

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 13

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EDITORIAL

The year 1967 has proved to be the best ever for "The Irish Railfans' News". Despite the pessimism of the Editorial in the October 1966 issue, the IRN has prospered to an extent which then seemed impossible. Thanks to the efforts of our many contributors the standard of the contents has been maintained and, indeed, improved. A special word of thanks is due to all who helped us, and in particular to Mr Padraig O'Cuimin, for providing station layout diagrams, and to Messrs R. Whitford, H. Cunningham and G.A. Wigham, for their invaluable and continuing contributions to our news service. We are especially grateful to our long-standing subscribers who introduced the IRN to new readers, and thereby helped to increase our circulation by over 30 per cent.

The success of the current year has prompted us to examine all aspects of production and compilation, with a view to seeking further improvements. We have decided to adopt a new style of cover for 1968, and we hope to include at least two extra pages in every issue. To assist us in using this extra space to the reader's best advantage, we are enclosing a questionnaire, and we appeal to all our readers to return the form promptly. In this way we will be able to provide readers with a magazine which will reflect more closely their interests in Irish railways.

To provide these improvements and, more important, to meet the ever-increasing cost of materials for production and dispatch, we have decided to raise the subscription to Five Shillings per annum. Only in this way can we ensure the stability and continuity of the IRN.

To enable us to implement our readers' suggestions we would ask that the questionnaire and subscription renewal forms be returned promptly. One more appeal remains to be made. There are many railway enthusiasts who are not yet aware of the existence of the IRN. We would appreciate if our readers would introduce the magazine to fellow enthusiasts who are not yet subscribers, and who have even a passing interest in Irish railways. Such action on our behalf will surely help to guarantee our continued expansion.

SOME RECENT ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Journal Of The Irish Railway Record Society

June NCC Signalling
 Rosslare Harbour
 Mallow-Waterford
 His Majesty, the Driver
 Steam Carriages

Railway Magazine

July CIÉ Adopts 24-Hour Clock (Paragraph)
 Irish Notes

August Three Irish Illustrations

Modern Railways

July Storm Over Ulster Railways

August Ulster Railway Crisis: Mr Coulthard Explains

Railway World

August The Dalriada Railtour (5 illustrations)

Forthcoming Books Of Interest

“Irish Railways Today”, Pender & Richards (Transport Research Associates)

“The Ballymena Lines”, Patterson (David & Charles)

News Section

THE WINTER TIMETABLES

On both CIÉ and the NIR the winter timetables are currently in force. Indeed, on the latter, the reduced winter service commenced on 4 September, 14 days earlier than on CIÉ. But the alterations on the NIR are insignificant compared to the radical changes in the pattern of the CIÉ train services. For ease of reference, the lines are covered separately.

Córas Iompair Éireann

No fewer than thirteen trains on the main lines have been accelerated - the biggest number for many years. The times saved vary from 8 to 55 minutes on weekdays, and a summary of the changes is as follows:

Departure				Minutes Saved
Was	Now	From	To	
12:40	13:10	Heuston	Cork	55
18:45	18:45	Heuston	Tralee	10
08:00	08:05	Tralee	Heuston	15
18:35	18:35	Tralee	Mallow	30
12:15	12:15	Limerick	Waterford	15
11:05	11:05	Waterford	Limerick	10
18:20	18:20	Cork	Rosslare	10
06:15	06:15	Rosslare	Cork	15
18:25	18:25	Pearse	Rosslare	10
08:40	08:40	Pearse	Galway	10
15:50	15:50	Galway	Pearse/Dun Laoghaire Pier	10
19:40	19:40	Sligo	Mullingar	8
09:50	09:50	Ballina	Limerick	10

On Sundays, trains are also running on faster schedules. The Up Waterford train is 5 minutes faster and, with the exception of the 10:40 Down which saves 20 minutes, both Up and Down Cork trains have had 15 minutes shaved off the timings. The Down Limerick train is 10 minutes faster but the corresponding Up train, oddly, is 5 minutes slower.

Another noteworthy change is the withdrawal of first class accommodation on all trains on the Northern section, excepting the cross-border expresses. The public notice of this change, an inconspicuous newspaper advertisement, did not appear until 14 September. The news is repeated in small print on the first page (only) of ten relating to the service. The same is true of the pages dealing with the trains on the Cork-Cobh line, which likewise now have no first class accommodation. The Bray line services have been standard class only for several years.

The timetable itself was, as seems inevitable, late. Despite the large number of impending alterations a newspaper advertisement on 12 September was the first notice given to the public. This stated that timetables were on sale but we could not obtain one for a further two days. Unfortunately, nothing has been done to improve the interior layout and, in particular, to clarify some of the "notes". We observe, for instance, on Page 44 a number of combined bus and train services from Dublin to Monaghan, Newry and Warrenpoint via Dundalk, which appear to have buffet cars throughout. The map, which was a welcome addition to the Summer Timetable, is again included but it will need its "UTAs" changed to "NIRs".

So far as we are aware the 07:30 ex Drogheda still runs through as the 08:40 from Connolly Station to Bray, while the 17:00 ex Bray continues as the 17:50 to Howth. Those important through trains are still omitted from the timetable, as is a reference to the availability of rail weekly and season tickets on Dublin City buses in the evenings when the train service has ceased. One possibly ominous omission is a list of "Cheap Weekends" which appeared on the back cover of the 1966 Winter Timetable, and which was very much appreciated by hordes of weekend travellers and by railway enthusiasts.

