

THE

# **IRISH RAILFANS' NEWS**

Volume 18

November 1972

No.4

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**EDITORIAL**

The month of September has, as announced and reported in our last issue, brought a new chief executive to CIÉ. Mr John J. Byrne went to work immediately by introducing himself to a wide spectrum of the board's employees and to the Minister for Transport & Power, Mr Brian Lenihan. He then had a statement for the press. It was an impressive start inasmuch as it gave him an instant "one of the plain people" image. In his press release the new general manager pointed out that CIÉ's greatest asset was its 20,000 employees - a statement which no doubt warmed the hearts of trade union representatives throughout the company who might have had some reservations about a work study oriented man filling the highest office. His further comment, in essence that "now that we have decided to have a railway, it must be a good one" seems to the point.

Time will tell what a good railway should comprise; it's now up to Mr Byrne and his colleagues in CIÉ. The biggest constraint on CIÉ modernisation programmes is of course financial. Time and time again various departments of the company have had to shelve or just forget about the implementation of ambitious schemes for lack of hard cash. Not that the Government has been ungenerous to CIÉ, rather the contrary if anything, but the national purse is never overfilled. Thus the persuasive powers of Mr Byrne on the Minister, through the CIÉ board, will play an important part in future developments.

The current renewals programme of CIÉ already includes new coaching stock which is about to enter service, new signalling equipment presently out to tender, and a comprehensive plan of main line track replacement which is currently under way. These matters are under the direction of Mr Byrne's established and competent staff. There are some day-to-day matters, however, which call for the attention of the new general manager, notably the catering services on trains and at stations, and also the Dublin suburban services; likewise, coach servicing is feeling neglected. The number of occasions on which lights are missing or unserviceable, or on which coach water supplies (together with missing soap and towels) are unreplenished, causes concern to passengers if not to the staff responsible. Similarly, the internal and external condition of the Dublin suburban railcar sets is hardly such as to create a favourable impression on users.

No one will deny that these trains are feeling their age but so are some (a diminishing number) of the city's buses, yet they are cleaned regularly while railcar bodies, windows, floors and seats are left in an often unspeakable state. One possible answer to the problem might be the appointment of a passenger vehicle inspector who would travel throughout the system regularly and devote his time to seeing that these problems are solved once and for all. He might report intermittently to Mr Byrne himself to ensure that the company's image in the public eye is a favourable one.

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## A Note to Subscribers

Enclosed with this issue is a subscription form for the 1973 issues of the IRN. Once again we sincerely thank our readers for their continuing support. May we ask that those renewing their subscriptions do so promptly, thereby saving the Committee much difficulty in arranging print runs. Thank you.

## IRN BOOK REVIEWS

### **The Ballinamore & Ballyconnell Canal by Patrick Flanagan (David & Charles)**

This latest addition to the D & C Inland Waterways series forms an interesting second journey through familiar territory for the author whose previous history of the Cavan & Leitrim Railway has set a high standard, maintained in his latest work. While it is "off the rails" in the sense that it deals with a currently defunct waterway this book forms a valuable part of the general history of transport in rural Ireland. The B&B started as part of a grand scheme to connect the Shannon and Erne waterways and like so many other railway and waterway projects it failed rather miserably. Granted the canal was built, but the fact that it was used by a mere dozen or so boats in its entire history, since its opening in 1860, is a fair indication of the lack of traffic and inadequate planning. The history and indeed reasons for the B&B were very much tied up with land drainage in the area and the attempt to cater for both drainage and navigation at the same time was probably a main reason for the failure. The background to the building and the history of the 13 years taken to build the canal are covered in considerable detail as are the subsequent attempts at revival. The illustrations and maps are very comprehensive and illustrate the main features and route of the canal. The main text is followed by a most complete series of appendices which include a gazetteer of the navigation listing all the main features, locks, lakes, etc. - a fact that could be most useful if recent suggestions and proposals that the B&B should be reopened for pleasure boat traffic are acted upon.

BP

### **The Baronial Lines Of The MGWR - Loughrea and Ballinrobe by Padraig O'Cuimin (Transport Research Associates)**

This very welcome publication is one of very few which devote themselves to the minor standard-gauge lines of Ireland. The work has a very attractive cover and is complete with maps, excellent station diagrams, gradient profiles and 19 representative half-tones. Although the lines were "brothers" they were quite widely separated and opened at different times. The author has woven the threads well, covering some aspects jointly and others separately, and the result is a skilfully assembled detailed account of life on two lines which were regarded as Midland branches but which until 1925 had a measure of independence. All aspects are there - promotion, building, services, stations, the locos which worked them, the personalities. We look forward to the author's next work eagerly.

PJF

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## **News Section**

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### CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

#### **The Trains Of Tomorrow**

The "Trains of Tomorrow" were officially introduced to the press on Thursday 26 October, when a special train ran from Heuston Station to Portarlington and back in the afternoon. Through the courtesy of the Public Relations & Publicity Department of CIÉ, our reporters were present on what was a useful, pleasant, informative and very well-organised occasion. The new trains consist, of course, of the BR-built rolling stock which is fully air-conditioned (and hence referred to as the AC stock) and which

will be introduced on the Dublin/Cork service in early December. In this report we will concentrate on the “introduction”, giving as well our impressions of the new trains, and in our next issue will appear a detailed, technical review of the new rolling stock.

