

THE

IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS

Volume 14

July 1968

No.3

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EDITORIAL

Congratulations must be our opening word to the CIÉ and NIR commercial departments for jointly introducing the 15/- Saturday excursion fare both ways between Dublin and Belfast. This in fact means a reduction of 12/6^d on the usual Thursday excursion rate for the 225-mile round trip. The result has been as expected - an enormous increase in this traffic, up to three relief trains supplementing the 08:30 ex Dublin. In the opposite direction, NIR have hired coaches (and locos) from CIÉ to cope with the traffic offering.

This new rate puts CIÉ below the fares usually charged by private-hire bus operators who have taken much traffic from the railway in recent years. Such an experiment with its attendant success may, it is hoped, encourage the growth of cheap fares on many other sections of the railway system. For instance, much could be done to build up a steady cheap weekend traffic to the West and South of Ireland and thus eliminate the sharing of private cars by four or more weekend travellers, besides partly removing another menace from our roads - the hitchhiker.

Few could complain about the return weekend fare at single rate, but could not this fare be drastically reduced if the passenger agreed to go "home", say, 6 or 8 times during the winter by entering into a contract. By paying a deposit initially the intending traveller would be issued with a card which when signed and produced could let him purchase a cheap, cheap weekend ticket (possibly at the Sunday excursion rate) on the days of departure. At the end of the allotted period the deposit could be deducted from the final fare and the card returned in lieu. The above scheme may be impractical in this age of computers, but whatever schemes CIÉ have in mind they must make more use of the vast advertising media now available. The railways programme receives scant attention in comparison with the Coach Tours and Express Bus schedules. The big commercial undertakings of Ireland are selling their special offers through advertising - why not CIÉ? "Advertising Pays" says the old slogan, and the older the slogan gets the truer it becomes. CIÉ please note.

SOME ARTICLES OF IRISH RAILWAY INTEREST

Modern Railways *

January CIÉ Annual Report 1966/7 (Paragraph)
February Increases in CIÉ Fares (Paragraph)

Railway World *

February Northern Steam Tour (Paragraph)
May RPSI Activities (Paragraph)

Railway Magazine *

January	Northern Steam Locos (Illustrations)
	NIR Notes (Paragraph)
	CIÉ Loco K801 (Letter)
	NIR Spoil Trains (Article)
February	No.800 "Maedhbh" (Letter)
	UTA to NIR (Paragraph)
April	Welding Research and Railcars (Article)
May	Mallow-Waterford Line (Article)

Journal Of The Irish Railway Record Society

February	The Dublin Railways
	GNR Luggage Labels
	Irish Railways in 1865
	The Mullaghmore Railway
	Compound Locomotives

* Issues of these magazines also feature notes on the Irish Sea passenger and freight steamers.

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The IRN Committee is very grateful to Messrs R. Whitford and D. Renahan for contributions to this issue.

BOOK REVIEWS

"The Cork & Muskerry Light Railway" by A.T. Newham (Oakwood Press)

The "Muskerry Tram", as it was known, is the second of the narrow-gauge railways of the Cork area to be included in the Locomotion Papers series of the Oakwood Press. Mr Newham gives a detailed account of the inception of the line to Blarney and Coachford. This is followed by an excellent description of the route of the railway, as well as locomotive data and some notes on the working of the line. "The Prosperous Years" of the company saw the opening of the Donoughmore Extension, as well as the further development of the tourist traffic to Blarney. Prosperity vanished under wartime conditions which were followed by the difficulties of operation resulting from the Civil War.

The years after the GSR Amalgamation were marked by declining traffic due to bus and lorry competition and the "Muskerry Tram" ran for the last time on 29th December 1934. An appendix, of memories of the railway by Bishop Scanlan of Honolulu, conveys the atmosphere and spirit of the line so familiar to many Corkonians. There is a good map and a gradient chart, as well as several photographs, a few of which are excellent. One feels, however, that at 44 pages for 10/6^d the book is somewhat expensive.

CBM

"Dublin's Buses" by P.J. Flanagan and C.B. Mac an tSaoir (Transport Research Associates)

This book was officially launched on 22 June - not with the usual reception but by a 120-mile tour using P26, CIÉ's oldest single-decker. Included in the itinerary was a short trip on Ireland's oldest horse-drawn barge, "The Pomeroy", on the Grand Canal, and a trip by special train on the Clonsast system of Bord na Mona. As the title of the book suggests, it is a full guide to buses serving the Dublin area. Included in the 112 pages is a brief survey of street transport in the city up to date, as well as full route details; there are also fleet lists. Most of the 45 half-tones are good, though some could be better. The book should be valuable to students of transport.

CDS

News Section

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

Station Improvements

Heuston Station: The new 30-ton gantry crane for the Guinness traffic is now in use and an additional siding has been provided. The passenger station has been painted once more and a new style of platform seat has appeared on the Down platform. These have black metal frames with varnished hardwood seats, and are a considerable improvement both in appearance and comfort on the traditional station seat. The Ladies' waiting room has been refitted.

Connolly Station: The hydraulic buffers at Platform 2 have been removed and scrapped. Platform 2 and 3 roads, as well as the "Middle" and "Crooked Road" sidings, have been slightly shortened to provide space for a barrow path behind the barrier. The escalator was first used on 20 April. Unlike most others, it is partly outdoors and it operates both up and down as required by the traffic density. Work is still in progress on the new waiting room and left luggage office. The metal framework for the new barrier between the carriage ramp and platform has been erected.

Limerick Junction: New 17ft gates were provided from 4 June to protect the "Station Gates" - the level crossing over the "Back Road" which affords vehicular access to the platforms. These are protected by signals for the first time. Two new 2-aspect electric signals worked from the South Cabin have been installed. To achieve interlocking between the gates and signals the gate posts are equipped with BSA "Magnalocks" to prevent the gates being opened when the signals are "off". Repeater lamps are provided for the information of the gateman. Some grass has been sown opposite the platforms as part of a project to landscape the rather drab surroundings of the station. The North Cabin has been rebuilt in brick literally under the feet of the signalman. An important feature is the use of large aluminium-framed sliding windows which give an excellent view.