Northern Ireland Railways

In contrast to the CIÉ Issue, this timetable shows few changes from the schedules introduced on 4 January last. It gave, however, the first indication of the changes in the CIÉ services, as these occur in the table of principal services. On the NCC section the 19:30 fitted train which conveys mail vans and containers from Belfast to Cullybackey now carries passengers and returns to Belfast at 21:00 as a new passenger train. On Sundays there is a new service from Belfast to Ballymena at 21:15. Prior to the introduction of the present timetable, this train was an empty coach working only.

CIÉ GENERAL NEWS REPORT

Annual Report

The annual report (for the year ending on 31 March last) was published recently. As with last year's report, it resembles an art catalogue, boasting some eighteen photographs. It includes a map of the railway system which shows the short "branch" at Shelton Abbey but excludes Castlemungret and Silvermines. For anyone with a serious interest in Irish railways, the report is full of interest and deserving of close study, having virtually all the statistics one could wish for.

Unfortunately, the facts and figures disclose that the net loss incurred by the Board's operations amounted to £2,398,000, compared with a deficit of £2,229,000 for 1965/6. Total revenue increased by £1,595,000 to £25,123,000, this increase being partly due to an increase in rates in June 1966 which yielded an additional £1,300,000. Expenditure totalled £26,312,000, representing an increase of £1,632,000 over the previous term. Some £1,300,000 of this was spent on increased wages and improved conditions of employment.

Railway operation revenue realised £9,844,000, an increase of £581,000 of which £530,000 was attributable to the increase in rates. The expenditure on railway operations increased by £606,000 to £11,702,000, resulting in an overall net loss of £1,858,000 on the railways. Loss of revenue due to the British Seamen's strike and other similar disputes was partly offset by receipts from additional freight traffics which included: cement (+90,439 tons), chemical manures (+60,395 tons), and petrol and oil

(+56,584 tons). In addition, the number of livestock carried by goods trains showed an increase of 71,588 head. This was mainly due to more attractive rate. The tonnages for other commodities were also up on previous figures: ale and porter, beet pulp, chocolate crumb, groceries and scrap iron were all carried in greater amount. However, beet, grain, gypsum, peat moss and tar/bitumen traffics were all lower than in the previous year.

The report, which rightly describes the year as a difficult one, mentions the credit squeeze, the British import levy, and the introduction of wholesale tax as all proving obstacles between CIÉ and solvency. It is hoped that this year, with fewer problems so far, may prove better.

Foynes Developments

On 8 September the Minister for Transport & Power signed a Railway Works Order to empower CIÉ to acquire land for an extension at Foynes. The new double line, 0.21 miles long, is to provide a trailing connection from the former engine shed siding to a new jetty where the zinc concentrates traffic from Silvermines will be handled. A wagon tippler has already been installed on the jetty to unload the wagons. Barytes ore traffic from Silvermines already amounts to 2,500 tons per week. A 20,000 ton oil storage tank for Cement Ltd is under construction; it will augment the existing three which have a total capacity of 25,000 tons. Five additional 20-ton tankers are expected to supplement the present 20-wagon block train. Meanwhile ex-GS&WR bogie creosote tankers 9000-1 have been added for runs to Castlemungret only. They have been fitted with Mariler couplings but have no vacuum brakes or pipes.

A Minor Closure

Skerries Golf Club Halt, at MP 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ on the Dublin-Belfast main line, was closed with effect from 18 September. As the halt was for the use of members only, notice of closure was given only to the Golf Club. The nameboards had not been repainted since GNR days.

Lifting Progress

The points at Charleville Junction were disconnected and spiked on 8 August, for subsequent removal. Lifting of the Croom Branch itself commenced at Patrickswell on 15 August. A temporary buffer-stop of sleepers has been tied across the branch line. The contractors carrying out the demolition are Messrs Providers Ltd, Longford. This firm was also responsible for the lifting of the Kilfree-Ballaghaderreen branch. Signs of lifting of the Thurles-Clonmel branch were evident on 24 September, when a rail tractor and a number of trolleys were observed at Thurles Junction. The line was previously broken at Horse & Jockey, in connection with the demolition of the road overbridge there.

Engineer's Siding

The unusual siding at the LMS Yard, North Wall, has been lifted. It was laid to admit track maintenance machines into the former GNR bus garage. Instead the line now climbs steeply onto the adjacent cattle bank, where it passes through a new shed which has an inspection pit.

Signalling Notes

Ballyglunin Cabin, between Athenry and Tuam, was closed on 10 July, the ETS section becoming Athenry-Tuam. The new electric Up distant signal at Hazelhatch was brought into use on 3 July, and the Down distant is also being replaced by an electric signal. Ashtown Cabin, on the MGWR section, has been demolished.

Free Travel

Since 14 July, old-age pensioners have been entitled to free travel on most of CIÉ's road and rail services. So far as rail travel is concerned, the only restrictions apply to the August Holiday Weekend and to the Christmas period. Of course, the concession applies on regular trains only. Before travelling,

the Pensioners have to obtain a special ticket at the booking office. These are singles only and so far all have been blank cards. Such tickets cannot be issued by Almex machines, and are not issued for journeys on the Dublin and Cork suburban services.

The pensioners must produce their pension order books to obtain the tickets, and the books must be carried during the journey. This regulation proved irksome to many, and much ill-feeling was generated when it was realised that only one ticket at a time could be obtained for each book. Thus when a pensioner and his wife - both receiving a pension on a joint order - travelled together, only one could travel free. This anomalous situation is being remedied by the issue of separate books in such cases.

