

THE

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Managing Committee:

C.D. Seymour

B.J. Pender

P.J. Flanagan

R.C. Flewitt

G.M. D'Arcy

EDITORIAL

Although a further revision of CIÉ fares took effect from 13 August, the general design of the rail fares structure outlined in our last issue remains in force. It has, however, been made a little more complicated - temporarily by the welcome provision of a special August Holiday Weekend fare scale for the "weekend" from Thursday 2 August, to Tuesday 7 August (or, as the CIÉ handout put it, "6 full, exciting days"), and more permanently by the announcement in mid-October of new "Mini-Weekend" fares.

The Bank Holiday fares were welcome; for a long, long time it has been the practice, doubtless dictated by a variety of pressing factors, to suspend the cheaper fares at such peak periods, and the present move was a good one. This may also be argued of the second development, though in this case there are factors which are not so laudable.

The "Mini-Weekend" tickets are valid for outward travel on Saturday only, with return on Sunday, and the fare charged for the round trip is the ordinary single fare, making the cost equivalent to that of the "Mid-Week" returns. So far so good. But why, in a striking newspaper advertisement, complete with thumbnail cartoons, offer travel "there and back for half the ordinary return fare"? This "Cheap ... at half the price" advertisement has certainly attracted customers who have frequently been, to say the least, disconcerted when told the cost of their trip.

The difficulty is one of semantics. To the current-day traveller the "ordinary return fare" means the fare he would previously have paid for his weekend travel, i.e. the single fare plus one-third. Therefore, he reckons he should be charged half this sum, or two-thirds of the single fare. Alas, not so. The CIÉ "ordinary return fare" means the virtually obsolete three-monthly return fare, the cost of which is double the single fare.

It is difficult to see why the "Mini-Weekend" fare could not have been simply defined as equal to the single fare. Had that been the case the complaints received by perhaps harassed booking clerks would have been avoided and any cause for public grievance averted. As it is, one cannot help thinking that the value of a good advertisement has been materially lessened by careless wording.

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This Issue

The Committee apologises for the late appearance of this issue of the IRN which was due to various factors, not least being the temporary inactivity of one of their number because of illness.

BOOK REVIEW

Bus Services of the County Donegal Railways by H. Dougherty (Transport Research Associates)

This attractively produced booklet rounds off nicely the story of the public transport operations of the CDR in the ten or so years between the closure of the railway and the acquisition of the undertaking by CIÉ. The author has done a thoughtful, detailed job in chronicling the various aspects of his subject. The text and the accompanying line and half-tone illustrations cover routes, tickets, vehicles, timetables, publicity and so on. To this reviewer Mr Dougherty puts in useful perspective the inter-weaving of the CDR and CIÉ (ex-GNR) services in parts of the territory covered, and he also covers the most recent development of services on the system, the introduction of express and limited stop services in keeping with other administrations. There are useful appendices (including one on the fate of the railway rolling stock from 1966 to 1971) and a bibliography. Recommended reading! **FQ**

News Section

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

Push-Pull Trains And Railcars

By the end of September the fleet of serviceable railcars had diminished further with the transfer of railcars 2624, 2628, 2635 and 2643 to Inchicore for conversion to push-pull working. With effect from 17 September only three railcar rosters appeared to be still in force, each requiring a four-piece railcar set. Surprisingly, one such set works the 17:43 Connolly Station to Wicklow.

Push-pull set No.6 was noted early in July. It comprised control car 6104, intermediates 6309 and 6306 and connecting car 6205. At the end of that month the seventh set was at work (6107, 6313, 6324, 6207), while the eighth appeared early in September (6108, 6310, 6311, 6208). By the start of October set 9 (6109, 6317, 6323, 6209) was on trial with the assistance of B227. Meanwhile control car 6110 was almost ready and work had been completed on connecting cars 6328 and 6329. Although set 8 was unusual at first in that it had the loco at the Bray end, in September all other sets were turned at Inchicore to conform with set 8.

News was released at the end of October of CIÉ's intention to begin a re-engining programme, at least in a minor way. General Motors engines will be fitted in two C-class locos which presently carry Maybach engines.

Trouble At Dun Laoghaire

On 7 August the 10:10 train to Dun Laoghaire Pier (loco 215 with four bogies) collided on the Pier with the wagons of the 09:50 Parcels Post from the Pier, which had not yet departed. Loco 215 was slightly damaged and the 09:50 was badly delayed - it reached Pearse Station some 7¼ hours behind schedule.

Locomotive Developments

As mentioned later in this issue, loco B201 was blown up near the Border on 16 August and was so seriously damaged that it is unlikely to be repaired. Another loco of the same class in trouble was 215 which was under repair in Inchicore for cab damage sustained in the Dun Laoghaire Pier crash on 7 August.

The new locomotive livery is being applied to more locos, the latest additions being A6R, A15R, A19R, A22R, A28R, A47R, A48R, B125, B182, B210 and B223; these are now numbered 006, 015,

019, 022, 028, 047, 048 125, 182, 210 and 223, respectively. In contrast, E427, which was in black and tan livery, has been repainted in all-black with red buffer beams.

The push-pull trials involving B121 referred to in our last issue have ceased but up to the end of September no move had been made to introduce B121-class locos on push-pull workings; the results of the trials are not known. B202, B216 and B227 have all been observed with push-pull trains, in addition to those previously mentioned.

An unusual working during the week ending 18 August was that of Sulzer B103 on some of the Cork/Mallow trains. Also odd is the frequent use of B121-class locos on the 07:45 "Letter Post" ex Dun Laoghaire Pier. On 7 October E434 left Fairview for Shelton Abbey. This is the first allocation of an E-class loco to Shelton shunting duties.

