

THE

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EDITORIAL

The observant reader will have noticed a slight alteration in our "masthead" which is the first intimation to our subscribers of a none-too-pleasant fact - an increase in our subscription rates, and no little one at that. We apologise for being so harshly direct but we feel that there is little to be gained in essaying to find some vague formula to make an unpalatable fact palatable. As we approached the completion of sixteen years of the IRN we carried out our annual review of progress. Much heartened by letters from readers we were convinced that our magazine had continued to improve in its efforts to cover all aspects of the Irish railway scene. The problem confronting us was simple. The "galloping inflation" so beloved of newspaper economists was no longer some vaguely remote thing, but instead a very real threat to the IRN at its 1970 subscription rates.

From its inception the IRN has been (to use the hackneyed but completely true expression) a "labour of love" for the production committee whose satisfaction has been measured in terms of the interest and support given by our many readers. This is as it should be, and as we would wish it to continue. Our aim is not to take away a profit, yet the IRN must make a profit which accumulates to serve as an emergency fund in the event of a catastrophic price increase during a subscription year. At the old rates the difference between outgoings and the subscriptions received would have been inadequate to carry the IRN through 1971 as we would wish. Thus, a decision that an increase in the subscription rates was necessary was taken shortly after the committee prepared the last issue. At that time it was known that the price of materials would soon rise but it was not known that an increase of no less than 50 per cent would be announced in the postal rates. Already this has affected our financial situation - you may have noticed a different (more expensive!) stamp on this issue's envelope.

This heavy postal increase hits at the IRN in two ways. Firstly, and obviously, each issue costs half as much again as before to dispatch; secondly, and this is perhaps not so obvious, we will now have to pay a much bigger bill for "back-up" postal services - the many letters and telephone calls which are made in the collection and verification of news items for each issue. We have thought long and hard about the matter and we see two alternatives: increase the subscription to a fully realistic level, or economise by sacrificing space or editorial expenditure. Without hesitation we choose the former and we are confident that our readers, who make our magazine the success it is, will vindicate our decision by their continued support.

INFORMATION OF INTEREST**The 1970-71 "Cheap Weekends"**

The following is the full list of CIÉ "Cheap Weekends" for the 1970-71 Winter Season. Only those marked * are "Cheap Weekends" on the Dundalk/Belfast section.

2 - 5 October 1970 *
9 - 12 October
16 - 19 October *
23 - 26 October *
6 - 9 November
13 - 16 November *
20 - 23 November
27 - 30 November *
4 - 7 December
11 - 14 December *
8 - 11 January 1971
15 - 18 January
22 - 25 January

5 - 8 February 1971 *
19 - 22 February *
26 - 1 February/March
5 - 8 March *
12 - 15 March
19 - 22 March *
26 - 29 March *
23 - 26 April *
30 - 3 April/May
7 - 10 May *
14 - 17 May
21 - 24 May *

The first date given is that of the Friday of the weekend; the second is the Monday. Tickets (both classes) valid over this period are issued at single fares for the return journey. This is a considerable increase on previous numbers of such weekends. It seems rather a pity, however, that there are so many gaps in the list. One can understand the suspension of the cheap fares for the Christmas and Easter periods - and possibly at the schools' Halloween break - but why February 12 - 15?

News Section

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

Fares Increase

Although an increase of 6.25% in the CIÉ rail fares was reported as recently as the last issue of the IRN, there has recently been news of yet another rise in fares. However, the latest increase is strictly the other "half" of a massive rise due to be made in June but which was limited at the Government's behest. In accepting the wish of the Government CIÉ made it very clear that further aid would be needed before the end of 1970 unless a deficit of the order of £10 million was to result from the current year's operations. The latest rise was announced at a press conference on Thursday, 15 October, when it was stated that despite the new revenue anticipated there would still be a £3 million deficit for 1970-71.

Rail and long-distance bus fares are to rise almost immediately by 17.5%; freight charges will go up by 12.5%. Suburban rail fares will also increase, and the rise will affect all ranges of concession and other such tickets. Cross-border rail fares rise by 10%. The sharpest rises, however, are reserved for the Dublin City (bus) Services where - to quote the most extreme example - the 1/- fare goes to 1/5.

Developments at Shelton

A fourth siding is being built at the Nítrigin Éireann Teoranta factory at Shelton Abbey. The trackbed was completed in late September and the sleepers were laid on 2 and 3 October. The pilot engine is currently a General Motors B class loco; it has recently been observed at work on some Sunday mornings. In previous seasons this had been confined to the peak period in January and February.

Malahide

After a lengthy period of disuse the sidings in Malahide Quarry are again in use as a storage point for wagons requiring repairs. Part of the head-shunt at the Quarry has been re-ballasted.

Heuston Mishap

The empty stock for the Killarney Radio Train became derailed when leaving the Military Siding at Heuston Station on 12 August. The down line was blocked until 13:30 and all trains had to use the up line and platform. As a consequence the 08:45 Sláinte express to Cork, which was already at the down platform, had to run out through the washing plant and reverse from there to the up platform before its final departure. The up trains were seriously delayed, the 09:15 Seandún express from Cork being 60 minutes late on arrival.

An Act of Sabotage

In the early hours of 22 July a double explosion damaged the down track of the Dublin-Belfast line near the site of the original Baldoyle station at MP 5¼. Reports in the newspapers gave contradictory accounts of the time of the explosion but the damage was discovered by the 06:10 Connolly Station - Balbriggan local train. It stopped specially at Malahide to report an impact and the subsequent investigation revealed that portions 12" and 19" long had been blown out of the track at joints in BOTH rails. It was a miracle that the train was undamaged and its crew unhurt. Single-line working over the up line between Howth Junction and Malahide was instituted after that line had been inspected and found to be undamaged. There was much consequential disruption of services until the down line was repaired and reopened for the 13:25 Dublin-Mosney local train.

