

THE

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Managing Committee:

C.D. Seymour

B.J. Pender

P.J. Flanagan.

R.C. Flewitt

EDITORIAL

With our subscription list for 1967 already greater than that of 1966, our efforts to revitalise the IRN have been even more successful than we could ever have anticipated. For us, the most satisfactory aspect is, without any doubt, the unqualified display of loyalty from our many long-standing readers. We are also very much encouraged by the number of new names joining our readership and we can assure all of our continued efforts to improve our magazine. A special word of thanks is due to all who sent us letters of encouragement. So many readers wrote that we would find it impossible to answer each individually, so we trust that this word of appreciation will suffice.

If speeches are made to be taken to heart, then the CIÉ railwaymen must be feeling very down in the mouth after the recent utterances of the Minister for Transport & Power, Mr Childers. Addressing the Institute of Transport, the Minister predicted a gloomy future for the CIÉ rail system if costs - particularly wages - continue to rise at the present rate. Taxpayers, he stated, could not be expected to carry a further subsidy over and above the £2m provided annually. Undoubtedly this was a warning to railwaymen and their respective trade unions advising them to think before lodging further claims for more money for shorter hours. While it has to be admitted that CIÉ has had more than its share of labour troubles over the past few years, it cannot be said that railwaymen are over-paid. The National Association of Transport Employees, commenting, has suggested to Mr Childers that such speeches do not generate better relations between the boardroom and the staff. We cannot but agree with such advice, at a time when CIÉ is endeavouring - with Government help - to play a greater part in Ireland's future. Silvermines, Castlemungret and Shelton are exciting new dots on railway maps - places where new industries throb. Good luck to these industries, the railways that serve them and the railwaymen who play such a vital part in national development. Long may they prosper, in spite of the gloom!

The air of pessimism spread across the Border too. The Ministry of Development confirmed that the section of the former Great Northern main line extending from the Border to Portadown would be singled, the saving being estimated at only £17,000. It has already been pointed out that the increased wear and tear on the remaining line would result in a cost increase approaching this figure. There is no doubt that the existing traffic could be carried on a single line, provided that modern signalling apparatus and frequent loops were installed but the present suggestion that there be a single line with only one intermediate loop will surely, if implemented, hinder both the existing and any future traffic.

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Keeping In Step

It is now just a year since the 50th anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising was commemorated. As part of the national tribute to those who played a prominent part in the independence movement, CIÉ named its principal railway stations after Irish patriots. As was, perhaps, to be expected, it is only in Dublin, where there is any need to distinguish between passenger stations, that the names have started to gain

acceptance. As from this issue, the IRN will use the new names for Dublin stations. For reasons of space we cannot repeat the old names in parentheses so we are taking this opportunity of tabulating the names of the three stations. They are:

Heuston	formerly Kingsbridge
Connolly	formerly Amiens Street
Pearse	formerly Westland Row

Another change concerns Northern Ireland. The Ulster Transport Authority is now a holding company for separate rail and bus concerns, the former being Ulster Transport Railways or UTR.

Finally, for new readers we would like to explain the few abbreviations normally found in the IRN:

HV	CIÉ 30' heating van
LV	CIÉ 30' luggage van
MPD	UTR multi-purpose railcar
MED	UTR multi-engined diesel unit

News Section

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

March Closures

It was announced in Iris Oifigiúil on 20 January, and in some newspapers on the 21st, that CIÉ intended to close the Mallow-Waterford, Thurles-Clonmel and Charleville-Patrickswell lines after the last trains on Easter Saturday, 25 March. Only the first of these had retained its passenger service and, as it was owned in part by the Fishguard & Rosslare Railways & Harbours Co., special legislation had been enacted to permit its closure. Protests against the closures were of an exceedingly mild nature and were not pressed very hard. An important result of the closures will be the imposition of a great strain on Limerick Junction, as all the through traffic will have to run via this already busy centre. There is no immediate sign that these lines will be lifted, except in the case of Thurles-Clonmel, where Thurles Junction and the adjacent crossover have already been spiked prior to removal.

Lack of space prevents us from detailing the last goods workings, but below are brief details of the last passenger trains to use the Mallow-Waterford line.

1. 06:15 Rosslare-Cork: Left Waterford 33 minutes late, consisting of B172, bogie van, 8 bogies and HV, and with 116 passengers. 48 minutes late at Mallow, but little indication that it was a "last train".
2. 09:20 Waterford-Mallow: The last up train, consisted of B123, 3 bogies, bogie van and HV. 38 people on board. Despite salvos of fog signals, it was early into Mallow.
3. 13:30 Cork-Waterford: Left Mallow at 14:30, consisting of B124, 4 bogies, LV and HV. A very quiet trip, the only diversion being the holding of the train at Ballyduff - where a Garda joined it and travelled to Lismore - all this for the purpose of removing rowdies! (The Garda had to return from Lismore on the goods.)
4. 18:20 Cork-Rosslare: B121, HV and 6 bogies with 160 passengers ex Cork. This was definitely the quietest "last train" we have yet seen. Few were making the sentimental journey and the train arrived in Waterford only 8 minutes late and in complete silence - no fog signals and no hooting.

Possible Closure

The probable closure of the Cork City Railway from Glanmire Road to Albert Quay was mentioned in “Nuacht CIÉ” on 17 February. Occasional trains carrying tar and bulk fertiliser still run, but one-way street traffic has made operation of the railway very hazardous.

