

THE

# **IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS**

Volume 15

May 1969

No.2

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### **EDITORIAL**

To some railway students comparisons between railway companies in Ireland in years gone by were fascinating and often very revealing. Those who admired and, indeed, took a pride in the activities of the Great Northern Railway very often found the operations of the post-war CIÉ rather pitiful. Traffic and rolling stock, along with antiquated locomotives seemed to offer little hope for the future of railways in the greater part of Ireland. In the early 1950s the target of admiration was the now UTA, which was just beginning a career which was to last for nearly two decades. Now in 1969 the wheel has turned, and the "with it" railway system is that of CIÉ. Shorn of its uneconomic activities (very largely, that is) and also of its ancient equipment, the present-day CIÉ system is ready to tackle the job of fulfilling its duties in a really first-class manner. True, a Government subsidy is still needed, but the general atmosphere is one of hope.

In the north, the declining years of the UTA were difficult, to say the least. A long spell of Government maladministration reduced the morale of the staff to a low ebb, very largely because of the ruthless policy of rail closures. The storm which culminated in the departure of Mr John Coulthard from the scene did not help. However, since the formation of NIR things have improved somewhat and it is possible that a new era is dawning. Apart from the introduction of new railcars and locomotives new halts have been provided and stations improved, and a branch line reopened. Excellent progress - but two important jobs have yet to be tackled. There should be an intensive drive to create new traffic revenue from quarters hitherto unexplored and, coupled with this, the facilities should be provided which will both help to win more traffic and to handle it when the "battles" are won.

New traffic will certainly come if commuters are wooed as they are in Dublin, and both excursion and commuter traffic would grow if the Belfast Central Railway link were reopened. We hear periodic tales that such a development is imminent but it is one which should take place immediately, receiving immediate priority. We emphasise the word immediate!

In the matter of new stations we feel that investigations - rather in the manner of the CIÉ suburban and outer suburban area surveys - should be made into the re-opening of Bessbrook station, with a view to developing a Newry-Belfast traffic and thus making the double track cross-border line more remunerative. A road connection from Newry to Bessbrook station with a fast rail journey afterwards would surely be preferable to Belfast-bound travellers than a slow trip by bus on choked roadways. It is fortunate that NIR has an enthusiastic management and we hope that it will get the Government assistance that is required for modern developments. In particular, the neglect of past years must not be allowed to happen again.

## SOME RECENT ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### **Railway World**

January	NIR Spoil Trains (Photographs and timetable) Irish Railways in 1868 (Article)
March	CDR Train (Photograph) RPSI Belfast/Cork Tour (Paragraph)
April	CIÉ Freightliners (Paragraph) “Brian Boru” Railtour (Paragraph)

### **Railway Magazine**

February	County Donegal Remains (Article)
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### **Acknowledgements**

We wish to thank all those correspondents who have contributed to this issue. Special thanks are due to Mr M.P. O’Conlain for his assistance, and also to Mr P. O’Cuimin.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **“The Engineering Industry of the North of Ireland”, W.E. Coe (David & Charles)**

This is a rather broad-based book which may appeal to the student of historical and economic trends in transport and engineering. Its price and the rather brief treatment of railways will not attract the railway enthusiast although it contains valuable references and a bibliography. Also of interest are the details in the text of engineering firms - often small - which were numbered among the makers of equipment for Irish railways.

### **“Irish Passenger Steamship Services, Vol 1: North of Ireland”, D.B. McNeill (David & Charles)**

Dr McNeill has a deserved name as an authority on Irish steamer services, as evidenced by the two excellent Belfast Transport Museum publications to his credit. Now he has given us a well-nigh exhaustive volume covering the multitude of cross-channel and local steamer services from ports right around the northern coastline from Sligo to Belfast Lough. Inland services are also dealt with, as are some ferry services. A general introduction prefaces the nine chapters. In each of these the text is suitably divided into sections according to a particular route or service, while the individual ships are dealt with in separate paragraphs. Extensive fleet lists are appended to the text. In addition to the general index there is a useful index of ships. There are 31 half-tones and 3 maps. Although the arrangement of the book is such that at first sight it may appear difficult reading, this is not so. The text is enlivened throughout with flashes of humour which add to the reader’s enjoyment. As many of the shipping services described had strong railway connections this book is recommended as important background material for the railway historian.

### **“The County Donegal Railways”, E.M. Patterson (David & Charles)**

This is a new edition of a work which first appeared in 1962 and which set the pattern for the publishers’ “standard railway histories”. The text has been fully revised and considerably expanded. There are 50 pictures and over 30 line illustrations, some of which are new. Even more than the first edition this is an essential volume for the bookcase.

### **“Transport In Ireland 1880-1910”, Patrick Flanagan (Transport Research Associates)**

In just two years Transport Research Associates have established themselves as publishers of specialist

works on Irish transport. With "Transport in Ireland 1880-1910" they offer a collection of universal appeal that will attract the attention of specialist and layman alike. The book consists of prints from the renowned Lawrence Collection of the National Library of Ireland together with explanatory text by Patrick Flanagan. Some 140 plates are shown, representative of all aspects of transport in Ireland during the chosen period. Many of the illustrations are actual size, while other negatives have been suitably "cropped". The page size used is 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and the binding is in black cloth. An attractive cello-glazed dust cover is provided.

Considerable care has been taken in the selection of the illustrations and a well balanced treatment results. The text is surprisingly informative, as in books of this kind all too often the pictures are left to speak for themselves. However, the scholarship of Dr Flanagan has ensured that each picture is complemented by informative description and frequently pungent comments. On matters of which the reviewer has special knowledge he has found that a great deal of accurate information has been given most succinctly. Dr Flanagan's opinions are his own, but as they are informative and stimulating they increase the value of the book by adding a necessary personal touch to the factual record.

The presentation of the work is austere and behind this one senses a proper respect for the work of Lawrence and his team. It would have been easy to succumb to the temptation to make an "art book" with these beautiful pictures, and to have destroyed their fresh impact by a self-conscious format. As it is the layout is clean and straightforward. A large typeface has been used and one questions the use of a dense black ink for this. The quality of the print impression is uneven but this is a minor defect. The quality of the blocks is uniformly good, though a loss has inevitably occurred compared with a direct print. This book is unreservedly recommended. It is the first time the publishers have stepped outside strictly specialist bounds. They have produced a book of universal appeal but also one of great value to the researcher.