Timetable Alterations

The timetable which came into effect at the beginning of April continues in operation. In recent weeks an extra train from Heuston Station to Waterford has run at 17:23 on Fridays, as has a train to Tralee at 17:48. Occasionally on Fridays it has also proved necessary to run an extra train at 17:35 from Heuston Station to Cork. Of these extras the first two appear to run quite regularly although not in the timetable. Another train not mentioned is an experimental 07:30 Waterford/Rosslare, serving Wellington Bridge and Rosslare Strand, and connecting with the 09:00 sailing Rosslare/Fishguard, which did not have a train connection. Another Friday innovation which began in July is a bus connection to Tuam out of the 18:50 from Heuston Station to Galway.

Coaching Stock

Three of the bogie luggage vans described in our last issue have been completed - they are numbered 2564-2566. Composite 2149 is being converted. Less happily, a number of bogies have been withdrawn: standard/brakes 1892 and 1903, ex-GSR standards 1323, 1324, 1326, 1330 and 1332, ex-GNR standard 65N, ex-GNR first 225N, ex-GNR buffet car 268N (which worked for many years on the "Enterprise" set) and ex-GNR bogie vans 780N, 783N and 785N. Other vehicles withdrawn are 4-wheeled LVs 2727 and 2745 and 4-wheeled HVs 3102, 3108, 3111, 3112, 3113, 3117, 3119, 3122, 3134, 3138, 3140, 3142, 3143 and 3151.

Four-wheeled LVs 2705, 2706 and 2751 have had their corridor connections removed and have been painted in all-over orange-brown livery. They have, in white stencilled lettering on the sides, the legend "To Work between Connolly and Dun Laoghaire only Max Speed 35 mph" and are to be used on the postal trains ex Dun Laoghaire Pier, conveying mail to the Central Sorting Office in Sherriff Street, beside Connolly Station.

Off The Road

Considerable disruption was caused on 19 July when B204, which had worked the 13:00 Bray to Skerries and which was running round its train at Skerries, became derailed on the south end crossover, blocking both running roads. One line was cleared by 16:40 and the loco was finally re-railed by 18:20. As a result of the mishap the 14:30 ex Belfast (6 bogies propelled by loco 103) arrived at Connolly Station about 17:35. By a happy chance there had been a special at 09:30 from Belfast that morning and this set worked the 17:30 "Enterprise" to Belfast while the regular set took the return working of the special at 17:58.

Other trains affected were: the 16:45 ex Dundalk (B210 and 5 bogies) which arrived at Connolly Station 24 minutes late; the 12:15 Guinness Liner train ex-Belfast, which arrived at North Wall about 3¾ hours late; and the 17:45 ex Drogheda (push-pull set with B219) which came in about 14 minutes late. Down trains badly delayed were the 14:30 to Belfast, the 13:45 to Drogheda and the 16:20 to Dundalk, all of which were held up en route till the line had been cleared.

Destruction Of Two Locos

On the night of 15 August the NIR signalman at Meigh Cabin, MP 63 on the Dublin/Belfast line, was held up at gunpoint and forced to stop the 22:15 CIÉ goods train from Dundalk to Derry. Two milk churns containing explosives were placed in the front cab of loco B201 and after the driver, guard and signalman had been instructed to leave the scene, the raiders did likewise.

The railwaymen raised the alarm and police and army units cleared the area and then waited until daylight to tackle the bomb, in case an ambush had been mounted. Eventually an army marksman fired rifle shots at the fuse which detonated the bombs, destroyed the bodywork of B201 and started a fire. (A thrilling account of operations appears in the October "Railway Magazine".)

When all fears of further explosives had been allayed, the fire was extinguished and the line cleared and repaired. The remains of B201 were brought back to Dundalk and on 21 August they were brought to Inchicore Works. It is understood the CIÉ has claimed £120,000 compensation for the destruction of its locomotive and doubtless there will be a further claim in respect of loco 008 which was also lost at the unwelcome hands of raiders on Tuesday 23 October.

Name Boards

A new type of black-on-white bilingual station name-board has appeared, fixed to the lamp standards at Sydney Parade and Bayside. At Ballygeary the station name appears (in English only) on the backs of two platform seats - a welcome return to an old-time tradition. Incidentally, it is worth noting that CIÉ in its role as custodian of the Grand Canal and Barrow Navigations is in the process of introducing "station name-boards" at principal points on these waterways. One of the first places to receive a board is, appropriately, Robertstown. Also, on the Barrow Navigation proper, the balance beams of both breast and deep gates of each lock carry neat cast plates bearing the place name - Irish on one beam and English on the opposite one.

Super

The first recorded instance of a B121-class loco working a "Supertrain" took place on 20 October, when B135 worked the 09:30 train to Cork.

Youghal Branch

The passenger excursion trains were not very well patronised through most of this year's season. Only on 5 August was the full service of five trains provided but unfortunately the afternoon weather was foul. By contrast, a sudden burst of fine weather on one Wednesday brought out so many people for the 11:00 ex Cork that the coaches of the 11:10 to Cobh had to be commandeered and a bus substituted for the Cobh train. It is reported that beet from Youghal line stations this season will go to the Tuam factory rather than those at Mallow or Thurles.

B+I Liner Train

We recently observed the working of the B+I Liner train between North Wall and the B+I Line Ferryport. On arrival at North Wall from Cork the CIÉ crew disconnects the vacuum brakes between the loco and train and "leak off" the brakes on the wagons. Once two Dublin Port & Docks Board tractors (massive 4-wheel drive Muir Hill machines) have arrived the CIÉ loco slowly hauls the train across East Wall Road into Alexandra Road, where the tractors take over. As there are no in-road crossovers suitable for the loco to "escape" it precedes the cavalcade as far as the B+I-premises, whence it returns on the parallel track.