Hail And Farewell

The IRRS chartered a Radio Train for its St. Patrick’s Day Outing on 17 March. The train traversed the Thurles-Clonmel, Charleville-Patrickswell and Silvermines branches, returning to Dublin via Nenagh. It was composed of LV, 12-wheel diner 353, 3 Cravens, compo, studio coach RS25 and HV, hauled throughout by B187. Excellent timekeeping all the way enabled all scheduled photographic stops to be made, as well as a few extra ones! It was necessary to leave 353 at Birdhill before the run to Silvermines, the loop there being too short to accommodate the complete train. Despite the shunting necessary to pick up 353 on the return to Birdhill, the train was 9½ minutes early on arrival at Connolly Station. Passengers’ enjoyment of an excellent trip was enhanced by the special Radio Train commentary, and also by the high standard of the dining car service.

Waterford South Revisited

The Munster Area of the IRRS organised another unusual outing on Saturday, 4 March. Using the Limerick railcar set (2607, 1352, 2634), a visit was paid to the former Waterford South Station. Leaving Waterford North at 15:30, the train reversed at Grace Dieu Junction and went down the Ironfounders’ Siding to the old South Station, arriving at 15:51. The special returned at 16:34 and waited 13 minutes at Grace Dieu while the 13:30 from Cork cleared the section. Arrival at Waterford North was at 17:10.

Ballyduff Derailment

The engine of the 07:00 Mallow-Waterford goods, B130, was derailed at Ballyduff on 24 March. It was entering the siding to collect a wagon, and as it had left its train at the down home signal the line was blocked for a time. The 07:10 stopping passenger train from Rosslare to Cork was halted at Lismore and a substitute bus arrived from Cork after a 90 minute delay. Soon afterwards the Mallow pilot, C230, arrived at Ballyduff and propelled the stranded goods of 16 wagons and van through the station and then hauled it into the loop. With the through road now clear, the empty passenger train ran on to Cork. The Cork breakdown van was brought to Ballyduff by C218, and B130 was re-railed before the 13:30 passenger train from Cork passed through.

Sanding Van

Ex GNR goods brake van No.78 has been adapted for use as a Rail Sanding Van at Cork. It is hauled through the tunnel before heavy trains.

Development Areas

Yet again we have to report important developments in various stations and lines on the CIÉ system.

Limerick Junction - Waterford: Mechanical staff exchangers at Grange, Fiddown and Kilsheelan are in use from 28 March. All stations are now equipped with 2-way signalling on both loops. The down platform at Cahir has been raised to full height.

Silvermines Branch: Ireland’s latest branch line opened on 30 December. At present the terminal facilities comprise only a loading bank for barytes traffic and a run-round loop. Earthworks for other sidings are almost complete and a concrete overhead bunker for loading zinc and lead concentrates is under construction. So far, the traffic on the line requires one train and one light engine each way daily, Sundays excepted.

Bagenalstown: The up platform has been raised to the standard height but has not yet been paved.

Limerick: Ballasting of the new line from Carey's Road Yard towards Rosbrien is almost completed. A new carriage cleaning depot has been established.

Shelton Abbey: Two useful crossovers have been installed beyond the loading bay at the factory, while a new pre-fabricated building comprising an inspector's office, shunters' dining room and wagon cover store has been built at the north end of the main yard. A C-class pilot replaced the G-class from 10 January, when the busy season commenced. This year much of the traffic is ammonium sulphate in bulk. This has a serious corrosive effect on wagons not treated as described in our last issue. Two specials have been running to Dublin almost every day for some weeks; these are in addition to the two regular goods trains.

Pearse Station: The second stage of the renovation scheme is now under way. A new buffet is being built on part of the north-side cab ramp. The suburban booking office was closed on 7 February and has since been demolished to make way for an escalator to Platforms 4 and 5. Temporary booking facilities are available at the Midland line office, pending the erection of a new office at platform level. The escalator will be a boon to local passengers but many main line passengers will still have to cross the footbridge to Platform 3.

Downs Crossing: 46-Mile Cabin, adjacent to Downs Crossing, has been modified to permit operation of the gates when the cabin is switched out. A new ground frame controls the gate locks and the signals on the main line to Mullingar are slotted to allow them to be worked with the lever frame or from the cabin when it is switched in.

Foynes: Work on the improved oil landing facilities for Cement Ltd was completed in December 1966. In connection with the ore concentrate traffic from Silvermines, a wagon tippler is under construction at Foynes. Special wagons numbered from 26550 are being built.

Limerick Junction: All platform faces have been raised and the outer ends paved. No further work has been done on the Dublin-Limerick curve, but the new crossover from No.1 Platform road to the Up Main line at the North Cabin has been installed; it was connected on 22 March. The next day, the facing crossover from the Up Main line to No.3 Platform road was connected, ending the 118-year-old ritual of reversing Up trains into the platform road; the first train affected was the 15:30 ex Cork on 23 March. Running locos round trains is now a conventional move at No.1 Platform. This is instead of the very complicated manoeuvres round the platforms as heretofore.

Far Afield

Train roster alterations resulting from the Mallow-Waterford closure have been the reason for the dispatch of railcar 2509 to Waterford on Friday, 24 March. Starting on 28 March, it is rostered to work the Waterford-Kilmokea workmen's trains.

We have only recently obtained confirmation that a CIÉ B-class loco worked a through goods from Dundalk to Derry, via Antrim. On Friday, 11 November 1966, the 22:15 goods from Dundalk was worked by a B-class which was refuelled at Dundalk after coming from Dublin with the 20:30 Mail. The 21:10 goods from Derry on the 11th was replaced by a special, worked by the B, the following day.