Woodenbridge: The footbridge was removed on 9 April and it has since been left at Howth Junction where it is to be erected, together with that from the halt at Woodbrook, near Bray. The passing loop was removed and the signal cabin closed on 21 April. The running line has since been realigned between the platforms to ease the curve. All sidings have been retained to supplement those at Shelton Abbey. Access is now by means of an Annett's Lock.

Newcastle (Co. Wicklow): The signal cabin was finally closed on 21 April and the points at the north end of the loop were removed. The rest of track remains for use in coastal defence works.

Waterford: Work on the new station building is well advanced; most of the fabric of the new building is finished and internal fitting out has commenced. Nos. 1 and 2 platforms are being filled in and converted to a passengers' car park inside the boundary wall. The diesel loco fuel facilities formerly located here have been transferred' to the riverside near the West Cabin, opposite the site of the old steam sheds.

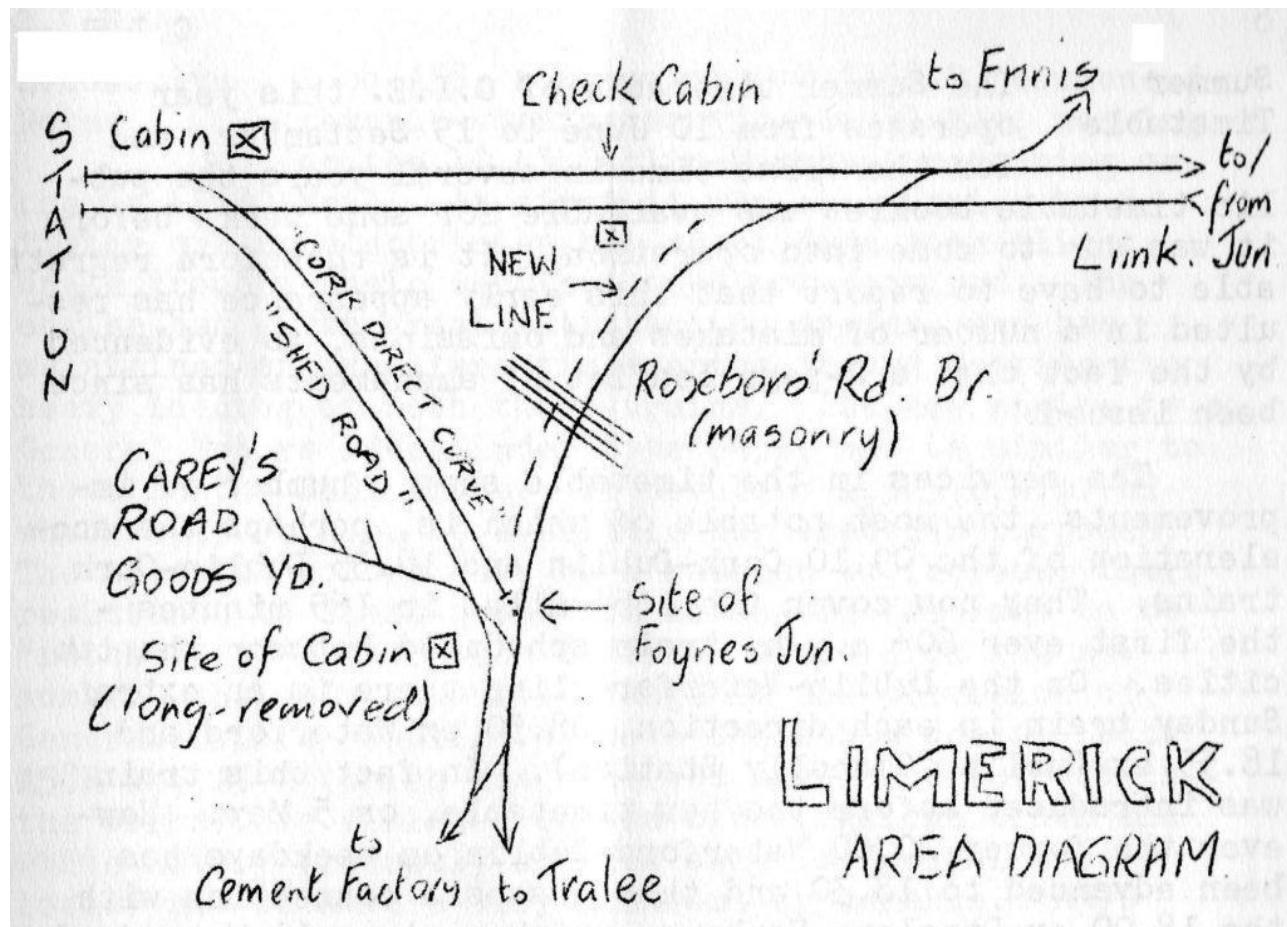
Pearse Station: The new buffet was opened on 10 April and the original one is now designated a Restaurant. The old left-luggage office at street level was demolished in mid-April. A wooden waiting room is being built on No.3 platform on a site formerly occupied by the Electrical Department. workshops. The roof is being waterproofed at present. Work began on 4 June on the installation of a carriage washing plant supplied by Smith Brothers & Webb of Birmingham.

Dundalk: A new loading bank has been provided for Harp Lager traffic (in casks) from the adjacent brewery. The casks are brought to the railway by conveyor belt. Although there was once a siding into

this brewery Harp Lager has hitherto been conveyed by road.

Cahir: The plaque commemorating the tragic accident of 1956 (when "Woolwich" 375 on a beet special ran through the viaduct into the River Suir, killing the crew) has been temporarily removed to allow replacement of its mounting. It is to be re-fixed to the station building.