**Padraig O'Cuimin**

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## News Section

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### **CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN**

#### **Lifting Progress**

Mallow/Dungarvan: By 31 March the lifting gang had completed the removal of rails to Fermoy station, leaving a further 17 miles to Mallow still to be removed. The rails have been lifted in near record time, but miles of sleepers and chairs, as well as other materials, remain in situ. These stretch from Carrickabrick Viaduct, east of Fermoy, to a point beyond Tallow Road (where the sidings are still in place) with a break at Ballyduff station. At the latter place there is a point of entry for the removal of materials by road, the vehicles - tractor and trailer - travelling along the ballast. Many of the sleepers are being sold on the spot, but those suitable for further railway use are being transported to Mallow.

Fermoy, Bridge No.30: One reason underlying the priority given to the lifting of the rails from the Lismore/Fermoy stretch of line was that Bridge No.30 over the main Dublin/Cork road at Fermoy station was urgently required for installation at the new cement factory siding at Platin, near Drogheda, on the Navan/Kingscourt branch. Work on the removal of the flooring and cross girders of the bridge commenced in the second week of April and on the 16<sup>th</sup> the two main girders were scheduled for lifting. On this date the Inchicore steam crane was on the spot at the station side of the bridge, securing one girder by chain while the far side was secured by hawser to a mobile crane standing on the road below. As the latter commenced to lift the girder dislodged the retaining wall on the embankment and sent it crashing onto the roadway below, snapping electric cables as it fell. The rest of the operation

was completed without mishap and the girders were swung onto nearby flat wagons.

Once the girders had been safely stowed on the wagons their journey to Platin began. At 19:00 B108 left Fermoy for Mallow with the bridge and steam crane in tow. The re-erection of the bridge was scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> April.

Thurles/Clonmel: No further lifting has taken place on the branch and the section from Horse & Jockey southwards remains in place.

### **News From Tivoli**

Work commenced in April on clearing the site for the new sidings at Tivoli. These will initially serve the dolomite traffic from Ballinacourty to the Roofchrome factory on the new Tivoli Industrial Estate. In addition a new siding will serve the Caltex depot nearby, for the supply of oil to Ballinacourty. It is anticipated that at a later date further sidings will be added to serve installations yet to be built. It is also thought that a rail connection will be made to the new B+I Ferryport.

The sidings will leave the Cork/Cobh Junction section at MP 167, east of the former Tivoli station. In mid-April the only rail materials delivered to the site consisted of a crossover from Fermoy Station. Plans were then being finalised for another operation of great interest in the Tivoli area. The road overbridge near MP 166½, on the Cork side of Tivoli station, has been a constant hazard to road users. Consequently, on Friday, 9 May, an operation commencing at midnight will see the replacement of the old bridge by a new structure of precast reinforced concrete. During the work traffic will use the approach road to the Industrial Estate and then cross the railway near MP 167 by a temporary level crossing. Cork Corporation will pay £5,000 towards the cost of the new bridge, which was made at the Inchicore Works.

### **Dunkettle Crossing**

A new level crossing protected by automatic barriers is planned for a site immediately west of the closed Dunkettle station. The crossing will serve a new road being built to serve the new B+I Ferryport at Tivoli. The road is being built on reclaimed land, and will not be in use for some time, although the Cork/Swansea car ferry commences its sailings in May.

### **Beware!**

Up evening local trains now bear "Connolly Station" stickers to avoid confusion at Pearse Station.

### **Limerick Traffic**

The wholesale grocery firm of Messrs Looney & Co Ltd have acquired land from CIÉ and constructed new premises. The buildings are served by a siding and the firm are negotiating with their Dublin suppliers to have all consignments sent to them by rail in future.

### **Speed Limit**

From 1 April the Minister for Local Government introduced an overall speed limit of 60 mph on all roads where other speed limits do not apply. The announcement brought a storm of protest from motorists and motoring organisations, and also a tongue-in-cheek response from CIÉ who doubtless are delighted with the new measure. The large Government advertisements in the national press announcing the new restriction were very nicely overshadowed by the CIÉ announcements which were no smaller than 15" x 7¾". These carried a photograph of a glass and were captioned: "The above gin and tonic was photographed on board the "Sláinte" CIÉ Express on its way from Dublin to Cork. Quite a trip! We average a mile a minute to get you to Cork in less than 3 hours. And to do this we are often needling 75 mph on the clock ..." It is to be hoped that after the initial shock of the Minister's announcement passes the motorist will be tempted to try the CIÉ gin and tonic!

## **Inspection Cars**

Drewry Inspection Car No.4 of 1927 has been renovated at North Wall, Dublin, and converted for use as a track recording unit to help locate irregularities in the lines. It has been repainted in the standard livery of black, golden brown and white. No.5 from the same series has been acquired for possible conversion to 3ft gauge by the Irish Steam Preservation Society.

## **Gantry Cranes**

The latest stations to receive gantry cranes for container traffic are Galway and Claremorris, where new sidings and crane tracks are under construction at present. All Guinness traffic in kegs, except that for Belfast, is now handled in special Lancashire flats by the gantry crane at the Guinness Sidings in Heuston Station, and it is intended to transfer the loading of the large Guinness tanks for Belfast from the North Wall to the same location.

## **Together Again**

The Rugby special from Limerick on 8 February was of interest in that it boasted diners 2400 and 2401 built as a pair in 1931 but almost never together.

## **More Liner Trains**

The Minister for Transport & Power has decided that he cannot justify asking the B+I Line to further defer their decision to withdraw their Cork/Liverpool freight shipping services. With effect from 21 April an additional liner train on Mondays and Wednesdays was introduced from Dublin to Cork, returning on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The sea service will continue until 1 June, leaving Liverpool on Wednesdays and returning from Cork on Fridays. The new rail service is restricted to 40 mph (all other such trains run at 50 mph) and its make-up includes a number of conflat specially adapted to carry loads 24ft long which project over the buffers. The greatest care will be required to ensure that such wagons are never shunted together! The intervening vehicles will carry normal ISO 20ft containers. The B+I have plans for a new freightliner terminal at Dublin Docks, but British Rail have recently been refused planning permission for a similar installation.

## **Railcar Notes And News**

Because of the demands of the Dublin suburban services on the railcar fleet only two main line trains are now railcar operated: the 09:00 to Rosslare and the 08:20 from Sligo (and their return workings). Several cars idle for varying periods are being repaired: 2600/10/27 (AEC) and 906N (BUT) are among them, and the sole remaining green railcar, 2647, will shortly be dealt with.