Snatcher Trouble

Some 6 minutes late leaving Mullingar on Sunday, 5 March, the 19:10 seven-piece railcar set from Sligo was running well on the straight through Killucan when trouble arose. The impact of the mechanical staff-exchangers resulted in the fracture of the apparatus in the leading portion of the railcar and caused serious damage to that on the ground. There was a delay of 15 minutes while the guard returned to the station to retrieve the staff, while further time was lost on the run home due to hand-exchanging of the staff, there being no other set of snatchers in the railcars. Arrival at Connolly Station was at 23:06 - 39 minutes late.

Waterford Reconstruction

A £120,000 scheme was started on 6 February. The object is the replacement of the 103-year-old station building, erected by the Waterford & Limerick Railway. The new building will be of reinforced concrete construction and will contain booking, parcel and administrative offices as well as the usual waiting and buffet facilities. The present site will be occupied.



Boyne Battle?

At the January meeting of Drogheda Harbour Commissioners the Secretary complained about missiles being thrown from trains passing over the Boyne Viaduct. He referred to an occasion when he claimed to have seen an “almighty splash” caused, he suggested, by a concrete block! Many travellers observe the custom of throwing coins over the bridge, but we have not observed anything larger.

GAA Again

The Dublin County Board of the Gaelic Athletic Association has followed the example of Cork. When CIÉ refused to run a 20/- fare special to Cork on Sunday, 22 January, the Board decided not to travel by CIÉ services for the rest of the season.

Pearse Station Derailment

The empty train for the 18:50 service to Galway was struck by the 18:25 Rosslare Harbour set during shunting on 1 February. Railcar 2600 was extensively damaged and coach 1361 of the 18:25 was damaged and derailed. Breakdown gangs were still at work over 3 hours afterwards. The undamaged part of the 18:25, with a replacement coach and HV, left 27 minutes late. A spare set of coaches was assembled for the 18:50 which left at 19:27 without a buffet car. The train remained loco hauled for some days.

Cheap Weekends

These arrangements have been altered yet again, this time to provide cheap cross-border fares on all cheap weekends except that of 26 - 29 May. The last is excluded as 29 May is a public holiday in Northern Ireland.

Blockade Running

In a nationwide demonstration, members of the National Farmers' Association blocked the approaches to 33 towns and cities on Monday, 9 January. Tractors and other farm machines were used to block not only the main but also the secondary roads and traffic was virtually halted throughout the provinces from 09:00 to 19:00 or later. The Dublin to Bray road was blocked at Crinken, halting the bus service. An emergency train service, worked by spare Pier train sets, ran from Pearse Station to Bray and back, giving 7 extra services in each direction. The 17:26 and 17:52 regular trains from Connolly Station were also 5-bogie Pier trains in place of the usual 4-coach AEC railcars. The 17:13 was a 7-coach AEC set instead of a 4-piece, while the other displaced set ran a special at 18:05.

Two newspaper specials were run from Heuston Station. A B141-class loco with LV, bogie van and LV ran to Limerick at 12:30; a second train ran to Portlaoise at 15:00. CIÉ were publicly thanked by the papers for this special service. Another special ran from Ennis to Dublin with 71 passengers from an airliner which was diverted from Dublin to Shannon because of fog.

Suburban Tribulations

Passengers on the Bray line have recently been critical of delays to morning and evening local trains, perhaps with some justification as services were dogged with a spell of ill-luck. On 18 January the 08:10 ex Bray did not run because of the failure of its loco, A9. The following 08:10 from Greystones had to carry all the passengers and make 4 extra stops. It was later stated that a relief train operated from Dun Laoghaire. On 23 January the 07:25 down train, worked by B147, stuck on Glenageary Bank. By the time a banking loco from Dun Laoghaire had restarted the train, it was so late that the working was terminated at Dalkey. The banker went back wrong-road to Dun Laoghaire and thus the 07:45 to Dalkey was 12 minutes late. Four days later, the 07:25 was 30 minutes late at Dalkey and once more it returned from there, making the third occasion in 10 days that the Bray passengers were deprived of the 08:10. The 17:42 down train was in trouble on 2 February. Emitting sparks and flames, A52 was 9 minutes late at Dalkey. It continued to Bray but had to be worked back to the city by another A at 21:30.

Cork Facelift

The improvements scheme at Glanmire Road is now completed. The down platform has been tiled and new electro-hydraulic lifts have been installed at each end of the subway to the up platform. The subway, once distinctly dingy, has been tiled and the walls bear a selection of posters. Tiling has been extended to the concourse while a new enquiry office has been provided. Staff facilities have also been improved, there now being dining and locker rooms and toilet and wash-up amenities. The loco dormitory has been completely refitted. It now has separate bedrooms, central heating and, with other comforts, a TV.

New Rule Book

A new rule book was introduced on all lines on 1 January, the former GNR section excepted. It will not apply on the latter until the UTR agrees. The new book embodies the many revisions made since the previous issue in 1933 and the opportunity has been taken to rewrite much of the contents in less formal terminology. It is noteworthy that this rule book was compiled by the railway officials and not by the Irish Railway Clearing House as heretofore.

Sandycove Shop

We have been informed that the station shop reverted to its original state on 24 January. The extension reported in our last issue was temporary only, while a new floor was installed.

Inchicore Station

A new shelter has been provided on the up platform; it incorporates a small office for the gate policeman, and has metal frames with wooden panelling similar to modern CIÉ bus shelters. The fluorescent lights have the station name on the shades, as on many modernised BR stations, but here the names are alternately in Irish and English.

A Change in Excursion Policy?