Limerick: There have been considerable alterations here. Foynes Junction points were removed on Sunday 26 May as a preliminary to the doubling of the "Foynes Loop" from Carey's Road Goods Yard to the Check Cabin. The "Cork Direct Curve" from Foynes Junction to Limerick Station Cabin has been rarely used since the Limerick-Tralee passenger service ceased in 1963; any necessary movements from the station to Carey's Road Yard have used the parallel "Shed Road" (see attached diagram) to avoid the complicated procedure necessary for switching from the Foynes Loop to the Direct Curve ETS circuits and vice versa. The ETS circuit from the Station Cabin to Patrickswell has been removed, together with its subsidiary instruments at Foynes Junction and Rathbane Level Crossing. This leaves only the circuit from the Check Cabin to Patrickswell with its subsidiaries as above. The Direct Curve remains intact, the upper end being used as a siding. Considerable earthworks required to widen the Foynes Loop embankment up to Roxboro Road Bridge are in progress. The latter, fortunately, was built for double track and does not present an obstacle. However, the concrete embankment of the "Coal Road", nearer the Check Cabin, will have to be removed to make way for the new line while the Wagon Works lavatory may also have to be moved. This work has become essential to relieve the increasing congestion in Limerick due to the ever-rising goods traffic.



Other improvements made include the following:

Glenageary: Fluorescent platform lights installed.

Killiney: Entrance hall refloored.

Dromod: Up platform repaved and slightly raised.

Longford: Booking hall extensively refitted.

Patrickswell: Repainted.

Foynes: Repainted.

Loughrea: Repainted.

Cork: New garage for PWD inspection car.

Rathkeale: Repainted.

Gort: Toilets being rebuilt.

Attymon Junction: Repainted.

Askeaton: Repainted.

Adare: Repainted.

Tuam: Repainted.

In addition, the platform copings at Emly and Tubber, both closed stations, have been removed.

Steam Locomotives

Since our last issue, 0-6-0 No.184 has received a thorough overhaul and is now in full working order. After several trial runs to Sallins, it ran a special of empty coaches from Sallins to Ballsbridge on 6 June in connection with the film "Darling Lili", presently on location in Ireland. The loco was then in white undercoating and it has since been temporarily repainted by the film company. No.184 is to be displayed in steam at the annual "Open Day" at Inchicore Works on 14 July, while it is hoped that other film contracts may be secured. The engine may also become available for occasional enthusiasts' outings. A minor problem - the total lack of firemen on CIÉ - has been overcome by asking drivers to volunteer to act as firemen at drivers' rates of pay.

A sister engine, No.186 of the RPSI, ran from Belfast (York Road) to Dublin on 3 May, hauling NIR saloon coach 150. Next day, 2-6-4T 56 worked a special of 6 coaches to Dublin and back, while 186 ran a 4-coach connecting special to Wicklow and back for some 320 people. No.56 made a clearance test run to Clonsilla in the interim. No.186 returned to York Road on 5 May.

Summer Timetable

The summer timetable of CIÉ this year operates from 10 June to 15 September, and for the first time in several years the public timetable booklet was available for some weeks before it was due to come into operation. It is therefore regrettable to have to report that this early appearance has resulted in a number of mistakes and omissions, as evidenced by the fact that a 2-page leaflet of amendments has since been issued.

The services in the timetable show a number of improvements, the most notable of which is, perhaps the acceleration of the 09:10 Cork-Dublin and 18:35 Dublin-Cork trains. They now cover the 165½ miles in 165 minutes - the first ever 60+ mph train scheduled between the two cities. On the Dublin-Waterford line there is an extra Sunday train in each direction, 08:50 ex Waterford and 18:55 ex Dublin (Connolly Station). In fact this train was introduced before the new timetable, on 5 May. However, the former 20:00 Waterford-Dublin on weekdays has been advanced to 18:30 and thus misses a connection with the 18:00 ex Rosslare Harbour, which arrives in Waterford at 18:54. On the Dublin - Rosslare Harbour line the 18:50 ex Rosslare Harbour has been changed to 18:15 and a new train from Rosslare Harbour to Enniscorthy at 08:15, returning from Enniscorthy at 09:30, will be provided from 1 July to

31 August.

On the Midland section the afternoon train to Galway is now 14:30, returning the next day at 08:00, running via Portarlington in the Up direction. The 18:50 to Galway is now 19:00 (although shown in the list of dining car services on Page 2 as 18:50).

One very bad point that has still not been rectified is the matter of the missed connections at Limerick Junction. The 16:00 ex Limerick is due at the Junction at 16:35, while the 14:45 ex Dublin departs at 16:33. For the sake of 2 minutes a passenger from Limerick to Cork must spend 2 hours 20 on a journey that could be done in 1 hour 35 if the 16:00 ex Limerick were 5 minutes earlier. Nor is this all; the same train returns to Limerick at 16:45 - only 8 minutes before the arrival of the 15:30 ex Cork! In general, the timetable booklet is not improved by the multiplicity of notes on some pages (e.g. Pages 36 and 46). Page 36 is further distinguished by 19 unexplained asterisks.

Locomotive Notes

Loco A58, now renumbered "A58R", commenced revenue-earning service on 13 May, working on the 10:45 Dublin-Cork and returning on the Up 15:30 Mail. At first it was accompanied by a fitter and an electrician but apart from some slight brake trouble their services were not required. The engine has given great satisfaction so far, and has maintained an excellent timekeeping record despite the heavy loading of both these trains. Its new engine is a General Motors 12-cylinder type 645E, and is similar to those in the B181 class. It develops 1,325 bhp of which 1,250 bhp is available for traction purposes. The traction motors have been rewound to increase their resistance to flashovers and so enable the loco to be "notched-up" faster than before. Apart from the new number, the only exterior change is the provision of General Motors headlights above the cab windows. Both A58R and A59R (which has received similar treatment in the works) are finished in the black, golden brown and white livery (recently applied only to General Motors locos) and so have a very handsome appearance. A59R has been on trial since 29 May.

The last remaining grey locos, B122 and B128, have been repainted in the new standard livery just mentioned. However, a new variation on the livery has appeared on C203 and B114 - these are all black with white patches above the cab windows and a bright yellow front (from below the windows to the bottom of the buffer beam) relieved only by large black numbers. There are still several green C-class locos in service.

Sydney Parade

Despite the opposition to the proposal to install remotely-operated barriers at Sydney Parade level crossing (mentioned in our last issue), CIÉ have applied to the Minister for Transport & Power for permission to proceed with the scheme.