## **The Ballinacourty Branch: Progress**

Considerable progress has been made on the construction of the 1.5 mile branch near Dungarvan. The site of the roadbed has been cleared of topsoil and cabbages (which were there in profusion) and dry filling is being laid at present. The contractors are Public Works Limited, a concern involved in building the M1 motorway in Northern Ireland, as well as carrying out work on the site of the new cement factory at Platin, County Meath. By early May the fencing and gate erection should be completed and later in the month the work of laying the track should be in hand. The rails to be used are at present piled in Dungarvan station, having been salvaged from the Lismore/Dungarvan section following its abandonment. At the terminus of the line the new dolomite processing plant is slowly rising from a sea of mud; it is due to be completed at the end of the year, when Tivoli-bound trains will begin. It is interesting to note that the line runs very close to the popular Clonea Strand, as near as 200 yards.

## **Clondalkin Derailment**

A considerable length of the Up Main line on either side of Clondalkin was torn up when an axle of a

HV on the 21:10 Up Night Mail broke in the early hours of 17 January. After single-line working had been established on the Down line the train service was resumed. There were some severe delays - the 10:00 to Limerick and the 10:45 to Cork departed as one combined train at 11:20. In the Up direction, the 08:20 ex Tralee was 131 minutes late while the evening trains fared little better. On the 18<sup>th</sup> the 10:00 to Limerick and the 15:30 ex Limerick operated between that city and Ballybroy only, connecting there with the 10:45 Down and 15:30 Up Cork trains. Further pressure on the single line was relieved by diverting the 09:30 Up and 19:00 Down Galway trains via Mullingar. Double line working could not be resumed until the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> and there was a lengthy speed restriction in force until repairs were completed in late March.

### **Liner Trains**

CIÉ's first freight liner train commenced running on 6 January. It runs from Cork to East Wall Yard, Dublin, Mondays to Fridays inclusive, and returns at 23:45. There are connections from and to Limerick at Limerick Junction and, if required, from and to Roscrea at Ballybroy. The train is limited to 20 conflat, usually hauled by a B141 class loco, and conveys containers for several owners, but it is not in any way connected with the B+I line's project to replace its Cork-Liverpool shipping service with a liner train to Dublin. The train is fully vacuum-braked and runs without a brake van, the guard travelling on the loco with the driver.

### **A New Station**

Construction of the new station at Kilbarrack, County Dublin, began in mid-February. It is located at milepost 4½ on the Dublin/Belfast main line, only ¼ mile south from Howth Junction, where extensive renovations have started. The platform faces, L-shaped concrete castings, were unloaded at the site on 24 and 26 February. They were put in position by a contractor's crane. The coping stones have since been put in place. The halt is scheduled to be opened in June and, although surrounded by housing sites in an area remote from the Dublin City buses, it would appear as if a long time will occur before it is profitable, all the more so in view of the long awaited improvements at Howth Junction - within hailing distance.

### **Loco News**

C206 and C222 were observed at Inchicore Works in February, being fitted with General Motors engines and multiple-unit controls suitable for working with B141 and B181 class locos. Of the further 28 A-class locos to be rebuilt with GM engines A35/39/41/42 were stripped to receive the new engines, delivery of which was delayed by a US dock strike. A11/48/49 are also stripped and seem likely to be similarly converted, as is A54, which has had 1964 collision damage almost completely repaired. A59R appeared on the Belfast line on 14 April working on the "Enterprise" services. The prohibition on B121-class locos working with the cab in the rear has been lifted for a few special locations: Rathmore to the Fry Cadbury Siding, Ennis to Clarecastle, and in and around the North Wall.

### **Catering Vehicles**

The following have been withdrawn from service: Kitchen Car 1130, Dining Cars 2092 and 2093, and ex-GNR buffet cars 97N and 170N. Further standard buffets have been fitted with B4 bogies, a conversion not entirely successful. Kitchen Car 2403 was damaged by a gas explosion at Heuston Station on 3 January. It was repaired in time for the Rugby special on 25 January. Buffet car 2407 is being extensively rebuilt as a kitchen car at present. Its equipment is almost entirely new apart from some items recovered from 1130. It will have a small bar at one end. Buffet car 268N has again been slightly rebuilt, losing in the process the unusual 'portholes' in its side beside the bar.

### **Heating Vans**

Ten new heating vans are under construction for CIÉ at the Dundalk Engineering Works. They are

Dutch-designed and will be mounted on Dutch bogies which can be seen in the Works yard, and are intended for service next winter.

## CIÉ Summer Timetable: 9 June - 14 September

Advance details:

07:45 ex Cork (slow)	To run as express, departs 08:10, arrives 11:00
18:30 ex Waterford	Deferred to 19:05; Rosslare connection
19:00 to Galway	Advanced to 18:45; time cut by 20 minutes
11:45 Limerick-Nenagh-Dublin	Cancelled this year
19:00 to Westport	Now a separate train from Galway "Cu na Mara"
13:40 ex Sligo (return of 14:05 Down)	Leaves Sligo at 18:45
12:20 ex Cork (Sundays)	Deferred to 15:30
09:30 ex Galway (Sundays)	A new train; to run till 31 August

## Station Developments

Tara Street: The girders of the old shelters spanning the tracks were removed on 19 January and on the same day a small bridge which carries the line over a scrap yard was renewed. The work has involved the demolition of the waiting room on the down side and the long disused signal cabin on the up side. The new walls and roof are of corrugated material fixed to a steel framework.

Lansdowne Road: This is the latest suburban station renovated.

Killester And Raheny: Ramps are being provided for up-side access at both places to replace the original steep steps which were dangerous for prams.

Ballybroughy: The diamond crossing and double slips controlling access to the loop platform from both the Dublin and Nenagh directions have been removed and replaced by a simple turnout from the down line. It is therefore necessary to turn all trains to and from the Nenagh line on the main lines.