By 15:00 on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the intending passengers - the representatives of the media and their hosts (including the Chairman, Board and General Manager of CIÉ, as well as members of the Public Relations and other concerned departments) - were assembling on the Heuston departure platform for a first look over the new train. It was headed by an apparent newcomer to the CIÉ loco stud - No.001 - which is in fact a renumbered A1R. The train comprised generator van 5602 (with one of its engines “in steam”, standard 5212, first 5102, kitchen/standard 5401, firsts 5104 and 5103, and standard 5207. The livery is a variant of the “black-and-tan” - a wide orange band up to window level, then a black band beginning just below and ending just above the windows, and then more orange, which is carried right up over the roof. Our first impressions were not that favourable but somehow the colour scheme grew on one; however, it would definitely be more serviceable (and attractive) to have a grey roof.

By 15:10 doors were being closed (noticeably reducing the background noise level) and following a very audible announcement on the public address system of the imminent departure the train left dead on time at 15:15.

	Down Run		Up Run
Heuston Station	15:15:00		04:50 ^
Inchicore Cabin	18:54		17:00:15
Clondalkin Cabin	22:53		57:35
Hazelhatch Cabin	29:24		52:38
Straffan Station	31:02		50:00
Sallins Station	35:05		46:00
Newbridge Station	41:23		39:45
Curragh (Main Line)	43:12		37:55
Kildare Cabin	45:28		35:14
Cherryville Junction	47:26		32:10
Portarlington	15:56:32	▽	16:20:10

The scheduled arrival times were 15:57 and 17:05! The speeds were the normal 70/75 mph on the open road and it was with some surprise that we recorded those figures as in neither first nor standard class seats was there any sensation of real speed - the train seemed to be merely gliding along at some much lesser speed. A novel feature of the proceedings (for a special other than an enthusiasts') was a photographic run-past at Portarlington. The loco ran round, reversed back for some distance on the up line towards Portlaoise and then ran smartly through the station, stopping again between the starting and advanced starting signals before reversing back to pick up the photographers at the up platform. The smoothness of the starts and stops of the train was notable.

During the outward trip Mr Hogan, CIÉ Chairman, welcomed those aboard in a succinct speech, in which he asked the press “not to write off the rail system” - the investment in the new stock was an “act of faith” on the part of the Board which was convinced of the importance of developing the rail network. These remarks ( relayed from one of the public address booths) were heard with complete clarity in the train, then travelling at over 70 mph - a train which was very well lit, silent-running, and with its air-conditioning resulting in an extremely comfortable atmosphere. Our criticisms are minor and will be contrasted with the advantages in the next IRN.

### Signalling Notes

A great amount of signalling work has been carried out recently at locations scattered throughout the CIÉ rail system. Among the modifications made are the following:

Howth Junction: Some cable trenches have been dug for electric signals.

Bray: The Down Starting signals from all three roads were converted to colour lights from 4 September. In the case of the Up and Down platform lines these are three-aspect, with single-aspect shunt signals below. There is a two-aspect ground signal for the Middle Road. Other electric signals are being erected.

Newtown & Ballycoskerry Level Crossings (Cork Line): The Up and Down distants are two-aspect colour lights (as from 11 July).

Killinick: Two ground frames, locked by the Bridgetown/Rosslare Strand staff, now operate the points to the sidings.

Bridgetown: An Up Outer Home (semaphore) was installed on 25 July and the Up Distant moved further out. There is a "Limit of Shunt" board near the Up Home signal.

Lucan And Straffan: The Up and Down Starters were removed on 31 July. These cabins only operate at times of peak traffic such as GAA "All-Ireland" days.

Portarlington: The Up Branch Fixed Distant became a colour light signal from 1 August - a most unusual move.

Limerick: Work is in progress on laying cables and air pipes for the new signalling installation.

Mallow Beet Factory Sidings: The passing loop and west end points leading into the sidings were dispensed with on 5 September and will be removed. All trains from the Tralee direction must now be propelled into the sidings from the east end.

Cabra: A new facing crossover was installed at the west end of Cabra yard on Sunday, 17 September. It is principally to give access to the yard to Bulk Cement trains from the Platin or Drogheda factories without their having to reverse via the existing trailing crossover. Two trains were in attendance during the work - B104 with the 35-ton Inchicore steam crane and B103 with the rail train.

## Refugees Again

A considerable number of refugees, mainly from Belfast, was handled by CIÉ during July and the early part of August. The pattern was much as before - a sudden influx which had to be handled promptly - but once again the transport operation went very smoothly.

## Sundry Breakdowns

Malahide and Sallins proved unlucky locations recently. On 3 July the 07:32 Connolly Station/Donabate failed at Malahide and had to be shunted into the Quarry Sidings, causing some disruption of morning suburban trains. On 25 July the 20:30 Connolly Station/Dundalk (B223 with 6 bogies and LV) failed there on arrival at 20:48. B224 was sent to the rescue, arriving at 21:26. Having disposed of B223, it resumed the journey, some 50 minutes late.

On Saturday, 15 July, an Engineer's Special convoying concrete sleepers failed in the Hazelhatch - Sallins section. It blocked the 14:30 to Cork (B192 + B146 with 13 bogies) at Hazlehatch until 16:05 and the 15:00 Pearse Station/Westport was held at Inchicore until the same time (A48R with 8 bogies and LV). The 08:45 to Cork (A30R with 11 bogies) failed at Sallins on Monday 7 August, but restarted after 12 minutes. Thereafter its progress was rather slow and the train was over 30 minutes late at Portlaoise.

## "Travel Express"

A new magazine for free distribution to CIÉ's long-distance passengers will appear on 1 November. The "Travel Express" will be rather similar in concept and contents to many such publications of airlines and European railways. The latter are normally left in aircraft or trains for passengers to read

and retain if desired but CIÉ will present copies to passengers individually. The publication will also be available at stations and bus depots.