Although a double-headed special of 11 bogies including a diner ran from Sligo to Cork via Claremorris and Limerick on Sunday, 12 February, on Sunday, 8 January, over 400 excursionists were carried from Sligo to Dundalk and back in a fleet of nine C-class buses. It has been suggested that CIÉ have found it cheaper - and more peaceful - to work such trips by bus and that future excursions will be by road, except in the case of exceptionally long distances.

“Enterprise” In Trouble

The 14:30 Dublin-Belfast “Enterprise” failed at Rush on 2 March. The engine of the 14:15 Drogheda-Dublin goods, A30, was used as a relief after the goods had been shunted into Malahide Quarry. The “Enterprise” was restarted after 45 minutes and arrived in Belfast at 17:35, a B-class loco having been provided at Dundalk. Meanwhile, the goods was worked into Dublin by a spare engine during the afternoon. The late arrival at Belfast resulted in the 17:30 up being worked by the 7-coach BUT railcar set rostered for the 18:35 Belfast-Dundalk. The CIÉ loco and train worked the 18:35 instead, as a through train to Dublin. The UTR railcars returned light from Dublin to Dundalk at 20:13.

With the 18:35 running through to Dublin, the usual 20:05 Dundalk-Dublin was not required, so the 5-car AEC set with 6-wheel van 1077 left at 19:45. This train, however, only got as far as Dunleer, being blocked there by the failure of A30 which was retracing its steps southwards by working the 19:20 empty Bulk Cement train from Dundalk to Drogheda Cement Siding. A30 failed at Drogheda and blocked the up line. Another effect of the failure was the blocking of the 18:35 from Belfast, which was held at Dundalk. To minimise delays, the passengers were brought from Dundalk to Dunleer to join the railcar set there but, as the section had been cleared in the meantime, the railcar had gone on its way when the buses arrived! So, the buses continued to Drogheda where the passengers rejoined the 18:35, which followed the 21:05 local to Dublin. The latter had been delayed until 21:15 by the 19:45 special but was only 17 minutes late in Dublin. Not so the unlucky 18:35 - it finally reached its destination at 22:32, 77 minutes late!

Trial By Fire

Three fires have recently occurred. On 1 January three withdrawn coaches were maliciously burned at Enfield while awaiting scrapping. On 1 March, a fire at Inchicore Works affected the Lifting Shop but the works brigade, aided by Dublin units, prevented serious damage. The former GNR stores was gutted by a fire of mammoth proportions on 2 March. The building was being used by the Industrial Engineering Co. as a store; some spray painting was also carried on. The store was a fine example of GNR red brick architecture and the interior was noted for its magnificent pitch-pine woodwork.

UTR GENERAL NEWS REPORT

The UTR Loco Fleet And Its Allocation

All units, with just 4 exceptions, of the loco fleet are now based on the NCC section. Early in March

the official allocation was as tabulated below.

Belfast (York Road): Working: 3, 4, 6, 27, 50, 51, 53, 54 and 55. In store: 5, 9, 10, 17 (diesel) and 26. Remarks: No.3 has a cracked frame and is confined to Belfast Yard; 55 was returned to service after a period in store at Ballymena.

Carrickfergus: In store: 2 and 8.

Ballymena: In store: 1, 7, 52 and 57. Damaged: 56.

The engines still on the GN section are Nos. 37 and 49 in store at Grosvenor Road goods yard, and No.48 stored in Lisburn goods shed. In addition, diesel No.28 is shunting at Great Victoria Street. Nos. 37 and 49, along with railcar 105 (formerly "G" of the GNR), are to be sold for scrap. Railcars in store are Nos. 4, 6 and 7 at York Road and No.1 at Ballymena.

Preserved Locomotives

Locomotives for preservation which are in store on UTR property are as follows: GNR Compound 4-4-0 No.85 in Lisburn goods store (for Belfast Transport Museum); Guinness 0-4-0ST No.3 at Carrickfergus, GNR 4-4-0 No.171 and GS&WR 0-6-0 No.186 at York Road (for the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland). The cab of No.171 has been "fenced off" with barbed wire, in an effort to stop vandalism. No.186 is being prepared for a special train to Portrush on 13 May.

York Road Derailment

Ex Sligo, Leitrim & Northern Counties Railway "Lough Erne", 0-6-4T No.27 was derailed at the ash pit at York Road shed on 17 February. It then fell into the pit and came to rest front downwards and canted sideways at an angle of 45 degrees. The engine was not removed until 20 February. Little damage was caused and it was soon back at work. "Lough Erne" and its sister "Lough Melvin" were the newest engines on the SL&NCR and, in fact, only saw some 7 years service on that line. "Lough Erne" was the last Beyer Peacock engine built for an Irish Railway; it was delivered to Belfast in July 1951.

Rolling Stock Developments

Soon after the appearance of our last issue, the NCC section livery of maroon and silver grey was adopted as standard for all sections. The first coach affected was Diner 552 from the "Enterprise" set, which appeared in mid-January. It has since been stored in Great Victoria Street, apparently awaiting the repainting of further vehicles for the train. No.552 is now sporting its fifth livery in 29 years. As GNR 88 it was at first the standard brown, later blue and cream, and as UTR 552 it has been successively Brunswick Green, blue and cream and now maroon and silver.

Following a take-over of the rail business of Messrs Cravens Ltd, the contract for spoil wagons will be completed by the Metropolitan-Cammell Carriage & Wagon Co., in the Craven Works at Sheffield. Wagon M53 entered service on 16 February.

Railcar Notes

BUT railcar 124 is likely the last to be painted blue and cream. On the Bangor line Nos. 30 and 31, with trailer 511, are being painted maroon and cream during an overhaul.