The concession of free travel has recently been extended to schoolchildren and although this is mostly catered for by a motley fleet of buses, quite heavy "free" traffic is carried by rail on certain sections. It was recently officially stated that the "free" school travel scheme was being implemented at a cost of some £840,000.

Bowater Blue Train

The "Bowater Blue Train", formerly Radio Studio coach RS20, is presently at Connolly Station, Dublin. When its "tour" officially comes to an end on 13 October, the coach will have been in use for some six months. Its total route mileage has been 1,500 and approximately 12,500 people have so far visited this motile exhibition. On its travels the "Blue Train" has visited 43 different railway stations.

Developments At "The Junction"

The new facing crossover immediately north of the Limerick-Waterford line at Limerick Junction was connected on 9 May. Thereafter all main line trains ran direct to the platforms in both directions. The original wooden platform canopy pillars have been removed and replaced by a single row of steel pillars under the original roof. Further pillars have been erected on the north side to support the new extension to the canopy. On the catering side, machines have taken over! No fewer than four coin operated machines in a tiny space comprise the "refreshment room" at present.

Work on the Dublin-Limerick direct curve was resumed in April. The earthworks were soon completed and track-laying began. An electrically-operated facing crossover was installed at MP 106¼ on the main line on 21 May. The curve was connected to the up main line near Kyle level crossing on 2 July. Most of the new line has been ballasted but it has not been connected to the Limerick line. The long siding from Keane's Points Junction, which was formerly part of the down line, has become a loop with the installation of a crossover near Milltown level crossing in mid-September.

A brick-built relay room has been added to the North Cabin to accommodate the additional signalling equipment required for the new line. Three new three-aspect colour light signals have been erected in the vicinity of Kyle crossing but these are not yet in use. A subsidiary ETS instrument has been placed in a new concrete hut at the Milltown end of the curve. Trains using the curve will collect or deposit the Junction-Dromkeen staff here.

Connolly Station

The new Dublin central sorting office was opened to letter post on 8 August. As a result, certain mails previously handled at Pearse Station were transferred to Connolly. Letter mail from the 03:15 Mail boat, from Holyhead is now conveyed to Connolly Station direct by special train. The Down Midland Night Mail calls to pick up last minute bags, and the Up Mail was given 15 minutes extra to unload mails. With the introduction of the winter timetable this Up train has ceased to run beyond Connolly Station for passengers. So far, parcels post is still being handled at the original Amiens Street office.

Albert Quay Reprieved?

Throughout the summer tar traffic was handled at Albert Quay. Fertiliser traffic ceased at the beginning

of the summer but recommenced in mid-September. Five to seven wagons daily are brought to the station from Goulding's Dublin factory. They carry "Concentrated Complete Fertiliser" which is not manufactured in Cork. The same firm's Cork products are being dispatched from Albert Quay on containers, as described in our last issue. The entire yard has been cleared of grass and weeds and some new ballast has been brought in. The running of trains to and fro on the Cork City Railway undoubtedly causes some traffic congestion, but it is thought that the fleet of lorries required to haul the fertiliser to Kilbarry would cause almost as much disruption of traffic.

Kilbarrack Crossing

The main road from Dublin to Portmarnock has been widened and as a result Kilbarrack Crossing, near MP 1½ on the Howth Branch, had to be reconstructed. CIÉ had hoped to install automatic barriers here, but Dublin Corporation refused permission. Instead, the four original gates have been replaced by two of a new pattern. These consist of a massive vertical timber beam hinged to the gatepost. There is also a horizontal baulk of timber approximately 4'6" above the ground. Wire netting and the necessary targets are suspended from this to complete the gate. Up and down signals, worked from a two-lever ground frame, have been provided. These are a down distant (on the same post as Sutton down distant signal) and a slot on the Sutton up advanced starting signal. These gates have been broken many times, especially by down trains, and it is surprising that such gate signals were not provided before.

Buffet Cars

Dining Car 2093 returned to its normal duty on the 08:40 to Galway for the summer, although it did not take up service until late - 31 July. On 15 August twelve-wheeler 353 replaced 2406 on the 08:15 ex Sligo and the corresponding 18:15 Down train; the latter car was due for repairs. As the replacement 353 was no longer fitted for working as a railcar intermediate, a locomotive hauled train was substituted until 2406 was again ready for duty. At present 2093 is on the 09:10 to Westport and the Galway car is the ex-GNR car 170.

Locos And Railcars

A34 is being repaired at Inchicore Works, where it was damaged some time ago in a collision with the buffer-stop at the "Ramps". As mentioned in our last issue, A58 and A59 have been completely stripped for the installation of the new GM engines; these were delivered to Inchicore in early September. The Connolly Station C-class pilot loco caught fire on Sunday, 6 August, as it hauled the coaches of the 09:30 ex Cork onto the Northern line, en route to the sidings. A section of the Dublin Fire Brigade was called and the line was blocked till 14:40. Railcar 2509 was repaired soon after our last issue and is at present stored in the open at Connolly Station. AEC units 2602 and 2608 have had their standard class portions designated "non-smoking" by affixing bus-style transfers to the windows. BUT cars are again working a fast train on the Northern line after a long absence. They are on the 20:05 ex Dundalk.

186 Comes Home

The J15 0-6-0 No.186, preserved by the RPSI, paid a brief visit to CIÉ lines on 9 September at the head of a 5-coach enthusiasts' special from Belfast (York Road) to Dundalk (Barrack Street). An unusual touch was provided by using three ex-GS&WR coaches for the run from Dundalk Junction to Barrack Street and back. An excellent lunch was served by CIÉ at Dundalk in two coaches in a bay platform, the meals being prepared in the kitchen of Diner 353.