With yellow warning lights flashing the front tractor hauls the train the length of Alexandra Road. The rear tractor acts mainly as a "tail lamp" and is chiefly used to help the train through the crossovers and curves into the Ferryport compound.

Better And Better

The new bookshop at Heuston Station was brought into use on 10 September; it is much more spacious than its predecessor (in the booking hall) which was demolished at once. The tea bar is not in use yet but the waiting room opened recently. They both have moulded fibreglass seats, dark green and bright orange respectively. Work of fitting out is continuing. It is rather a pity that the tea bar was not available for the summer season. The temporary refreshment kiosk is still in use and the caravan which it displaced has been returned to Ballygeary where it has been permanently mounted without wheels on a plinth. Also at Heuston a new men's toilet was opened on 8 October.

Tinnock Bridge

In our July 1967 issue we reported the then controversial decision of Wexford County Council to replace Bridge No.278 at MP 56½ on the Wexford line, by an automatic half-barrier level crossing. The change was brought about by roadworks on the approaches to the bridge which has a highly-dangerous S-bend. There have been many serious accidents at the spot. The occurrence of the Hixon disaster in England led to the abandonment of the proposal and no further action was taken until early in October this year, when work began on a replacement bridge. In 1967 the cost of a bridge was estimated at £67,000 as against £45,000 for a crossing. Doubtless costs have escalated significantly since then. The full charge will have to be borne by the county as the point of crossing is being altered from that originally provided by the railway.

Paint Job

The repainting of the Barrow Viaduct at Monasterevan is once again in progress; work started in mid-May. The colour is being altered to dark grey in place of the usual red.

Clonmel Derailment

The mammoth task of making good the damage caused by this derailment on 4 July last is only now almost finished. The line was closed for five days following the incident. New ballast was delivered on 23 and 30 July, 1 and 2 August and also on 29 and 31 August. A ballast machine was engaged on 15-17 September and the Ballast Regulator was scheduled to complete the job on 6 and 7 October. The damaged sleepers were recovered on 9 and 23 September and the smashed chairs on 30 September.

Ballast Supplies

While most of the CIÉ stone ballast comes from the Board's own quarries at Lisduff and Lecarrow, certain quantities are taken from local contractors at times to reduce haulage. Boyle and Ardee have previously been mentioned in our columns in this regard. Last August, while Lisduff was closed for holidays, one of the Lisduff trains ran to Midleton and later this train loaded ballast at Buttevant. The loading bank at Spencer Dock Sidings, North Wall, is no longer available so ballast is loaded near the North Wall Point Store.

Season Tickets

New season ticket rates were recently announced for the Dublin/Belfast line. Both weekly and monthly tickets, available for unlimited travel, are being issued, the fares being: Weekly £9.55 and Monthly £38.20. In addition, similar tickets valid for six or twelve months may be obtained at the following rates: 6 months = six times monthly rate less 10%; 12 months = 12 times monthly rate less 15%. In all cases first-class tickets are available at a surcharge of 50%.