The Wilson 4-speed gearboxes fitted to multi-engined railcars 16 and 17 have proved very satisfactory and about half the units are to be converted. Next to be altered are 8 and 9, now in the York Road shops. The conversion has had a remarkable effect on the acceleration of these units.

The multi-purpose railcars are to be fitted with Rolls Royce engines instead of the present Leyland type. No.38 was so altered for comparison with AEC-engined No.56. Subsequently four more AEC units appeared but these have been troublesome. The livery of No.50 has had a V-shaped colour band

painted on the front, similar to the diesel-electric units. No.50 is a non-corridor unit with an ugly flat front and this livery change should improve its appearance. Diesel-electric railcar No.77 is nearing completion and, early in March, parts and an engine for an additional unit were ordered.

No More Excursions?

It is unlikely that excursion trains will run on the UTR in the coming summer, with the exception of Orange specials to Finaghy on 12 July. The elimination of steam haulage on passenger trains has left the railway with barely sufficient stock to maintain its normal services.

Lissue Crossing

The first automatic barrier level crossing in Northern Ireland came into use on Sunday, 29 January. It is at Lissue, 2½ miles south of Lisburn on the main line to Dublin. The equipment is very similar to that already installed by CIÉ at eight locations on their system but the illuminated "Second Train Coming" sign is omitted; in such cases the barrier merely remains down. Telephones, connected to the nearest signal box, are provided for use if the barrier remains down for an abnormally long period, and also for cattle drovers and drivers of slow-moving vehicles, to ensure that there is enough time to cross before the next train.

Port Arthur Cabin

A new ground frame at the extreme north end of York Road yard was opened on 2 February. It is in a corrugated iron hut with shuttered windows; the floor level is about 6 feet high. The 5-lever frame controls a trailing crossover from the up main line into an adjacent siding, as well as two disc signals. It is released by "King" lever No.6 in Belfast Cabin and its purpose is to allow Spoil Trains to reverse off the main line without coming right into Belfast. The first of the three Fortwilliam Sidings has been extended to join the existing long siding north of the engine shed.

Trooperslane Downgraded

Since Monday, 30 January, Trooperslane Halt on the Larne line has been unstaffed. However, a gatekeeper remains on duty for the time being.

Great Victoria Street To Move?

It was announced on 1 February that a new hotel would be erected on the site of Great Victoria Street Station, the work commencing in early 1968. It is not yet clear how much of the station premises would be involved but one report suggests that the station and bus depot might have to be moved south of the "Boyne Bridge". If this should happen, almost all the money spent on extensive alterations since 1964 will have been wasted.

Derry Line Hooliganism

A special train from Derry to Belfast on 31 December was delayed 103 minutes by persistent pulling of the communication cord. In addition, a window and several light bulbs were broken.

"Muck", "Stone" or "Spoil"?

All three names are being given to these trains from Magheramorne Quarry to Fortwilliam Sidings. In future the IRN will adopt the signalman's designation of "Spoil Train". An intensified service was introduced on 25 January, comprising 8 down and 7 up services, Mondays to Fridays. The standard train is now 20 wagons with an engine at each end but the first two empty trains each morning have only one engine each and are followed by two light engines. The Saturday service is one empty train of 40 wagons with two engines, followed by two light engines in the down direction. There are two 20-wagon up trains.

Ballyclare Junction

A new motorway bridge is under construction at Ballyclare Junction. The signal box was demolished and all sidings lifted. A temporary signal box was erected at the level crossing which will be abolished when the motorway is opened. The removal of the sidings has left the NCC section very short of storage space for spare coaches; several are now at Antrim.

Toomebridge Revival

The disused railway bridge at Toomebridge, Co. Antrim, is being used as a temporary road bridge while the adjacent bridge on the road is being rebuilt. Both bridges cross the Bann.

Larne Sea Terminal

Part of Larne Harbour Station has been demolished to make way for new passenger facilities. The existing station was designed for passengers changing direct from train to ship and vice versa, but now a high proportion are motorists who sometimes arrive at the Harbour long before the ship. The new terminal will include a cafeteria.

Rugby Specials

The ASLEF union raised objections to CIÉ locos and drivers being used on specials to Dublin for the Rugby matches on 21 January and 11 February. On both occasions strike action was threatened; nonetheless two CIÉ locos and a UTR railcar set were used each time.

Illegal Closure?

In the course of a television interview on 26 January, it was alleged that the Belfast Central Railway had been closed illegally. The suggestion, surprisingly, was agreed with by a UTR official!

Revised Timetables

New timetables were introduced on the NCC section on 4 January, on the Bangor line on 6 February and 14 days later on the GN section. In each case separate free booklets with diesel-electric, multi-engined and BUT railcars, respectively, on the cover were issued. While the style of the production is better than previously, it is rather a pity that the sections are covered separately. The old style timetable, for all its shortcomings, was comprehensive for the whole of Northern Ireland and the cross-border services and thus a boon for tourists. The timetable changes are:

NCC Section: The numerous changes include the deferment of the 10:55 Belfast-Derry to 11:25, thereby restoring a valuable Dublin-Derry rail connection by the 08:30 "Enterprise". The 18:40 to Coleraine is advanced to 18:30 and runs on to Derry on Fridays only; hitherto this was a bus connection. The 18:00 (Saturday excepted) Belfast-Cullybackey has been withdrawn; instead, the 17:45 SX calls at Antrim and has a single MPD connection to Cullybackey at 18:30. Too numerous to detail, changes on the Larne line reflect an attempt to economise by making intensive use of DE railcars. Several trains have been withdrawn or stopped short, but additional stops have been included as far as possible on other services and much retiming has been done.

