

THE

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EDITORIAL

We have read the report of the formal enquiry into the tragic collision at Hixon in Staffordshire with considerable interest. It has revealed some remarkable contrasts between Irish and British regulations for automatic half-barrier level crossings. Examples of both can be seen within a 51 mile stretch of the Dublin-Belfast main line, as those in Northern Ireland follow the British pattern.

As it is widely recognised that most Irish roads are far less used than those in Britain a direct comparison between the safety devices incorporated in these crossings might seem pointless, nonetheless the protection given to road users by CIÉ's barrier crossings seems far better than by those on the NIR. In accordance with British practice the warning bells on the latter cease ringing as soon as the barriers are fully lowered, whereas the CIÉ bells remain at work until the train has passed. Besides, NIR trains "whistle" twice as they approach the crossing, while CIÉ trains must do so continuously until the crossing is reached.

The advance warning signs on Northern Ireland roads seem pitifully close at a mere 200 feet from the railway; they consist of the "hammers" sign surmounting a notice reading "STOP when lights flash". CIÉ crossings are protected by sign-written notices 100 yards from the line, reading "Traffic Lights at Level Crossing ahead". These are in addition to conventional "Gated Level Crossing" road-signs a further 60 yards away.

In the matter of notices at the crossing itself, the NIR crossings are fully equipped, the signs including one requiring those driving "exceptional loads" or cattle to telephone the signalman. A telephone in a box is clearly marked "Telephone" and "T". This is in contrast to CIÉ practice which omits the notice and houses the phone in a striped box. The "second train" situation is covered in the north only by a reflectorised notice; CIÉ provides an illuminated sign which is sited so as to be visible to a driver tempted to zigzag past lowered barriers.

All in all, the precautions taken at CIÉ barrier crossings are quite adequate, possibly the one desirable improvement being the provision of notices for cattle drovers and the like. So far the only incident at one of these crossings has been the fouling of the line by a road user with a horse-box trailer who stopped short after crossing the line.

To compensate, it would seem, for the excellent record of the barrier crossings, CIÉ has suffered from a series of unfortunate accidents at accommodation crossings. The most serious occurrence was at Goold's Cross in August 1965 when seven vehicles of an eight-piece railcar train were derailed after striking cattle which were being driven across the line. This spectacular incident was happily unattended by loss of human life, but there have been fatalities among road users at these minor crossings. To prevent a recurrence of a Goold's Cross style derailment, some of the railcars have been fitted with a form of cow-catcher, consisting of a shield of $\frac{1}{2}$ " steel plating stoutly braced.

More important, however, is the preventative work which has commendably been carried out by CIÉ.

All over the system accommodation crossings are now protected by new warning notices appropriately surmounted by International Convention level crossing road signs (which, incidentally, depict a large black steam locomotive inside the familiar red triangle). In addition, many new "Whistle" signs have appeared along the railway. These, too, are of new design, consisting of concrete posts on which are mounted narrow vertical panels with a reflectorised "wasp" motif. Such safety measures are deserving of the highest praise.

The IRN

At the end of another successful year we wish to thank all our contributors and subscribers who have helped us so much. We particularly appreciate the efforts of those who introduced the IRN to friends. In case any reader wishes to "enrol" a friend, we include with this issue a duplicate subscription form. Thank you.

News Section

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

Signalling Improvements

A number of distant signals, including those at 46 Mile Box, Levington Crossing and Ballinasloe, have been equipped with motors as many of them are now too far from the cabins for manual operation. Although such motors are common on the lines of the former NCC, they have been comparatively rare elsewhere in Ireland until recently. The working distants at Ballinasloe, and elsewhere on the Athlone-Galway line, are new and their installation complements the provision of Manson-Guthrie staff exchangers mentioned in our April issue.

All semaphore signals at Central Cabin, Connolly Station, and at East Wall Junction were equipped early in July with luminous arms to make them much more conspicuous. The project to abolish Sydney Parade Cabin and to replace its level crossing gates by barriers remotely controlled from Merrion has been abandoned in deference to the local residents, whose opposition was determined. When they were officially informed by CIÉ they were also advised that workmen would be seen removing some cables installed for the barrier system.

Ardee Ballast

A train of ten 10-ton ballast wagons and plough van 62M, which had been working on the Sligo line for some time (based on Boyle), was transferred to Ardee on 14 August. The ballast is being obtained from a local quarry, for use on the main line, between Drogheda and Dundalk. The present demand for ballast exceeds the capacity of the three regular ballast trains when travelling time is taken into account. The regular trains are based in Lisduff (two) and Lecarrow (one).

Ardee Again

The speed limit on the Ardee Branch was increased to 25 mph in August. It had been 15 mph for some time. It is rather a rare occurrence for the limit on a line used for goods only to move upwards.

Station Improvements

Connolly Station: The new waiting room is in use but it has been decided to retain the old left luggage office. The newly-installed counter and roll-up shutter at the new one have already been removed and the space is now to be used for a conference room. The Inspectors' Office is now located on No.2 platform in the former Customs' room. The barrier between the carriage ramp and No.2 platform is

now complete. It consists of a metal framework closed in by large squares of plywood and topped by rectangular sheets of transparent perspex. The station name appears (at the request of the staff) for the first time ever on the ex-GNR section of the station. It is displayed eight times (at intervals) along the new barrier in black plastic letters mounted on a white background of the same material. The escalator is temporarily stopped while a new roller shutter is being installed in place of the unsightly temporary doors at the top end.

Tara Street: A new circular booking office has been built at the bottom of the stairs and the old one demolished. Passengers may now pass on either side to reach the appropriate platform, an arrangement which will doubtless prove more convenient. Some further improvements are being made to the stairs.