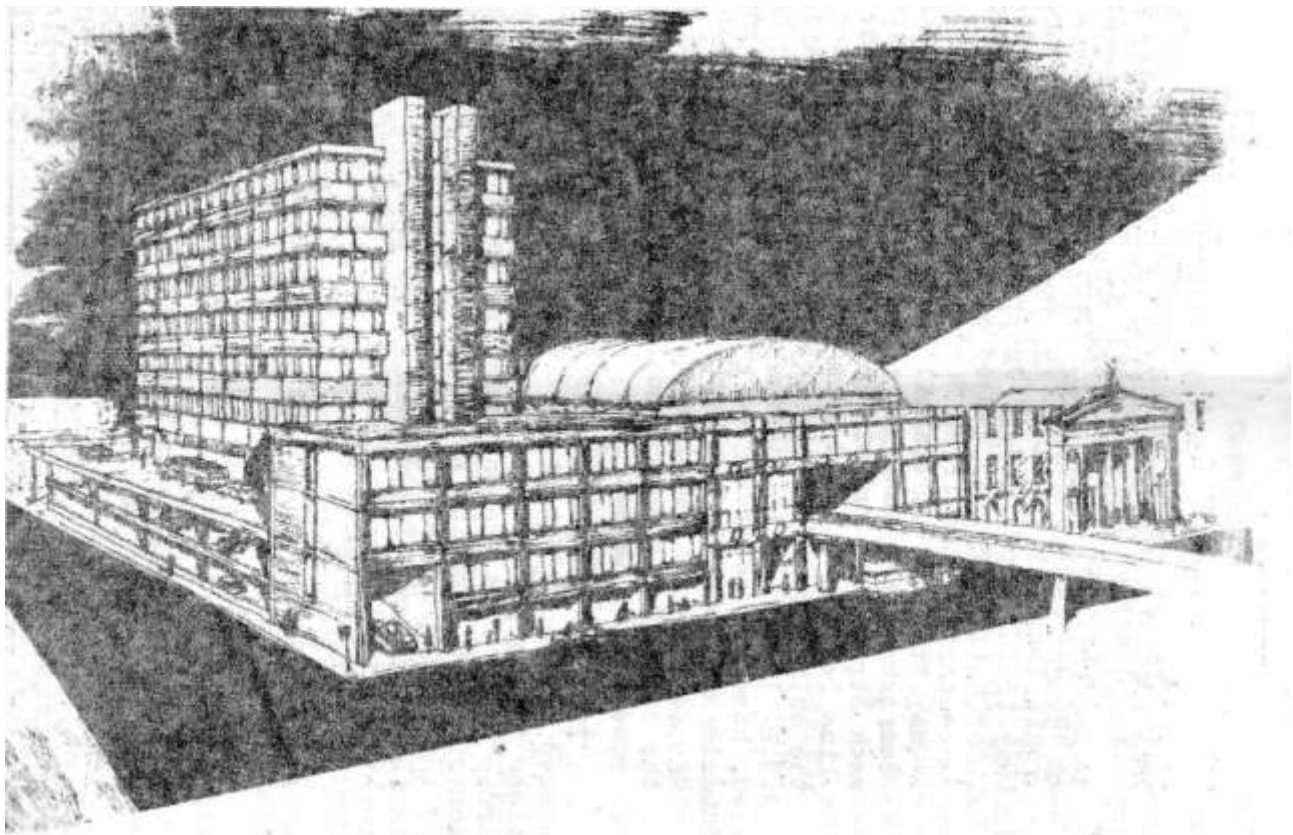
Pearse Station Redevelopment

It was disclosed in September that CIÉ, in association with the Irish Life Assurance Company, proposes to build a new office block at Pearse Station. The structure will be 8 storeys above ground and 5 storeys above platform level. This is to be the first stage in a major development plan for CIÉ's many

valuable properties, principally in Dublin, but also in provincial areas where the opportunity arises.

The feasibility of moving most of the CIÉ headquarters staff into the new building is being studied at present. It is thought that some 130,000 sq ft of space would be so required, leaving some 100,000 sq ft for rental to other tenants. Many economies both in staff and efficiency could be effected by bringing all CIÉ's officials into one building, while further economies could be expected from the release of premises presently rented and also the redevelopment of other premises owned by the Board.

An artist's impression in the October "Travel Express" shows the new block rising from the site presently occupied by the Down side carriage entrance and the offices of the Civil Engineer's Department. In addition, the buildings between the station and Pearse Street, fronting onto Westland Row, are replaced by a new four-storey structure. The unusual cast iron frontage of the station appears to be retained, as is the handsome arched roof over the platforms. From the enthusiast's point of view the only loss would appear to be the roof over the carriage entrance, which is reported to consist of the original roof of the 1834 station of the Dublin & Kingstown Railway. At the time of its opening - 17 December 1834 - the station was a modest affair with two platforms partly roofed over.



However, in the late 1880s, with the expected opening (which took place in 1891) of the City of Dublin Junction Railway and a consequent development of traffic, the station was greatly extended and rebuilt. The new line continued the original tracks through the facade of the building and across Westland Row by a bridge heavily ornamented with cast iron. To match this, a new station facade was erected, also consisting of cast iron segments, a highly unusual method of construction. Its appearance from the street gives little clue as to its formation and few of the many using the station would know that iron was used.

While the rebuilding was in progress a new station roof was provided, consisting of a long and a short span which covered all five platforms in part. At the same time the original station roof was demolished, the girders being re-erected outside the offices on the Down side, as mentioned above.

After 140 years of use what girders remain of the original are apparently as good as ever. But when the redevelopment does begin this historic link with the first Irish railway will be severed at last.

The five platforms mentioned are as follows:

No.1	Down Bay (on Up side)	length 414 feet
No.2	Down Bay (on Up side)	length 320 feet
No.3	Up Through Platform	length 598 feet
No.4	Down Through Platform	length 680 feet
No.5	Down Bay (on Down side)	length 517 feet

In a way it was unfortunate that the bays faced as they do, as in 1936 when the Midland section trains were transferred from the Broadstone, all such services were confined to the two through roads, on which suburban trains had also to run. The situation would have been even worse had the Kingscourt and Cavan trains run from Westland Row rather than Amiens Street.

And it was not until this year that the position changed and the Mayo and Galway trains altered to run from Heuston Station, Sligo trains running from Connolly Station.

News Of Dundalk

The short remaining spur of the Dundalk West Junction/East Junction line was removed completely during September. The section, some ¼ mile long, had been out of use for a long time. It was part of the route formerly taken by the Dundalk, Newry & Greenore Railway trains from Dundalk Junction to Dundalk Quay Street stations until services ceased on 31/12/1951. The spur was once part of the Irish North Western Railway's line to its "Quay Station" at Windmill Road, much better known as the Barrack Street Station. Goods trains still operate to Barrack Street but run via Dundalk South Junction, so that the line between the old East Junction and Barrack Street is the only part of the Dundalk & Enniskillen Railway (the INWR later) still in use. Its existence is now threatened, however, according to reports which are strong in Dundalk and which indicate that the ailing hump-backed bridge carrying the Dublin/Belfast road over the line (just to the east of the East Junction) will be replaced by a new road on the level.

The goods depot at Barrack Street would then be replaced by a new freight centre to the west of the main line, close to the present station, and entered from the Dundalk/Ardee road. The present services to and from Barrack Street comprise two incoming and three outgoing goods trains (one of the latter operating direct to Dublin) and several light engine workings. The running time from the Junction station to Barrack Street, inclusive of reversal at Dundalk South, varies from 15 to 20 minutes.

Heuston Station

On 19 August a new trailing crossover between the "new Up" and Up lines, and a trailing connection off the latter, were put in as a first step in the construction of a new carriage valeting plant.

Cranes And Rails

The "Irish Independent" of 9 August reported that CIÉ had taken delivery of 4,300 tons of new rails from the British Steel Corporation at Workington. The rails were described as 50 kg/m, flat-bottomed. The BSC source has thus supplied Irish lines with 9,500 tons of rails and fishplates.