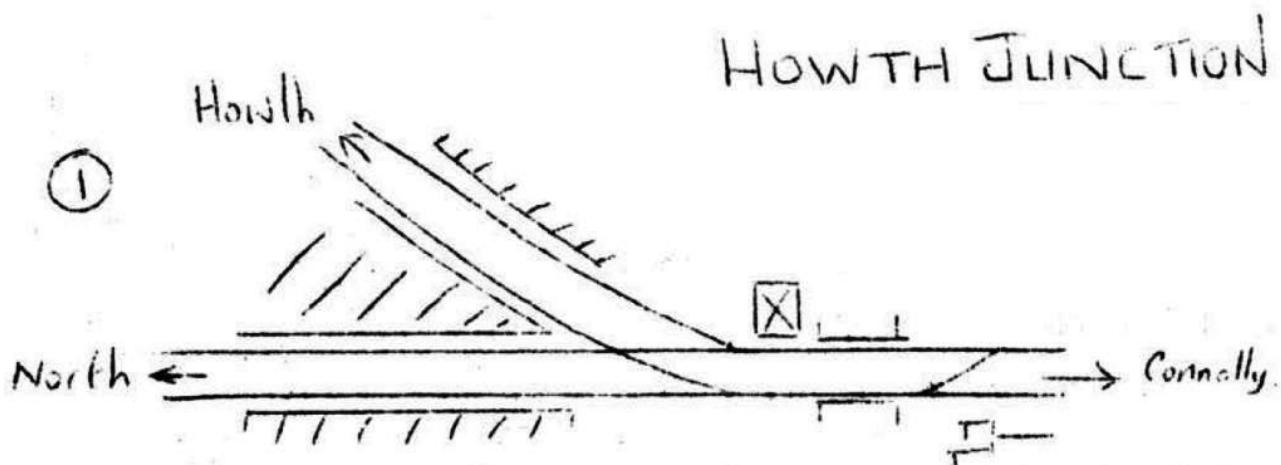
Connolly Station: Extensive track and signalling alterations are in progress. A new facing crossover between the up and down main lines was installed at milepost ½ on 16 February, and a new connection was installed further in on 27 April between the Northern and Eastern yards at the back of the Central Cabin. These new crossovers will allow trains to and from the Northern and Eastern lines to use any line through the Eastern Yard instead of the overworked No.5 line as at present. A facing crossover to allow Up Northern trains to enter No.1 platform has also been provided. Hitherto this short platform has been restricted to down trains. Three 3-aspect electric signals have been erected in the vicinity of MP ½ but are not yet in use. During January points 10 and 18 were converted to pneumatic operation, the first power points to be controlled from the Central Cabin.

Clara: The track and signals were altered on 28 January to permit passenger trains to be crossed here. Previously this could only be done by prior notice in accordance with special instructions.

Pearse Station: The facing crossover which allows down trains to pass through the up platform (No.3) was installed on 13 March. It is situated mid-way to Tara Street and is partly on Pearse Street bridge. It is electrically controlled from Pearse Station Cabin.

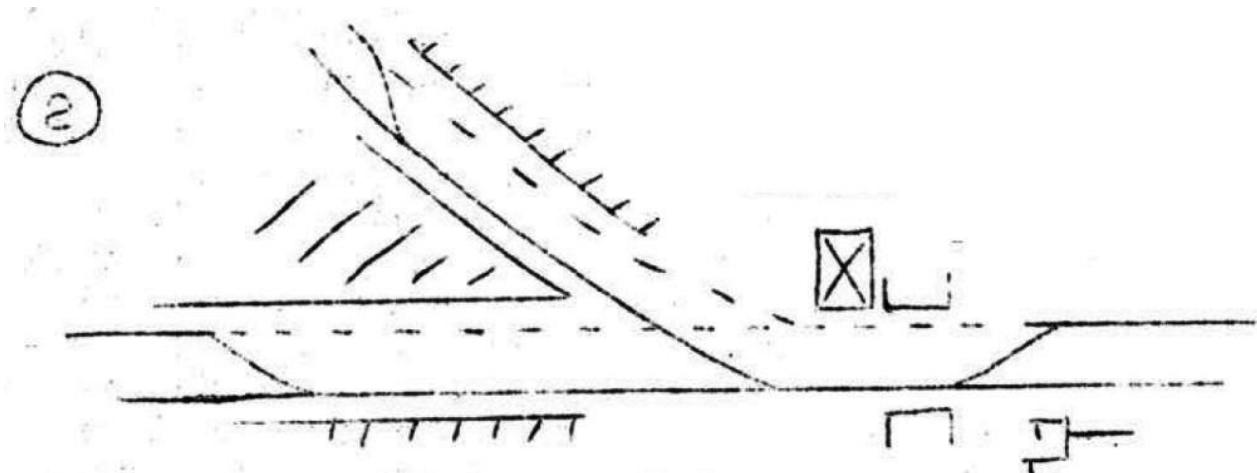
Waterford: The new station premises (and area offices) at Waterford were formally opened on 3 March. A distinguished party attended the ceremony which marked the opening by the Minister for Transport & Power. Various speeches were made and in the course of an address the Mayor of Waterford, while giving deserved congratulations for the improvements, remarked that "we have never forgiven them fully for closing the Tramore railway line"!!!!

Howth Junction: Diagram 1 shows Howth Junction station before the present alterations commenced. On 9 February single-line running was introduced on the down main and branch lines to enable contractors for Dublin Corporation to drive piles through the site of the road on the up side. This was to allow the placing of temporary girders underneath the track on either side of Bridge No.17. The tracks not in use are shown as dotted lines in Diagram 2. This phase of the work was completed by 9 March when the arrangement was reversed and the down lines were taken out of use to enable work to proceed on that side.



When the work on the down side has been fully completed the arrangements will revert to those in Diagram 2 so that the Up side may be finished.

Lack of space does not permit the description of the detailed track and signalling alterations, the scope of which was out of all proportion to the engineering work which rendered them necessary.



### Newcastle Derailment

On 28 December the Dublin/Wexford line was blocked just beyond MP 22, near Newcastle, when 9 wagons and the rear van of an oil special bound for Shelton Abbey were derailed. The loco, A2, front van and the first wagon remained on the rails. The mishap occurred about 16:00 so the 15:10 ex Rosslare terminated at Wicklow and the passengers were brought on by bus. A 6-piece railcar followed the path of the 15:10 from Greystones to Dublin and worked back to Greystones in place of the 18:25 down train. Passengers for Wicklow and stations beyond were taken by bus from Pearse station. On 29 December a loop was laid around the derailment on the seaward side and was tested by A24. The first train over it was the 19:00 special ex Wexford. The next day work began on clearing up. A32 and the Limerick crane and C230 with the Inchicore crane were in attendance. The line was cleared by 2

January and was re-laid by the 5<sup>th</sup>. The damaged oil wagons were retrieved by B170 on 8 January.