Bangor Line: The service has been improved by one train each way, Saturday excepted - 09:20 down and 09:35 up. In addition, the service to and from Bangor and Bangor West has been improved by transferring the Sydenham stop on the 08:20 up to the 08:24, and the Holywood stop on the 17:10 down to the 17:17. The 17:10 now leaves at 17:13. This step should attract further season-ticket traffic.

GN Section: The only modifications are a few extra stops and minor time alterations, the main item of notice being the prominent star against Adelaide on the 16:50 SO ex Belfast to indicate "Calls at Adelaide when there is a football match at Windsor". A very much reduced list of bus connections from Portadown is given.

A Single Main Line

As mentioned in the Editorial the announcement of the intention to single the line between Portadown and Meigh, a distance of 24 miles, was made on 26 January. The Minister's statement that no delay would result was hotly challenged by CIÉ.

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

14 January 1967: The Night Mail, Galway to Dublin (P. O'Cuimin)

The 20:15 mail train from Galway is run primarily for the benefit of the postal authorities but it does, however, enable the Dublin-based traveller to spend 8 hours in Galway, assuming he arrives on the 12:10. Perhaps more importantly, it is a useful train for all East Galway people for both shopping and social trips. Besides those practical considerations, there is no doubt that the Night Mail has an atmosphere all its own and which is quite distinct from that of the normal passenger working.

On Saturday, 14 January, the train left Galway 1 minute late. It was hauled by B122, still in original livery, and consisted of HV 3137, 61'6" standard 1444, 57' bogie LV 2545 (still in green livery), 30' luggage-brake 2759 and 61'6" TPO 2978. Leaving Galway, the passenger coach was almost full but 10 people left the train at Athenry, reached at 20:32. Three passengers joined and the train continued on its way at 20:35.

Ten minutes later Attymon was reached and 1 passenger entrained, no doubt off the Loughrea train of G612 and coach 1910. Four people left the Mail at Attymon.

By 20:57 the train was at Woodlawn where 1 minute was spent in setting down 2 passengers. After a brisk run down the bank to Ballinasloe (arrive 21:10) the "Cu na Mara" six-piece railcar set was crossed and, with 7 less on board, the Mail restarted at 21:18. It arrived at Athlone at 21:36, this being the final destination of most of the passengers.

Those remaining immediately headed for the refreshment rooms! Athlone is busy at this time; the Westport vans (on this date 30' luggage-brake 2756 and 57' bogie LV 2542) are added to the 20:15, while at 22:12 the Down Night Mail arrives. The latter train on this occasion was 1 minute early and had a good passenger complement. It was hauled by B123.

The long break over, the Up Mail left Athlone at 22:19 and arrived at Moate at 22:33. Losing 2 passengers and gaining 1, it continued at 22:35. Arrival at Mullingar was at 23:00. While the 2 Sligo road passengers boarded, the Mail was lengthened by the addition of LV 2744 and 3 vacuum-fitted 10-ton vans, 18808, 18651 and 18522.

Leaving at 23:17 the Mail ran briskly till it was signal-checked at Liffey Junction at 00:16. After an immediate restart, it continued, with a brief pause at Connolly Station, to reach Pearse Station at exactly 00:30 - 10 minutes early! Definitely an interesting and rewarding journey.