The two ex-BR 30-ton steam cranes are understood to have come from Manchester (Longsight) and Carlisle (Kingmoor) depots.

Signalling

East Wall Junction: The Up Main Starter was converted to a 3-aspect, colour-light signal from 15 July, having been erected a considerable time ago. There is also a single-aspect yellow lamp for movements to Church Road Junction. The main line signal aspect is interlocked by slotting with Connolly Central

Cabin, in similar fashion to the semaphore which it replaced.

Dunbell Level Crossing: This crossing, near MP 32¾ on the Kilkenny-Thomastown section, was equipped with Up and Down colour-light signals from 23 July.

Castlebar: An additional signal, designated “Up Starter from Down Loop” has been provided and certain other signals have been relocated.

Straboe: The Portarlinton-Portlaoise section has recently proved something of a bottleneck, so since 26 August Intermediate Block signals have been provided near the site of the former Straboe Cabin. Unlike those at Caragh (Sallins/Newbridge section) and at Mourne Abbey, the new Straboe signals are automatic. On the Down line the signals are at MP 46¼ (yellow and green aspects) and MP 47½ (red and green aspects); on the Up line the positions are similar with the aspects reversed.

In connection with these new signals the Down Starter at Portarlinton and Up Starter at Portlaoise have been changed into 3-aspect units, the yellow aspect showing only if those in the following Block Distant should fail. Each intermediate Home signal is equipped with a telephone to the cabin in the rear.

Mallow Beet Factory Sidings Cabin: This cabin was closed on 23 September and a ground frame provided to control access to the factory sidings. There is also a subsidiary ETS instrument in a new hut at the Mallow end of the sidings.

Duncormick: The cabin here will be brought back into use for the duration of the Beet Season. At other periods the cabin is closed (rather than switched out) and all signals are maintained at danger and “crossed”.

Clonydonnin Loop: Work is in progress on the erection of colour-light signals at this new loop. They will be worked by a miniature panel in an adjacent new cabin, which will also house the ETS instruments. The rumour that the lever frame from the former 73rd mile Box might be moved to Clonydonnin is unfounded.

Straffan: Automatic Intermediate Block signals have been erected to enable the cabin to be dispensed with. Because of a staff shortage it was very rarely used in recent years. With effect from 7 October certain signals at Hazelhatch and Sallins, governing entry to the section through Straffan, were converted to colour light operation.

Limerick Station Cabin: The new “NX” type miniature control panel has been delivered and will be commissioned soon following exhaustive tests.

Here And There

Among private sidings rarely if ever used nowadays are those which service the Clover Meats Factory at Waterford and the North City Mills in Dublin. The latter appears to have been out of use for some 18 months.

Among changes at Limerick is the installation of new turnouts from the Up Main line into Tobin’s Store Road and also into the wagon shop sidings.

Not On

We have learnt that although serious consideration was given by CIÉ to the purchase of the now unused “Blue Pullman” trains (which operated from London to Manchester, Bristol, etc., and have been withdrawn) it has been finally decided not to purchase the units in question.

Mail Depot At Connolly

Most of the roof beams for the new main depot at Connolly Station had been erected by early October and some roofing sheets were also in position. The concrete edge for the platform is being cast on site.

There will be a track on either side of a single central platform and trains about 9 bogies long will be accommodated beneath the roof, with a further three bogies outside, at the north end of the building.

Sidings, Old And New

The removal of redundant sidings and connections continues throughout the system, often while new work is being done:

Newbridge Ballast Pit: This extensive area between Newbridge and Curragh Cabin has for many years been used as a tip for refuse of all kinds from CIÉ depots. Its capacity has now been reached and it was officially closed on 5 September, though wagons were being discharged a fortnight later.

Lucan South: The connections to the sidings on both sides of the line were removed by the 35-ton steam crane and soon afterwards the “Baldonnell Siding” was lifted. Although nominally permanently switched out, it is understood that the cabin here is virtually unusable because of the bad condition of the floor. It is believed that some of the pointwork from here will be used at the Fairview depot (below). It is expected that Automatic Intermediate signals will be installed here as soon as those at Straffan are completed.

Fairview Railcar Depot: Work began in late August on the provision of a “back exit” at the north end of Fairview yard. It will take the form of a crossover connecting the sidings into the Down main line.

Clonsilla: The long stub of the former Down main line, running towards Barberstown, has been cut short before MP 7½ and will soon be lifted.

Enfield: The stub of the former Edenderry Branch, some 1¼ miles long and running from Enfield right out to and just beyond the site of the former Nesbitt Junction, has been reduced to about one third its length. Oddly, the lifting operations have been started in the middle of the disconnected remnant, leaving both ends intact.

Sligo: As mentioned in this issue’s “Journey Jottings” a new container gantry displaces the former cattle bank.

Carrick-On-Suir: Work is in progress on the re-sleepering of the goods bank siding. In the course of the work some fossilised old sleepers have been removed.

Bray: The lifting of the “Bray Head” sidings at the Greystones end of the station yard has recently been commenced.

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS

Station Notes

In addition to the four NCC stations deleted from the July timetable, Damhead on the Dublin line has also been omitted. The battle over the station buildings at Portrush goes on. The Urban Council still refuses to sanction their demolition or to give planning permission for the new buildings. One reporter has described the latter as resembling a “public toilet”. In contrast to its former glory the station has had a staff of only four this summer - a foreman, a signaller and two “others”. At Coleraine the Down side buildings have been much improved and a new booking hall has been provided. The loco turntable, coal plant, and all sidings on the Up side have been removed, including those leading into the loco shed. The six-wheeled fuel oil tank car remains in its traditional position on an isolated piece of trackwork.