Subway At Pearse Station

The subway will be installed shortly. It is intended to use prefabricated units (of concrete, in sections) which will be placed under the running lines. The task of installation may possibly be hindered by interference with cranes by the overall station roof.

Back To 12 Hour?

An extraordinary clock has recently been installed in the general waiting room on No.4 platform at Pearse Station. It bears the numerals 13 to 24 only!

Youghal Excursions

Passenger trains ran from Cork to Youghal on Sunday and Monday, 4-5 June, and on every Sunday from June 18 to August 27. In addition, trains ran on Wednesdays and Saturdays in early August. On 27 August approximately 1,000 passengers travelled from Limerick to Youghal on a Mystery Train.

Limerick Junction Collision

A serious collision occurred at 01:10 on 28 July at Limerick Junction. The 23:35 goods from Limerick to Dublin, headed by loco B233, was struck by the 21:25 goods from Cork to Dublin, hauled by loco B172. The former was shunting at the time, with the loco at the Cork end, and fortunately it was on the Down main line, with its train across the road and partly in No.1 platform. As a result, B233 was barely damaged and was back in service within a few days.

Most of the damage was suffered by the wagons on the Cork train. These piled up on top of their derailed loco and spilled partly on top of the platform canopy. Both main lines and No.3 platform road were blocked by the huge heap of wreckage. The train had been conveying some 100 head of cattle and some sheep. Many of those were killed outright, but others had to be destroyed by local veterinary surgeons who were hurriedly called to the scene. A number of new cars were also on board and these were crushed almost flat, one ending upside down right on top of the wreckage. The crews and station staff had an incredible escape from injury. Only one driver was taken to hospital in nearby Tipperary, suffering from slight injuries and shock.

In the early stages of the clearance work, main line trains were seriously delayed. They had to be worked through the “Back Road” past Nos. 2 and 4 platforms, and each movement was limited to a loco and 5 coaches. Longer trains had to be divided and re-marshalled beyond the station. Later, the down main line was broken and slewed into adjacent siding which then made a through down road. Thus the 18:35 to Cork was only 5 minutes late whereas the 11:30 and 15:30 up trains were 63 and 43 minutes late, respectively.

Breakdown cranes from Inchicore, Cork and Limerick were used to clear the wreckage, most of which was dumped on the open space opposite the station. At one stage, a wagon caught fire and there was danger to both the main pile of debris and the station buildings. According to a radio news bulletin, a bulldozer was used to clear away the burning wagon. Tipperary Fire Brigade was called to extinguish the flames. Although torn from the train in the crash, the Cork loco was not seriously damaged. Repair work is in progress on B172.

NIR GENERAL NEWS REPORT

A Change Of Name

Although the system is still being operated by the Ulster Transport Authority pending the formal establishment of the Northern Ireland Railways Co. Ltd, the term “Northern Ireland Railways” is now in general use on all publicity and timetables.

Transport Bill

So far as the provisions for railway matters are concerned, the 1967 Transport Bill, published on 19 August, proved singularly disappointing. While the none too popular Transport Tribunal is to be disbanded, a Transport Users Committee is to be established, the members being appointed by the Minister of Development. It is to discuss and make recommendations on matters concerned with road

and rail transport in Northern Ireland. Except for matters referred to it by the Minister, the Committee can decide for itself whether or not to discuss any matter at all. Although the Government has reiterated that no further closures are contemplated, provision is made in the Bill for future reduction of the rail mileage. The final decision will rest with the Minister of Development, subject to confirmation by both Houses of Parliament. The Minister is further empowered to direct the policy of the newly-created Northern Ireland Transport Holding Co., including its policy towards its subsidiary companies.

Provision has been included for the payment by the Ministry of Development of money required by the railway for capital expenditure. Alternatively, such capital expenditure may be met by the Holding Co., which is also empowered to meet any deficit in revenue. No specific sums or time limits are mentioned. The railway is not obliged to provide facilities for private sidings, nor is it a common carrier.

Signalling Alterations

The signal cabin at Glarryford has been closed and the signals dispensed with. The automatic barriers at Damhead Halt, MP 100 on the Dublin-Belfast line, were installed earlier this year, preparatory to operation commencing on 28 August. Work is also in progress at Trummery level crossing near Moira, on the same line, for the installation of barriers. So far none of the level crossings on the NCC section are being similarly equipped. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the installation of barrier crossings has continued (and will do) on the CIÉ system.

Safety Measures

Yet another derailment on the Larne line (early on 31 August) revived the outspoken criticisms of the safety on the line. On this occasion nine empty spoil wagons became derailed on the down line near Eden Halt. Fortunately the train had been double-headed, instead of having an engine at each end, otherwise the considerable damage done to the track might have been much worse. Serious inconvenience was caused to passengers until single-line working commenced over the up line. Two Belfast Corporation buses assisted for 13 hours.

The Northern Ireland Labour Party, which has been highly critical of the Government's Transport Policy, urged that the Chief Inspector of Railways in Britain should be invited to examine all safety aspects of the railways. It seems that such an invitation would have to be issued in the first instance by the NIR through the Ministry of Development. Their own inspector is also the Ministry's chief highways engineer, and not a full-time railway expert as in Britain.