Clonmel Lifting

Lifting of the Thurles-Clonmel branch resumed at Horse & Jockey in mid-July and the gang of the contractor, McGuirk of Carrigans, had reached Farranalleen on 19 September. Work is now in progress in the Fethard direction. It is hoped to get as far as Fethard this season and to complete the job next year. The limited daylight at this time of year restricts progress to an uneconomic level. Likewise beet traffic movements in Clonmel hamper the work. These factors were partly responsible for the late start this year. To facilitate the contractor CIÉ laid down a special loop last Spring to enable the men to work independently of normal train movements. It was in this loop that some weeks ago McGuirk's railcar (ex-UTA 104; ex-GNR F) was badly disfigured when it collided with wagons used in the lifting. Apparently the hand points were made to permit the approaching railcar to enter the clear side of the loop but some local children had altered the setting.

Youghal Changes

Work has been in progress at the terminus of this East Cork branch in support of a local development plan. This involves the improvement of the seafront facilities near the station and has resulted in the removal of the line serving the seaward side of the island platform. The opposing platform has also been shortened slightly and the relevant track-beds filled in to platform level. The promenade benefits from this and a road now joins it with the station forecourt, apparently to ease traffic congestion on busy Sundays. The position of the island platform mentioned above must be unique in Ireland. Built to cater for the heavy seaside excursion traffic from Cork and beyond, its position rendered the main passenger entrance to the station building useless. Entrance is made direct to the station platforms from the forecourt.

In recent years the Sunday seaside trains did not usually warrant the use of the line now removed, the remaining two platforms being adequate. The main platform is currently in use as a beet loading bank, the beet season having commenced in early October.

Tivoli Tank

Recently erected in the precincts of the Roofchrome factory is an oil storage tank. It is understood that it will be serviced by coastal tankers berthed nearby, and that its contents used to supply the Ballinacourty-bound oil wagons. The new tank is close to the Caltex depot from which oil was

originally to be supplied. This scheme fell through, however, and the special siding and loading gantry provided have never been used. Temporarily, the fuel is being transhipped at the North Quays but this site is obviously not permanent due to its proximity to the public roadway.

Some New Sleepers

Six new sleeping vans have been placed in service. They are unusual in that they are built in caravan style after the fashion of ISO containers and they rest on 12-ton flats which have been fitted with ISO lugs and access ladders. The bodies are attractively finished and are painted blue and cream (the double-deck bus livery). They are numbered 567A-572A. The underframes are flats built in 1962/3; they are painted in standard CIÉ red. The vehicles have been given number-plates with the new A numbers. The original numbers of the six vehicles were as follows (in order of A numbers): 25250, 25409, 25426, 25407, 25401 and 25291.

North Wall

At the Midland Yard in the North Wall a short siding connection has been added to the so-called "Brick Road" siding near the old MGWR wagon shop. Both sidings have been concreted and they are now used for running repairs to wagons.

Ballina Branch

Heavy roadworks by Mayo County Council at the Barracklands Level Crossing not far from Manulla Junction caused the Ballina Branch to be closed to all traffic after the 09:50 Ballina/Limerick train on Saturday 19 September until early on the following Monday morning. A special bus was provided for passengers off the 15:40 ex Limerick, while passengers for the 22:30 Claremorris/Ballina branch train were taken by the 22:25 regular bus. The engines and coaches of both trains spent the weekend at Claremorris and were worked to Ballina early on Monday morning to resume their regular duties.

Signal Troubles

To curb acts of vandalism on the electric signal cables on the Northern and South-Eastern suburban lines underground cables are being installed mainly on Sundays. The automatic signals on the Northern Line between East Wall Junction and Howth Junction were put out of action by an unusual cause on 30 September. The Electricity Supply Board officially disconnected the power supply at Howth Junction at 14:00. The work took longer than intended to carry out and normal working on the railway was not resumed until the 18:30 down train.

First Class

Yet another Craven Standard, No.1548, has been converted to a first-class coach. Now renumbered 1150 it is at present on the 09:15 ex Cork and the 18:30 ex Heuston. These conversions are a nice job but the finished appearance is rather spoiled by the crude look of the tables fitted. The addition of a formica top would very much improve the general effect.

Kilrane Halt

This small halt near Rosslare Harbour was closed on 10 October. It has been replaced from 12 October by a temporary wooden platform close to Ballygeary Cabin; a permanent platform will be provided later, a little nearer Rosslare Harbour. The sidings at Kilrane are to be retained for beet traffic. The present is the second platform to have existed at Ballygeary. The Waterford & Wexford Railway had a platform which lasted until the alterations of 1906. The present signal cabin occupies the site of the old W&WR platform.

Liner Train

The capacity of the B+I liner train has been increased from 20 to 25 vehicles. The total weight, however, is not allowed to exceed that of a 20-wagon train (i.e. 400 tons payload). The train continues

to make three round trips per week.

A Near Thing

An underbridge near Ballinasloe was badly damaged on 15 September when an excavator being driven underneath became entangled in the girders, dislodging one and leaving the railway track with insufficient support. The 08:40 Dublin/Galway Down Day Mail was due almost at once but it was stopped by the praiseworthy efforts of a CIÉ pensioner who lived nearby. He ran along the line towards the train, brandishing a towel. His efforts were rewarded when the train was safely brought to a stand very close to the wrecked bridge.

Commuter Specials

Many of the principal streets of Dublin were closed to traffic on 5 October for a visit of US President Nixon. To facilitate passengers going to Heuston Station a special train ran from Connolly Station to connect with the 14:45 to Cork. It returned at 15:20 with passengers off the 11:30 ex Cork, bringing them to Pearse Station. It left Pearse Station again (with 47 passengers) at 17:20 to connect with evening trains for the south and then returned at once to Connolly Station. The train consisted of a railcar set: 2608/1402/1334/2603/2646/2601.

Potato Trains

A series of interesting special liner trains commenced to run on 7 September. The journey is a bit unusual - from Navan to the Tuam Beet Factory, where there is also a food processing and packaging plant. The 20-wagon train (which runs without a brake van) runs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and returns empty on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The potatoes - from the Gibbstown area - are conveyed on Lancashire flats and will ultimately end up as Erin Foods instant potato.

Ballinacourty Passenger

The Irish Railway Record Society ran a fascinating outing over this new line on 29 August. The party travelled in railcar 2509 from Rosslare Harbour to Ballinacourty and back to Waterford, making connections from and to regular trains. Stops were made at varied points of interest, including the Barrow Viaduct and Waterford South. This passenger special was the first such train on the new line.