Bars Barred

The entrances from the platforms to the station bars at Whitehead, Larne Town and Coleraine have been closed following an accident at Whitehead. It appears that a man rather imprudently rushed out of

the bar and attempted to board a moving train. Following the alterations, trade has diminished in each case, as would-be patrons now first see public houses outside the station as they leave. In the case of Whitehead only the most determined patron could penetrate the labyrinth of "entries" to reach the station bar from the station.

Tunnels On The NCC

A correspondent has written to point out that the tunnels on the NCC were numbered in the same list as the bridges and culverts. On the main line the tunnel at Castlerock is No.196, that at Downhill bearing the number 198; culvert No.197 lies in between. On the Larne line Whitehead Tunnel is No.436! There were no other tunnels on the former NCC broad gauge lines, but at Capecastle on the three-foot gauge Ballycastle Railway there was a virtual tunnel, though at this late date it is not clear if or how it was numbered.

On the subject of bridges it may be noted that Nos. 51A and 51B, the new underbridges between Templepatrick and Doagh are complete. Both carry double track, despite the impending downgrading of the line concerned.

Central Railway

Major contracts for the reconstruction of the Belfast Central Railway and the building of the new Central Station were announced on 3 October. Messrs P.J. Walls & Brothers will build the new station at a cost of £2.9 million, while the other works will be undertaken by Graham Contractors, Dromore, County Down - a firm better known for motorway construction.

The latter contracts include 2½ miles of double track railway with signals, the new Lagan Viaduct and the Middlepath Street bridge, two other bridges and the partial reconstruction of East Bridge Street overbridge. Grahams will also build the new station at Botanic Avenue and an extension to Queen's Quay Works at a total cost of £1 million.

It was also mentioned that £1.1 million was to be spent on new rolling stock, but it is not clear if this refers to the existing contract with British Rail Engineering or to a hitherto undisclosed additional order.

"Enterprise" Workings

The use of the "Enterprise" locos 102 and 103, with their coaches, has apparently been confined to the Dublin line since our last issue. Loco 101 is presently unserviceable at York Road. Due to a variety of causes, ranging through bombs, bomb scares, a derailment and a failure, the "Enterprise" punctuality record has been severely affected.

On 29 August 6 bogies propelled by loco 102 failed at Dunleer on the 08:00 ex Belfast. Passengers were transferred at Drogheda into a following CIÉ train, the 10:30 ex Dundalk, which was delayed for 22 minutes. The empty NIR train followed on slowly to Dublin, arriving at 12:45. To cover for the absent set on the 11:00 Down, CIÉ turned round the 07:45 ex Sligo (8 bogies) which left for Belfast behind B157 at 11:06. This train returned as the 14:30 Up, arriving 13 minutes late. In the meantime two NIR fitters had been sent to Dublin where they rectified the fault, enabling 102 to work the 17:30 Down train as usual.

Officers Appointed

The appointment of three new officers was announced on 30 July: Financial Executive, Mr E. Graham Wilson; Mechanical Engineer, Mr C. Stanley Myers; and Personnel Officer, Mr Robin C. Bacon. The details were reported in the "Belfast News Letter" of 31 July.

Tokenless Block

Despite some lively runs on recent steam specials (operated by the Railway Preservation Society of

Ireland) through single-line block posts north of Ballymena, the tokenless block equipment is still not in use. Likewise the colour-light signals are out of commission. For the record - installation began in 1969!

Violence Continues

We regret to have to report the continuation, indeed escalation, in the number of bomb outrages occurring on the railways. In recent months there has been a very considerable amount of damage, as is shown below in the digest of some of the incidents. We have not space to even list all the scares or damage.

31 August: Dunmurry cabin blown up; only block post between Belfast and Lisburn; sorely missed and many delays caused; no Down signals between Lambeg and Belfast distant; no Up signals between Balmoral and Lisburn distant. Trains being “flagged” through crossing. New corrugated iron cabin being built on original site.

31 August: Small bombs exploded at Whiteabbey, Seahill and Tate’s Avenue Bridge (near Adelaide) two bombs found.

7 September: The 17:55 Belfast-Larne delayed by a bomb scare. Arrived destination at 19:03.

11 October: Bomb destroyed gents’ toilet at York Road.

11 October: Bomb exploded on evacuated 12:20 Belfast/Bangor at Marino. Body of trailer 526 destroyed; all windows broken in MED cars 26 and 15. 26 propelled remains of train back to Belfast, clearing line at 16:50; single line working had commenced at 16:30.

11 October: According to newspaper, bomb warning on 12:10 Belfast/Portadown; no bomb found after search; same set worked 14:20 Portadown/Belfast; around 15:00 explosion without warning wrecking MED power car and causing more damage to Great Victoria Street station. No passengers or staff injured, but 7 persons in Ulsterbus depot hurt.

Bully Beef

On 18 October the 11:00 Dublin/Belfast (loco 102 and 6 coaches) hit some cattle near Lisburn. Five of the coaches were damaged and the train immobilised. A relief train of loco 103 with 813, 811, 822, 828, 821 left at 15:10 on the 14:30 ex Belfast, returning as the 18:30.

Southern Region

In keeping with the current modernisation programme the inner suburban stations on the Belfast/Portadown section are now receiving attention. Concrete materials have been used to replace the traditional wooden sleeper platforms, with brick shelters on the Down side (to Belfast) platforms in lieu of the original structures made redundant on the introduction of train conductors.

Fluorescent lighting has also been installed and the general appearance of these halts is smart and pleasing though somewhat spartan as befits unstaffed locations. By late September the new platforms had been provided at Adelaide, Finaghy and Hilden, with shelters at the latter two; meanwhile at Derriaghy and Lambeg new Down side shelters had been added to the existing platforms.