### **Howth Goods**

One of the extremely infrequent goods trains which operate to Howth was observed there on 16 September. Comprising a loco, one empty open wagon and a van, it followed the 14:03 ex Connolly Station. At Howth it exchanged its wagon for one loaded with scrap from Parsons' private siding and left for Dublin within a short time.

### **Castlebellingham**

The station here was reduced to halt status from 26 June. It is under Dundalk (Clarke Station; Junction) for passenger traffic and Dundalk (Barrack Street) for goods in common with Dunleer which was previously a halt under Castlebellingham. The former stationmaster has been transferred to Liffey Junction.

### **Kilcommon No.1 Level Crossing**

This crossing on the Dublin/Wexford line is now unattended and the gatekeeper's cottage has been demolished. It was near the temporary Rathdrum station of the DW&WR which was the terminus of the line pending the completion of the Rathdrum Viaduct.

### **Killurin Failure**

On 9 August the 18:15 ex Rosslare Harbour failed near Killurin. The driver made his way back to Wexford and called on the pilot engine to haul his train back to Wexford. There it was combined with a following special from Rosslare Harbour - the Fishguard boat had once again missed the 18:15 - and the journey for Dublin resumed. At Bray the 18:15 was almost 2 hours late.

### **Damage At Belfast**

The latest hotel in the OIÉ chain, the Russell Court in Belfast, was opened on 14 August after very extensive alterations to the original premises. Just six weeks later - on 25 September - the hotel was in the news again when it was very severely damaged by a bomb. So great was the damage that it was feared initially that the structure might have to be demolished though this drastic action was later ruled out.

### **Oil Trains**

Because of a strike at the Roofchrome factory at Tivoli in Cork the Tivoli/Ballinacourty oil train began to operate to and from the North Wall on 27 September. When observed on 4 October it comprised A21R, a flat wagon, 11 tankers and another flat.

### **Steam Heating**

The steam heating of main line passenger trains resumed as from 11 September, although the weather at that time was very mild. Night mail trains are, of course, steam heated throughout the year.

### **Midland Bridges**

Both overbridges and underbridges on the main Dublin/Galway line are receiving attention under the civil engineering works programme. At Blanchardstown the bridge carrying the Navan Road over the railway has been strengthened, having been closed to heavy road traffic for some time. The existing and (from the road-user's point of view) rather dangerous bridge has been retained but there are new abutments.

Further out, at Leixlip, Louisa Bridge, which carries the main Dublin/Galway road across the railway at the southern tip of Leixlip station, was renewed on the weekend of 17/18 June when A36R was in attendance with the Inchicore crane. In this case the old bridge was removed and replaced by a pre-

stressed concrete structure but the abutments were not touched.

At Kilcock the notorious bridge carrying the same road over the line is under reconstruction, as mentioned in the August issue. The bridge carrying the railway over the Blackwater River (between Nesbitt Junction and Moyvalley) is having work done on its abutments and further west, just outside Ballinasloe, the Suck River bridge has been repaired. Finally, the bridge carrying the line over the Shannon at Athlone has been repainted.

### **Busy Day**

The main Dublin/Wexford line had a very busy day on Sunday 9 July, when a variety of trains operated. The Mystery Train ran in duplicate to Wexford, which was also the destination of a special train from faraway Roscommon. There was also the Sea Breeze train, as well, of course, as the regular summer Sunday trains. As a result of all this activity the 19:00 from Pearse Station to Wexford crossed trains at virtually every crossing point from Greystones to Gorey inclusive!

The Up trains left Bray as follows. First was the Sea Breeze - a four-coach railcar (units 2625 and 2628) at 19:58. Next was a Mystery Train - B148 with HV, 5 bogies and LV (departed at 20:14). Then came the main Mystery Train (B155 + B185 with 11 bogies) which left at 20:56. The returning Roscommon special consisting of B173 with HV, 5 bogies and LV, left at 21:21 and last of all was the 18:48 ex Ballygeary (2 GM locos, 7 bogies, 2 vans) which left at 22:06 - some 37 minutes late.

### **Coaching Stock Developments**

Existing stock classifications have recently been changed to some extent. Some of the main-line composites are being declassified and renumbered in the 1600 series from 1611 upwards. When the programme has been completed a full list of numbers will be published but the following numbers have so far been observed to date:

Old Number	New Number	Old Number	New Number
2144	1611	2124	1618
2146	1612	2128	1620
2152	1614	2130	1621
2123	1617		

It will be recalled that suburban composites 2162-2171 inclusive were declassified and renumbered 1601-1610 prior to their ultimate conversion to standard/brakes bearing numbers 1914-1923 inclusive.

Park Royal No.1381 was noted at the end of September with two styles of lighting. One half had the normal fluorescent "haloes" while in the other half the lights had been enclosed with battens and clouded glass giving an effect similar to that in the Cravens.

Coaches withdrawn are 1114 and the ex-GN 134N, 153N and 232N. The remaining Northern passenger bogies are mostly concentrated in the set which works almost exclusively the Dun Laoghaire Pier Train service. At the end of September this set comprised 63N, 75N, 78N, 105N (brake), C140N, 168N and 195N. At the same time 225N was working on Dublin suburban services and 114N was acting as van for the BUT railcar set whenever it ventured out into service.

### **Wagon Notes**

Construction of the 40 additional bulk cement wagons referred to in the May 1972 issue has been completed as has the building of 29 mineral hoppers. A further programme of 26 such hoppers is now in progress. Some of the hoppers have been stencilled "P.W.D."; they were noted at Dun Laoghaire on 1 October when A3R brought 15 of them with ballast from Lisduff. Since then, however, one of the Lisduff ballast trains has consisted of eight of these hoppers with seven of the older type of ballast hopper wagon.