The Winter Timetable

This year's winter timetable was introduced on 14 September and is effective up to 6 June 1971. There are several important changes in the services, the only weekday one of note being the retiming of the former 17:15 Heuston Station - Waterford Deiseach express to 18:00 - a time which should be much more attractive to the businessmen at whom it is aimed. A most regrettable feature of the weekday services which must also be commented on is the withdrawal of the 13:50 Pearse Station - Rosslare Harbour and the up working at 18:15. These services have normally been summer only trains but they became invaluable connections from and to the Heysham - Dun Laoghaire emergency steamer service. Passengers travelling by this route to Wexford line stations are thus compelled to wait at Dun Laoghaire from 10:45 until 18:36. Much the same situation applies to the Sligo line, where the withdrawal of the afternoon train to Sligo means that intending passengers off the previous night's boat have to idle around Dublin for over seven hours.

There are sweeping changes in the Sunday services. Trains to and from Waterford, Cork and Limerick which have used Connolly Station since 12 September 1960 have now reverted to Heuston Station. The former arrangement was fraught with operational problems, and trains were often subject to serious delays on the approaches to Connolly Station. There was also a considerable mileage of light engines and empty coach workings, both morning and evening, and these must have been very costly in staff overtime payments. From the passengers' point of view the delays around Connolly Station were rather frustrating and there was quite a lot of confusion arising through, for example, weekend passengers

leaving Heuston Station on Friday and returning to Connolly Station on Sunday night. A further serious problem arose through a shortage of car parking space at the latter terminus. The move, however, is not such a good one for those who must use CIÉ's Dublin City Services to connect with the Sunday trains. Connolly Station is quite convenient to most city-centre bus termini, whereas Heuston Station is rather remote and for most people two bus journeys home are involved. However, to alleviate the added difficulties of trying to reach Heuston Station from the city centre on Sunday mornings a special early bus service is being operated from O'Connell Bridge.

The actual Sunday trains are also somewhat altered. The two each-way Dublin/Limerick services (and the return workings) are now routed non-stop from Thurles to Limerick, and back via the Limerick Junction Loop. This change, along with the move from Connolly Station, results in a saving in journey time of 15 or 20 minutes. The Cork trains all retain their original departure times but all call additionally at Thurles and thus are only 5 to 10 minutes faster than before. The Waterford trains are slightly retimed and are each about 10-15 minutes faster.

In addition to these trains, the 15:30 Cork - Dun Laoghaire Pier, which has been a summer only service (apart from last year when it ran into late autumn), is retained throughout the winter. It serves all stations except Rathduff, Mountrath and Monasterevan; it runs via Heuston Station. This necessitates a reversal to Islandbridge Junction to complete the journey to the Pier. This train has a connection to and from Limerick at Limerick Junction.

A further very welcome improvement is the provision of a regular Dublin/Wexford (and return) service every Sunday, instead of an advertised "Special" every Cheap Weekend. Only two important secondary lines are now left without regular Sunday trains - Mallow/Tralee and Ballybrophy/Nenagh/Limerick. Both have had their Cheap Weekend Sunday "Specials" on a semi-regular basis for some time now, in the up direction only in the case of the latter line. With the considerable increase in the frequency of Cheap Weekends (referred to earlier) it is rather odd to see these lines still unserved, while the Wexford line with its questionable profitability is now granted a regular Sunday train. Admittedly there are two bus connections from Nenagh to Ballybrophy and back on Sundays, but apart from Tralee itself which has a (not very handy) bus connection to Limerick the Kerry line is totally unserved.

The timetable booklet itself retains the commendable new format introduced with the last issue but, as usual, it appeared far too late, and as far as footnotes are concerned it retains previous evils. There is an internationally recognised code of such symbols and it ought to be adopted without further delay to replace the present unhelpful and sometimes unexplained mess - Note H on Page 33 is an example of the latter. There is also inconsistency about train names. If trains are given names surely those names should appear in the official publications. Neither the Seandún nor the Deiseach are mentioned at all, while the Fáilte appears only as a down Dublin-Cork service.

To conclude this review of the winter services we may note alterations made since the timetable appeared. From 28 September the 19:00 Sáirséal express to Limerick has been calling at Limerick Junction instead of running non-stop from Thurles to Limerick via the new loop. When the former 18:30 (Cork) and 19:00 (Tralee) trains were combined in June passengers who had used the latter to reach Limerick Junction en route to Tipperary and other nearby places were obliged to travel instead on the retimed Sáirséal and change at Thurles into the 20:45 stopping train from Thurles to Cork. This provoked many complaints and the problem was solved by the slight diversion of the Sáirséal. Finally, since 4 October the 11:15 Dun Laoghaire Pier - Connolly Station has been extended to Heuston Station.

Ballymerrigan Crossing

This highly dangerous level crossing at MP 30¾ on the Wexford line has been equipped with a mirror to allow users to see down trains of which there has been a very restricted view. It will be recalled that

the crossing was the site of two tragic fatal accidents in recent years.

Presidential Special Train

President De Valera travelled by train from Limerick to Dublin on 15 August. For the occasion the 18:30 was specially altered to run non-stop to Dublin via Limerick Junction Loop. The train consisted of B176 and B146 with LV and 7 bogies, including Kitchen Car 2407 and the State Coach 352. Ordinary passengers travelled in the remainder of the train which arrived in Dublin exactly on time despite a deluge of rain and very high winds.

The timing of the train clashed with the 18:00 ex Cork so the latter was deferred to 18:05. It ran 5 minutes later throughout and arrived at the down platform at Heuston Station also exactly on time. The following 17:00 ex Tralee, however, was not so lucky. Its loco, B222, failed just outside Limerick Junction. So the Limerick Junction pilot, the unrebuilt A18, was commandeered to complete the journey. It did well to bring the train to Heuston Station 39 minutes late, the cavalcade comprising A18, B222 (dead), 5 bogies and 2 LV.

Opening At Ballinacourty

The official opening or “dedication”, to use the correct terminology, of the Pfizer (Quigley Magnesite Division) plant at Ballinacourty took place on 18 September. The £3.8 million plant was opened by Mr George Colley, the Minister for Finance, who with many of those present travelled to Ballinacourty by rail. The special train comprised locos B192 and B186 (fitted with “Pfizer” front and side boards) with BHV 3163, RS25, Cravens 1557, 1556, 1549, Kitchen Car 2407, Cravens 1550, 1546 and LV 2707. All vehicles were resplendent for the occasion, 2707 being fresh out of the paint shops. The Cravens, being standard class stock, were fitted with antimacassars for the occasion.