Pearse Station: Much of the brickwork has been cleaned and restored revealing some beautiful work long hidden by accumulated grime. The very unusual cast-iron facade and the bridge in Westland Row have been repainted in various shades of white and grey, highlighting the ornate ironwork.

Limerick: The work on doubling the Foynes Loop was completed very speedily and the new line was brought into use on 11 August. However, the new arrangement is not strictly speaking a double line. The apparent Down line is, in fact, a two-way single line from Limerick Check Cabin to Patrickswell, over which normal ETS working applies. Crossovers equipped with Annett's Locks are located at the site of the former Foynes Junction and near Rathbane Crossing, giving access to Carey's Road Goods Yard and the Cement Factory Branch, respectively. The new Up line ranks as a siding from Limerick Check and so gives direct access to Carey's Road and thence to the Cement Factory without interfering with the Patrickswell line at all.

Dun Laoghaire: One of the two sidings through the Irish Lights Yard has been lifted to make way for a roadway which will be used by a mobile crane for handling buoys.

Minor Demolition

At Clondalkin the platform copings have been removed, while at Clonsilla a small permanent way gang in early August removed the quarter mile stub which was all that remained of the line to Navan.

Limerick Junction

The signalling for the new loop was completed on 30 June and the line thereby became available for all types of trains. Normally the guards are required to operate the subsidiary ETS instrument at Milltown Crossing when trains enter or leave the Limerick Junction/Dromkeen single-line section via the loop (which has a 10 mph speed restriction). Exceptions are made, however, for the 21:55 Dublin-Limerick and 23:45 Limerick-Dublin goods trains, and also for passenger trains, when a man is sent from Limerick Junction for the purpose.

A passenger train on 30 July attracted some newspaper publicity as “the first ever non-stop Dublin-Limerick train”. It was a special from Dublin at 11:40 for airline passengers diverted due to fog. Sunday, 21 July, saw the first rostered passenger workings on the loop, a GAA special from Templemore to Limerick and back, and the 10:05 regular Limerick-Dublin train was diverted via the loop as there were eight specials from Cork to Limerick.

The Counties Excursion

The annual “Counties Excursion” to the Isle of Man took place on Monday, 5 August, which is still the Bank Holiday in the Republic of Ireland. In addition to two steamers for Dubliners, another boat was scheduled at 08:30 for the provincial passengers. To connect with the latter, special trains ran from Waterford, Cork, Sligo and Wexford to Pearse Station, and Dundalk and Limerick (via Limerick Junction; connection from Carrick-on-Suir) to Tara Street. The earliest was the Cork train, which started at 04:45. The rush of provincial excursionists to the boats added to a confusion which resulted in a Dublin boat - nominally 08:00 - leaving at 08:50!

Cheap Weekends

For yet another season the CIÉ “Cheap Weekend” fares make their welcome appearance. For the convenience of readers we list of dates (Friday-Monday):

4 - 7 October	6 - 9 December	21 - 24 March
11 - 14 October	17 - 20 January	25 - 28 April
25 - 28 October	31 - 3 January/February	9 - 12 May
22 - 25 November	14 - 17 February	16 - 19 May
6 - 9 December	28 - 3 February/March	

As yet there is no indication whether or not CIÉ will reintroduce the 20/- Sunday day excursion fares which were available last year.

Public Address

A public address system which utilises the existing Radio Train wiring and loudspeakers was introduced on the 08:45 Dublin-Cork and 18:00 Cork-Dublin expresses on 30 July. The equipment is housed in a former toilet compartment of a Standard Brake. A programme of recorded music is played while the train is loading and immediately on departure the Train Hostess introduces herself, mentions the Buffet Car facilities on board, and outlines the connecting services. Suitable announcements are made shortly before arrival at Limerick Junction and Cork. This rather simple innovation has been very well received by passengers and it is intended to extend the service to other main line trains in due course. In the “Times” of 20 September it was announced that British Rail would experiment with a similar system.

The Achill Line Again

In August, the “Connaught Telegraph” carried a note stating that the Westport town engineer thought that a section of the roadbed of this branch (closed 1935; reopened temporarily and then finally closed in 1937) might soon be used as a roadway. He urged that no development should be allowed near the old line which would interfere with the adoption of the scheme for a road.

On The Way Out?

With the introduction of the winter timetable (detailed below) the train service to Dromkeen, on the Limerick Junction - Limerick line, has been curtailed to one train a day, and that in the Up direction only. The other “train services” shown on the page (Page 11) are in fact bus connections. Some trains have been speeded up as a result of the curtailment.

Winter Timetable

The CIÉ Winter Timetable came into operation on 16 September and is valid up to and including 8 June 1969. Apart from the normal withdrawal of certain “summer only” trains, there are a number of interesting changes. The most notable of these is the provision of a new fast train between Limerick and Dublin. Named the “Sáirséal” (reflecting the history of Limerick), the train leaves Limerick at 08:30 and returns from Heuston Station at 18:45. It runs via Limerick Junction new loop in both directions and on the Up journey calls at Ballybroy where it provides a fast connection to Dublin from the 08:00 ex Limerick, via Nenagh. It also calls at Portarlington (not Portlaoise as shown in the public timetable booklet) and connects there with the 07:45 ex Galway. On its return journey, the 18:45 ex Heuston Station serves Portarlington, Templemore and Thurles.