## Railcar News

Up to the end of September there was no sign of the introduction of push-and-pull working on the Dublin suburban services. Further trials have been carried out with a four bogie train. Meanwhile many railcars were in various stages of the conversion, process for push-and-pull operation:

2602	2607	2608	2610	2618
2619	2626	2627	2632	2639
2660	2663	2664	2665	2668

Already converted are cars:

2605	2666	2621	2645	2646	2647
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Ex-GN car 600N is also a candidate for push-and-pull but its lack of connecting cables (the GNR AEC cars were not fitted for "double-diesel" working) has proved a disadvantage.

## Locomotive Developments

Difficulties over obtaining spare parts (resulting from the British dock strike) have delayed the completion of the re-engining programme for the C class locos. By the middle of September all but one of the locos had entered service, the additions to the active list being B205, B208, B214, B218, B219, B223 and B228. At that time work on C220 had been held up completely.

Grand Canal Street loco shed closed on 25 July. On that morning A53R was on shed but by evening the BR heating vans had taken over and since then the shed has been used as a maintenance and repair depot for those vehicles. All locomotives were transferred to the running shed at Inchicore and in the early days after the move the result was the tardy arrival on quite frequent occasions of locos at Pearse Station to work trains down the South Eastern or out the Midland sections. However, as staff got used to the new arrangement things quickly got back to normal.

## Kingscourt

In preparation for Liner Train conveyance of Gypsum an additional siding had been laid. It is partly on the site of the former loco shed and it passes behind the present end-loading dock. The latter will have to be modified to allow side-loading before the new arrangements can be brought into force.

## Gypsum Traffic

Conveyance of gypsum from Kingscourt to the cement factories at Drogheda and Limerick was converted to Liner Train operation in August. New 20-ton hopper wagons are used. On 15 August the first load for Limerick was observed, in this case the 11 wagons of gypsum being attached to an overload special of cement in covered wagons. The returned empties reached Dublin late next night, running as a liner train with no brake van. The operation to Limerick has since been rather intermittent but the load has grown to 20 wagons. Gypsum for the new cement factory at Platin is being carried in open wagons as a temporary expedient until the conveyor system at the Platin site has been completed. The siding alteration at Kingscourt is mentioned above.

## Portrait Of The 16:00

The 16:00 Sunday-only train from Cork to Heuston Station and thence to Dun Laoghaire Pier has had quite a variety of motive power - ARs, rebuilt Cs and representatives of all three batches of General Motors diesels. It has also undergone some trials and tribulations. On 13 August the train comprised B224 with a BR heating van, seven bogies and another van. At Limerick Junction its connection - the 16:45 ex Limerick - had not arrived, having been blocked at Dromkeen where work on the renewal of a crossover had not proceeded according to plan and had not been completed in time. The 16:00 did not wait, however, and headed on to Thurles where the loco failed. A20R came to the rescue and worked train, failed engine and all, to Heuston Station, arriving at 20:12. There B224 was left and the rest went

on to Dun Laoghaire.

Meanwhile the Limerick train (A51R, 4 bogies and LV) got away from Dromkeen at 17:55 and headed direct to Heuston Station, bypassing the Junction and stopping only at those stations where it had to set down. It reached Dublin at 20:18 - only 6 minutes behind the unfortunate 16:00! There was thus no train to run from the Junction to Limerick giving a connection for passengers from Cork but, according to a rather picturesque rumour reaching us, the few people involved took their places for Limerick in a personnel van belonging to the Permanent Way Department and went off by road!

### **Heuston Station**

Work commenced on 18 September at Heuston Station on the provision of additional platform accommodation. Such a development has been frequently mooted in the past - and indeed it is obvious - but the continuing increase in the number of trains has rendered it essential. The work involves the removal of carriage storage space in the centre of the station and the substitution of a double-sided platform. The trackwork will be slightly shortened giving in effect some much-needed concourse space in what was virtually terra incognita as far as most travellers using the station were concerned. Friction buffers will be provided on the platform roads, the work to be completed by early December.

At the present time there are four storage roads and two of these will become platform roads. There is a degree of confusion in the reports reaching us as to whether one or two of these lines will be removed to yield space for the new platform. We record this as the position but add that we are inclined to agree with statements that both lines will be removed to give space for a wide finger platform. If the development is being undertaken to make Heuston an adequate principal rail terminal in Dublin (possibly even catering for trains from the West as well) then it is hardly likely that the job would be skimped. We will report further developments.

### **Wexford South**

On 4 September the Up Loop at Wexford South was put out of use temporarily in connection with drainage work being carried out by Wexford County Council in the area. Trains cannot, of course, be crossed there and for the duration the 08:20 goods from Wexford (North) to Waterford has been advanced to 08:02 and the 08:13 passenger train from Wexford (South) to Rosslare Harbour has been altered to leave at 18:02 from Wexford (North). The changes permit the crossings to be made at Rosslare Strand instead of Wexford (South).

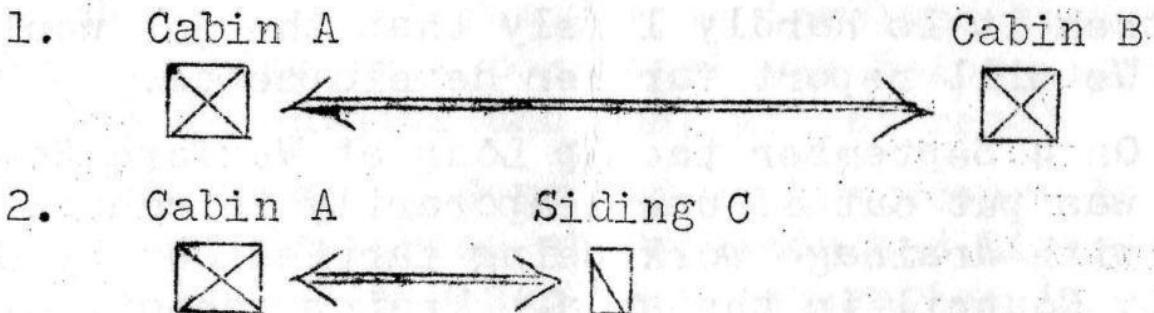
### **GAA Trains**

This year as usual special trains for GAA sporting fixtures have demanded a number of special trains, the operation of which has been smooth. Because of rolling stock shortages at peak times, however, some of the specials have been composed of locos hauling fascinating combinations of AEC and BUT railcars.