The exact extent to which the Spoil Trains are responsible for the derailments is difficult to estimate. Prior to their introduction, the track was already in a somewhat run-down state. Loaded spoil wagons have a nominal axle loading of up to 22½ tons, but the actual load on individual wheels must fluctuate wildly as the load is unevenly distributed and consists of an uncontrolled mixture of earth and huge rocks. This factor, combined with the elementary springing on the wagons, as well as the general looseness of the rail joints, makes the passing of a spoil train seem like a minor earthquake, while the dancing motion of an empty wagon train is an incredible sight.

Following a spate of derailments in April, a 50 mph speed limit was applied between Belfast and Larne, in both directions, and including main line trains as far as MP 5. The General Manager has since stated that "maximum safety precautions" had since been stepped up on the line, but these would seem to consist solely of the speed restriction. The restriction has been seen as a tacit admission that the line had deteriorated seriously. Certainly, even at quite moderate speeds, the oscillation of trains can be somewhat alarming, and reminiscent of the rather decayed West Cork line of latter days.

"Siege Of Derry"

The annual "Apprentice Boys" demonstration brought seven steam locos to Derry on 12th August. These were Nos. 56 and 55 (from Belfast), 3 (from Coleraine), 10 (from Ballymena), 53 (from Antrim)

- all on special trains - and 4 and 5 on the 08:35 and 13:00 regular trains. The 08:35, however, was deferred until 09:00. The operation was badly hampered by an unfortunate series of Train Tablet failures and jammed points, caused by the appallingly wet weather. Latest of all was the Ballymena special, 60 minutes behind time at Limavady Junction. In the Up direction, the 12:45 regular train was No.53 with 5 coaches, the remaining workings being:

Time	Loco	Load	Remarks
17:10	3	10 coaches	Retimed 17:15 regular
17:20		7 MPD	Ballymoney special
17:40		9 DE + 1	Regular
17:55	56	10 coaches	Belfast special
18:10	10	10 coaches	Belfast special
18:25	55	10 coaches	Antrim special. Took water at Castlerock.
18:55	4	10 coaches	Ballymena special
19:25	3	10 coaches	Coleraine special. Empty to Antrim.

“Black Saturday”

Royal Black Preceptor demonstrations required a total of 18 specials to Antrim and Carrickfergus on 26 August. These were from Finaghy (7-coach MPD), Ballymoney and Ballymena to Antrim, and no less than 15 steam operated trains from Belfast to Carrickfergus. Six 8-coach sets of carriages were worked on a shuttle basis by locos 3, 6, 10, 51, 53, 55 and 56, in the morning, with loco 4 as Belfast pilot and 5 away at Antrim. To allow the passengers to leave the station at Carrickfergus quickly, the fence opposite the island platform was opened, and the sleeper level crossing over the loop was made available, instead of the normal subway exit. To compensate for the closure of Mount Cabin, a temporary block post was established at Trooperslane. Two block instruments were installed in the station office and two flagmen signalled the trains as instructed by the signalman. The distant signals for the gates were kept at caution for the entire period. The same sets formed the return trains which were worked by locos 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 51 and 53. While the trains were being boarded, the regular Up Larne trains ran through on the Down side.

Railcar Developments

MEDs 8 and 9 returned to service in mid-August, fitted with four-speed gearboxes. Unlike 16 and 17, these units seem very sluggish in running and are limited to 60 mph. The appearance of the cars has been enhanced by the removal of some skirting round the underframes and front buffer beams. Lifting loops for workshop use have been fitted in line with the bogie centres, and there are small lamps at each end to illuminate the couplings during night shunting operations. Surprisingly, the cars are coupled with trailer 527, which still has a toilet compartment. The entire train has been fitted with fluorescent lights and is finished in the red and grey livery, complete with monograms.

Apart from 8 and 9, Nos. 18 and 23 are the only MEDs running on the NCC section. Nos. 13 and 19 are in the York Road shops, where 20 and 21 are being rebuilt as 8 and 9. Nos. 10, 11 and 12 are at the loco shed, while 22 is in store behind the shed. No.508, the only MED driving trailer to retain its controls, has been repainted red and grey.

On the Bangor line, the new livery has been applied to railcars 30 and 31 and trailers 511 and 512. The units have red monograms on the grey “V” fronts; these are much more conspicuous than the gold leaf ones on 8 and 9. No.25 is presently being fitted with a four-speed gearbox and 24 will shortly receive similar treatment. No.14 is receiving an intermediate overhaul.

On the GN section, AEC-fitted buffet car 555 has been rebuilt as a 72-seat trailer coach. All but two of the seats have been taken from coach 418 which is at Belfast in a cannibalised condition. Kitchen car

166 was fitted to run with AEC railcars, and these have worked the "Tourist Train" to Dublin for the entire summer season.

Loops: Old And New

The run-round loop at Larne Harbour was extended in July by moving the points out along the long headshunt. Also at this station, the siding running across the road to the quayside has been cut back to within station limits. At Bangor, the run-round points were removed in June. They became redundant on the isolation of the line, which is now worked exclusively by railcars.

Excursion Traffic

The gloomy prospects for the 1967 season, reported in our April issue were apparently given an official review, for there has been quite an extensive volume of excursion traffic. This, however, has been very light compared with previous years. The GN section appeared hardest hit, for the acute shortage of railcars and the withdrawal of all locos rendered the section incapable of running more than one extra train at a time on weekdays, without denuding the regular services of rolling stock. On a few occasions the MPD shunting units were used, including come workings for parties for Bangor, for which Belfast Corporation buses were used for the transfer across Belfast. Two large Sunday School excursions ran to Bray from Lurgan. In each case CIÉ locos and crews were used. Two excursions ran over the Knockmore Junction to Antrim line - a CIÉ special to Portrush on 5 June and the RBP excursion from Finaghy (see above) on 26 August.