The evening Tralee train - formerly 18:45 - now departs at 19:00 and is accelerated by no less than 35 minutes, chiefly by faster running. The 08:05 from Tralee now departs at 08:20 and is accelerated by 15 minutes. Small reductions in the overall running times of several other trains have been made, one such improvement being rather illusory. Although not mentioned in the CIÉ advertisement heralding

the (very late) new Timetable, the accompanying press reports indicated that the down morning train to Sligo was accelerated by 15 minutes. In fact the running time is exactly as in the summer timetable, the saving resulting from the decision to run this train separately from Pearse Station at 09:25, as has always been the case in summertime. In winter, however, recent practice has been to run a combined Sligo and Westport train from Dublin at 09:10, the end portion of which on reaching Mullingar was detached and worked to Sligo by a Mullingar loco. The Sligo portion continued in the path used by the 09:25 summertime through train.

On the Dublin-Bray suburban line two new trains have been provided: 07:30 and 17:34 Connolly-Dalkey, returning at 08:10 and 18:20. All are Mondays-Fridays only and serve all stations, the only exception being the 18:20 which omits Lansdowne Road. The through South Eastern/Northern suburban trains are at last indicated to the public. Finally, a very welcome improvement - the 16:00 ex Limerick now connects into the 14:45 Dublin-Cork.

A New Railway

The speculation about the proposed new railway to connect the Waterford-Dungarvan line with the magnesite factory to be built at Ballinacourty came to an end on 4 September. CIÉ announced that it had applied to the Minister for Transport & Power for the necessary railway works order under the 1963 Transport Act. The order is to empower CIÉ to acquire land compulsorily and to give certain other powers. The official notice stated that CIÉ sought power, *inter alia*, to:

construct, maintain and operate a single line of railway 1.5 miles approximately in total length, forming a junction with the existing railway of the Board between the towns of Dungarvan and Waterford at or near a point thereon measured 49 miles 910 yards by reference to the milestones on that railway (*) and passing through the following townlands in the Barony of Decies-without-Drum and County of Waterford, viz., the townlands of Garrynageragh East and Tallacoolbeg in the parish of Kilgobnet, the townland of Tallacoolmore in the parish of Dungarvan, and the townland of Kilgrovan in the parish of Clonea, and terminating in the townland of Ballinacourty in the parish of Dungarvan and Barony and County aforesaid.

* The site of the junction is 3½ miles east of Dungarvan

From the junction with the existing line - closed since April 1967 to all traffic - the new branch will rise at 1:130 for the first ½ mile and then cross a "farm road". Then it will fall at 1:940 for a quarter mile to cross a public road, and fall again at 1:160 to another public road crossing, whence it will rise at 1:140 to its terminus at another public road. Presumably the line will then cross the road into the premises of Quigley Magnesite Ltd.

Other provisions of the Draft Order are that the time limit for construction is to be five years; it is to be part of the whole undertaking of CIÉ and may be used for any railway purpose; it may not be opened until it has been officially approved by the Inspecting Officer of Railways; and the level crossings are to be fully gated, CIÉ bearing the cost of the road signs.

Nothing has yet been said about the arrangements at the mine at Upper Dunbell, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny, where the prime raw material - dolomite - is to be produced. As the deposit is almost beside the railway the necessary sidings will probably be quite short and no railway works order will be required. A fleet of about 40 special wagons will soon be built at Inchicore for this traffic.

In an interview quoted in the "Sunday Press" of 11 August, Mr Jack Mulcahy, the Irish American industrialist who is the leading figure in the development, said that 10 or 11 trainloads of dolomite would be processed each day. It was hoped to produce 100,000 tons of magnesite per year which will be exported from Cork. While it has not yet been confirmed that this part of the traffic will go by rail, by the circuitous Limerick Junction route, it is unlikely that such a bulky produce would be transported

by road. The first sod on the 42-acre site for the factory at Ballinacourty was turned on 14 September. No work on the railway can commence until the railway works order has been issued. The Minister must wait until after 16 October before issuing it, that date being the latest for receiving objections to or representations about the scheme.

The Vacuum Train

The 20:30 Dublin-Dundalk Mail Train (Mondays-Fridays) has been known by the title "Vacuum Train" since 1958 when the GNR altered it from a two-piece railcar to a loco-hauled train conveying mails, perishables, containers and Guinness tanks. Although passengers were carried the train was not advertised for some years. On 20 August last the train reverted to railcar operation, the "tail" being sent in advance direct from North Wall to Dundalk where it forms part of the 22:15 goods.

To The Scrapyard

Among recent withdrawals of coaching vehicles for scrapping have been some interesting items. The most notable is 12-wheel Dining Car 353, which spent most of its life on the Cork-Rosslare run. Also withdrawn is 41M - a former MGWR stores van which had remained virtually unaltered since its building. Other coaches for scrapping include: 1284, 1898, 1092, 849, 2111, 1131, 1075, 1088, 347N and 181N.

Rolling Stock Developments

The snack cars mentioned in our last issue are now in traffic and all have been renumbered into the Dining Car series. The old and new numbers are as follows:

1419 now 2423	1423 now 2426
1420 now 2424	1426 now 2427
1421 now 2425	1427 now 2428

Each retains most of its original passenger seating; 56 seats are now provided instead of the original 70. The toilet at one end, as well as the doorway at that end, has been removed to make way for the kitchen and service counter. One complete bay of 10 seats has given way to a partitioned space for patrons, while another 4 seats have been removed to make for easier circulation. Nonetheless the arrangement is not particularly happy, especially on crowded trains. No indication is given in the new timetable of which trains have the rather limited facilities afforded by these cars.

Buffet Car 2420 has been extensively rebuilt and now has an enlarged kitchen in what was formerly the bar/kitchen area. A small bar has been fitted at one end where there was formerly a toilet. The toilet is also being abolished in the other buffet cars, at least as far as passengers are concerned. The compartments now bear "Staff" notices and are locked. Car 2420 is now fully available to diners and the total seating capacity is 35. The car, supported by snack car 2424, has been in use on the 18:35 Down and 09:15 Up Cork trains since mid-August.

