. This left for Greystones at 13:00 and arrived there at 14:35 - 95 minutes for 5½ miles! The trouble was caused by slipping on the steep and serpentine course taken by the railway around Bray Head.

The same day (Wednesday) the up day goods of Tuesday night which had stabled overnight in Wicklow left soon after 13:00 and took just over an hour to reach Greystones as sea spray had put a film on the rails which caused repeated slipping. CIÉ diesel locomotives are not fitted with sanding apparatus as it is understood that when tried, sand made its way into the mechanical parts of the loco and caused such damage as to make the prospect of engine failure due to overheating preferable.

Passenger trains during Wednesday 17 terminated at Bray southbound or at Wicklow northbound, due to the high seas and floods at Ballygannon, and buses bridged the gap.

The rain came down continuously and the rise in temperature brought a thaw to the mountains behind. The rivers rose rapidly. The 15:50 Rosslare-Wicklow (C710, C24N, C712N, C904N, HV and LV) returning, forming the southern section of the 18:25 ex Westland Row, was stranded at Gorey as also was loco B133 with the up day goods.

There were slight subsidences near Ferns and Camolin while at Enniscorthy the Slaney washed trees against the railway bridge, flooding the station and almost submerging loco B160 - the loco of the up night goods. The trees were later joined by a petrol storage tank, washed from its seating at Clohamon, nearly 10 miles away, and this made things worse as it struck the bridge, damaging the catwalk.

Further north the Avoca River undermined the track for some 100 yards at 46 miles 48 chains close to the new Shelton sidings but, fortunately, north of them. Worse still at 43 miles, just south of Avoca station, the river tore away foundations over 250 yards, leaving the track suspended over and drooping into the "witches' cauldron" that was the Avoca River.

On Thursday November 18 nothing moved on the DSE south of Greystones or north of Wexford. In the early hours of Friday 19 two goods trains left for Wicklow and returned, one that night and the second next morning. Following the goods in the down direction was a 141 class GM loco with a permanent way special for Rathdrum, which left Bray at 09:00 after loading rails. The 02:25 goods worked to Wicklow each night but no passenger trains ran.

The Ferns and Camolin slips were repaired by Tuesday 23 and engineers inspected Enniscorthy Bridge on Monday and Tuesday. On the latter B133 hauled the BUT set from Gorey to Enniscorthy and at 19:30 was used, along with the unworkable B160, to test Enniscorthy Bridge for deflection. On

Wednesday B133 and B160 and the railcar left empty for Wexford and Rosslare after the arrival of B150 from Wexford about 09:00.

Meantime the Shelton washout had been filled by Roadstone tipping trucks with stone from their quarry at Arklow Head. At Avoca the line was deflected around the washout; a fortunate circumstance being CIE's ownership of suitable land - where once stood the siding for the Avoca Mineral Tramway.

On Wednesday 24 therefore the down 02:25 day goods reopened the road to Rathdrum while the Enniscorthy assemblage (B133, still trailing the dead B160) worked the 15:05 up passenger crossing the goods at Rathdrum but made heavy weather of the journey arriving 52 minutes late in Amiens Street. The down 18:25 restored semi-normal working over the trouble spots with of necessity several severe PW slacks en route.

It lasted almost 9 days! On the night of Thursday December 2 the up day goods reported the subsidence of bridge 193 at 40 miles 48 chains. The down night goods turned in Rathdrum and arrived back in Westland Row at 16:45 (B153 with 39 wagons and van) and thence continued to Wexford via Cabra, Kilkenny, Waterford and Rosslare Strand. The down day goods turned at Wicklow and the up night goods at Arklow. Passenger trains operated south to Wicklow and North to Arklow with buses between these points by the direct road and a separate bus for Rathdrum. Fortunately the timetable suits this operation very well and causes but little delay to passengers in either direction; only one train is required on each section of the line. Goods trains are run only to Wicklow (Rathdrum does not handle freight traffic). Goods for Shelton and points south are taken by the normal 22:30 Waterford goods and worked early next morning by a special goods thence to Enniscorthy via Rosslare Strand. This goods returns to connect with the regular 21:50 Waterford-Dublin goods. The Enniscorthy pilot engine works traffic northwards to Gorey, Arklow and Shelton, at which last-mentioned G611 is in daily use as yard pilot.

An operation of note is the supply of crude oil to the Shelton nitrogenous fertiliser factory in CIE "Tar Bitumen" tanks still thus lettered.

At bridge 193 the damage was severe. The south abutment had cracked and in its east (upstream) side had slipped to an angle of about 80° with the ground level. The first move was to construct a platform on the upstream side of the damaged abutment and a pier extending into the river. On the former a sleeper crib was made and two cross girders have been arranged resting on it and on the undamaged side of the abutment. These support the main bridge girders; the upstream one having been extended for the purpose. In the pier a pile has been driven deep and two timber baulks are keyed to it and against the abutment to prevent the bridge slipping further. A similar but smaller support is fixed on the inside end of the abutment. Another sleeper crib has been erected on a stone and rubble platform in the river and will give further support to the main bridge girders. The line is expected to open again soon although a speed limit of 5 mph is expected. 10 mph restrictions apply to bridges 190 and 208 which are "under surveillance".