The NCC section, which still has steam locos, was better equipped to operate specials, although on a smaller scale than previously. To cater for the few trains from Derry to Portrush six coaches were left at the former station, to be hauled to Portrush as required by 4 MPD units. Later, loco No.3 stayed in Derry for some days in early August, leaving there with the coaches on 12 August.



This monogram is being applied in the form of a gold leaf transfer to railcars, trailer coaches, locos and it has even appeared on the 36-ton crane. Unfortunately, it is not particularly distinctive and unless the vehicles concerned are kept very clean, it is hardly visible.

New Booking Office

A new three-window booking office was opened at Queen's Quay station on 17 September. It is adapted from an existing office in the main building, and has an interior, raised platform for the booking clerks to stand on. The outside wall has been repainted in a grey shade, and this makes the beautiful brass War Memorial very conspicuous indeed. It is rather a pity that this decoration has the undesirable secondary effect of accentuating the shabby condition of the rest of the station interior.

Steam Locos

2-6-4Ts 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 51, 53, 55 and 56 are now in working order. No.5 was repaired in the shops in July, and No.56 in August. The latter had been in store since the Pomeroy accident in 1966. It has been fitted with the pony truck and bogie from No.9 and the coal bunker has been reduced to normal height. No.27 0-6-4T was damaged in July by a collision at York Road and has since been repaired in the shops. After the mishap 0-6-0 No.48 was brought round from Lisburn Goods Shed to York Road, but it failed a boiler inspection. As a result the RPSI 0-6-0 No.186 had to be borrowed on busy days for shunting duties. It is known as "Biddy" by the men!

The locos now in store are Nos. 1, 7, 52 and 57 at Ballymena, 2 and 8 at Carrickfergus, 26, 48 and 54, along with 9 and (diesel) 17, at York Road. Nos. 37 and 49 are at Grosvenor Road Goods Yard. No.50 is being repaired in York Road Works.

Open Again

Monkstown Halt, on the former NCC main line, was reopened for traffic on the introduction of the winter timetable on 4 September. Five trains each way are scheduled to stop, Mondays to Fridays, with three in each direction on Saturdays.

GUINNESS TRAMWAYS

Narrow (22") gauge steam loco No.15 returned to work on 6/7 August at Stradbally, Co. Laois. It was displayed at a traction engine rally organised by the Irish Steam Preservation Society. The Society had laid 90 yards of rail on which the loco hauled two coaches from the former Visitors' Train. Children and their parents were taken for rides on the train at 6^d per head. It is hoped to extend the line considerably in time for next year's rally.

Although closed in May 1965, the 5'3" gauge line along St. John's Road in Dublin has not been lifted. Excavations in connection with electric cable-laying some time ago revealed that this line was laid on wooden sleepers beneath the granite set paving. A small part of the narrow-gauge system, including the famous spiral tunnel, is still in use, worked by the Planet diesel locos.

NEWS EXTRA: BOARD AND BALLAST

The End For Lisduff

The bigger of the two CIÉ ballast quarries, at Lisduff, Co. Tipperary, was closed in mid-September. For many years it has been a distinctive feature of the Dublin-Cork main line, its most notable structure being a wooden ballast loading plant adjacent to the Down main line. Latterly, this had become very ramshackle indeed and the aerial ropeway which served it has been removed. A place of great interest, Lisduff was the subject of a Feature Article in our issue of January 1965. Since the closure of Lisduff, stone ballast has been obtained from Messrs Roadstone Ltd, which firm owns numerous quarries throughout Ireland. Their lorries have been observed tipping ballast into hopper wagons at Spencer Dock Siding on the side of the Royal Canal opposite to the Midland Store, North Wall.

Expansion For CIÉ

It was announced on 18 September that CIÉ's hotels subsidiary, Oslanna Iompair Éireann, were embarking on a programme of construction for four hotels, to be known as "Great Southern Inns". Intended to cater mainly for the motoring tourist, these will be built at Killarney, Rosslare Harbour, Galway and Dun Laoghaire. In fact, that at Killarney has been under construction for four months and it is hoped that it will be ready in time for the 1968 season. It will have 96 bedrooms and its estimated cost is some £300,000. Those at Rosslare and Galway will have 100 bedrooms and cost £350,000 each. They are scheduled to open in 1969. Most interesting of all is the proposal to site the Dun Laoghaire hotel over part of the railway station! It is hoped to include a public concourse on a level with Crofton Road, above the station. The hotel itself will be four or five storeys high, depending on the decision of the Planning Authority. It is hoped to complete it by 1970. Finance for the whole of the ambitious scheme, and for a further hotel envisaged for Donegal will be sought on the commercial market and not from the Exchequer, apart from the normal grants to hoteliers from Bord Fáilte.