Balmoral was of course modernised some years following the raising of the adjacent underbridge, leaving Dunmurry in its more traditional form. At the time of reporting the new signal hut at Dunmurry was being fitted out on the site of its predecessor. This block post controls the adjacent mechanically operated level crossing.

South of Lisburn, the newly-laid third road is almost completed to Knockmore Junction, where it will soon connect with the Antrim Branch and form the new (revised) route from Belfast to Derry. Knockmore Junction will then cease to exist as such but the name may be perpetuated in the new halt

recently built to serve both main and branch lines. As yet this halt is not in use, but its purpose is to draw passengers from new housing developments nearby. This again is a standard “GNR” halt (which, incidentally, replaces an earlier, long-closed one) with the usual feature of platforms without ramps. The rumour, strong at one stage, that a triangular layout would be installed at Knockmore, to permit the through running of CIÉ Dublin/Derry goods trains without reversal at Lisburn, has died the death and such a move is not planned for the immediate future.

Between Lurgan and Portadown two diversions have recently been made in the line. Both are temporary and involve reverse curves and severe speed restrictions. A number of overbridges have been demolished due to road updating.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIONS

Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company Limited

The latest report shows an operating profit of £1,656,738 before depreciation, an increase of £45,437. The group’s assets have increased by some £4 million (about 25%). The only company to lose money during the year was NIR (£186,011 - or £39,325 more than in the previous year). The Holding Company embraces Northern Ireland Carriers Ltd, Ulsterbus, Northern Ireland Airports Ltd, in addition to the NIR and since last year it has acquired the former Belfast Corporation Transport Department, which now operates as “Citybus”, pending full integration with Ulsterbus.

Irish Shell & BP Ltd

This company’s unique 5ft 3in gauge loco has at last retired and it is to be preserved, we are glad to report.

Bord Na Mona

A recent visit to Ballivor Works revealed that new railcar C72 is allocated there, in addition to an older one, C51. Wickham C20 has been set aside for the ISPS and there is another unnumbered Wickham there also. Locos seen were Rustons LM 63 and LM 90.

Shane’s Castle Railway

Locomotive No.1 will require a renewal of its firebox before being run in steam again.

Irish Steam Preservation Society

Ex Bord na Mona railcar C39 is to be placed on the line in October or November after being restored. The construction of a bogie toast-rack coach is in hand, using some components and the bogies of ex-Cavan & Leitrim coach No.7L. Despite the rather uncertain weather, the railway was operated very successfully during the 1973 Rally.

Winn Technology Ltd, Kilbrittain Castle, Co. Cork

The October 1973 “Narrow Gauge Illustrated” reports that this firm has acquired the boilerless remains of Guinness Loco No.22 (Spence, Dublin, 1895). It is to be restored to working order with a new boiler and one of the Planet diesels from the Guinness Brewery is expected to join it.

Feature Section

JOURNEY JOTTINGS

17 August 1973: Dublin To Sligo (Herbert Richards)

Despite the collision of a bus and a large articulated lorry which resulted in the latter overturning and completely blocking the approach road to the “Five Lamps” junction from the west, the writer, by some artful manoeuvring, managed to arrive at Connolly Station, park his car, purchase the morning paper, and negotiate platform 3 against the commuter hordes to board the leading coach just three minutes before the advertised departure time of the 09:05 Sligo train.

The train was surprisingly well filled, about 70% of the seats being occupied. Power was provided by B126 while the set was composed of an interesting variety of rolling stock: HV 3128, suburban standard 1403, compo 2173, buffet 2418, Cravens 1504 and 1532, standards 1490 and 1460, brake/standard 1917 and HV 3139. Your writer travelled in 1403, a suburban Park Royal of 1955, seating 82, with blue upholstery and - for the convenience of those wishing to stand en route to Sligo - handy hanging straps provided from the central roof-mounted rails. As dictated by its intended use this coach had no conveniences.

Due to a slight delay to the incoming Northern suburban services, the train was held up for 10 minutes and did not leave platform 3 until 09:15. As it left, the new precast concrete framing for the parcels depot was passed on the Up side. Taking smoothly to the new “Ossory Road Junction” and then onto the Up Link Line the 09:05 soon crossed to the Down side via the new Crossover No.31, thereby avoiding a light engine detained by Signal No.30. Observations en route may be summarised:

Connolly Station		09:15	Ten minutes late
Clonsilla	pass	09:34	“Gas Tank” siding cut back
Enfield	pass	09:56	Branch now only short stub
Hill of Down	10:07	10:12	Cross Up Sligo Passenger
Mullingar	10:32	10:37	TPO 2971 added ex Galway Mail
Mostrim (Edgeworthstown)	10:59	11:00	Cross Up Sligo Passenger
Longford	11:13	11:16	
Dromod	11:30	11:33	
Carrick-on-Shannon	11:46	11:48	} Writer takes himself off } to Buffet Car for lunch.
Boyle	12:01	12:03	
Ballymote	12:22	12:24	
Collooney	12:34	12:35	
Sligo	12:46		Six minutes late

When being brought to a stand at the terminus your author was surprised to find himself alongside State Saloon 351, parked in one of the central carriage roads. President Childers was in the North-West for a few days attending, inter alia, the Yeats Summer School in Sligo.

A quick sortie down the goods branch revealed much activity at the cattle bank which is being removed to provide room for a new container gantry and some sidings have also been removed in connection with the work. The old MGWR Guinness wagon which served as a hut has also been removed in the upheaval. Continuing onto the Sligo Harbour Commissioners’ Tramway your reporter found several wagons in traffic and also noted some signs of track maintenance near the terminus. For some time the line had not been used beyond Egans’ Store Siding.