The train ran from Dublin via Bennettsbridge, where the dolomite is being mined, and Waterford and it reached its destination almost to time around 13:30. After a plaque had been unveiled, spruce trees planted, and the dedication performed, the windswept passengers began their return trip at 15:47. The level crossing gates on the new branch were manned for the occasion and the colour light signals were in use.

Cheap Weekend Postscript

It was announced on 29 September that for the four Cheap Weekends in October special Sunday trains would run from Cork to Tralee and back with connections from and to Dublin, from Limerick to Dublin via Nenagh, and from Dublin to Cork and back calling at Charleville in each direction. This last train is an additional Cork train.

Locomotive Developments

There has been a slowing up in the introduction of “transplants” (the re-engined A class locos being turned out from Inchicore) because of the holiday season. A8R emerged towards end of July while A34R, damaged in the crash at Charleville on 16 May, was quickly repaired and returned to service. A20R left the works in late August. Other locos receiving the treatment are A9, A10, A16, A17 and A19.

STEAM AT STRADBALLY

The annual Irish Steam Preservation Society’s Steam Rally on 1, 2 and 3 August attracted greater numbers than before, the narrow gauge railway proving a great “draw”. No fewer than 4,400 passengers were carried over the weekend.

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS

Signals Van

The former lightweight railcar trailer 545 has been converted to a signals van. It has been repainted in all-over maroon with prominent white lettering reading: Signals Van - 3109.

York Road Alterations

Work continues on the extensive alterations to the station and works. Most of the buildings are now recognisable and should be in use before long. The new diesel running shed on the site of No.1 Platform and No.1 Siding will have three roads, all with pits; however, it is only about 4 bogies long. In the event of a power car at the Derry end of a longer set requiring attention over a pit it will be necessary to divide the train. The present shed is open at both ends and is much more convenient. The workshop extensions are also well in progress. The pit for the turntable from the present loco shed is located on the site of the former carpenter's shop, and the traverser from Duncrue Street Factory will be installed behind this.

The connection to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners lines through the former Whitla Street Goods Yard has been lifted. The Commissioners themselves had cut the line and blocked its site with a new office during June. There is now no rail access to any part of Belfast Port.

Cookstown Junction

Both of the tiny platforms at this halt are at present being extended following some instances of trains stopping in such a way that no carriage door reached the platform.

Guinness Store

Messrs Arthur Guinness & Son (Belfast) Ltd, a subsidiary of the well-known Dublin brewery has announced its intention to build a new office block and distribution centre at Adelaide industrial estate. A former Lord Mayor of Belfast cut the first sod at the new site on 21 August and it is planned to move into the premises in September 1971. The site was formerly occupied by the Adelaide loco depot and goods yard of the GNR. At present Guinness has a depot at Grosvenor Road Goods Yard. It was opened in 1893 but must close to make way for the Belfast Urban Motorway. The new premises will have a special railway siding.

Painting

All the signal posts and arms at Derry (Waterside) have been repainted recently. The posts of the Coleraine electric signals (once grey) are now black.

Ballymoney Derailment

The rear coaches of the 14:50 Belfast-Derry train became derailed at Ballymoney on 10 July. The mishap blocked the line until 20:00, when normal working was resumed. In the meantime a shuttle service of buses ran from Ballymena to Ballymoney. Trailers 721 and 727 were out of use until 31 July and DE motor coach 71 was reported still out of use on 12 August.

The New "Enterprise"

All three locos have been appearing on the train in turn. 103 Merlin still lacks its nameplates but its side panels have been drilled to receive the bolts. For a few days in early August only one loco was used, as 102 was working specials on the Derry and Portrush lines with 103 under repair.

812 was kept at Queen's Quay until late August to allow its controls to be completed. Instead of the single searchlight fitted to the new locos it has two smaller headlamps similar to a railcar. It was first seen in use as a control trailer - as distinct from a standard-brake - on 30 September. The previous day the 14:30 ex Belfast, was delayed 58 minutes when loco 103 broke down. An attempt to complete the

journey by driving 101, the rear loco, from 103's controls was not a success and 101 had to be put in front. Because of its late arrival in Dublin the train could not return on the 17:30 and CIÉ provided a train for the 17:30: B142, 7 bogies + LV, and the NIR set went back as the 18:30. A large-party for Lurgan waited for the latter train as they had booked a meal on the train. The dead 103 was taken back to Belfast at the end of the train.

Weedspraying Programme

For the record we give details of the routes followed by the CIÉ spray train during its stint on the NIR lines last June:

15 June	Portadown - Belfast and back
16 June	Knockmore - Antrim; Antrim - Ballymena (down line); Ballymena - Portrush
17 June	Coleraine - Derry; Ballymena - Belfast (up line)
18 June	Belfast - Larne Harbour and back
19 June	Belfast - Antrim (down line)

All of which adds up to a very compact tour of a system which was previously unknown territory for the spray train.

Portadown - Craigavon West

The new station opened at last on 5 October. The ceremonial opening was on the 12th, when a special train ran from Belfast, conveying the Governor of Northern Ireland, Lord Grey. He performed the official ceremony. The special train also stopped at the new Goodyear Halt, where the nameboards were officially unveiled. The new Portadown station is quite an interesting place. The entrance from Woodhouse Street leads up one flight of stairs to the spacious Buffet and to the "usual offices". A further flight leads up to the concourse which also has a level entrance from an extensive car park reached from Wilson Street. There is a booking office, equipped for traditional card tickets, and also a luggage and parcels office. The concourse leads onto No.1 (Up) platform and there is a subway to the island platform 2/3. All other offices are reached from No.1 platform and they include a Customs & Excise office and a small luggage examination hall. A lift for baggage and parcels is provided with access at all three levels, Its mechanism is housed in a tower above the station.