Ex-GNR Dining Car 268N has been overhauled and fitted with B4 type bogies and it has returned to traffic on the Belfast line. Work on the series of Craven coaches has been almost completed at Inchicore as has the conversion of three suburban composite coaches to TPO vans. An interesting conversion has been that of 1325 - the conversion being of the interior from standard GSR to modern CIÉ. This early steel coach was in service on the 09:25 to Sligo in late August, resplendent internally. The whole interior has been repainted in a very pleasing light wood finish, both in the corridors and in the compartments, which retain the two-a-side reading lights. A novel form of seating has been introduced: the original seats have been replaced by new low-backed bench seats finished in the patterned fawn material made standard by CIÉ. There are now completely separate longitudinal headrests covered in light-coloured leatherette.

News From Silvermines

The zinc mine and processing plant of Mogul of Ireland Ltd. at Silvermines was officially opened on 11 September by Mr Jack Lynch, Taoiseach, who travelled to the ceremony by car. A special train, only the second passenger train to traverse the branch, conveyed the Minister for Labour, Dr Hillery, and other invited guests from Dublin to Silvermines and later to Limerick for further functions. The train was delayed by an incident near Ballybroy when the dynamo belt on the front steam-heating van came loose. While the train was running at speed the flapping belt disturbed some ballast which struck the underside of the carriage floors. The train made an emergency stop and the only damage found was a punctured fuel tank on the heating van which was abandoned at Ballybroy. The concentrates produced at Silvermines are taken to Foynes by rail for export. The traffic is still not running regularly but the first shipload left Foynes on 2 July.

Suburban Revival

Until very recently CIÉ's Dublin Suburban services have been very much in the doldrums - ever since the heavy service cuts of 13 June 1960. Little official interest was shown in these trains and nothing was done to render the service more attractive. Advertising was scanty and, in general, was directed at existing rail users and not at the apparently large numbers who travelled by road each day. However, times are changing! The road traffic problem in Dublin is rapidly becoming chaotic, with little effort being made to ease the situation. This summer some of the worst traffic jams on record have occurred. Some CIÉ buses were reported as taking over two hours for a 10-minute journey. Inevitably, frustration has driven more commuters to use the railways and a general improvement in the services has begun.

We have already reported the increased number of trains calling at Lansdowne Road and the integration of a few of the Northern and South-Eastern services by through running. This winter sees the introduction of extra trains (Page 7), while even better things are to come. It has been announced that work is to start in January next on the new station at MP 4½ between Raheny and Howth Junction; it will serve a district called Kilbarrack (though that name will not necessarily be used). A new road is to cross the railway at the site so CIÉ will be spared the expense of a footbridge. The station is due to open in July or August 1969, and will have car parks for 50 vehicles on each side of the line - a new feature for a CIÉ suburban. The "facelift" for Howth Junction is also imminent; in addition to the two footbridges already promised, a new station building with full booking, waiting and toilet facilities is to be built, as is a car park for 50 cars.

A recent survey showed that 74% of the commuters arrive at their home stations by foot, 12% by car, 9% by bus and 5% by bicycle. There is obviously a big market to be tapped as the bulk of those using the railway at present are those who live reasonably close to the station. In addition to Kilbarrack, new housing estates are under construction or are planned at various points alongside Dublin's railways. For some time past there have been moves by local residents for a halt in the Shankill area, between Killiney and Bray. Perhaps they will be encouraged in their objective by the opening of the new halt on the Northern section next year.

For many years past Dublin suburban services have been concentrated on the Northern section, the Dun Laoghaire line, and the now sadly-missed Harcourt Street line; there has been nothing on the GS&WR or MGWR lines. This is of course a reflection of the lack of growth of a suburban population in the district between Clondalkin and Lucan - a "green belt" the existence of which is in large part due to the absence of a main drainage scheme. It is intended to remedy this situation - hence the plan to transport sewers along the bed of the Grand Canal which has aroused such passion among waterway and tourist interests. Development of some sort is inevitable and with it will come the housing growth which is the nucleus of a commuter "supply". Already there are rumours of a train service to the city from the south-western and western suburbs.

One further stimulus to improve the suburban rail returns must surely be worth considering: an all-day fixed interval service. Granted that when the D&SER had one, in the 1920s, conditions were different, but NIR are giving a satisfactory service to a growing number of passengers with just such a service today.

Tivoli Sidings

Our report of the planned dolomite/magnesite traffic originating at Bennettsbridge and Ballinacourty, near Dungarvan, does not take cognisance of the fact that special sidings for the traffic will be installed at Tivoli on the Cobh/Youghal line. Cork County Council have given the necessary approval.

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS

Steam To Scarva

The first public NIR steam passenger trains on the former GNR lines ran on 13 July to convey some of the crowds from Portadown to Scarva for the annual Royal Black Preceptory demonstration. The loco involved, 56, ran light from York Road to Great Victoria Street and thence with empty coaches to Portadown. It then ran with passengers to Scarva, empty to Poyntzpass, and propelled the empty coaches back to Portadown as there are no run-round facilities at Poyntzpass. The procedure was reversed in the evening, the loco returning to York Road at 19:00.

Station Alterations

The hinged extension of No.2 Platform at Larne Harbour came into use on 12 July. It is in two portions, unlike the original arrangement at No.1 Platform, which was in one piece. The new sections are metal framed with wooden upper surfaces. At Coleraine extensive alterations are being made to the bar and buffet on both platform and street sides.

Speed Limits

The 50 mph limit on the Larne line, imposed after the Ballycarry derailment, is still in force despite vigorous work on the permanent way. A much more serious restriction of 60 mph was imposed on 13 July (after a serious derailment near Coleraine). It applies right through from Bleach Green Junction to Derry.