Staff Snatchers

The new Manson-Guthrie automatic staff exchangers at Ballinasloe (Up side) and Woodlawn (Up side), Attymon Junction and Athenry (both Down side) were brought into use on 23 March. Working distant signals will be provided at all these stations, bringing them in line with those other stations on the Midland section (between Clonsilla and Athlone) where snatchers are in use.

News From Dungarvan

Lifting of the Lismore-Dungarvan section of the Mallow-Waterford line is just completed as we go to press. The station yard at Dungarvan remains intact, although there is some doubt if it will remain so. It is understood that the lifting train will now move to the remains of the Thurles-Clonmel branch before tackling the Lismore-Mallow section. In connection with the projected dolomite traffic to and from Ballinacourty a heavy trial train (consisting of wagons with brake vans added to make up the weight of over 500 tons) traversed the Waterford-Dungarvan section at the end of May. It is believed that about

40 wagons are to be built for this dolomite traffic from Bennett's Bridge.

Rolling Stock Developments

Work has continued at Inchicore on the present series of Craven coaches, and the project is nearing completion. Work is also well advanced on the conversion of a number of former Park Royal coaches to Snack Cars. In all, 6 are to be so converted and work on the first four (1419, 1420, 1421 and 1423) is almost complete. In fact, 1420 went into traffic on 3 June when it was used on a special train from Limerick to Dublin. Since then it has replaced the ordinary Buffet Car on the 09:35 to Waterford and its return working at 16:15. The alteration involved the fitting of a small kitchen and service counter at one end of the coach (replacing the toilet at that end); the rest of the seating remains unaltered. Former 1st class coach 1144 has been demoted to standard class, while standard 1297 has been converted to Traffic Department sleeping car 521A. Two former Ambulance coaches, AM10 (ex 94M) and AM11 (ex 163M), have become Brake Test vans 518A and 519A. A number of new conflat wagons have been built to handle "Freightliner" containers.

Shelton Pilot

The C-class pilot at Shelton Abbey was replaced by a G-class from 10 June as the former was found to be straining the weighbridge. While a G can manage the traffic in the off-season, something more powerful is required in the autumn and winter when output from the factory exceeds 120 wagons a day.

Banana Specials

Two unusual special trains conveying containers of bananas to Dundalk for a large firm of fruit importers were observed during May. The trains originated at Cork where the ship docked.

Railcar News

Main line railcar duties were resumed on 28 March when the 18:20 Dublin-Sligo was so worked. Railcars reappeared shortly afterwards on the 18:50 to Galway. There are still no railcar turns on the Cork line, nor are there likely to be in view of the higher speeds in vogue there. Although there are several dead units both at Inchicore and Fairview, only 2647 at the former retains the green livery.

Pilgrimage Traffic

A visit to Claremorris on Sunday 26 May demonstrated how smoothly the Knock pilgrimage traffic is handled at this station. Seven trains were expected between 12:20 and 14:15 and a fleet of 20 buses (including the veteran 39-seater P308) was assembled at the station to work a shuttle service to Knock and back. The first train to arrive (at 12:26) was B154 with a 6-wheeled HV and 8 NIR coaches from Belfast. This was followed by specials from Youghal (via Ennis), Dublin (Connolly), Dublin (Pearse), Mallow (via Ennis), Dalkey and Rathdrum. The Youghal train was the largest, comprising B162 + B161, HV, 11 Bogies and HV; the smallest were those from Pearse Station and Rathdrum, each having HV, 6 bogies and LV, and worked respectively by B150 and B148. The entire operation was carried through very smoothly indeed, the 6-minute late arrival of the Belfast train being the only case of unpunctuality.

Straffan Relaying

On Sunday, 19 May, a train-load of prefabricated rails with concrete sleepers was laid in the Up Cork-Dublin line between Straffan and Hazelhatch. The operation was performed by the 35-ton Inchicore breakdown crane in a train which was propelled by A32 on the Down line. The rail train - on the Up line in two portions - was worked by B104 at the Cork end and by A23 at the other end. A tractor equipped with a fork was used to remove the old sleepers, three at a time, and also to assist with the laying of a length of rail at a point where an electricity cable crossed the line and would have obstructed the jib of the crane. A ballast packing machine was in attendance and A10 was also present

on a double ballast train comprising 30 wagons, with a van at each end. The rails have since been welded together.

Malahide

The 50 mph restriction which has applied over Malahide Viaduct for several years was finally lifted in mid-May. The viaduct parapet is still incomplete.

Signalling Notes

At Limerick a new arrangement of “intercabin electric controls” has been installed to govern movements on the ‘wrong lines’ between the Station and Check Cabins. New ground disc signals at either end govern entry to the lines but both signalmen must operate their control levers to pull the signals. Although the “Cork Direct Curve” has been disconnected at Foynes Junction, all signals governing entry to it at the station end remain intact and lit, although “crossed” to indicate that they are out of use. The latest station on the Cork line to have electric distant signals is Portlaoise (from 19 May). Rathpeacon received a Down electric distant from 25 June.

The new signalling installation at Limerick Junction for the direct Dublin-Limerick curve was completed at the end of June, after a prolonged delay caused by a chronic shortage of new materials. It is controlled from an illuminated track diagram mounted above the existing levers in the North Cabin. Clear tracks are indicated by white lights which turn red as a train passes. Points and signals are operated by small rotary thumb switches and normally the operation of a signal switch automatically selects the necessary points, the first such installation in Ireland. Should a point fail, there are separate emergency switches to allow the signalman to reverse each point as required.

The Weed-sprayer

The annual tour of the weed-spraying train commenced on 13 May. It had been hoped to use the MAK diesel-hydraulic locomotive K801 on this duty but this proved impracticable owing to a lack of suitably trained drivers.

OTHER RAILWAYS

Guinness At Stradbally

Guinness narrow-gauge loco 15 and all four coaches of the Brewery Visitors’ Train will be in use at the Irish Steam Preservation Society’s Rally at Stradbally, Co. Laois, on 2-5 August. It is hoped to have a considerably lengthened track.

Bord Na Mona: Derrylea Bog

Work on the development of this bog is in hand and a new railway from “Derryounce Junction” on the Clonsast BNM system is being laid. A new level crossing has been installed.