STATION SURVEY

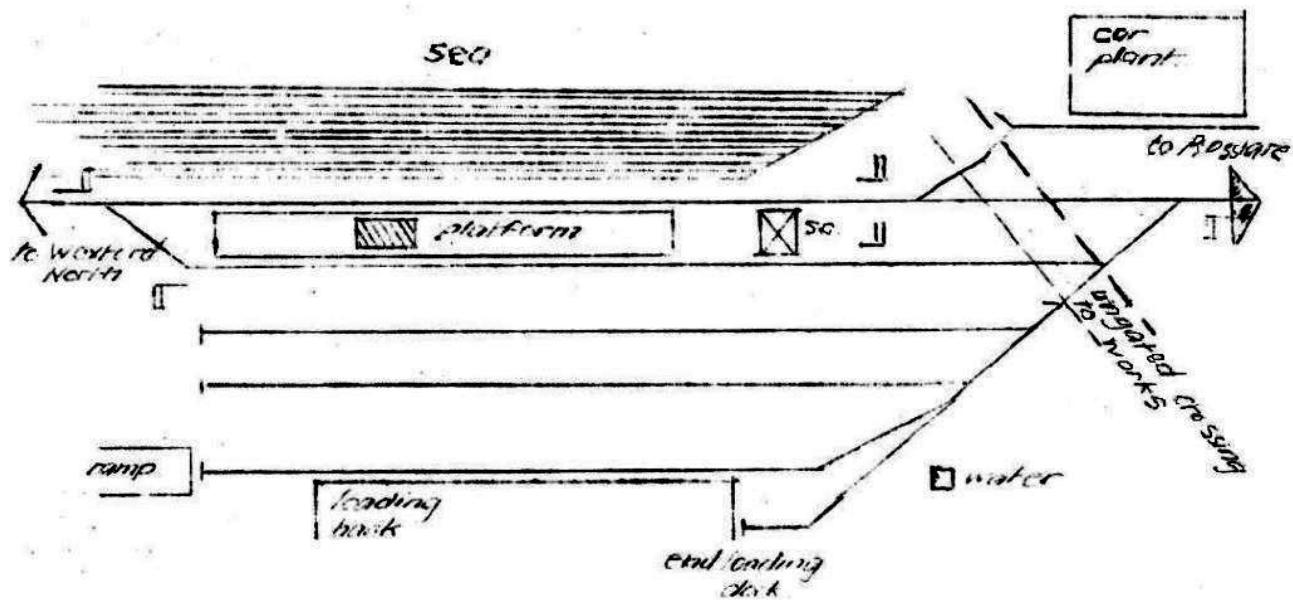
Wexford South

To the historian, Wexford is a place of invasions, rebellions, heroes and seamen. To the railway enthusiast, however, Wexford is a busy town of 11,000 inhabitants, with two stations which are connected by a 4^d train ride along a busy waterfront thoroughfare, served by boat trains, and with a

railway history worthy of study.

The present Wexford North station came into operation in 1874, replacing the original Dublin, Wicklow & Wexford Railway terminus which was opened on 17 August 1872, at the time when the line from Enniscorthy first carried traffic. This station, which was renamed O'Hanrahan Station by CIÉ in 1966 (in honour of the Wexford patriot), was described in our April 1965 issue. Since then, however, the track layout has been altered considerably.

The South Station, with which we are presently concerned, is situated at the southern end of the timber quayside and first went into use on 24 June 1882, when the Waterford & Wexford Railway succeeded in opening its (only) line from Wexford Quay to Rosslare Pier. The line was operated by the DW&WR until 17 May 1889 when regular services ceased. However, one of the company's best customers, a Mr Cooper of the Drinagh Cement Works, had a private siding and, with the help of a small loco, ran his own "cement specials" along the otherwise derelict line. But on 4 August 1894 the line was reopened for public traffic, Wexford South station then coming under the auspices of the Fishguard & Rosslare Railways & Harbours Co. From February 1898 until the following November the DW&WR took over but in the latter month operations were undertaken by GS&WR.



WEXFORD SOUTH

Wexford South is not unlike the “South Wexford” line stations, having an island platform with adjacent sidings. It is situated on the water’s edge and is a block post. The signal cabin, at the Rosslare end, has 16 levers, of which two are spare. The station is not signalled for two-way working and at certain times, when the down platform is unusable due to heavy seas, a special procedure is adopted. Southbound trains are flagged into the Up loop which has a starting signal for Rosslare. The cabin houses the ETS instruments for the sections to Wexford North and Rosslare Strand.

The three long sidings can accommodate at least 27 wagons each and empty fertiliser wagons are stored in them from time to time. The private siding on the down side formerly served the Star Engineering Works, and was used for agricultural machinery traffic. In 1965 this industry was diverted to another location and was replaced by a Renault car assembly plant of the Smith Group. Nowadays this siding is disused. What traffic presently offers is dealt with at the goods bank and dock. Rail freight

traffic is mainly dealt with at the North station but the South is served by one goods train in each direction every day.

Southbound passenger traffic from the station is very healthy indeed and there is two-way season ticket traffic with Rosslare Strand, Kilrane and Rosslare Harbour. Most of the passengers and, indeed, the large number of shoppers using the local trains on the line alight at the South Station in order to avoid if at all possible the long crawl along the quayside. A factor contributing to the passenger figures here is the absence of a bus service to Rosslare, which is thus one of the very few provincial districts remaining not served by buses of any operator.

There are five passenger trains each way between Wexford and Rosslare Harbour on weekdays in wintertime. In addition there is an extra double working on Thursdays and Fridays. All except two are local trains which originate and terminate at the North Station. Departures are:

Wexford North: 07:00; 11:37*; 14:00#; 16:05; 18:00; 21:07*

Rosslare Harbour: 07:30*; 08:15; 12:30#; 15:10*; 16:45; 18:50

* To/From Dublin; # Thurs and Fridays only

Of these, the 21:07 Down and 15:10 and 18:50 Up trains do not call at the South Station, thereby causing resentment among regular passengers who have to walk the length of the quays. Deputations to CIÉ and Wexford Corporation have not yet solved the problem. In addition to the regular traffic, seaside passengers contribute much revenue and a shuttle service to Rosslare Strand is operated on fine Sundays. The South Station is under the control of the stationmaster at Wexford North, who regularly visits the three-man staff at his southern "branch".