### **White Rock Landslide**

On 13 January a combination of heavy rain and a leaking cess pit caused a landslide onto the Dublin/Wexford line near MP 9 1/4, between Dalkey and Killiney. The 06:40 ex Bray, 2658, 1367, 1357, 2653, 2634 and 2659, crashed into the slide, slightly damaging 2658. As a result single-line working over the down road was introduced, causing a dislocation of the morning service. The 07:00 to Greystones, B165 + 6 bogies + HV, terminated at Dalkey, and the 07:30 to Dalkey was cancelled. All the other trains were delayed. The railcar set was hauled away at 12:00 by A2 but the up line was not reopened until 16:45.

### **Storm Damage**

On 19 February a severe easterly gale and high tide blocked the line between Blackrock and Salthill, at Ballygannon and at Wexford South, while at Rosslare some of the decking and sand under the pier was washed away. Train services between Dublin and Dun Laoghaire were suspended from 14:00. The up line was reopened at 06:00 on the 20<sup>th</sup> and a limited morning rush hour service was run. The high tide closed the line again that afternoon and both roads were not finally reopened until the morning of 21 February.

At Ballygannon the line was undermined by the sea on 19 February and was closed until late on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. In the interim some goods trains ran via the South Wexford line. Rosslare Pier was closed to rail traffic from 19 to 24 February and passengers were brought from boat to train by minibuses.

## **NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS**

### **New Halts**

Without prior notice, other than a television news film showing its construction, a new halt called Dhu Varren, at MP 67 not far from Portrush, was officially opened on 10 February. The 120ft platform is partly on the site of Glenmanus Siding and it serves an area of Portrush remote from the original station. It is understood that it was provided at the request of the authorities of the New University of Ulster, some of whose students are in lodgings nearby. It is served by 5 down and 6 up trains; all others call by request. Portrush fares apply in all cases except Portrush - Dhu Varren, which is 3<sup>d</sup> single adult or child. No name board had been erected up to Easter.

On 10 March the former Portstewart station, closed except as a little used passing place since 8 September 1963, was reopened as an unstaffed (except for the crossing keeper) halt named Cromore, from the name of the townland in which it is situated. Traffic will be meagre initially as the site is 4 miles from Portstewart but a hall of residence for the university is to be built nearby.

### **Work to Rule (Unofficial)**

An unofficial "work to rule" and overtime ban was enforced by all NIR traffic staff from midnight on Friday 24 January. Loco staff and supervisors were not directly involved. The action was taken to draw attention to the men's dissatisfaction with the terms of a proposed productivity deal which had been the subject of protracted negotiations between the company and the unions. Normal working was resumed on 29 January, pending further discussions, and the agreement was finally approved and signed on 10 February.

The effects of the action varied considerably from region to region, the southern being the worst affected. No trains at all ran from 07:00 on 25 January until the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> when some commuter services and the 08:00 to Dublin ran. Many passengers for the Rugby international in Dublin on the 25<sup>th</sup> were left without transport and had it not been for the foul weather a fortnight later irreparable damage might have been done to this lucrative source of traffic. Traffic on the Down and

Midland regions ceased from mid-afternoon on the 25<sup>th</sup> till the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>. The position at Queen's Quay on the 28<sup>th</sup> was aggravated when ticket collectors and guards staged a lightning strike when an inspector operated the signal cabin there.

### Railcars And Locos

MED: All units at York Road are now fitted with 4-speed gearboxes; on the Bangor line, 14, 15, 28 and 31 remain to be converted. The rebuilt trailers 519 and 523 seat 72 and 64, respectively; 519 has no toilets while 523 has two such compartments.

MPD: No.51, converted like 53 to centre-corridor type, appeared in March; it has 8 bays and seats 78. Unlike its counterpart, No.53 has two sliding lights each side in addition to the drop-lights in the doors. This is welcome as 51's ventilation is inadequate in view of the highly efficient heating. Trailer 538 has been similarly rebuilt and has 8½ bays (2/2 across instead of 2/3) seating 68; it also has a toilet. Nos. 46 and 52 are in York Road awaiting similar treatment. Nos. 42, 54 and 55 are also being overhauled.

DE: New driving trailer 714 appeared in February. Like 713 it has 40 seats in 5 compartments, a toilet, luggage space and separate driver's and guard's compartments; it was formerly coach 280 (NCC No.67). Side-corridor trailer 726 left the works on 4 April. It has 64 seats in eight compartments with 2 toilets; it was formerly coach 362 (NCC No.263). There have been conflicting reports about the purchase of "a diesel-electric car set", to cost £54,000, while it has also been stated that locos may be bought alternatively.

Locos: All withdrawn locos at York Road, except 49 and 54, had been removed by Easter. It is still uncertain whether 54 will be repaired. A 50 mph restriction was placed on "Jeeps" working passenger trains on and from 4 April, after the Easter schedules at normal speeds had been published. The condition of some locos is very poor and it seems likely that steam workings will end later this year. RPSI loco 171 was steamed on 27 January and shunted for a time before retiring to Lisburn goods store to be painted. It returned to York Road in mid-March for further running-in. Locos 4, 50, 51, 53, 55 and 56 now have raised coal bunkers.

### New Locos

Three new diesel-hydraulic locos are on order from English Electric, being due for delivery "early in 1969". No details of their size or work capacity have yet been released apart from the fact that they are about 600 hp. This is really an extraordinary choice when the present-day trend on other railways is towards the purchase of, or conversion to, much larger units.

### Station Developments

York Road: The side entrance has been improved by the fitting of blue mosaic tiles on the walls and better lighting. A new lay-by for BCT buses to the city is being built in part of the car park. The coin-operated sectioned model of GNR loco 202 once displayed at Dublin, and later at Great Victoria Street, came here in December.

Castlerock: Following road widening new manual full barriers are being erected to replace the crossing gates. The 4 barriers will be controlled from a new 10-lever cabin situated on the street(!) outside the up platform wall.

Portrush: The bookstall on the concourse has been converted into a 2-window, booking office. It is manned on Mondays only during the winter (for the sale of weekly tickets only); otherwise the guard issues tickets on the train.

Greenisland: The trailing points between the down line and the "Back Line" at Greenisland were partially dismantled on 2 February. Access to the latter is now confined to a connection via No.1 platform loop.