On reaching the passenger station the Up train was found to be cleaned, ready and waiting. All four-wheeled vehicles were now in the rear. Chosen vehicle this time was Craven 1532 and timings were:

Sligo		15:05
Collooney	15:19	15:20
Ballymote	15:32	15:34
Boyle	15:53	

Disembarking at Boyle the writer observed work in progress in the store unloading sundries. Several wagons of cement were standing on the cart road and two new 4,000 gallon fuel oil tanks (ex Galway) were positioned next to the goods store but unfortunately the trial wagon, Texaco tanker No.118, could not be unloaded due to a pump malfunction. No grain traffic has so far been carried this season.

Your reporter then retraced his steps by the 14:15 ex Connolly Station (B135, BV 2714, 2156, 2415, 1514, 1546, 1516, 1493, 1463 and 1915). Departure from Boyle was at 16:56 (exactly to time) and arrival at Ballymote at 17:14.

All the facilities at Ballymote were thoroughly inspected, including the remains of the old mill ropeway. The goods store was closed and the yard quiet. The cabin, which had been damaged by fire a couple of years ago, has a new superstructure and was particularly bright and clean. The 16:20 Sligo/Mullingar goods passed later but did not stop.

The writer's return train was the 18:25 ex Sligo, the set being that of the 14:15 Down. Once again Craven 1516 was chosen but now it was bereft of the many bottles deposited by earlier westbound passengers. The running was:

		18:55	Three minutes late
Ballymote	18:55¼	18:56	Latecomer joins train
Boyle	19:13	19:15	Pass Up 16:20 Goods
Carrick-on-Shannon	19:26	19:27	
MP 97xx	19:29	19:29½	Cattle on line
Dromod	19:44	19:45	
Longford	19:58	20:10	Cross Down Sligo Passenger
Mostrim (Edgeworthstown)	pass	20:25	
Multyfarnham	pass	20:37	Cross Down Sligo Passenger
Mullingar	20:47	20:49	
Enfield	21:19	21:26	Cross Down Mail 4 Goods
Leixlip	pass	21:45	Cabin switched out
Clonsilla	pass	21:50	Cross Down Goods
Liffey Junction	pass	21:58	Cross Down Goods
Ossory Road Junction	22:05	22:07	Blocked
Connolly Station	22:10		Platform 2, 10 minutes late

All in all, an interesting day in which the Sligo Branch was examined in more-than-usual detail.

SPECIAL FEATURE: THE TRAMORE MINIATURE RAILWAY

Since this excellent little line (already covered in previous issues of the IRN) was opened the following detailed information has come to hand and we have pleasure in bringing the record up to date.

Track

The permanent way was laid by CIÉ platelayers to a very high standard indeed. It is substantially ballasted and all curves are carefully formed; in addition, these are super-elevated where necessary. The line is nominally level but in fact there are one or two slight undulations. It follows a serpentine

course and is fenced throughout on either side, except for a short lakeside stretch. There are two pedestrian level crossings, with “bat-wing” hinged gates and warning notices. The trains run in an anti-clockwise cycle. There are neither points nor signals on the line.

Buildings

A handsome timber awning has been built over the curved concrete platform, and it provided shelter both for those on the platform and for others queuing outside. The awning is varnished; the station roof has the legend “Tramore Railway Station” in large blue letters. The small wooden booking office also sells tickets for pedal boats and for a miniature paddle steamer which plies on the lake. The platform fences are the traditional picket type, but are varnished rather than painted white. There are a few advertising panels.

Since there are no sidings, the two green timber sheds which sit astride the track fulfil a dual function; when trains are running they act as “tunnels”, while at other times they form rolling stock sheds. In this latter capacity one of the two houses the locomotive and one coach. The second shed is used to store the three remaining coaches. The overall arrangement of the buildings reflects a careful and judicious expenditure of funds available for the line.

Coaches

Contrary to expectations the coaches are air-braked and are coupled together in tramcar fashion with simple bars and pins. The marshalling order is covered/open/covered/open. Each seats sixteen passengers in four bays of four seats. Although the suspension looks rather elementary, the riding is in fact excellent because of the fine trackwork.

Locomotive

Like almost all others of its design the Tramore loco is finished off as Denver & Rio Grande Western No.278. The livery is black and blue/grey. The engine is fitted with a bell and also a five-note chime air-whistle mounted above the “dome”. Regrettably, the air compressor supplying this voracious whistle is of barely sufficient capacity and it certainly cannot stand up to sustained use. Hence, many passengers are disappointed at not being able to hear the mellifluous tones of No.278. But this is a small fault which will surely be rectified promptly.

A somewhat unusual feature of the loco is that the maker’s plates on either side of the cab are dissimilar:

Left: Severn Lamb Ltd.
Works No 22 73
Stratford on Avon

Right: Designed by David Curwen
BUILT BY
Severn Lamb Ltd.
1973
Stratford on Avon

The driver in charge of the loco is also responsible for its maintenance; he is a former CIÉ loco fitter - an expert!

Traffic

We are pleased to report that the train has attracted a prodigious volume of business, despite its capacity of only 64. The peak day is reported to have been 15 August, when some, 3,500 (!) passengers were carried. The tickets are torn off a roll and bear the wording: “Tramore Fáilte Limited TRAIN Dundegaln Press Limited”.

We congratulate Tramore Fáilte on this excellent venture and hope it will be repeated elsewhere in the country. Our readers are strongly recommended to sample the line as soon as they next visit Tramore.