There is no signal cabin in the conventional sense. Instead there is a control room adjacent to the platform. All points and signals are electrically controlled from a console with 30 knobs supplied by Westinghouse. This is by far the most advanced signalling installation in the whole of Ireland. Black knobs control the points, red the running signals and yellow the shunt signals. A further innovation - so far as the former GNR lines are concerned is the use of three-position block instruments instead of the Harper instruments previously standard on all GNR double lines. The corresponding instruments in Poyntzpass and Lurgan cabins were altered to the three-position type on 4 October. The instruments concerned were salvaged from closed cabins on the NCC lines.

There was great activity on Sunday, 4 October, when the old station was being closed. All the signal arms worked from the North Cabin were removed and discs obscured. The electric signals were switched on but trains were hand-signalled while work was in progress. Normal double-line working was restored at 14:30 for the first time since the alterations began, and the temporary cabin at Portadown Junction (formerly Port Arthur cabin) was closed. The first train to run over the new down lines was a ballast train. The first "proper" train to pass was the (CIÉ) 18:30 Up.

Goodyear Halt

A new halt named "Goodyear" opened on 31 August. It is situated at Ballinamoney Crossing, 1¼ miles south of Lurgan, and consists of two short sleeper platforms. It is principally intended to serve the nearby Goodyear tyre factory. The Monday-Friday service is provided by calls of the 06:15, 14:15 and

22:15 Belfast-Portadown trains and the 07:15, 15:20 and 23:15 Up trains. The Saturday service is by the 06:15, 12:15 and 18:00 Down and 07:15, 13:20 and 19:20 Up trains. There is no Sunday service. The first train reported to us as calling at the new halt was the 13:45 Belfast-Portadown on 29 August - it set down a workman!

An interesting curtain-raiser to the opening of the halt was the running of a temporary bus service from Lurgan to the Goodyear factory from 26 July to 31 August. The bus was supplied by Ulsterbus on contract hire to the NIR.

Hollywood Deviation

Work continues on the massive new embankment at Hollywood onto which the railway will be diverted so that its present site can be used for a by-pass road. There are two arches in the new embankment to give pedestrians access to the new promenade which will replace the present one. As in the case of Seagoe, a cemetery stands in the way of the new road so the railway is being moved.

Bangor Alterations

Work is in progress on alterations to the inside of Bangor station in the area of the bar and former booking office. It is expected that the exterior will be improved at a later stage.

Loading Gauge

In order to improve the loading gauge under some overbridges on the Derry Line the track is being lowered, notably at Bridge No.91 between Cookstown Junction and Kellswater, where work was observed in progress on 3 October. It is not immediately apparent why this work is being undertaken. It is known that the new DE locos were a very tight fit under some of these bridges, but they were also a barrier to the running of ISO containers on the CIÉ Derry goods trains.

Ballycarry Loop

Following the closure of the signal cabin at Ballycarry on the Larne line, reported in our last issue, all signal arms were promptly removed. The loop points were lifted on 30 July and part of the loop has since gone. Ballycarry is now unstaffed.

Locoments' Strikes

The 100 NIR loco drivers staged unofficial strikes on the four weekends from 24 July, 31 July, 7 August and 14 August. In each case the strikes started at 13:30 on the Friday and continued until the Sunday night. No cross-border trains ran while those normally worked by CIÉ ran only to and from Dundalk, with bus connections to and from Belfast. The matter in dispute, a pay increase, was finally referred to the Transport Staff Tribunal and the strikes ceased.

As might be imagined, the strikes coinciding as they did with the peak of a holiday season, already disrupted by civil disturbances, caused heavy traffic losses to the railway. One report has put the direct financial loss at £40,000. The traffic returns, however, depend to a great extent on commuters as the main source of revenue and it is feared that long-lasting harm may have been done. Needless to say, the competing bus services did very well at the expense and one railwayman was heard to say, "It looks as if we can be done without." This may, sadly, prove to be the case.

Kilroot

The signal cabin at Kilroot was closed completely on the cessation of the Spoil Train contract and all signal arms have been removed.

Snatchers Restored

The use of Manson Automatic Tablet Exchangers has been resumed. The ground instruments at Cullybackey, Dunloy and Lisahally have been put back in working order and both DE sets on the

principal Derry services have also been equipped. The ground instruments at the other cabins are out of use as the trains either call or the cabins are normally switched out.

TRANSPORT HOLDING COMPANY

Details of the THC trading for the year ended 31 March were published on 9 September. Its profits after taxation fell by over £33,000 to £467,062 compared with the previous year; this is attributed to the trouble in the north. The constituent companies had profits as under:

Northern Ireland Carriers	£234,926	(+ £63,204)
Ulsterbus	£366,537	(- £33,782) Before tax
Northern Ireland Railways	£24,626	(- £25,750) Before tax

No copies of the report are available to the public so it is impossible to comment on statistics. However, railway assets were revalued, creating a capital reserve of £2,362,876.

Feature Section

NEWS EXTRA - RE-OPENING IN BELFAST?

There has been quite a lot of talk in recent months of the likelihood of the reopening of the Belfast Central Railway which, among other things, would reunite the now isolated Bangor line with the rest of the NIR system. The NIR hierarchy itself favours such a move and its hand has recently been strengthened by a report on the project submitted by the consultants, Rendal, Palmer and Tritton, who examined the matter very carefully. According to one recent report the interest of the Government (not previously too apparent) was stimulated by the consultants' findings - and this after the Government had set "severe criteria" for consideration of reopening the line.

The consultants are believed to favour the elimination of the existing Great Victoria Street and Queen's Quay terminals and their replacement by one central station. The total capital cost has been estimated at £1,000,000 but it is thought that the project would release for sale land with a value of some £650,000. It has seemingly been argued that in any event much money would have to be spent before long on the existing termini.

Although the matter is still up in the air it has been reported that the revitalised Central Railway would be a double track laid with BS 113A flat-bottomed rail on concrete sleepers, with a sleeper density of 24 for each 60 ft rail length on straights and an extra two sleepers for each length on curves less than about 20 chains radius. It is envisaged that "two major underline bridges" will require complete reconstruction and that two more will have to be rebuilt partially. Apparently it is thought that the whole job would take a year and the starting date has been suggested as mid-1971. Certainly the scheme would be useful and we wait with interest to see if the predictions are fulfilled!