### **Subsidiary Instruments**

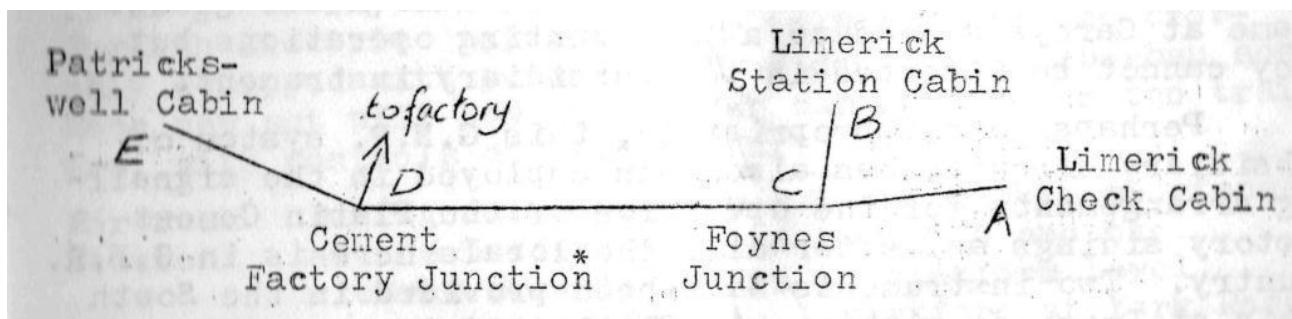
The provision of subsidiary Electric Train Staff (ETS) instruments at places along single-line sections where trains would require to shunt off the running line (or to head down an often quite lengthy but little-used branch line) for prolonged periods is a well-known and most useful feature of railway operations in Ireland. Without such an arrangement at Clara & Banagher Junction, to cite but one example, the train which required the Clara/Ballycumber staff to reach the junction would effectively close that section of the Portarlington/Athlone line while meandered off down the quiet 18-mile branch to Banagher. Under this system, however, once the Clara/Ballycumber staff (unnecessary, of course, for the branch) was placed in the subsidiary instrument at the junction the ETS instruments at both Clara and Ballycumber were put back into phase and the section could be used normally, irrespective of how long the branch train lingered at Ferbane or Banagher.

The system was quite widely used by most of the major companies but there was a considerable variation in practice between CIÉ, on the one hand, and GNR and UTA procedure on the other. Taking the latter first, the companies would provide two parallel token circuits as follows:



Cabin A had two identical ETS instruments, the staffs (or other tokens) being marked "A to B" and "A to C", respectively. Under normal operation along the section trains would use the "A to B" staffs as required. If a train had to make a call at C its staff would be placed in the instrument there, activating the "A to C" circuit. To restore regular working along the section the signalman at A could then withdraw a staff from his "A to C" subsidiary instrument and place it in the "A to B" main instrument. To permit a train to leave C for either A or B this procedure was reversed.

The practice on CIÉ was to have all the instruments on the same circuit, there being only one ETS instrument at the terminal cabins. However, there could still be complexity, as demonstrated by the set-up in the Limerick area, on the Limerick/Patrickswell section. This had (until 26 May 1968, when Foynes Junction was disconnected) two entries at the Limerick end and also two separate subsidiary ETS instruments at sidings, as shown in the following diagram.



The power-operated points at Foynes Junction were an added complication in this instance; they normally lay set for trains to and from Limerick Check (A) but could be reversed by the signalman at Limerick Station (B) when the section was clear. This operation released a staff from the points mechanism which was used to put the Limerick Station (B) ETS instrument into phase with that at Patrickswell (E), permitting normal ETS working between Limerick Station and Patrickswell (B to E). Reversal of the procedure permitted the more usual normal ETS working between Limerick Check and Patrickswell (A to E).

The removal of the virtually redundant “Foynes Loop” (B to C) simplified matters somewhat and the set-up became identical to that obtaining between Woodenbridge Junction (later Rathdrum) and Arklow, which section has two separate subsidiary instruments at the NET sidings at Shelton Abbey.

The situation has been drastically altered, however, as from 28 July, by the institution of arrangements on the GNR pattern. There are now two identical ETS instruments in Limerick Check Cabin, each capable of accepting the Limerick Check/Patrickswell staffs. The same cabin (in addition, of course, to

its ETS instrument for the section to Ballycar on the Ennis line) also has another instrument for long-section working to Ballingrane when the cabin at Patrickswell is switched out. The long-section staffs can be used to unlock the ground frame at Carey's Road to allow shunting operations but they cannot be inserted in the subsidiary instrument.

Note: Cement Factory Junction (D). The junction was later removed to a point near Rosbrien Level Crossing when the Castlemungret Cement Factory branch became a siding connected directly into the goods yard at Carey's Road.