Automatic Crossings

No further work has been done on the installation of automatic barriers at level crossings, work being suspended at both Trummery and Drumbane, near Moira, soon after the Hixon disaster. Twelve sets of flashing lights for such installations have been stacked on Ballymena down platform but there is no indication where they may be installed. It is now virtually unknown for a Derry line train to run unchecked at some crossing or other.

Railcars: MED

All 12 units based at York Road are now fitted with 4-speed gears and in running order. Only trailer 523, which is being converted to centre-corridor type, remains in the shops. On the Bangor line, 34 and 35 are the latest pair to be converted while 16 and 17, the first set converted, have been repainted red and grey, despite the fact that other units are in worse condition. Nos. 32 and 33 are now in the shops and it is hoped to finish all the cars by Christmas.

Railcars: MPD

The latest conversions to Rolls Royce engines are 65, 57 and 59. Considerable trouble has been experienced with both RR and AEC-fitted units overheating, and representatives from both firms have been helping to cure the problems. As a result of these troubles steam haulage had to be resorted to on

the 17:30 to Larne Harbour several times during August and even to Portrush on 7 September. No.37 (AEC) was burned out at Ballymena on 24 July, having been detached from the 07:10 ex Portrush owing to poor performance. It burst into flames in the siding and the body was destroyed. No.53 is being converted to corridor type.

Railcars: DE

The new unit, 78, is almost ready for trials. No.75 suffered serious electrical damage on 26 August and is in the shops for repairs. No.72 was receiving mechanical repairs on 7 September. All eight units are required to work the winter schedules according to the roster. The four new trailers are not yet ready.

Railcars: AEC/BUT

The overhaul of 116 was followed by 120; driving trailer 586 has been done also. The new red/grey livery gives it a striking appearance - in contrast to 585 which is still in a rather dirty green. BUT units 123 and 128, and trailers 573 and 584, are freshly painted, while second brake 592 is receiving a new side as the original was badly rotted.

Railcars: 105 ("G")

This ex-GNR unit has been burned after lying derelict for 2 years at Grosvenor Road Goods Yard.

Steam Locomotives

Nos. 8, 9, 26 and 52 have been taken away by road for scrap. Nos. 1, 2, 7, 48 and 57 are to follow. 54 is still "dead" but virtually complete. It is anticipated that steam locos will remain on NIR till the end of the spoil contract in January 1970. No.171, 4-4-0, on lease to the RPSI, returned from overhaul at Harland & Wolff on 26 July, bearing a suitably engraved plate in place of the GNR(I) building plate.

Winter Timetable

The winter schedules took effect on 2 September - two weeks earlier than on CIÉ. The Bangor and Larne line services are virtually unchanged and the new service between Belfast and Portadown introduced on 24 June is continued. Several minor changes, mostly extra stops and slight time adjustments, have been made. There are also three extra trains - 13:05 Belfast to Lisburn returning at 13:40 (Monday-Saturday) and 23:10 from Lisburn to Belfast on Sundays. The last mentioned used to run empty.

Apart from the welcome restoration of winter trains on the Portrush Branch, mentioned in "Station Survey", there have been sweeping changes - not all welcome - in the Belfast-Derry service. Because of the 60 mph restriction on the line, all the best trains are slower by 5 to 18 minutes. The fastest timing for the 92¾ mile journey is now as much as 125 minutes, with 6 stops, a far cry from the 110 minute schedule (also with 6 stops) introduced on 3 February 1958. Admittedly the latter was too difficult for punctuality to be maintained over the largely single-track route, but the present schedules will not enhance the image of the railway in comparison with a steadily improving road.

Apart from many departure times being altered by 5 to 20 minutes and consequential changes caused by deceleration, the 08:10 Belfast-Derry (Monday-Friday) introduced in the summer is changed to 09:40 (Monday-Saturday) and it takes a bus connection at Antrim from early flights into Aldergrove Airport. In the up direction there is a new 22:15 Derry-Coleraine which also works the last Portrush Branch service.

Almex Tickets

A number of Almex ticket issuing machines have been obtained and it is intended that they will eventually displace most card ticket issues. They are Type 99 machines suitable for use either on trains or in booking offices. Unlike the Almex machines in use on CIÉ, these machines normally issue tickets from a paper roll: white for tickets issued on trains, pink for station issues, and green for test purposes.

Thicker card inserts, partially pre-printed, will be used for weekly and monthly tickets. There are ten characters in the top row on the ticket as follows:

I or O	Inward or Outward
Fare	00/0 to 99/11 ^d
Classification:	S Single D Day Return Z Testing, etc.
Serial	000 to 999
Station	Indicated by 00 to 99

A second line of characters shows the date and the machine number. Below this are letters: F, Sa, Su, MT. Those are to indicate, by punching, the day on which a return journey on a weekend return ticket is made and thereby to prevent the ticket being re-used. The machines will not be used to issue ordinary returns.

So far only one machine is in regular use; it is at York Road to issue tickets to passengers arriving from unstaffed halts. Two others were used on 13 July at Queen's Quay from noon until 16:00 to issue adult and child day returns to Bangor. Others have been used intermittently for staff instruction purposes.

The station numbers are:

- 01 - 13 Belfast (Queen's Quay) - Bangor, including Craigavad, which is closed at present.
- 20 - 38 Belfast (York Road) - Larne Harbour.
- 40 - 64 Belfast (York Road) - Derry, including University (55) and Portrush (56). 42 is reserved for a new halt between Bleach Green and Monkstown if it is built. Belfast and Whiteabbey have two numbers: 20 & 40 and 21 & 41, respectively.
- 70 - 85 Belfast (Great Victoria Street) - Portadown. 79 is for a new halt past Lisburn and 84 for Craigavon, past Lurgan, both of which are unbuilt.