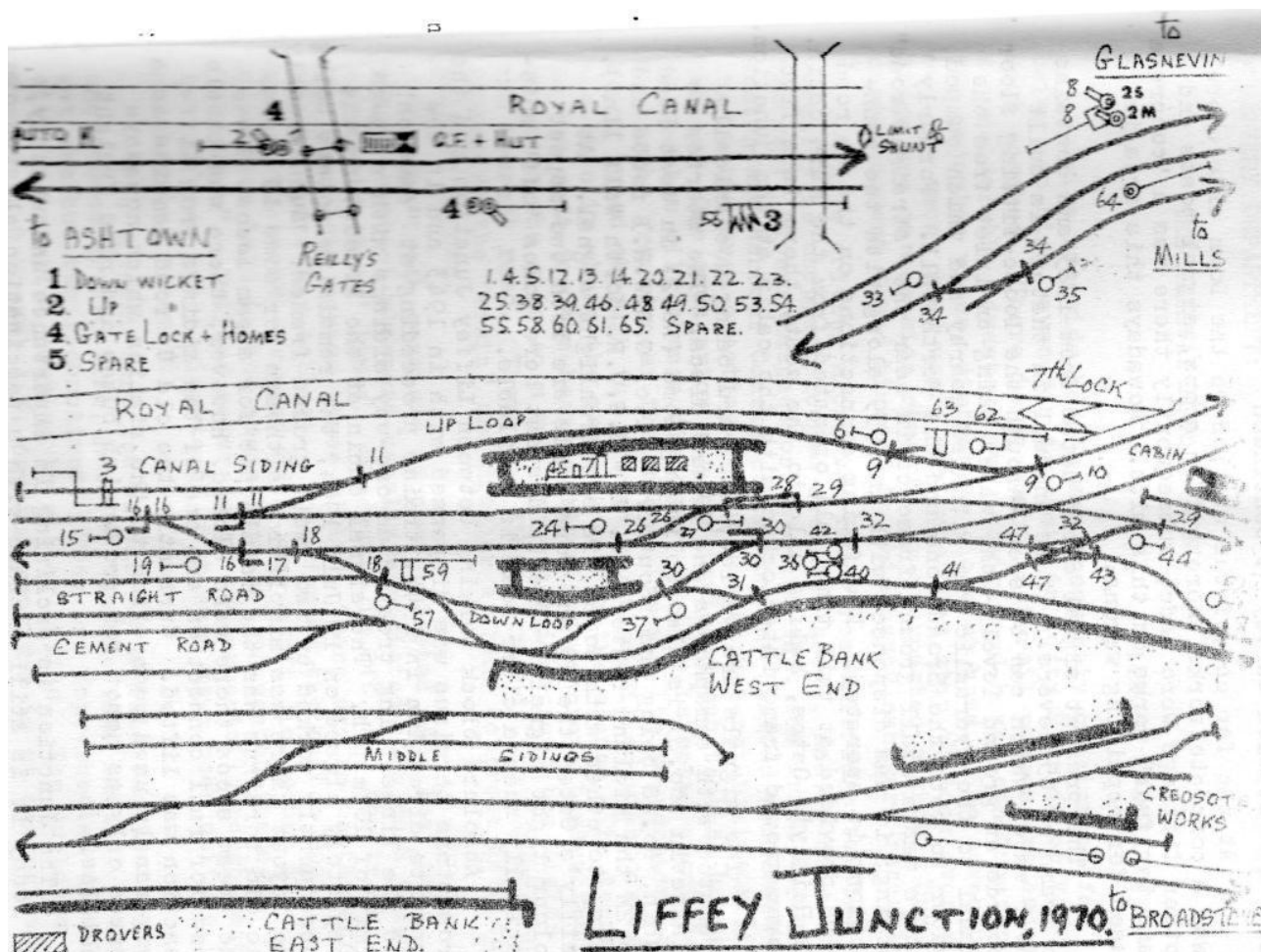
LIFFEY JUNCTION

(Herbert Richards)

Situated but three miles from the centre of Dublin, Liffey Junction was until recently enclosed by green fields. With the approach of housing schemes on one side and an industrial estate on the other, this agricultural aspect is fast disappearing, without, unhappily, any increase in railway traffic.

The Midland Great Western Railway main line from the Broadstone to Enfield was opened in 1847, but

it was not until 1864 when the North Wall branch was opened - on 1st April - that Liffey Junction came into being, though there was a creosoting works on a low level there at that time. Passenger workings did not go onto the branch until 1877, when the L&NWR station was opened; the Midland itself had only a goods terminus at the North Wall. Passenger traffic ceased in 1926 and the Broadstone terminus was closed 11 years later, a new facing junction being installed at Glasnevin for re-routed trains from the West which terminated from then at Westland Row (now Pearse Station). The GS&WR line to Glasnevin Junction (opened in 1877) passes under the Broadstone line, the Royal Canal, and both the North City Mills siding and the MGWR Liffey Branch.



As can be seen from the accompanying diagram, the Liffey Junction passenger station consisted of two island platforms to which there was no public access, the traffic being merely of an exchange nature. Formerly the Up and Down loops were passenger roads. A continuous cattle bank runs along the sidings on the down side - it was shortened at the east end when an extension to the Batchelors factory encroached on the line. Originally there was a low level creosote works siding on the up side, the walls of which works may be seen to this day. The more extensive works which had narrow gauge lines on the same site was engaged in creosoting 3'0" sleepers prior to being closed in 1930.

The North City Mills siding joins the branch on the north side of the canal. Near the traps of this mill siding is the stationmaster's house. In the triangle between the mill siding and the canal there was a small wagon shop capable of taking about six wagons at a time for light repairs. It was closed by the GSR. A siding in this area was also used for dumping ashes from the Broadstone.

At the far end of the station on the Down side there was a concrete works where buffer stops, signal posts and other fittings were made; subsequently there was a "concrete and tar fuel" works on this site.

Nowadays this area is used for repairing wagons.

The present signal cabin dates from 1923 and contains a frame of 65 levers. It is unusual in that it is built over water which can be seen through the loose-fitting floor boards at ground level - the water being an inlet from the canal to the hydraulic ram situated nearby and which pumped water to both the Broadstone and the North Wall. Formerly there was a small ground frame cabin near the "straight road" siding; it was dispensed with in 1939 along with the connections it operated. New facing connections on the Up road were provided at this time, all operated from the main cabin. At Reilly's Gates, half a mile to the west, there is a five lever ground frame interlocked with the cabin at the junction.