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS

A New Station

A new station - in fact, a halt - called simply “University” has been built on the Portrush line near milepost 62½, close to Coleraine. It is to serve the adjacent New University of Ulster. The platform on the Down side is 200ft long and consists of concrete slabs formerly used as an extension at the Portrush end of Portstewart Up platform. These were transferred to their present site by a hand crane. The railings are black and white and there are two oval nameboards lettered “UNIVERSITY” in white on a crimson background. There is a telephone, but no shelter. Access to the halt is from the main road outside the University through a gate and along a path beside the line. Outside there is a sign reading “Northern Ireland Railways Co. Ltd. - Entrance”.

The halt was in use from 1 June and was ceremonially opened on 12 June. It is unstaffed and all regular trains call, giving 7 services each way daily except Saturday, when there are only 6 Up services. There are also special services: one MPD railcar and a trailer from Coleraine at 09:05 and 17:35, returning at 09:10 and 17:40 Mondays to Fridays. Passengers are required to use the first two coaches of longer trains and must book at Coleraine; the guards collect tickets from alighting passengers. The fares range from 6^d for a day return to 20/- for a monthly ticket. Passengers from the Belfast and Derry directions, and from Portrush, are charged the fare to Coleraine.

Most of those using the halt at present are administrative and maintenance staff residing in Coleraine. There is as yet no indication if the halt will be used continuously throughout the winter months. For some years the Portrush Branch has operated on a seasonal basis, but it now seems likely that services will be fully restored.

This year the line reopened for the summer on 1 June, some weeks earlier than originally planned. Portrush Urban District Council had protested that much valuable business would be lost to the town by such a late opening and in view of the superb weather in early June it is fortunate that this protest was heeded.

Track Circuit

The continuous track circuiting between Coleraine and Macfin was extended to Ballymoney and brought into use on 26 May, after the 09:30 ex Belfast had passed. Trains in this section are now controlled by direction levers, tablet working being discontinued.

Bridge 179

After a winter of preliminary work, reconstruction of Bridge 179 near MP 59¹/₄ on the main line to Derry began on 26 March. The work will eliminate a danger point on the road.

Excursion Fares

Substantial reductions in day excursion fares between 1 May and 30 September were announced in April. For example, the day fare to Portrush is 12/6 from Belfast, and an exceptional bargain is an afternoon excursion for only 7/6. This latter has been well patronised, especially on Wednesdays.

A great surprise was the introduction of a regular 15/- day excursion fare by special train from Belfast to Dublin on Saturdays, commencing on 20 April. For many years such an excursion but at progressively higher fares was offered on Thursdays from Dublin (and also on Saturdays from late 1965). The volume of traffic offering on this excursion from Belfast has proved too much for NIR's own resources. Each time, a train has been worked by a CIÉ loco, while a second train (if required) consists of a CIÉ loco and CIÉ coaches. In the reverse direction, the cheap fare has been offered on the 08:30 Down and 17:30 Up Enterprise expresses, and there have been up to three relief trains leaving Dublin at 08:15, 08:45 and 09:00. This has resulted in the opening of Ireland's smallest signal cabin, Kellystown, between Drogheda and Dunleer, after several years of almost complete disuse.

Spoil Trains

Another revised schedule took effect on 11 April. The weekday service was increased to 11 trains each way on Mondays to Fridays, with 4 on Saturdays. Subsequently the practice of running these trains with a banking engine was discontinued as it was resulting in excessive buffer wear. All spoil trains are now double-headed.

New Conflats

It has been decided to scrap all the existing 4-wheeled container wagons and to replace them with bogie vehicles adapted from carriage underframes. Each is to carry 3 containers. The first such conversion is already in hand.

Coleraine

The Harbour Branch has been lifted between the station yard and the Portrush Road bridge which was removed last year. The rest is virtually intact.

Steam Locomotives

Nos. 7 and 57 were brought from Ballymena to Belfast for stripping, and the following are to be auctioned shortly: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 52, 57, 26, 48, 49 and the experimental tender for the "Jeeps". A decision on the future of No.54 has not yet been taken. Nos. 4 and 10 have been repaired in the shops. No.5 has had its wheels turned and No.3 is to be done soon. Some reports would suggest that steam passenger working, now rarely seen on regular trains, may cease altogether after 13 July, but no alternative means of handling heavy excursion traffic is readily available. The bunker extension from No.54 was transferred to No.56 in April.

Railcars: MPD

Nos. 45, 57 and 64 now have Rolls Royce engines; 59 is being so fitted and 65 is to follow. The underframe of 56, burned out in 1966, is now in York Road shops. Overhauled Leyland engines are to be fitted to 46 and 52 to make them available as shunting units. Their interior fittings are too shabby for regular passenger work. All the non-corridor units and trailers are to be rebuilt to corridor type during their next heavy overhauls.

Railcars: MED

The last cars to be converted to 4-speed gearboxes at York Road are 18 and 23, which are now in the shops. All others are finished. Trailer 519 has been drastically rebuilt from a 9-compartment non-corridor type with 108 seats to a 72-seat centre-corridor coach. It retains 6 doors each side and is divided internally into 3 equal saloons, all "smoking". The bright finish of the seats in red rexine and moquette is in striking contrast to the drab beige interior finish of the walls and doors. Trailer 523 is now being rebuilt along similar lines but it is to have 2 toilets added at one end. Corridor gangways have been added to trailer 515. On the Bangor line, 34 has been converted and 35 is almost ready. Trailer 513 has been fully overhauled. Trailers 515 and 518 can now work MPD.

Railcars: DE

Construction of extra car 78 started in April. There are to be 2 new driving trailers: 713 and 714 (ex coaches 278 and 280) and 2 intermediates: 726 and 727 (ex coaches 362 and 364).

Southern Region

AEC Car 116 is being completely overhauled. On 15 April two separate MPD sets worked Lisburn locals. On 12 May Drogheda saw MPD and MED (first time across the Border) on excursion trains.