Stations Old And New

As a preliminary to the demolition of the station buildings at Great Victoria Street, to make way for a new hotel, the buffet/waiting room which was built in 1962 has been closed and replaced by a much smaller one located in the former Enquiry Office. The Booking Office has been reduced to 4 windows but the remaining space is not yet in use.

At Portadown most of the remaining sidings in the goods yard have been lifted recently as a preliminary to the erection of a new station. Heavy roadworks are in progress on either side of the station forecourt and a huge steam pile-driver is used on the site of a new Bann bridge.

SOCIETIES ON THE MOVE

IRRS: Munster Area

The Munster Area of the Irish Railway Record Society arranged another of its fascinating "little" outings to out of the way places on 20 July, when the Castlemungret Cement Factory Branch was traversed. This first ever passenger train on the line consisted of C220 and one coach - standard 1474. After a pause at the factory for an official group photo, the party were able to inspect the extensive track layout and loading facilities.

RPSI: St. Ciaran

The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland returned to CIÉ metals on 14 September when they

enjoyed the “St Ciaran” tour - a two-day affair from Belfast to Athlone and back. NIR Jeep No.4 hauled a six-coach train to Dublin, where the passengers transferred to a CIÉ train of five coaches and a luggage van. When No.4 had been turned, it hauled this train to Enfield, double-headed by the Society’s own J15 0-6-0 No.186. After lunch, partaken of in another train at Enfield, No.186 continued alone to Athlone with her train. No.4 returned to Dublin with the “lunch train”. In the evening 186 made a return trip to Ballinasloe, and next morning went to Roscommon and back before commencing the return journey to Dublin, via Portarlington. No.4 went to Portarlington in mid-morning with the “lunch train” and returned later to Dublin with the party. No.186 followed to Dublin with the “lunch train” and then took the participants to Dun Laoghaire Pier and back. The last stage of the journey was the run of No.4 to Belfast with the NIR set of coaches. This ambitious tour was an enjoyable success.

IRRS: Kilkenny

The Dublin parent body of the IRRS has also arranged a steam outing - Dublin to Kilkenny and back on Sunday, 29 September. Rostered for the train was RPSI loco 186, generously made available as a replacement for CIÉ loco 184 which is feeling the strain of “Darling Lili”.

News Extra: “Open Day”

Sunday, 14 July, was “Open Day” at CIÉ’s Inchicore Works - the fourth such occasion. Normally a vast empty place (the works staff have too much to do instead of walking around!) the huge expanse of the Works was the fairground through which some 20,000 people strolled, or just sat, or toured. At first thought, such an occasion might seem admirably suited to those of highly technical mind ... and no one else. But the success of the Inchicore gala days springs from the happy blend of sport, technical displays, refreshments, music, demonstrations and entertainment. There is literally something for everyone. The CIÉ pensioners are transported by special bus to a marquee where they can enjoy refreshment and reminisce. The children can climb over the steam locos preserved by CIÉ - two of them, that is, the third is busy shuttling back and forth from the centre of the works up to the main line with over-capacity loads. The ladies can listen to the bands or perhaps watch the dancing and judo exhibitions.

On this occasion the railway enthusiasts’ societies were CIÉ’s guests at “Open Day” which is normally confined to employees and their relatives and friends. The members played their part by contributing to an already excellent programme - one by mounting a comprehensive model railway layout and the other by exhibiting pictorial and graphic evidence of the fascinating evolution of our railways. Both society stands were focal points of interest, as were the many places throughout the works where skilled personnel demonstrated the complex techniques which are part of running a railway.

Perhaps the one criticism that readily springs to mind may be voiced - there is too much to see! It would take a succession of “Open Days” to do justice to the complex that is the modern Inchicore Works of today.

STATION SURVEY

Portrush (J.R.L. Currie)

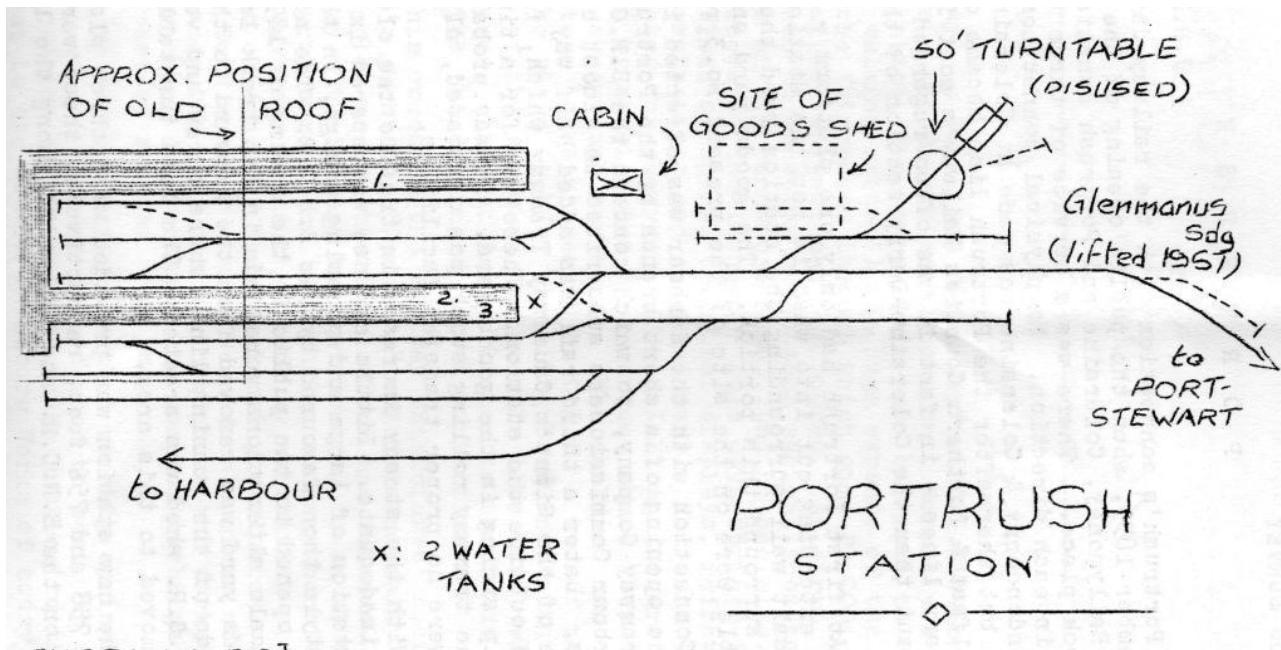
Portrush’s connection with the railway dates from 4 December 1855, when the public opening of the Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine & Portrush Junction Railway took place. There was a service of three trains a day in each direction. No physical connection with the Londonderry & Coleraine was made at Coleraine until 1860, but thereafter the Portrush line became one of the Belfast & Northern Counties Railway’s most important secondary lines - in fact it was often regarded as more important than the Coleraine-Derry section of the main line.