Perhaps more appropriately, this GNR system of subsidiary circuits has also been employed in the signalling arrangements for the operation of the Platin Cement Factory sidings as, after all, the locale here is in GNR country. Two instruments have been provided in the South Cabin at Drogheda with one at Platin and in the cabin at Navan. In this particular instance the Drogheda South signalman is specially authorised to keep a Drogheda/Navan staff in a locked box rather than in one or other of the instruments. This is to allow trains to be operated to and from Platin without the cabin at Navan being manned. (Where trains are running to or from Navan itself the cabin there must be opened.) This arrangement is rather akin to that currently in force on a small number of lines, "Manual Staff with Reversion to ETS Working". This system was quite popular on branch lines which had occasionally to handle increased numbers of trains (for example, fair day specials) when manual staff operation could not cope.

### **Railway To Mornington**

Planning is at an advanced stage for a new branch from a point south of Drogheda on the Dublin main line to Mornington, some three miles distant on the estuary of the Boyne river. A new port development is projected there in connection with the export of minerals from the very extensive deposits of zinc in the immediate vicinity of Navan. Surveys for the line have been carried out although mining has not yet commenced. Progress will be reported as it happens.

## **NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS**

### **New Railcars**

It was announced in the September 1972 issue of "Rail News", a British Rail staff magazine, that NIR have ordered four three-car and five two-car diesel-electric railcar sets from British Rail Engineering Limited. The work will be shared between York and Derby carriage and wagon works and Derby loco works, for completion by late 1973. Some internal fitting out is to be completed at the York Road Works in Belfast. NIR have yet to comment about the order but it is generally accepted that the units will be 600 hp English Electric type, similar to Nos. 71-78 but probably equipped with power-operated doors and suburban seats. Each new set will have one power car and one or two trailers, with controls at either end.

### **Portrush Station**

During July, platforms 1 and 2 were shortened at the buffer-stop end by 150ft and the cleared area filled in to platform level.

Later, the former canopy from No.1 platform at York Road, Belfast, was re-erected at No.1 platform, Portrush. It is not yet clear if No.3 platform will also be shortened. This, if done, would put the last remaining loco-release crossover at an NIR station out of use. It seems that NIR propose to demolish the present station building and clock tower which are probably the most noteworthy structures in a town which is poorly endowed with buildings of architectural merit. In relation to the present-day scale of railway operations at Portrush these are white elephants from NIR's point of view but they are surely worthy of preservation by some local or national authority provided that this does not become a

financial burden on the railway. The last remnants of the Portrush Harbour Branch, latterly just a steeply-graded siding, were lifted in August.

### **Antrim Branch**

A considerable amount of relaying is being done on the Knockmore Junction/Antrim branch which was closed to passenger trains in 1960. It is suggested that when the standard of the track has been restored to that necessary for running passenger trains the Derry/Belfast trains may be diverted into Great Victoria Street Station as a temporary expedient pending the resuscitation of the Central Railway and the opening of the new Central Station.

### **Level Crossings**

Two crossings on the Dublin/Belfast line became unattended in August - Acton (MP 78) and Augheraner (MP 76), both near Poyntzpass. On 24 July the BBC "Police Call" programme included an appeal to motorists using Kilmakee Automatic Crossing (MP 17½, Belfast/Derry line) not to dodge past the lowered barriers.

### **Bangor Clock**

The three-faced clock in the tower at Bangor has been renewed. The new faces are rectangular and are lit from behind by fluorescent tubes. The appearance is pleasing but the faces are perhaps a little too small.

### **Cromore**

It has been decided to remove the passing loop at Cromore (formerly Portstewart). It was intended to do this from 18 September but it was then decided to re-sleeper the fast (Down) line first, during which time all trains would use the Up loop.

### **Derailment At Killogue**

This spectacular mishap on 13 June was reported in our last issue but further information is now available. The train involved, the 08:10 Belfast/Derry, comprised motor coach 73, trailers 701, 554 (buffet), 725 and motor coach 75, and it was the latter which was derailed. The passengers in this vehicle had a miraculous escape from serious injury as it passed through a very narrow overbridge just as it stopped, without touching the abutments. After some time the front portion was uncoupled and driven on to Ballymoney Station.

The line remained blocked until the 14:50 Belfast/Derry next day (713, 722 and 78, with bogie van 614). These returned as the 17:40 ex Derry with the undamaged vehicles of the 08:10 at the Derry end. No.75 was hauled to Belfast on the 15<sup>th</sup> by a diesel-hydraulic loco.

### **Vandalism**

Apart from the damage occasioned by the terror campaign in the North (mentioned below) NIR trains are suffering a lot from an alarming increase in stone-throwing in widely scattered areas. The "Enterprise" bears the scars of such attacks, while some trains out of York Road have boarded up windows. All three regions of the NIR system are suffering.

### **Malicious Damage**

Since our last issue there has been a big and very unwelcome increase in the number of alerts over bombs, both genuine and false. Mercifully, no-one has been injured but damage to rolling stock and property has reached very serious proportions. Some of the more serious incidents are listed below.

21 July: A bomb exploded beneath the 20:55 Derry/Dundalk goods near Boilie Crossing. The loco and first four wagons remained on the track and were later worked on to Dundalk; ten wagons were derailed. The crew were shocked but unhurt. The Up line was blocked but services were kept running

between Lurgan and Portadown on the Down line. On the same date a bomb in a suitcase exploded in York Road station concourse. The area had been cleared but there was extensive damage, especially to the ornate timber structure which was formerly the booking office.

22 July: The booking office and hall at Lurgan were severely damaged by a car bomb left outside. Until repairs are complete the long-closed Down side booking office has been reopened. This incident severely disrupted the train services. The 08:00 ex Belfast (102 + 6 bogies) left Lurgan at 12:20, some 4 hours late. The 11:30 Up (B155 + B142 + LV + 11 bogies) reached Dublin at 16:51, 186 minutes late. The 13:45 (B227 + 7 bogies) arrived at 17:33, closely followed by the 14:30 (6 bogies propelled by 103) at 17:55 (70 minutes late). This set was combined with that of the 08:00 Up to form the much-delayed 17:30 Down train.