Summer Timetable

The timetable, which took effect on 24 June, shows few changes from last year, except on the Southern Region: Belfast-Portadown. Here, a commendable effort has been made to introduce the type of regular interval service which is so successful on the Down Region. The basic service now consists of a fast train at Lisburn, Lurgan and Portadown at 15 minutes past the hour, and an all-stations to Lisburn at 45 minutes past. These intervals are varied somewhat at peak hours. The cross-border service is improved by the restoration to Monday-Friday operation of the traditional 09:15 ex Dublin and the 15:00 ex Belfast. Last year these trains ran on Saturdays only and on 7 other selected dates. This year the 09:15 also runs on Saturdays, but the 15:00 is advanced to 13:45. A further improvement is the showing of certain local services on both sides of the border in the through timetable page.

On the Bangor and Larne lines minor improvements have been made, notably the showing of most of the trains which have had to run through to Larne Harbour to clear the section since Larne Town Cabin

was closed. Up to now these trains ran nominally empty to and from the Harbour, although potential passengers were seldom turned away.

The service to University has been mentioned and the other changes on the Main and Portrush lines are mainly time alterations. However, certain trains which last year started at Coleraine, with a bus connection from Portrush, now start from the latter place, thereby going some way towards eliminating bus competition. All in all, this timetable although of short duration reflects imaginative planning which deserves to bear fruit in improved traffic.

Station Developments

At Ballymena the headshunt of the Up side sidings has been extended along the back of the Up platform, formerly used by narrow gauge trains. This is in connection with the transfer from Belfast of the sleeper depot which will be displaced by the new motorway. The reconstructed concourse at York Road was officially opened on 1 April by the Minister for Development. In addition to the changes previously described, the floor has been resurfaced with grey and pink concrete slabs, chequer-board fashion. The Minister also unveiled a giant NIR monogram outside the station.

Feature Section

MINING IN IRELAND

Ireland has a long and rather sorry tradition of mining. The failure of its many ventures may be attributed to foreign competition, trade recessions, lack of communications, sudden geological faults, inadequate surveys, and a host of other causes. But minerals of a varied nature are distributed throughout the country and in many cases their existence has long been known. The Geological Survey Memoir (G.J. Cole, 1922; reprinted 1956) affords ample evidence of the large number of localities of mining interest.

It is nonetheless surprising, in view of the past, that at present metalliferous mining in Ireland has embarked on a programme that will ultimately result in an annual output of value £15 million. Much space in the IRN has been devoted to railway activities in connection with this "bonanza" and lest readers feel in a vacuum we include details of present and projected operations which are of importance to the Irish rail network of today. The principal sites and mining activities thereon are set out briefly below.

Tynagh, Co. Galway

Lead (Pb), Silver (Ag), Zinc (Zn). Known as a "very ancient silver mine"; operated 1862-65. Presently operated by Irish Base Metals Ltd. Commenced 1961 and subsequently very successful. Capital investment circa £4m. Output (of concentrates) brought by road to Galway for export. Goods inwards for mine has benefitted Loughrea line. Life of mine recently re-estimated at 12 (was 7) years. Just conceivable that a rail link would result with greater output from mine. This is an open-cast mine (though an underground one will be built) and as yet there are no railways used on site.

Silvermines, Co. Tipperary

Barytes (Ba), Copper (Cu), Pb, Ag, Zn. Magcobar are at present exporting Ba from here via the rail link to Foynes. More important will be the Mogul operation (capital investment circa £7m) due to start in Spring 1968. Labour force will be 400+. Exploration started late in 1962 and mine output scheduled to reach 2,000 tons a day (Pb, Ag, Zn). Mine - shaft and levels - will have a rail network of its own,

10-ton wagons being used underground. Long tradition of mining here: for example, Pb and Ag were worked prior to the 1641 Rebellion. Silvermines area is undoubtedly the most important development for railway.

Keel, Co. Longford

Pb, Zn. No previous tradition of mining. Exploration in 1962-63 by Rio Tinto-Goulding group found ore. Shaft built on site but no indication yet of mining programme apart from statement that expenses of working a mine could be recouped from ore so far discovered. Site 7 miles SSE of Longford Town. Very unlikely on present knowledge that a rail link (at least 5 miles; to Sligo line) would even be thought of.

Gortdrum, Co. Tipperary

Cu, Ag. Another new deposit, this was discovered in 1963 and is now being worked by Gortdrum, an associate of the Northgate group. Although within sight of Limerick Junction, the output of concentrates from the mine is being brought by road to Limerick for export. Although the product is extremely valuable the low daily output (30-40 tons) is not sufficient to make rail connection worthwhile.

Moyvoughley, Co. Westmeath

Pb, Ag, Zn. Unusually, an Irish mining development caused a flurry of activity on the London Exchange when Gortdrum/Northgate announced in April that a survey had revealed a hitherto unknown body of ore. Shortly afterwards Tara Exploration announced that it also had prospecting rights in the area. Moyvoughley is 4 miles NNE of Moate and, should mining activity be warranted on any reasonable scale, a convenient link could be made off the Galway main line, possibly revitalising the Mullingar-Athlone section. An interesting speculation rail-wise!

Upper Dunbell, Co. Kilkenny

Dolomite (Ca+Mg). Near Bennett's Bridge. (See News pages.)

THE DOWN REGION

R. Whitford

The "Down Region" of the NIR consists of the Belfast (Queen's Quay) - Bangor railway line, once part of the Belfast & County Down Railway. It is the first line in the British Isles to have its regular passenger services 100% diesel-operated, railcars taking over early in 1954. Steam excursions and works trains from the GNR section continued to run to and from Bangor until 12 August 1965, when the Belfast Central Railway was closed between Ballymacarrett Junction and East Bridge Junction.

The B&CDR main line to Newcastle and other places had been closed on 24 April 1950, and Ballymacarrett Junction ceased to exist in September 1965. The cabin there remained in use until 23 April 1966, its functions being taken over by the new Queen's Quay cabin which opened the following day.

The Bangor line stations are served by the only regular interval train service in Ireland - trains run every half-hour, except at peaks when extra services operate. Thus, there is no working timetable for the line, and the staff refer to the public timetable along with the official working notices. Only one train - an empty diesel working from Queen's Quay (06:20SX; 06:45SO) - is not shown to the public. Trains leave at 20 and 50 minutes past the hour from Belfast, and on the even hour and half-hour from Bangor. The only variation is in the peak hour services; there are no short workings.