At first Portrush had only one platform - an open affair extending out into what is now the station

square. The basalt wall surrounding the station yard then continued to surround this portion. The goods yard and engine turntable were on the site of the present No.3 platform.

Connection with the Harbour was effected in 1862, with the opening of a short branch by the Portrush Harbour Tramway Company, to which concern the B&NCR and the Harbour Commissioners subscribed in almost equal amounts. Later a third rail was added half way down for the use of the Giant's Causeway Tramway which, from 1883, started outside the station. There was for a time a tranship siding in the goods yard. It was probably here that the tramway rolling stock was offloaded, although there were no proper transfer facilities.

With the steady increase in traffic the old station became inadequate. Little expense was spared in erecting a new station of large and pleasing design, in the mock Tudor style then favoured by the B&NCR. The new building was opened to the public in the spring of 1893. Large-scale alterations were made in the track layout. The goods yard was removed from the seaward to the landward side of the running line, where a new and very typical B&NCR shed was erected. The loco turntable was also removed to this area.



The new station was provided with three platforms. At 753, 758 and 756 feet, respectively, these were the longest on the B&NCR and are still among the longest in Ireland. Eleven coaches and an engine may be accommodated at each. The siding accommodation was very extensive and, by utilising the Harbour branch (a line much used for its original purpose), well over 100 coaches could be dealt with. As recently as June 1966 there were more than 70 in the yard on at least two occasions. Run-round facilities were provided at each platform, but that from No.1 was dispensed with some years ago.

The present signal cabin (45 levers, including 11 spare) was built on the same site as an earlier one. The distant signal is fixed at "Caution" and the Inner Homes for the different platforms, once mounted on a gantry, are now one signal with a platform number indicator mounted below. A calling-on arm is fitted near the bottom of this post. Several shunting arms on the old gantry were replaced by standard discs. The present block sections are to Portstewart (2½ miles; the only intermediate station on the branch) and to Coleraine (6 Miles). Switching-out apparatus is installed at Portstewart and the normal block section is to Coleraine.

The 1930s saw Portrush's golden days. Every morning the 08:10 to Belfast, better known as the "North

“Atlantic Express” stormed up the 1:70 out of the station, on what eventually became a 73-minute schedule for the 67¾ miles to Belfast. Then there were those other names which are fast going into oblivion - the “Golfers’ Express”, the “Portrush Flyer”. Likewise the specials on fireworks nights from Magherafelt, Cookstown and all points between, when anything from the latest Mogul to “Jubilee” was liable to turn up - with a GNR ‘Q’ to add variety! Half-a-crown excursion expresses ran from Belfast on Sundays.

Traffic on the branch was almost equally divided between local and through Belfast trains. The line cradled the NCC’s tentative experiments with a railbus in 1924. Later it was worked by a railcar, and by the ex-B&CDR diesel-electric loco during its first days on the NCC.

The Harbour Tramway was closed in 1949, the upper portion being retained as a siding long enough for two trains. This stub is exceedingly steeply graded and two or even three engines are required to shunt trains off it. The large open space was sold for an amusement arcade, thus robbing the big cafe (closed since) of its sea view. Goods traffic ceased in 1955; it was never heavy, except during World War II when much stone was carried from Glenmanus Siding (located just inside the Outer Home signal). Finally, it was decided to end the winter passenger services, and this was done from 10 September 1960. They were resumed temporarily for the Christmas and Easter periods, services being fully restored in May 1961. This pattern of intermittent train services continued (less the Christmas workings) until 1967, when the line was opened only for regular services in July and August, with a few specials in May and June. Since last year, however, there have been further alterations, which are described below.

During the summer of 1960 the goods shed was demolished and its sidings removed. A crossover linking No.2 platform to a siding was also taken out. Lastly, the station roof, the wooden trusses of which had become rotten over a period of nearly 70 years, was partially removed. Only the portion over the concourse was left in situ. Glenmanus Siding has also gone; it was last used to load ballast after the disastrous floods of August 1960. The station escaped undamaged but the line was closed for three days as the track was flooded at Portstewart.

How much longer the Portrush line would have survived as it was is a matter for conjecture. Happily, however, residential traffic for the new University of Ulster (located near Coleraine) looks like proving its salvation. A new halt, simply named University, has been built on the branch and Portrush’s many summertime guest houses are being used to accommodate some of the students.