Portadown: Construction of the new station south of the Bann river bridge has begun. Single line working over the down line was introduced on 16 February between the south end of platforms 3 and 4 and the site of Portadown Junction, where a “temporary local box” (previously Port Arthur Cabin) was installed to control a temporary crossover between the up and down lines. Movements over the single line are controlled from Portadown North Cabin using existing semaphores with additional Outer Home and Home signals to control down movements to the new crossover. The latter are both 2-aspect colour lights and they are preceded by a fixed yellow colour-light distant signal. Platforms 1 and 2 became temporary bays with access from the Belfast end only. Many ballast trains then ran to deposit stone with which the up line was raised to its new level. It was partially slewed onto the site of the goods loop and was reopened on 17 March, when the down line was closed to be similarly raised.

### Other Alterations

Larne: Repainted despite proposals to re-site station.

Glarryford: Passing loop now completely lifted.

University: Platform extended to north and waiting room built.

Antrim: Turntable pit partly filled and siding extended.

Bangor: Booking office and barrier (new) opened on 31 March.

### Central Railway

The Ministry of Development is studying a proposal that both Great Victoria Street and Queen's Quay stations be closed and replaced by a new station at May's Market with access from the Dublin and Bangor lines by way of the Belfast Central Railway which is closed and disconnected at present.

### Train Changes

The most noteworthy of the changes made on and from 10 February was the withdrawal of the 05:55 Belfast/Derry, which in recent years has attracted very few passengers although carrying considerable amounts of mails and parcels. Three down and two up Monday-to- Friday bus connections at Limavady Junction have also been cancelled. Despite some local protests, these services were rarely used.

### Easter Steam

The combination of a shortage of diesel stock and excellent weather caused an unusual number of passenger steam trains to be run. Brief details are:

Date	Train	Make-up	Remarks
5 April	12:00 to Portrush	No.4 + 5 bogies	Empty to Derry
7 April	09:25 to Portrush	No.53 + 9 bogies	
	10:00 Special to Portrush	No.56 + 7 bogies	Ex Antrim
	Special Derry/Portrush	No.4 + 11 bogies	Set specially provided
	12:52 Up Branch train	No.56 + 5 bogies	
	13:30 Down branch train	No.56 + 5 bogies	
	19:00 Ex Portrush	No.4 + 6-car MPD	Railcar set
	19:15 Ex Portrush	No.10 + 6 bogies	To Belfast
	19:30 Ex Portrush	No.56 + 9 bogies	To Belfast
	19:45 Ex Portrush	No.4 + 9 bogies	To Belfast
	20:35 Ex Portrush	No.53 + 11 bogies	To Derry

Further steam trains ran on Easter Tuesday, 8 April, a particularly interesting train being the 10:25 Belfast to Portrush: loco 171 + 7 bogies. Apparently the loco had not been sufficiently run in for passenger duties as the right rear driving axlebox was hot on arrival at Portrush. The loco ran light to

Coleraine and next day ran slowly to Belfast, picking up three coaches which had likewise run hot.

### Coleraine Lifting

Further sidings at Coleraine are being removed. The "New Siding", opposite the cabin, has been disconnected and the adjacent "Engine siding" cut short just beyond the pit. The Harbour Branch points have also been lifted.

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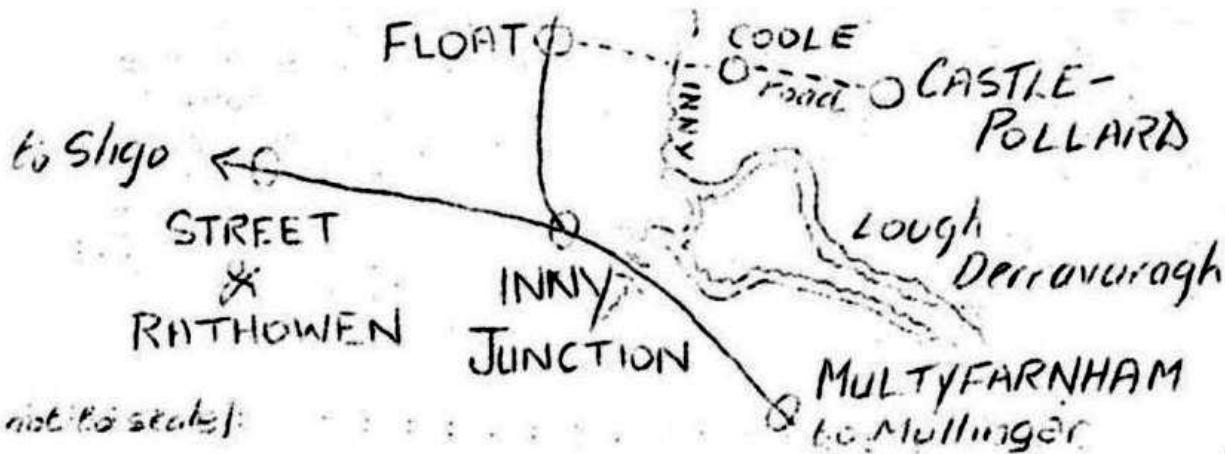
## Feature Section

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### WESTMEATH MEMORIES

Just at the 60¾ milepost on the Sligo line is the site of Inny Junction station. Now derelict and windswept it was once a typical Midland junction station, complete with principal buildings, two main line platforms and another for the Cavan line trains, an engine shed, MGWR style signal cabin and a water tank. Just 3½ miles from Inny Junction, along the branch, was the station named Float. It too was a crossing place, with the facilities so lavishly provided by the Midland.

The Cavan line was opened on 24 June 1856 and at first the traffic returns were none too great, at any rate on the lower part of the branch. The most important town in the neighbourhood of Float Station was Castlepollard but, unfortunately for the growth of railway business, the not inconsiderable River Inny separated station and town. However, passengers from Castlepollard could gain easy access to the railway for the river was crossed by a "float" or flat ferry boat. It was this which gave its name to the station and not the nearby village of Coole. It may be noted that in some old guide books "Float Road" was quoted as "the station for Castlepollard".



The Midland decided to try to boost its traffic by building a bridge across the Inny, it being hoped that much of the goods for Castlepollard which until then were railed via the Oldcastle branch of the Great Northern Railway would now travel over MGWR metals. The bridge was an iron structure and the chosen site for it was some 2 miles from Float Station. Parts of the bridge were brought by train to Float and thence to the riverside along a specially-laid temporary tramway along the public road. The wagons could be brought right to the spot and much tiresome transhipment was avoided. Once open the old "float" across the river became a memory, while goods did pass in profusion from the railway to the town of Castlepollard. Around the turn of the century several carters were employed with their horses drawing goods from the station to Castlepollard. Later, lorries were used.