The same day a bridge near Whitehouse was damaged by a bomb and the Larne and Derry services were disrupted.

9 August: The 20:55 Derry/Dundalk goods was stopped at Bell's Row Crossing near Lurgan. The crew were put off by raiders who then set fire to the train. When the fire brigade had extinguished the blaze the driver took the train on to Portadown where the somewhat damaged loco not surprisingly failed. The journey southward was completed with the aid of the locomotive off the 03:30 newspaper train which regularly operated from Dublin to Portadown.

14 September: An underbridge at Kilnasaggart, just north of the border, was damaged by explosives. Both lines were blocked to passenger trains until the 14:30 in both directions.

23 September: A bomb scare at Finaghy caused the 14:20 ex Portadown to be cancelled and the 14:30 Belfast/Dublin was delayed for some 80 minutes.

### Railcar Notes

Many AEC railcars are out of action and in mid-August only one set including three units was reported to be running. No.111, still in UTA blue and cream, is lying at Antrim partly dismantled. MPD trailer 543 was observed in July newly converted from non-corridor driving trailer (composite) to corridor standard class non-driving trailer. The pioneer NCC railcar No.1 is still mouldering at Ballymena despite its apparent claim for preservation. The remaining lightweight trailer No.545, now Signals Department Van 3109, has lain partly derailed at York Road for a considerable time.

### “Enterprise” Working

There was an apparently unforeseen complication with this unconventional train in mid-July when its formation grew first to 10 and then to 12 bogies. On 10 July the train was loco 103 with 10 bogies and to run around the loco had to go out to East Wall Junction. On 14 July the train comprised 102 + 12 bogies + 101. The end of this cavalcade stopped outside the furthest facing point by which it could reach the Down line on the return journey. To overcome the problem the train was shunted out to East Wall and back by another route which was not signalled for passenger trains. A variation on this performance was tried on 20 July when the train was divided after the tenth bogie. Loco 103 then shunted the remaining two clear and after a visit to Sheriff Street Goods Yard to clear the line it was reunited with its train and left at 17:34. While the Connolly Station/East Wall Junction is electrically, signalled for trains in either direction on both tracks, the crossover at East Wall lacks a facing point locking bar so passenger trains must therefore always run on the correct line.

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# Feature Section

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## THE PRESERVATION SCENE

Since our last review of the Irish preservation scene several significant developments have occurred.

### **Córas Iompair Éireann**

On 30 August ex-GNR Q Class 4-4-0 No.131 was placed on public display at Dundalk (Clarke) Station, having been stored in the loco shed there for some two years. Two proposed sites in the station had been rejected - the Civil Engineer refused to sanction the loco being placed on the platform, while a site on the Up side near the Harp Lager Brewery was found (after a length of track had been laid) to be frequently obscured by goods wagons on adjacent sidings. Its final resting place is on the Down side at the end of the siding beside the loco shed. The siding has been shortened by some 25 yards, a low plinth constructed and the track laid thereon.

It is understood that D&SER 2-6-0 No.15 (later GSR/CIÉ No.461) may soon be sent to Wexford North (O'Hanrahan) Station for display and that GS&WR 0-6-0 No.184 is to be placed on a plinth at Inchicore Works, thereby dispelling hopes of its being restored to working order.

### **Belfast Transport Museum**

The long-talked of plans to move this priceless collection of transport relics from the city to Cultra, County Down, have not yet been implemented but an article in the "Belfast News Letter" for 25 September confirmed that there is to be a two-foot gauge working railway on the new site. Services will be operated by a diesel loco - Hunslet No.3127, built in 1943, which along with the rolling stock came from the Royal Navy Wharf at Lisahally in County Derry. These items (along with many other items from the museum collection for which space has not been available) are in store.

### **Railway Preservation Society Of Ireland**

The Society has acquired Londonderry Port & Harbour Commissioners 0-6-0ST No.3 "R.H. Smyth" (Avonside No.2021 of 1928). It had previously been in the possession of the Rev L. Campbell of Portstewart and it is now at the Society's base at Whitehead, County Antrim. The loco shed there is being extended as it has become too small to house the Society's collection of locomotives which now number six. Another recent acquisition is CIÉ coach No.485A, latterly used on the Inchicore workmen's train. This twelve-wheeled vehicle first saw light as a GS&WR tri-composite brake and with its sisters 862 and 863 became familiar to enthusiasts on many Irish Railway Record Society outings. One of the trio was on the Edenderry trip in 1954 and on the Streamstown/Clara/Banagher trip in the next year.

The RPSI recently operated a railtour using its 0-6-0 No.186. On the morning of 7<sup>th</sup> October, a special operated around the Dublin area, visiting Newcomen Junction, Liffey Junction (with a set-back a little towards the Broadstone), North Wall, East Wall and the Howth Branch. The train returned to Connolly Station before heading northwards on a single journey to Dundalk (and ultimately Belfast). Dundalk was the final destination for most of the passengers. We regret to record that what was a very enjoyable outing was spoiled to some extent by the activities of a 10-year-old boy at Kilbarrack who threw a sizeable piece of stone through one of the coach windows as the train was passing Kilbarrack bound for Drogheda. A lady passenger was cut quite seriously on the forehead (she had to have the wound stitched) and an emergency stop was made at Howth Junction to allow her to be transferred to an ambulance. This delay led to others and ultimately the train shunted at Drogheda to allow the 17:30 Down "Enterprise" to proceed after it stopped specially to pick up some of the Belfast passengers on

the tour who could not afford to be very late reaching there. The special reached Dundalk at 19:04, allowing speedy Dubliners to get the 19:05!