As a result, the wintertime branch service has been restored with effect from 2 September. Of the 13 services each way during the academic term time, 8 will operate to and from Portrush. In addition there will be one empty train each way. The Saturday service will consist of 8 trains. There is even a service, albeit on a very modest scale, on Sundays: 4 Down and 3 Up trains, one train returning empty. The trains and the reasonable season ticket rates will, it is hoped, be successful.

Feature Section

DARLING LILI

Gerard D’Arcy

When - in 1963 - steam locomotives ceased to be a part of the regular scene on CIÉ it looked as if the last chapter in the long history of the steam locomotive had been written, at least as far as the southern-based enthusiast was concerned. But the Rail Tour of 1964 and the various specials from north of the

border have caused the book to be reopened and further chapters inserted. The film "Darling Lili" has now made a further chapter possible.

In recent years Hollywood moguls have been attracted to Ireland as a place suitable for film production on quite a large scale. This year alone has seen the shooting of large-budget films in Dublin and Kilkenny, while Co. Galway has resounded all summer to the war cries of those re-enacting the days of "Alfred the Great". Paramount Films also chose Ireland this summer as the location for the filming of "Darling Lili", the scenario of which is set in the days of World War I.

In all this film will cost in the region of 15 million dollars, and it is being shot in 70mm Super Panavision in colour. The leading female part is being played by Miss Julie Andrews, a star of worldwide popularity. Many of the scenes were filmed in and around Dublin, the unit later going somewhat further afield.

Railways play quite a part in the story of the film, and as the diesel-electric had not come on the scene in 1914, CIÉ obligingly produced a rather more appropriate form of motive power in the form of '101' class 0-6-0 No.184, which some devotees will surely regard as playing the real star part! On 27 May No.184 came to life with a trial run to Sallins. Then, on 6 June, after more trials she ventured across to Pearse Station, her off-white livery and train of 3 old side-corridor timber coaches resulting in some startled glances. Six days later she was towed to Ballsbridge Siding to be groomed for her film role. This consisted of a repaint in an olive green livery with lining of a lighter shade.

In the meantime her train was assembled, comprising wooden bogies vehicles 1129, 1125, 1122, 1126, 1119, 1127 and van 1117 - all of exactly correct vintage, and GS&WR origin. To assist 184 in hauling this load diesel-electric loco A16 was disguised as a brake van. To do so, the telltale panels on the side of the loco were covered with wood, as were the ends. Suitable framing enabled flush ends to be fitted, obscuring the cab windows. The lot was painted in the standard livery of black, white and brown which - along with the coach numbers - was retained for this "Austrian" train of World War I!

At 10:23 on Saturday 15 June a still undisguised A16 passed through Pearse Station towing 184 to Sheriff Street Yard to await further orders. Soon afterwards the "conversion" of A16 took place. On 22 June A16 went to Heuston Station with the coaches, all of which now sported rich red velvet curtains in each compartment, while at 19:11 on the same day 184 steamed across to Heuston herself. This was it!

For the occasion all modern rolling stock was cleared out of view and the judicious use of suitable properties gave the station an authentic pre-war look. Filming was carried on in the late evening and early morning, among the scenes shot being the departure of 184 with her 8-coach (6 + van + 'van') in full cry.

In the following week the locale changed to the Drogheda-Navan line, about a mile on the Drogheda side of Beauparc. No.184, A16 and the train all went there. This was an ideal choice of line as it is unused for most of the day, being traversed only around midday by the returning goods from Kingscourt (which goes out from Drogheda at an unspeakably early hour!). The daily routine involved the locos and train being in attendance at the site most of the day. No.184 was stabled overnight at Drogheda, while A16 and the train remained at Navan. All retired to Navan at midday to allow the loco crews to have lunch and the Kingscourt goods to go home to Drogheda. This cosy routine was rather shattered one day when the loco on the goods failed and all had to wait for a relief.

In addition to the period train the action called for the services of some vintage aircraft. The machines used were replicas specially made for a previous film and again pressed into service. One of their duties was to attack the train with various armaments - a process cleverly carried out. The aeroplanes "went through the motions" for the cameras while, at the appropriate time, technicians aboard the train detonated tiny charges in specially prepared coach panels giving the appearance of bullet holes. The illusion of great damage was furthered by a lot of broken windows. The ultimate, however, was the

almost complete demolition of a coach (which had, of course, been purchased from CIÉ by the film company) by an explosion. To heighten the effect the coach had beforehand been virtually dismantled and then put together again loosely enough so that when the button was pressed bits flew in all directions.

As beffitted the austere conditions of wartime, No.184 was grimy looking. Not that her new livery had been misapplied, but rather that the Art Department of the production team had gone to a great deal of trouble to ensure an authentically dirty appearance. The “make-up” was extremely well done, as evidenced by the startling contrast in the appearance of 184 when she took a day “off the set” to appear at the Inchicore Works Open Day on Sunday 14 July. Then, in clean film livery, she operated short trips propelling brake-standard 1907 from the new Boiler House up to the long siding parallel to the main Cork line, much to the delight of the vast crowd of adults and children who watched and travelled in her train.

Immediately after her duties at Open Day, 184 went back to her film commitments. She was kept busy until the end of July when the shooting was finally completed. A16 returned to Dublin on 26 July with the train, while 184 followed a little later. The DE had its wooden appendages removed and returned to normal service in a livery comprising black on its ends, buffer beam, and along the sides from a point about a quarter of the way along the side from one cab to the same distance from the other cab - the rest of the sides are black and brown.

Some of the bogies have been scrapped (or are awaiting that fate) but van 1117 is back in service on more mundane 1968-style duties. No.184 is “resting” but will no doubt reappear once more before long, enabling us to compile some more chapters of that book on the steam locomotive in Ireland.