Passengers also used Float Station and together with those from further up the Cavan line they could avail of the facilities of the refreshment rooms at Inny Junction, a station which was further distinguished by the fact that it had no road access whatsoever (the rather similarly remote Macmine Junction was reached at the end of a cul-de-sac). However, there was competition for the Castlepollard passenger traffic in the 1920s, when a road service was operated from Mullingar. This was reported to have ceased in February 1928, at which time passenger figures to Float were no doubt further boosted by the issue of special cheap fares for the coursing at Lismacaffrey, located (like Float) in the parish of Streete. Passenger services on the Cavan line were “temporarily suspended” during the fuel crisis in January 1947 but were never resumed. Thereafter a Cavan/Mullingar bus service was provided. It still runs, but with the run-down of many provincial bus services it has been cut back to a service (one run from Cavan to Mullingar and back) two days a week. On the other four days the bus operates the Cavan/Sligo service.

By the end of the 1920s there had been developments at Inny Junction too. The singling of the double road between Mullingar and Longford began soon after the 1925 Amalgamation but there were still two lines in situ from Inny Junction to Multyfarnham. In February 1931 the “dead road”, as it was termed, was brought back into use, while the use of Inny Junction down main platform was discontinued. In March the station was closed to passengers and the transfer point became Multyfarnham; no extra charge was payable by those interchanging between the Cavan and Sligo lines. Track alterations at Inny Junction were such that only one platform had rails alongside it - the Up Sligo. At that time the cabin was still open, principally to assist operations in late April 1931 and subsequently, when the now redundant half of the red girder bridge across the Inny was removed and the second line lifted to Multyfarnham. The works were virtually completed on 27 September 1931, on which date the signal cabin at Inny Junction was formally closed and all sidings except those controlled by a ground frame on the Cavan line removed. The junction points were electrically operated from Multyfarnham, as were the traps on both branch and main lines. In the 1950s, prior to the closure of the branch, the main line traps were removed.

The Inny Junction/Cavan line closed for good on 31 December 1959, along with some 75 miles of other lines in the Dundalk/Clones/Cavan area. Trains continued to use it for some time, as the demolition was from Clones southwards through Cavan and on to the Sligo line at Inny Junction. The lifting was completed early in June 1962. Early in the next year the power points were removed and transferred to Athlone East Junction, where the signal cabin was being dispensed with in the course of a modernisation scheme. The few remaining buildings at the old junction grew ever more forlorn, and in 1968 they were reduced in number: the row of solid stone cottages was demolished. As far as CIÉ is concerned, the only practical memento of its 25 mile line is the bridge carrying the road across the Inny near Float. Because of its origins, it is maintained by CIÉ; along with the Fiddown toll bridge on the River Suir and other structures it is part of a burden the company would gladly shed.

### **HARCOURT STREET: FINALE**

On 31 December 1958 the mainly suburban Harcourt Street / Bray (Shanganagh Junction) line was closed to all traffic by CIÉ. The closure was to be the first of a series of railway attenuations to be carried out by the board under the baton of Dr C.S. Andrews, its recently appointed chairman. Apart from residing very close to Dundrum Station, on the doomed Harcourt Street line, and thus becoming one of the first victims of his own economic policy, Dr Andrews, some people argued, had no interest in railways and no conception of what value they were to many. If CIÉ could get away with closing a double track suburban line into the capital city they could close anything - that was the general verdict. But it must be remembered that Dr Andrews' mandate was to improve the solvency of the company; at that time the Government had made it clear that subsidies to keep the railways going would cease in

1963. The taxpayer at the time was not inclined to blame CIÉ for pruning the dead and dying (albeit picturesque) branches of its network in an effort to conserve sorely needed funds. An annual loss of "a mere £50,000 a year" on the Harcourt Street line amounts to £½ million in a decade - quite a considerable sum, and one that is certainly a minimum.

In the long term, however, this particular closure appears to have been premature. What were in 1958 green acres of fields in Dundrum, Stillorgan and Foxrock are now endless roads through housing estates. This growth has resulted in increasing traffic chaos and Dublin County Council has been moved to request to reopen the line. Sadly, it is now rather too late for such requests. The rails have been lifted; many of the bridges are gone; and in March of this year the last of the massive approach embankment to Harcourt Street station was removed to make way for a new office block.

The station yard at Harcourt Street has been built on, as has that at Dundrum, while building has taken place on the old roadbed at Shanganagh Junction. There has been building too at Shankill, while other stations have been converted to private residences. To resurrect such a railway would cost a staggering sum, while CIÉ quite rightly feel that the poor site of Harcourt Street terminus is hardly likely to aid the traffic situation.

A variety of suggestions for the restoration of the line have been made, including one for a monorail. But to overcome the various problems, not least of which is the need to serve suitable city locations, only an underground centre city line would suffice. No such line has been yet suggested, probably everyone can make a shrewd guess at the cost: enormous! The Harcourt Street line has gone for good, but we hope that the complete lack of foresight of CIÉ and the civic authorities shown in 1958 has gone too.

### **SUBURBAN SURVEY - A MAJOR EVENT**

If one were to judge from the number of column inches of news space given in virtually all sections of the Irish press recently it would seem as if Dubliners are preoccupied with trains, especially suburban ones. Extensive coverage has been given to the schemes for a revival of the Harcourt Street line (mentioned earlier in this issue) and to those suggestions for completely new lines north of the city. CIÉ, too, have been giving intensive study to the problem of commuter transport and the company, in addition to intensively advertising the existing suburban rail services, has been analysing by means of traffic surveys in various areas outlying from the city the potential traffic of the future. These developments no doubt prompted the two-part article on railways which appeared in the Irish Times in March. Its author, in discussing suburban services, mentioned the possibility of new commuter trains to serve Wicklow and Naas. Such a suggestion seemed a little premature as neither town could yet be termed a "dormitory".

However, part of the scheme was realised on Monday, 10 March, when CIÉ introduced a Wicklow-Dublin commuter train service. In the Up direction a train runs every weekday from Wicklow to Connolly Station at 07:50. It returns ex Connolly Station at 17:43 (13:10 on Saturdays). The morning working to the city is provided by the set of a Down 06:25 ex Connolly Station which replaced the former 07:00 to Bray. In practice this is rather an "empty working" although advertised as a passenger train. The opposite evening working from Wicklow is scheduled as an empty train, except on Saturdays, when it returns at 14:45 (arriving at Connolly Station at 15:58).