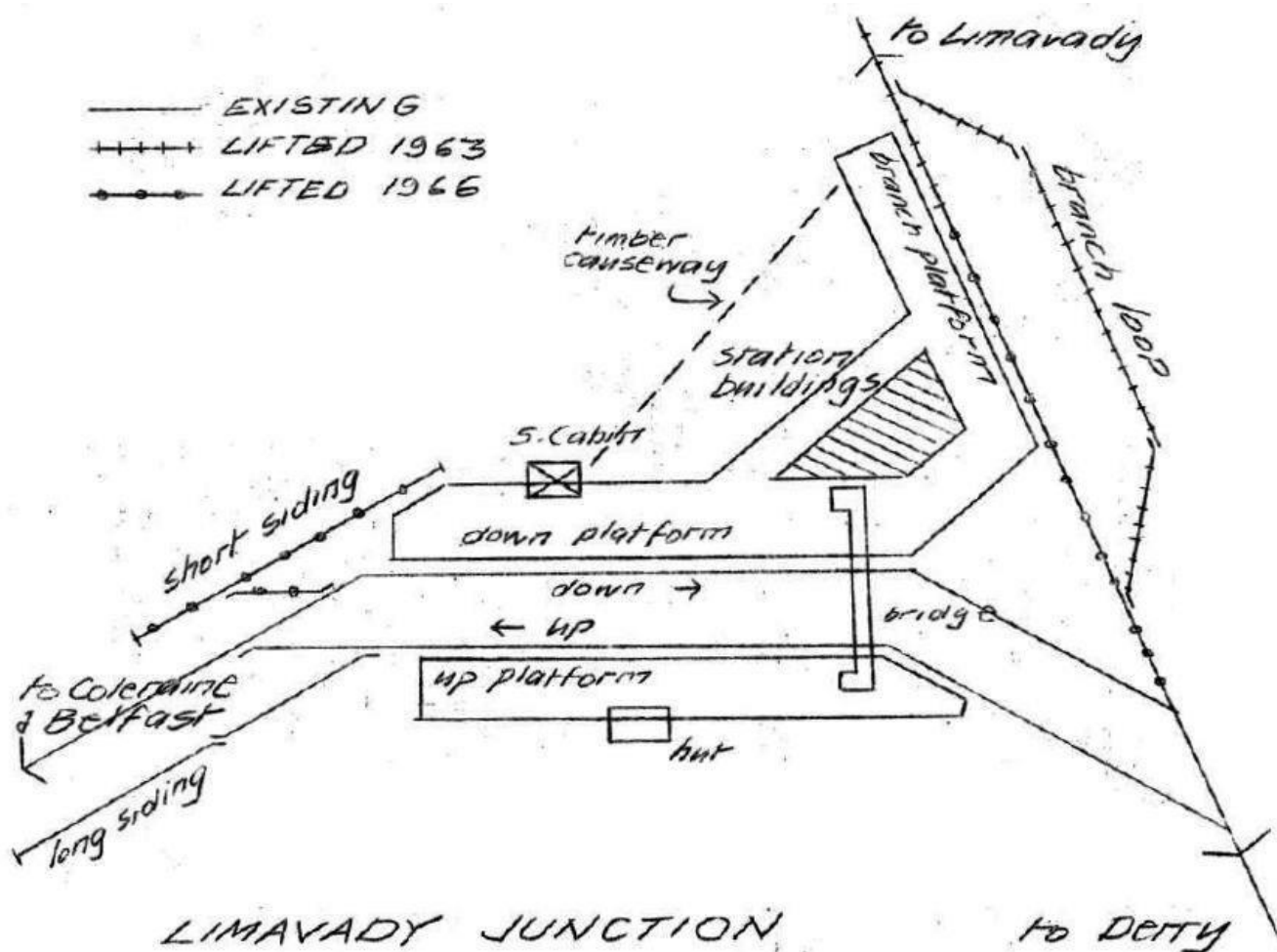
STATION SURVEY

Limavady Junction (J.R.L. Currie)

"Yes," said Maurice thoughtfully, "the 'Junction' is like every other station these days - petering out!" This melancholy comment was evoked by the sight of the oxy-acetylene torches of the Coleraine 'gang' at work on the dissection of the old 'Branch'. Maurice McLaughlin is the Limavady Junction signalman. Like so many of the other old hands, and virtually every enthusiast, he cannot but deplore, on sentimental grounds, the removal of such old landmarks.

The former Broharris Junction sits in the middle of an old raised beach, in a place now readily susceptible to flooding. It was opened by the Londonderry & Coleraine Railway on 20 December 1852,

on which date passenger traffic commenced on the Londonderry - Limavady section, goods trains having run since the beginning of October. On 18 July 1853 the rest of the main line to Coleraine was opened and the line to Limavady became a branch. At that time the up and down main line trains crossed at the Junction, often waiting there for 20 minutes while the branch train ran to Limavady and back!



The present buildings are situated on the down platform and were built by the Belfast & Northern Counties Railway in the 1880s - that company's monogram can yet be seen on the ends of the canopies. It was the B&NCR which changed the station name from Broharris Junction to Limavady Junction, at some time prior to 1868. Although the station was for the vast majority of travellers merely a transfer point, a small booking office was provided.

The loop is the shortest on the UTR system, the distance between clearance points being 550'. Also unique is the fact that no fast line is provided because of the sharp curves at the approaches and at the platforms. When crossing, up and down trains keep to their right platforms, otherwise the down side is used to facilitate transfers to the bus. The bay from which the branch trains left adjoins the down platform. The latter is linked to the up main line platform by a footbridge. The up platform, with its small waiting hut, was rebuilt with reinforced concrete in LMS days.

The present signal box has 45 levers, of which 20 are now spare, but which originally had only 5 spare. Siding accommodation at present consists of the Up or "Long" road, intended to stable ballast trains, but previously there was also the Down ("Short") road which trailed to the down loop at the end of the platform and into which it was only possible to work in an engine and one wagon, a reversal being necessary. This siding was installed hurriedly during World War II, when extra storage space was

required. In later years it was buried up to rail level in cinders to provide a turning space for the bus.

The Limavady passenger services ended on 3 July 1950, UTA buses taking over. For the buses stops were provided near the signal cabin, and thus the station got its first passenger entrance. An interesting practice is the recording of the arrival and departure of the all too often empty bus by the signalman as though it were a train.

The branch Goods service ceased on 2 May 1955 and the track was lifted soon afterwards. As a result, the Junction signalling was modified and certain changes were made in the layout, chief among them being the removal - in 1963 - of the branch run-round loop. The last remains of the branch and the "Short" siding were removed in 1966.

Also lifted then was the siding into Ballykelly Aerodrome; it was controlled by the last Pinkerton Box on the NCC. At Ballykelly, the main line crosses the runway which has a ground frame to control it! The runway down distant signal is just ahead of the Junction advanced starter and one of the tasks of the Junction signalmen is to telephone the ground frame to warn of approaching trains. However, a description of the Ballykelly signalling merits an article to itself!

How much longer Limavady Junction will continue to be a block post is a matter of conjecture.

Already it lies at the end of two "long sections", normal working being to Lisahally and Castlerock, with Eglinton and Bellarena, respectively, being switched out. There is no doubt that the retention of the present large cabin is unnecessary.

As this is the story of a junction it is appropriate to give a little detail about the branch working. The engine was shedded at Limavady and at the end was usually a "County" or a "Whippet" - the Moguls and "Jeeps" were prohibited. The usual train of the 1930s was a bogie compo, six-wheeled third-brake and such wagons and vans as the traffic demanded. Once, the branch was lucrative; the Junction was also a ticket inspection and crossing point of importance. This has passed, and perhaps the best signs of past glories are the "call-ons" fitted under the home signals!