Timings for the 12½ mile line vary from 17 minutes non-stop and 27 minutes with 5 stops to 33 minutes with 9 stops. There are 42 trains in each direction, Monday to Friday, 38 Up and 33 Down on

Saturday, and 15 Up and 16 Down on Sunday. The Summer Sunday service is 23 Up and 24 Down trains. The usual formation is two railcars and a trailer, although 5-car sets are used on the 08:20 ex Bangor (SX) and the 17:45 ex Belfast (SX). During winter Sundays and other off-peak times (Saturdays excepted) single railcars are used. At holiday times in the Summer extra railcars and trailers are added as required, three of each being the usual formation. Although up to four cars and four trailers could be run as a set the length would be too great for some of the platforms.

The following table shows the stations and halts on the line:

Station/Halt	Miles	Remarks
Belfast (Queen's Quay)	0	Former BCDR headquarters
Ballymacarrett Halt	0 ⁷ / ₈	Serves shipyard and factory
Victoria Park Halt	1 ¹ / ₄	Relatively little used
Sydenham	1 ⁷ / ₈	Former block post (BP)
Holywood	4 ¹ / ₂	Still has cabin
Marino Halt	5 ³ / ₈	Closed 11/1957 to 01/1960
Craigavad Halt	6 ⁵ / ₈	Closed 11/1957 to 01/1960; BP
Seahill Halt	7 ³ / ₄	Opened 4/4/1966
Helen's Bay	9	Still has cabin
Crawfordsburn Hospital	9 ³ / ₄	Opened 13/9/1965
Carnalea	10 ¹ / ₂	Former block post
Bangor West Halt	11 ¹ / ₂	Opened in 1929
Bangor	12 ¹ / ₄	Block post

Line opened: Queen's Quay to Holywood on 2/8/1848 as double line, Holywood to Bangor (single) 18/5/1865, doubled 1897/1902.

Not all trains serve each place. For example, the service provided to Seahill is hourly in either direction, while the hospital staff and visitors who use the halt at Crawfordsburn can choose from 8 Down and 7 Up trains booked to stop Monday to Friday, in addition to some which call on request; there are even fewer trains on Saturdays and Sundays which offer a service. Both these halts are unstaffed, having sleeper built platforms, those at Seahill having small shelters. Ballymacarrett is used by some 30 to 40 workers (Monday-Friday), while only a few passengers are still using Victoria Park. Marino has 5 trains calling in each direction on weekdays, plus a few request stops, but it has never regained the traffic it had prior to its closure in 1957. Likewise, Craigavad traffic returns were less than anticipated and the service was reduced within a year of its reopening. Trains now call at this halt as required in the Spring and Summer, providing a service for a nearby Girl Guides' camp.

The headquarters of the section is Queen's Quay, where the railcar maintenance and overhaul shops (with a 30-ton capacity overhead crane), signal cabin and carriage washing plant are all on the Up side. Only railcar engines and bogies are required to be sent to York Road for overhaul, all the other work being undertaken at Queen's Quay. Three passenger platforms are available at the station - Nos. 2, 3 and 4 - the fourth, No.1, is used for storing trailers as it has now no direct access to the main running lines.

At the other end of the line, Bangor has three platforms and a siding (which was formerly the engine release road) between platforms 2 and 3. The only intermediate siding on the line is at Helen's Bay; it faces in to the Down line at the Bangor end of the Down platform.

The line is level from Belfast to Holywood but from the latter station there are some 2¹/₂ miles of gradients in the range 1:73 to 1:89 as far as the 7 mile post. From there on the line falls steadily in the direction of Bangor. The only major engineering feature on the line is Crawfordsburn Viaduct, located between Helen's Bay and the halt for Crawfordsburn Hospital. The permanent way is rather rough in

places but there is welded track on both lines from the site of Ballymacarrett Junction to a point about a quarter mile on the Bangor side of Holywood.

The Up and Down lines are continuously track circuited from Queen's Quay to the Belfast side of Bangor signal cabin. The latter has a frame of 40 levers, 12 of which are spare, while that at Queen's Quay has 30 levers in use with a further 15 spare. The remaining cabins - at Holywood, Craigavad and Helen's Bay - are switched in only when the crossovers at these places (each trailing from the Up to the Down line) are being used, for example in connection with permanent way work or single-line operation. Automatic signals control all trains on both lines from Sydenham to Carnalea, these being of the banner type. Exceptions, however, are the upper quadrants at Sydenham itself and near the closed halt at Tillysburn (2⁵/₈).

Permanent way trains are worked by railcars, three or four of which haul the required wagons to the site of operations. The railcars run round the wagons using the nearest pair of crossovers, for example, Helen's Bay and Craigavad if work is going on in that section.

The passenger rolling stock of the line consists of 16 railcars and 16 trailers. All railcars with even numbers are Brake/Seconds and face towards Bangor. The odd numbered cars face the other way and are all seconds. Each car is fitted with two Leyland 0/680 engines, now rated at 150 hp, driving through a torque converter, with direct drive giving a top speed of 50 mph on the level. Cars 16, 17, 24 and 25 have been fitted with 4-speed gearboxes and have a rather higher maximum speed. In time all the railcars will get the new gearboxes on overhaul as spares for the converters cannot now be obtained. The cars and their seating capacities are:

No.	Seats	Remarks
14	56	Railcar; reversible seating
15	76	Railcar; reversible seating
16	56	Railcar; reversible seating
17	76	Railcar; reversible seating
24	62	Railcar; set of controls in guard's compartment
25	85	Railcar
26	62	Railcar; set of controls in guard's compartment
27	85	Railcar
28	62	Railcar; set of controls in guard's compartment
29	85	Railcar
30	62	Railcar
31	85	Railcar
32	62	Railcar
33	85	Railcar
34	62	Railcar
35	85	Railcar

The corresponding list of trailers is as follows:

501-507	89	Trailers; No.504 seats 85 only
509-514	89	Trailers
520	108	Trailer; built 1930; ex-NCC compartment stock
522	108	Trailer; built 1936; ex-NCC compartment stock
525	108	Trailer; built 1925; ex-NCC compartment stock

All railcars and trailers on the line have bus-type seats.