Feature Section

THE COURTOWN BRICKWORKS RAILWAY

Five miles to the east of Gorey, a busy market town on the South-Eastern section of CIÉ, lies the small but popular seaside resort of Courtown Harbour. The nearest railhead to Courtown is Gorey, and road services - though varied - have always been infrequent. The harbour itself dates back to the Famine of 1846-7, and was built from stone which was quarried locally. This material was brought to the construction site on a tramway laid along the narrow Gorey-Courtown road for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. This line was apparently horse-operated, but as yet no details of it have come to light.

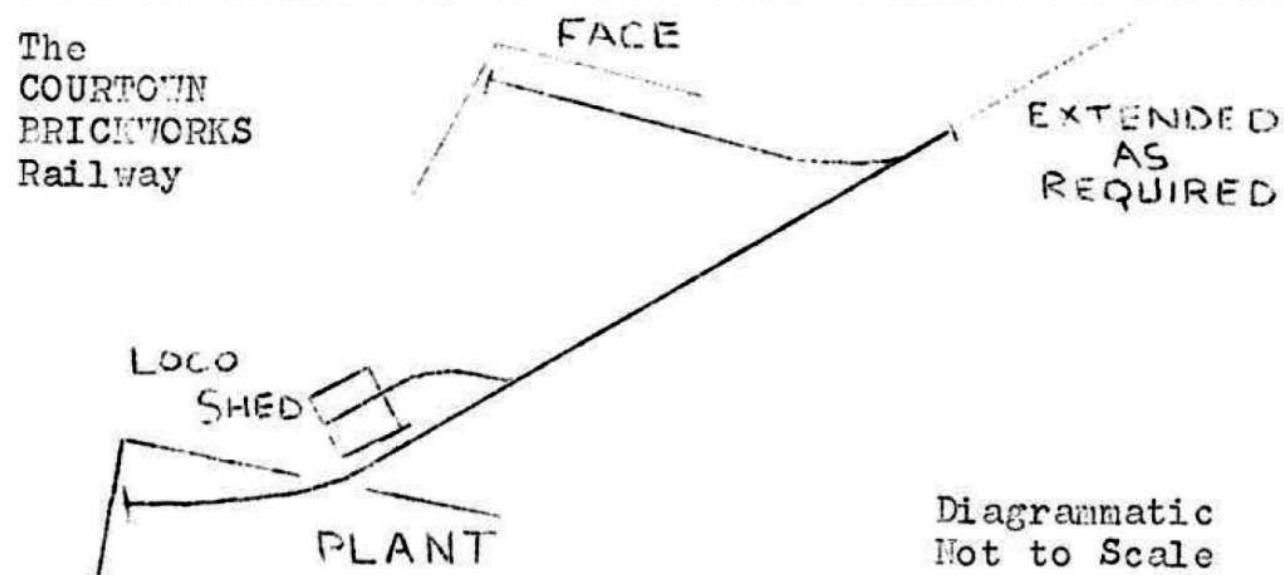
However, at present there is a minor railway in operation about one mile from Courtown on the road to Gorey. It is working continuously on every working day of the year, and it serves Courtown Brickworks, one of the oldest industries in this region. The line, which is laid to a gauge of 20", is owned by Messrs Wallace Brothers of Dublin, this well-known firm of fuel importers owning the brickworks. It is of interest to note that this same firm operated the Rathnew Brickworks, which fed traffic to the D&SER through the private siding on the Up side of the main Wexford-Dublin line near the 30½ milepost. The Rathnew works flourished about 1900.

The main products of the Courtown Brickworks consist of pipes and bricks. The raw material is first excavated from a "face" - at present about 200 yards from the works - and filled into a side-tipping hopper wagon. This is then taken to the plant for transformation into the finished product, along the railway. The motive power is provided by a 20 hp, 2-cylinder, 4-wheeled Ruston & Hornsby locomotive. It was built in 1948 and has the maker's number 264237. This loco, which was specially

adapted to run on the 20" gauge, does not seem to have had any predecessors, and thus it is likely that prior to its arrival the railway was horse-operated.

The simple layout of the line presently consists of less than 1/4 mile of metal-sleepered track. However, much in the fashion of Bord na Mona, the trackwork is extended from time to time as required by the work.

The operating procedure is quite simple. The loco with its load of tons of clay reverses into the head-shunt (see the diagram) and then propels the hopper up the incline to the plant. Then, after the hopper has been unloaded, the procedure is reversed and the "train" returns to the working face. Only one hopper wagon is in use at any one time, although six hoppers are available. In the evening, the loco returns to its shed for stabling overnight. An interesting feature of the loco shed is an under-line heater which maintains the "health" of the locomotive during cold weather.



Inside the plant itself, further use is made of railways. The partly-finished articles are brought to the different sections on 24" gauge wagons. These are hand propelled and, in addition, use is also made of 4ft gauge transporter wagons. To complete the railway atmosphere, the works are supplied with steam from a plant the main feature of which is a "Roby" loco-type boiler.

These railways at Courtown are of interest in that locomotive operated lines are nowadays not too frequently found. If the regular operations of Bord na Mona and the extremely irregular workings of mining interest are excluded, the total of small industrial lines currently operating in Ireland is very small indeed.