Feature Section

THE CIÉ COACH AND WAGON SCRAPPING PROGRAMME

Herbert Richards

With very few exceptions, all CIÉ steam locos have been scrapped. Thus the scrapping of coaches and wagons has been carried on with increased activity. The intention is to run down all pre-grouping stock by scrapping vehicles as repairs become necessary. It is hoped that this programme will be completed by 1975 when all trains will be composed entirely of CIÉ standard stock.

This activity is centred on Mullingar where the MGWR track relaying gantry has found a new lease of life, not having been used for its original purpose for some 35 years. The method of operation is straightforward: two lines are reserved for condemned vehicles; the first, running underneath the gantry, is used for goods stock, while the second, running parallel to the first but outside the gantry area, is used for bogie coaches. With bogie stock the procedure is simple. First, the wooden body is disconnected from its parent chassis, and then the estranged body is tipped over on its side. Next, the body is saturated with inflammable spirit and burnt without further ado. Finally, the remaining underframe is shunted to the "wagon line" where it is cut up.

The formalities with goods stock and 6-wheel coaches are less tedious. If the vehicle is of timber

construction throughout it is burnt immediately, leaving small ironwork, axleboxes and wheels which are then easily cut up. With vehicles of all-metal construction, the worker simply cuts them up as he sees fit, keeping a continuous lookout in case the vehicle collapses around him!

The resultant conglomeration of metalwork is then sorted into large buckets according to size and type, i.e. brass, steel, aluminium, lead, etc. These are emptied into wagons for transport to Inchicore, where the contents are smelted down or exported. Only a very small portion of the materials from stock for scrapping is re-usable: self-contained buffers, wheels and axlebox covers being all that is worth saving. In this regard, it is interesting to reflect that an ancient Waterford & Limerick Railway 7" x 3½" axlebox may see 90 years service and then be smelted down in 1967, and then, perhaps, re-appear later in the year as a modern CIÉ 10" x 5" box!

A small amount of scrapping takes place at Inchicore, and in the case of a vehicle not being fit to move the cutting up is carried out locally. When a train examiner decides that a vehicle is not fit for further service he adopts the following standard procedure. The defective vehicle is shunted to a refuge siding at the examining station where it is carded with the legend "NOT TO GO", and the sides daubed with a large white "V", thus conveying to all concerned that the vehicle is not to be used for traffic. When official authorisation to scrap is received the "V" is deftly changed to "X" and the vehicle is forwarded to Liffey Junction for progression to Mullingar.

Apart from those vehicles which originate from Limerick and proceed directly to Mullingar, all condemned stock is channelled through Liffey Junction. Situated at MP 1 (from the Broadstone), Liffey Junction is a clearing house for all types and classes of stock, i.e. that for repairs, scrapping, storage or cleaning. It boasts a small depot for light repairs, while most vehicles come to this somewhat out of the way spot for inspection before being dispatched to either Inchicore or Limerick - the two major repair depots of CIÉ.

The more common stations storing goods stock proposed for scrapping are: Limerick, Rathpeacon, Thurles, Dundalk, Malahide and, of course, Liffey Junction. Passenger stock, in the main, emanates from Sallins, the remnants of the Tullow Branch being used to advantage. Sallins has a storage capacity of approximately 70 bogie coaches.

Condemned vehicles are dispatched from Liffey Junction as required by Mullingar. On reaching there, they are moved out to Newbrook Racecourse Siding for temporary storage, space being at a premium at the gantry. En route to Mullingar, stock is often parked at Enfield for months, the stretch of the Edenderry Branch running from Enfield Station to the site of Nesbitt Junction being used for the purpose.

Very many of the vehicles which have found their way to Mullingar for scrapping have been of very great interest to the railway connoisseur. Often, the number included the last surviving vehicle of a once large class or perhaps of one of the smaller railways which went to form part of the GSR at the Amalgamation in 1925. One vehicle originated from territory far outside the borders of the "empire" of the GSR.

The following is a random selection of some of the more interesting stock to reach Mullingar in the last eighteen months or so.

No.108A: Ex 47, MGWR. Loco Sleeping Van, built 1909. This interesting "one off" bogie vehicle had vertical matchboard sides and served its original function till the end.

No.1: MGWR 10 ton covered goods wagon, built 1923. This van carried the legend "GOODS ONLY" to distinguish it from the open roof type of wagon which carried both goods and cattle.

No.140: An interesting 6-wheel TPO built in 1894. Ex GS&WR, this vehicle had off-centre gangways.

No.305A: This 6-wheel coach was originally owned by the Finn Valley Railway and was sold to the

DW&WR when the former was converted to narrow gauge. It was since rebuilt many times.

No.918: Open wagon. Built by Hurst Nelson in 1904 for the Balleece Quarry traffic of the D&SER.

No.114: This was certainly the last Cork & Macroom Railway 6-ton dropside open wagon. Built in 1912, it was rebuilt in 1946. It carried GSR number plates and was based in Waterford as a CIÉ PWD vehicle.

No.609: This was one of six 20-ton bogie covered vans built in 1903 for the Guinness traffic on the GNR. Built on Fox's Patent Pressed Steel frameplates, these wagons were finished in blue livery and carried the legend "GUINNESS DUBLIN" in white.

No.309A: Ex 37, MGWR. Family saloon, built in 1879. This six-wheel coach retained its ornate windows, and sported an interesting maroon livery under its recent peg-board additions.

No.23527M: This represented the final 20-ton goods brake design of the MGWR. It was one of 20 built in 1925 under GSR auspices to replace 20 MGWR vans scrapped earlier at Inchicore. Hence, the unusual number.