The signals are varied, the yard being operated mechanically with semaphores and ground discs. The starter to Glasnevin (No.8) is also splitting home (No.2) in West Road Cabin, No.2S being the "Southern" (i.e. GS&WR) route and No.2M the Midland route (i.e. the MGWR North Wall line). This, together with No.64, is a searchlight signal. At Reilly's Gates the Up and Down homes are both two-aspect colour light signals. The Up distant here comes "off" automatically when a clear road is available.

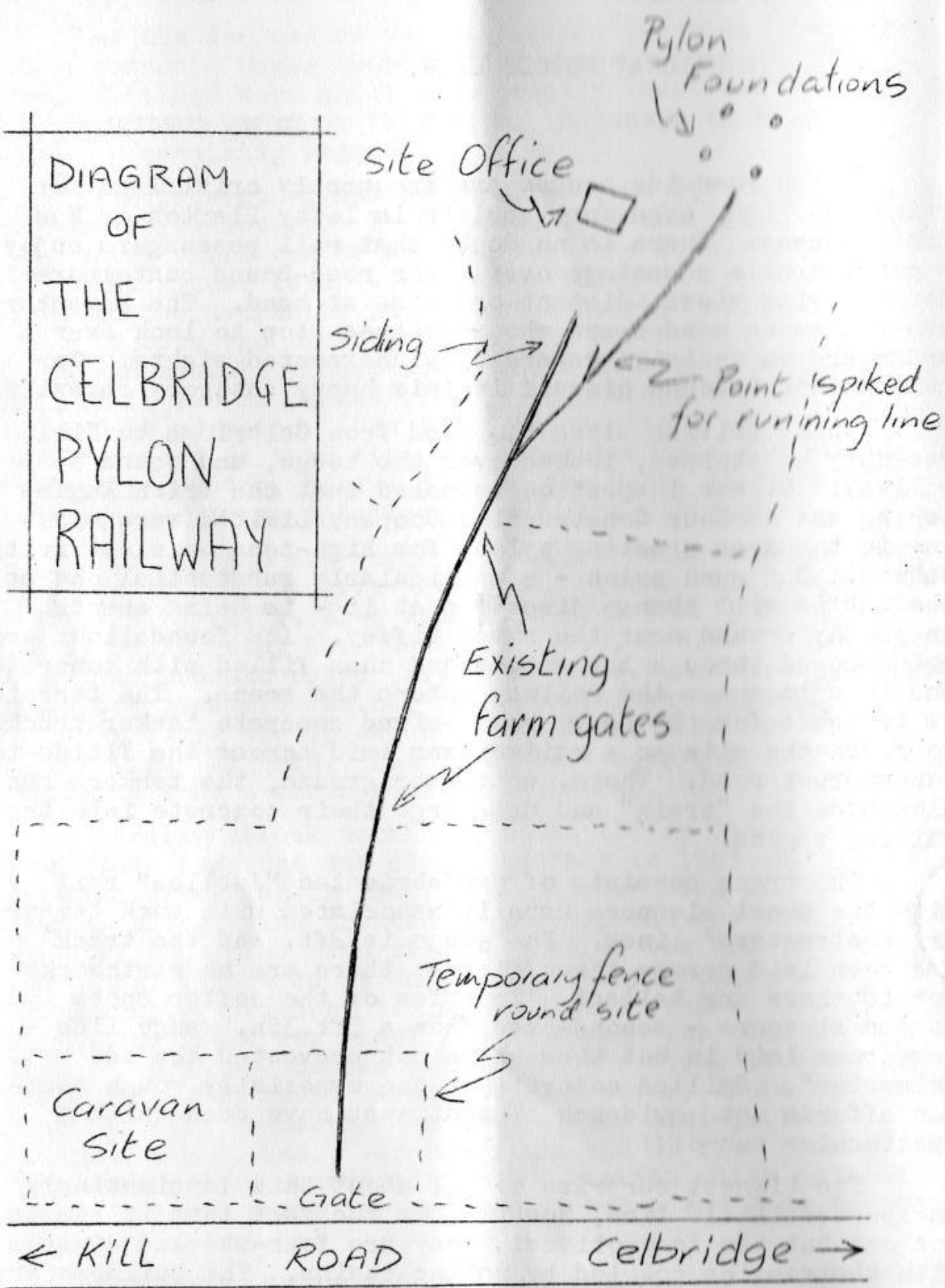
Absolute block working between Liffey Junction and the Broadstone terminus was dispensed with in 1943 and in the opposite direction in 1944, trains proceeding at "caution" and the lines being treated as one-way sidings with a speed limit of 10 mph. The signal cabin at the Broadstone was completely closed on 19 July 1944, the remaining points being subsequently worked by two small ground frames. Subsequently the layout there was simplified although for some 15 years the old terminus was the main depot for steam locos. Once the steam sheds there were closed, however, there was little need for rail connection and one of the sidings from Liffey Junction was lifted. Currently the old Up road remains as a very rarely used connection to the station which nowadays serves only as depot for provincial buses and road freight vehicles.

The Junction is declining in importance undoubtedly, but today it is still a place with a fascination all its own.

THE RAILWAY NOBODY KNEW

Irish roadside hedges are frequently criticised for being too high, even for tourists in lofty Plaxton or Van Hool coaches. There is no doubt that rail passengers enjoy a considerable advantage over their road-bound contemporaries for enjoying views, distant or close at hand. The adventurous few among road users who sometimes stop to look over a hedge are on occasion rewarded by unexpected sights. Our correspondent found himself in this happy category recently.

While driving along the road from Celbridge to Kill recently he stopped, looked over the hedge, and found a railway! Closer inspection revealed that the Irish Engineering and Harbour Construction Company Limited were working in the area erecting pylons for high-tension electricity cables. One such pylon - a particularly substantial one as the cables will change direction at it - is being erected in marshy ground near the river Liffey. Its foundations are being bored through the ground and then filled with concrete, and this is where the railway enters the scene. The terrain is too soft for the heavy ready-mixed concrete tanker trucks to reach the site so a railway was laid across the fields to the nearest road. There, on firmer ground, the tankers run alongside the "train" and discharge their concrete into the waiting wagons.