The most interesting aspect of the whole exercise is undoubtedly the use of The Murrough station at Wicklow, otherwise known as Wicklow Goods Station. This station is considerably more convenient to the town than the normal passenger station. It was, in fact, the original passenger station at Wicklow, in the period when the line ended there. In August 1861 the railway was extended from Wicklow (Junction) to Rathdrum (Kilcommon Station) but trains used the Murrough station for a further 20

years, even though a tedious reversal was involved at the junction. But in the early 1880s the passenger trains withdrew, leaving the Murrough the preserve of goods traffic. Fortunately, the passenger platform and loop were retained and, indeed, they proved useful at odd intervals over the years when specials ran to Wicklow for the regatta or for racing. For the recent reopening a bright booking office has been provided although there is as yet no covered waiting area, while no doubt the weed-covered platform will be taken care of in due course.

The first train to operate the new service, on 10 March, was as mentioned the 06:25 ex Connolly Station, which comprised loco B157, HV 3136 + suburban set 1897, 1416, 1401, 2167, 1379 and 2491 - a well-heated and well-lit train. Departure from Connolly Station was on time and the train left the partly refurbished Tara Street at 06:28. One passenger joined the train there bringing the total complement to 3; no other traffic offered before Wicklow. Blackrock was in darkness as the single passenger alighted there. At Dun Laoghaire the train was joined by an official representative of "Nuacht CIÉ", published by the Department of the Information Officer. Departure at 06:45 was on schedule and near Dalkey the 06:40 Bray/Connolly Station train was passed. After a signal check at the home Bray was reached two minutes early at 06:58. Leaving at 07:01 the train continued to Greystones where there was a brief pause to exchange staffs. The next stop was at Wicklow Junction at 07:31, after which without ceremony the train passed slowly down the branch to the Murrough Station, reaching the platform at 07:35, 4 minutes late.

The reception committee on the platform included an RTÉ television news cameraman, reporting for that evening's news bulletins, and the stationmaster who acted as booking clerk for the three passengers who turned up to use the new service. It emerged later that not everybody had seen CIÉ's advertisements proclaiming its punctuality - a further three passengers turned up after the train was on its way back to Dublin!

This lack of initial support was undoubtedly due to CIÉ's very sudden decision to start the service and, no doubt more so, to the fact that the new trains were publicised by advertisements in the Dublin evening papers. Such a medium would hardly be likely to catch the eye of a provincial reader, especially in view of the quite unnecessary number of small advertisements for CIÉ which are frequently scattered among the pages of these papers. Adequate coverage in the local provincial paper was really essential. A survey previously made in Wicklow had shown that there was sufficient traffic potential to warrant such a train service and in time this will no doubt materialise to the full. In mid-April the number using the train regularly had grown to over thirty.

For the record it may be noted that the inaugural train from Wicklow left a few seconds after 07:50 and a brief stop was made at Wicklow Junction where, as on the Down journey, communications between the train crew and the ground signalman were rather confused. At Greystones, whence the departure was a little after 08:10, the train took up the path of the previous 08:10 from Greystones, which train it replaced. The train filled up as it reached the city and a signal check at Lansdowne Road resulted in its arriving at Connolly Station at 09:00, just two minutes late.

CIÉ have shown commendable initiative in inaugurating such a new suburban service, while the choice of the Murrough as the terminus was particularly enterprising. This factor must in time attract people to the train, and a second factor will surely be the fares. A day return ticket costs 10/6<sup>d</sup> and weekly tickets are available: 5-day at 37/6<sup>d</sup> and 6-day at 42/3<sup>d</sup>. These represent very good value indeed and they should be publicised well. If, however, they do not immediately attract sufficient traffic perhaps CIÉ could borrow a trick from the supermarkets and, for a limited period, offer "Introductory Bargain Offer" tickets at even more reduced prices. Likewise the provision of a Saturday morning shopper's fare to Dublin at a special rate could be an added inducement to some to try the train. Such methods of attracting custom may offend against tradition but in the present day the aggressive technique of selling has banished the courtesies of the last century.

## **NEWS EXTRA - NIR RAILCAR TRANSFERS**

Extensive alterations in railcar duty allocations were made in January. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, DEs 72 and 77, trailers 701, 722, 723 and diner 550 were transferred to Great Victoria Street to take over the NIR share of the “Enterprise” workings on the next day. Car 78 and driving trailer 711 followed on the 11<sup>th</sup> and have been used intermittently to strengthen the set to 8 coaches and also to work occasional local trains. The “Enterprise” DE train has run with outstanding success and can maintain the 130 minute schedule with effortless ease despite the spate of severe temporary speed restrictions due to present track and bridge alterations. The way now seems clear for the realisation of the long-cherished ambition of the erstwhile GNR to have a 2-hour schedule between Dublin and Belfast, for CIÉ’s General Motors locos should be able to match the DEs for performance.

The BUT set previously on the “Enterprise” has been relegated to lesser duties and none of its units has so far been seen south of Dundalk. Any extra trains since then have been worked by AEC units. The latter type cars also made a short appearance on the NCC, for use on the Larne line. Cars 117, 118, 120, driving trailer 586 and trailer 580 were transferred. On 6 January they were used on the 11:45 to Derry as the 08:40 Up DE set was 2 hours late due to its colliding with Lisahally Gates. The 11:45 was only 25 minutes late into Derry - not a bad performance, considering the lack of a driver with experience of these cars. Sadly, however, the set lost 70 minutes on the return trip, while its only other recorded trip (to Larne Harbour on 9 January) was marred by the complete failure of car 120. Thereafter the set was steam hauled back to Great Victoria Street. All MPD stock has been withdrawn from the latter place: cars 46, 47, 49 and 50, with trailers 536, 537 and 540; all serviceable except car 46. The MPD stock had been used mainly for ballast trains and for shunting, and steam is now in use on the ballast workings.

With the DE set sent to the Northern line, MPD working had to be resumed on some of the Derry trains: the 08:30 and 14:50 Down and 11:10 and 17:40 Up - a motley collection of power cars, sometimes with trailers, at other times without. These trains have no catering facilities as there is no spare buffet car equipped to run in MPD or DE sets to replace 550.