### **Irish Steam Preservation Society**

The 1972 Rally was most successful, the railway carrying almost 4,000 passengers. The ex-BNM railcar is being restored while the diesel loco needs an overhaul.

### **JOURNEY JOTTINGS**

#### **22 September 1972: Brussels To Dublin**

Flight 693 on Fridays operates from Zurich to Brussels and on non-stop to Dublin. Departure from Brussels is scheduled for 18:40 and the flying time to Dublin is just 90 minutes. On 22 September, however, the flight had been rescheduled (becoming flight 2693 in the process) to leave Brussels exactly two hours later. So, by 20:45 our reporter was comfortably sealed in BAC-111 "St. Malachy", ready for takeoff and ready too for the meal which would be served in flight. About 80 people soon were enjoying their food and conversation had died somewhat. Somewhere about the coffee stage the captain announced that weather conditions at Dublin Airport were not too good (from a later reading of newspaper reports this would seem to have been a slight understatement!) and he quickly followed this news with an announcement that the plane would be diverted to Shannon. For our reporter, if not for everyone else aboard, this raised the possibility of an unscheduled rail trip and the potential interest outweighed the certainty of an extremely tiring overall trip.

By the time Flight 2693 was over the Isle of Man there had been a change of plans and the destination was announced as Cork. "St. Malachy" headed south-west and by 22:13 its passengers were walking over the Cork apron to Customs. Lurking in the background was a Boeing 727 and somewhere else must have been a third plane, for it transpired that a planeload of returning pilgrims from Lourdes as well as the passengers on Continental holiday charter flight 2983, had also been diverted to Cork Airport (which might be still reeling from its hectic night). Outside the terminal were three D-class double-deck buses with a C-class service bus for company. As the passengers were cleared through Customs and filled the buses in turn they departed (along a hair-raisingly narrow route) for Kent Station.

By 23:15 all the passengers had reached the station where they lined the platform and enjoyed (?) the display of shunting which went on before a train was eventually placed in the arrival platform. It was incomprehensible why CIÉ had not managed to have a train waiting for the weary passengers many of whom had their arrangements seriously upset, though not, of course, though any fault of Aer Lingus. It was known by 21:45 that a train would be required, yet none was forthcoming until about 23:20. When it arrived the train comprised: bogie HV, 1462, 1458, snack-car 2423 (not in operation but with a formidable collection of empty bottles), 2161, 1611 (without lights while the train was stationary), 1489 and, to bring up the rear, LV 2716. A58R, which had been lurking round the back, soon came on to head the train which left at 23:46:53.

The night was quite clear but was cold and dank, and it was a nice thought that our reporter's coach - 1458 - was near the heating van. Alas for such innocence! As the train sped northwards it soon became clear that the van was doing anything but heating, a fact which was abundantly obvious to most of the passengers by the time the train reached Rathduff. Enquiries confirmed that the van was not functioning but there was a promise that a heating van would be taken on at Mallow. Sure enough, a four-wheeled heating-van was added at Mallow and by the time the train had reached Buttevant a reassuring warmth was percolating up the train.

Despite firm intentions of monitoring the progress of the train right through our reporter's senses were rather dulled by tiredness and he succumbed to sleep at one point - somewhere about 02:30! Passing

times he did manage to record are:

Cork (Kent Station)	23:46:53
Signals (outside Mourne Abbey)	00:07:26 00:11:13
Mourne Abbey	00:14:10
Killarney Junction	00:17:58
Mallow	00:19:31 00:33:13 Set down 2 passengers. Took on 4-wh HV.
Buttevant	00:44:19 00:53:17 Signal check.
Charleville	01:02:46
Kilmallock	01:06:55
Knocklong	01:13:15
Limerick Junction	01:24:10 01:24:51 Set down 1 passenger.

The stops at Mourne Abbey and Buttevant were bad signs, the quick pause at Limerick Junction was the opposite - it indicated a willingness on somebody's part to get to Dublin quickly. But more black marks were earned by signal stops at Templemore, Mountrath and Portlaoise, by which time it was obvious that no records would be broken. The final stages of the run were:

Hazelhatch	03:19:30
Lucan	03:25:10
Clondalkin	03:25:20
Inchicore	03:29:48 03:34:33
Cabra	03:40:42
West Road	03:47:04 03:48:04
Connolly Station	03:50:48

Overall time 04:03:55

From the pattern of checks and stops it seemed that the main line was alive with goods trains, wild beasts or other obstructions, resulting in a journey time of over four hours for a run between two cities for which the regular service train takes 2 hours 50 minutes, including one stop. Admittedly there was the extra mileage around to Connolly Station but it was still a rather discreditable performance. Our reporter had his interest to sustain his patience, not so the other passengers, and it was this fact which made him so annoyed over the journey.

Nobody could pretend that CIÉ could compete with Aer Lingus when it comes to ferrying passengers outside the country. The day has yet to come when we will leave Platform 3 at Pearse Station on direct transport to Dusseldorf. But surely among the 200-odd passengers that night were some - maybe a considerable number - who never consider the railway as a means of transport within the country. Were CIÉ to have provided a well-lit, warm train of the best stock possible, with at least a snack car, and kept the main line free of obstructions, they would surely have made a very favourable impression on some of those passengers. "Well, at least CIÉ did us proud!" would have been the reaction, one would think. Instead, the overriding impression as one staggered down from Platform 5 was of a rather grim ordeal now fortunately over.