NOT TO SCALE

The track consists of prefabricated “Jubilee” rail with the steel sleepers usually associated with such temporary contractors’ lines. The gauge is 2ft and the track has been laid across three fields; there are no earthworks nor is there any ballast. In a few of the softer spots wooden sleepers - second-hand from a 5ft 3in gauge line - have been laid in but these have not prevented the odd “disaster”. Spilled concrete at one especially rough section affords mute evidence of what must have been quite a spectacular run-off!

The biggest surprise of all about this fascinatingly unexpected little line, however, is the fact that it boasts not one but two locomotives! They are four-wheeled diesels with their axles coupled by roller chains. The builders are Orenstein & Koppel A.G. and their origin is at present unknown. (Any information on their origins or earlier history will be gratefully received and published in the IRN.) The locomotives are numbered 1 and 2 and were painted - a long time ago! - in a pale yellow shade with black underframes and buffer beams. They appear to be of the maker’s type “RL 1A” but their works numbers are quite difficult to establish. No.2 is marked “Kom 31955 and Nr 16951” on the gearbox, while it bears the number 110986 (or possibly 113986) on the lid of its sandbox. No.1 has the legend “Kom 33035 and Nr 17063” on the gearbox, but there is no sign of a number elsewhere on this loco.

Both appear to be very old and in heavily worn and dirty condition. No.2, which appears to perform most of the work, has a very home-made exhaust pipe carried up to about six feet through a piece of hose. No.1 appears to be the “spare” locomotive. An external charging unit is required by the locos when they are cold although after they have been running for a time they can be restarted by starting handle.

Grateful acknowledgement for assistance is made to Messrs F. Geraghty and J. Pim.

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN IN BRIEF

To mark its Silver Jubilee CIÉ has produced a superbly-illustrated booklet giving details of its present-day services and some statistics of traffic carried, rolling stock, staff, etc., abstracted from the 1968-69 Annual Report. The picture the booklet projects very successfully is of a thoroughly modernised and highly efficient transport system. There is thus little space devoted to nostalgia, apart from Page 2 which is given over to “Milestones in CIÉ History”.

The illustrations maintain a very high standard indeed; all are recent and the oldest item of “rolling stock” depicted is a single-deck bus! The publication reflects great credit on CIÉ’s Public Relations and Publicity Department which also produces the fortnightly staff newspaper “Nuacht CIÉ” - a paper which always draws interested comment and which at times excels itself in its coverage of the multifarious activities of “The Largest Commercial Undertaking in the State”. Congratulations!

MEMORIES OF A LOCOMOTIVE - D1

(W. Nixon)

In October 1967 D1, the diesel-electric shunting locomotive of Messrs Harland & Wolff, the Belfast ship-builders, became surplus to requirements due to changing transport methods. The engine was offered for sale to various interested bodies but despite a “stay of execution” for two years the only offer received was from a gentleman who envisaged its being used by an enthusiast society - a plan which came to nothing.

The story of D1 starts in the early 1930s when Messrs Harland & Wolff were looking for new fields in which to extend their activities. As diesel traction on railways was in its infancy it was decided to construct several diesel locos and so, in 1933, D1 emerged onto the Belfast & County Down Railway with ample coverage from the H&W photographic department. The loco, which bore the letters BCDR

on its side, had painted, lined and highly polished axleboxes and had a whistle in place of the more usual klaxon horn. Even at this early date the loco was fitted with a “deadman’s handle”.

In quite a number of ways there were external resemblances to the steam locos of the time. The chimney would easily have passed on a steam loco; its radiator was located above the generator in a “bulge” where a firebox would be; it was topped by the whistle, and the starting batteries were behind the cab in the “bunker”. Two short “side tanks” housed the vacuum exhaustor and a compressed air reservoir, respectively.

The power unit - a Burmeister & Wain principle uniflow diesel of 270 hp - was itself somewhat unusual. The system incorporated ports sited tangentially in the cylinder walls, which were uncovered at the end of each stroke to blow fresh air through the cylinder and out through the exhaust valve at the top. The engine drove a 170 hp generator, also built by H&W. Final drive was by two “Emcol” type traction motors built by Laurence Scott and Electromotors Limited. Train speed was controlled by variation of the generator voltage by the master controller. The total weight of D1 was 33 tons; its tractive effort was 9,450 lbs, and the maximum speed was 60 mph.

The loco’s working life was uneventful, most of it being spent working the B&CDR’s Ballynahinch Branch. In its early days the loco was tested by the GNR at its important yard at Maysfields, Belfast. But unfortunately the track there was rather rough and subjected the loco to a severe jolting which played havoc with the lubrication system. The pipes continually worked loose or fractured, and all too regular repairs were necessary. Various rearrangements of the piping were made in an effort to combat this trouble. One such variation on the theme had the effect, according to one GNR employee, of making the innards of D1 look very much more like a distillery than a railway loco!

D1 was joined on the B&CDR by another product of Messrs Harland & Wolff in 1937. Diesel loco D2 left the works and entered service. Although Harlands continued to think of their product as D1 the loco was renumbered 2 by the B&CDR and it became 202 when the B&CDR gave way to the Ulster Transport Authority. D2 was renumbered 28.

In 1952 the loco retired from “public life” to take up shunting duties for her makers. Seven years later some significant alterations were made to the by then quite venerable D1. A uniflow engine of 210 hp was fitted and the wheel arrangement was altered. As turned out in 1933 D1 was a 2-4-0 and she remained one until the 1959 refit. Then, however, to help the loco to negotiate the sharp curves on the harbour lines, she was converted to the 0-4-0 wheel arrangement. This was done by removing the centre axle and by powering the leading axle. Other alterations carried out at that time included the reduction of the maximum speed to 20 mph, but there was an increase in the tractive effort to 12,000 lbs. The weight was reduced slightly too; it became 31 tons.

Just ten years after she had been revitalised, and after moves to keep her in existence had as mentioned proved unsuccessful, D1 went to the scrap-heap. For the record, she was cut up on 4 June 1969. However, the engine unit was saved; it was removed for use on a research project. With the development of active preservation today in quite a wide variety of technical fields it is to be hoped that no other diesel loco with such historic significance as D1 will be summarily cut up.