Apart from Nos. 520, 522 and 525, all trailers and railcars have air-operated doors; built 1952-4.

The PWD rolling stock consists of 7 four- and six-wheeled open wagons, one 4-wheeled bolster wagon, three ballast wagons, two brake vans, a 15-ton crane (No.8434), a bogie flat wagon and a bogie van (No.8198, ex 610); the last mentioned has never been used.

Completely isolated from the rest of the NIR system, these railcars do a good job. Trains failing to complete a journey are rare, although there is the odd engine cut-out which results in the lengthening of a journey by 5 or 10 minutes. No doubt because of the novelty of the recently-fitted 4-speed gearboxes, the standard of driving needs improvement. Attention to this factor and to careful maintenance is increasingly necessary in these days of intensified motor competition. However, since the introduction of unlimited travel tickets on 1 January 1966, season ticket traffic has improved, due also to the fact that on this line the staff, under the Region Manager, Mr E. Ewing, put the needs of the passenger first - an example which should be followed on other lines none too far away.

CIÉ LOCOMOTIVES - THE "C" CLASS

In 1953 CIÉ ordered 94 diesel-electric locos from Metropolitan Vickers Ltd of Manchester. The order was for 60 Co-Co units of 1,200 hp and for 34 550 hp Bo-Bos. At the time it was the largest single order placed with any British firm for diesel locos, being worth some £4¾ million. The diesel engines were supplied by Crossley Brothers of Manchester, the electrical equipment and bodywork being by Metrovick. The larger engines became the "A" class of CIÉ, the 550 hp type receiving numbers C201 - C234.

The first of the "C" class arrived in Dublin in February 1957; by the end of May 15 had been delivered and 9 were in traffic. The last unit did not arrive until 24 June 1958. At first these locos were allocated to branch line duties. They had a monopoly of diesel loco workings on the West Cork lines and were very much in evidence on the Valentia Harbour branch.

Others were allocated to various centres for shunting, while some were rostered to work suburban services from Bray and Grand Canal Street depots. They proved unsuitable for these latter duties, with the possible exception of C231 and C234 which were specially tuned to improve their performance. Ultimately they were restricted to Pier Train duties and now see service on suburban trains only in summer emergency periods, having reduced the service to chaos on previous occasions.

As the branch lines were closed by degrees, "C" class locos became redundant and many were spare. But later they found a new use as pilot engines, stationed at points throughout the system. The class has never penetrated the Northern section; one member of the class is the regular pilot at Dundalk but otherwise the class is virtually unknown on the GN lines. Only one passenger working is known: a special train to Howth on a hot summer Sunday. This was not a success - a steam engine could do the round trip in less than an hour, and the "C" took 70 minutes.

Few main line duties ever came the way of the "C" class although for a time one worked the Cork - Rosslare Harbour slow train. Likewise, the Sligo Night Mails have been regularly worked by a "C" on Fridays, but this is only because the regular engine, a General Motors "B", is needed for the "Sligo Shipper" on that night, and the "C" which acts as Sligo station pilot steps in for the Mail. Perhaps the most notable performance - of which, unfortunately, adequate statistics are not available - was several years ago when a mishap at Manulla Junction resulted in the "C"-headed Ballina branch train being commandeered for a run to Dublin. The train returned empty from Dublin to its home ground, apparently creating records.

Most of the present-day "C" duties are of the "pottering around" type', a typical example being as follows:

06:00 Grand Canal Street to Dun Laoghaire. Shunting. Parcels Train Dun Laoghaire Pier-Connolly Station. Light engine to Liffey Junction. Shunt yard. Work North City Mills and

Broadstone Works Sidings (if required).

15:30 Liffey Junction to North Wall (Midland). Shunt.

19:35 Bank goods train to Liffey Junction.

20:20 Bank goods train to Liffey Junction. Light engine to Grand Canal Street.

The technical specifications, as well as details of the dimensions, of the "C" class are given below:

Power Unit	Crossley EST Vee 8, two-stroke, pressure charged, 8-cylinder.																
Generator	Metrovick Type TC 3601, direct coupled to engine. Output: 1,100 amps continuous rating; 1,625 amps one-hour rating. (There is also an auxiliary generator.)																
Dimensions	<table><tr><td>Length over headstocks</td><td>38'0"</td></tr><tr><td>Length over buffers</td><td>42'0"</td></tr><tr><td>Bogie centres</td><td>21'0"</td></tr><tr><td>Bogie wheelbase</td><td>8'0"</td></tr><tr><td>Wheel diameter</td><td>3'2"</td></tr><tr><td>Width over headstocks</td><td>8'4"</td></tr><tr><td>Width over body</td><td>8'10"</td></tr><tr><td>Height to roof sheet</td><td>12'7"</td></tr></table>	Length over headstocks	38'0"	Length over buffers	42'0"	Bogie centres	21'0"	Bogie wheelbase	8'0"	Wheel diameter	3'2"	Width over headstocks	8'4"	Width over body	8'10"	Height to roof sheet	12'7"
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Width over headstocks	8'4"																
Width over body	8'10"																
Height to roof sheet	12'7"																
Weight	58 tons																
Maximum Axle Load	14½ tons																
Maximum Tractive Effort	43,200 lb																

Hoffmann roller bearings are fitted and air brakes are fitted to the locos, but there is a vacuum exhauster for passenger trains. An early modification to some of the class was the provision of jumper sockets on the buffer beams for heating of small trains on branch lines, for example, Clonakilty. Electric heaters were fitted under the coach seats. This practice has, of course, now lapsed but the jumper sockets remain. A major modification was the re-engining of two locos, C233 and C234, with 950 hp Maybach units but as these locos are more properly to be regarded as (and have been renumbered as) "B" class locos they are not described here.

When delivered the "C"s were finished in the distinctive silver loco livery of that time, the only exceptions being C231 and C234 which were always green. The silver livery gave way first to green (a few examples of which still remain) and the latter was succeeded by the standard livery of black, golden brown and white. However, those now being turned out are in overall black with a white patch and red buffer beam at each end. No engine of the class has ever carried ETS snatchers.