

# ***IRISH RAILWAY NEWS***

Volume 2 Issue 1

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*08:42 Marino Point to Arklow Anhydrous Ammonia train just south of Greystones on 11/10/1993.  
(Alan Keller)*

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## **Editorial**

There are many elements in a quality passenger rail service including comfort, safety, punctuality, reliability, speed, frequency, catering and cleanliness. Another very important factor is the provision of accurate and timely information at all times, but most particularly when services are disrupted. Each needs constant monitoring and attention. Irish Rail, when good, is often very good, but when bad can be extremely bad. There have been many improvements in recent years with the modernisation of rolling stock, better displays of information at stations and the now almost standard use of on-train public address. Sunday service frequencies on most routes are now approaching or better than on weekdays. The first class service on the Cork line, marketed under the Citygold brand, represents a standard of service and quality at least as good as anywhere else in Europe. On the down side service frequency on most routes is generally less than desirable, many trains are very leisurely timed, linger for extended periods in stations and in some instances persistently fail to operate as timetabled. Detailed punctuality figures are not published and there is as yet no such thing as a passenger's charter. Standards of cleanliness vary enormously with some stock giving the appearance of continuous neglect - dull and tatty upholstery, filthy internal window surfaces and glass partitions, vestibules caked in dirt - the best kept is probably DART, the worst is undoubtedly the stock in use on the Dublin outer suburban service.

Some operating practices seem designed to make the railway impossible to run, a relatively harmless bit of wind is sufficient to cripple services on some lines due to the draconian and ill-considered requirement for 15 mph running in block failure conditions even when the line is known to be clear and alternative communications are available.

Apart from the lack of information during service disruptions - even DART is poor at this - the most common complaint is overcrowding on mainline trains. This latter phenomenon is frequently the subject of Dáil questions, newspaper letters and radio talk shows, and on 4<sup>th</sup> January was the lead story on the front page of one of the national dailies. The root cause of this problem is the gradual reduction in rolling stock, down from 252 passenger carrying vehicles in 1988 to a little over 220 at present. Irish Rail have become very skilled at carriage rostering but no amount of conjuring can produce sufficient seats to meet current traffic peaks. There appear to be four options: 1) do nothing and continue as at present; 2) raise fares or impose a supplement for travel on nominated services; 3) introduce a reservations bureaucracy; 4) buy more rolling stock. The new railcars are a step in the right direction but are too small in number to make a significant difference and in any event will be partially absorbed by the South West corridor commuter service. More are needed so as to fully equip the Dublin suburban services with purpose designed vehicles and allow the recovery of the Mk3 push/pull cars for conversion to mainline use. Such a move might see five three-car push/pulls based in Limerick and Cork together with 9 additional Mk3 coaches added to the mainline pool.

The quest for quality is an ongoing one which must balance all the elements mentioned above against the costs involved. One thing is certain, minimum standards must be set and adhered to if the railway is to secure its proper place in the national transport infrastructure.

***A. Gray - 24/1/1994***

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# Irish Rail

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## **Dublin/Belfast Project**

This project has been at a virtual standstill during the last few months, as far as Irish Rail are concerned, and many of the temporary staff recruited in connection with it were laid off in November, pending the resumption of work on 4<sup>th</sup> January. There is thus little to report!

## ***Signalling***

Some additional signals have appeared in the Skerries, Balbriggan and Mosney station areas, though several more remain to be erected at these three places, including the gantry mounted Down main and loop signals which will be located at the north end of Mosney loop. Apart from the installation of track circuit feeds, the only other visible activity has been the wiring of wayside location cases including several at Skerries in mid-November. It can now be confirmed that the layout at Skerries will indeed incorporate a trailing crossover, located on tangent track near the site of the present semaphore Up distant signal. Reversible working, which was originally intended as a substitute for this crossover, will be provided between Skerries and Balbriggan over the Up road as described in the previous issue.

Commissioning of the Malahide/Drogheda SSI scheme, to be operated via new “non vital” supervisory computers and graphical display units, is expected to take place in advance of the May timetable change. The new computer system will also be used to operate the existing suburban CTC area of control (Howth, Howth Junction, Killester, Connolly, Pearse, Booterstown, Dun Laoghaire, Dalkey and Bray interlockings), the area formerly controlled from West Road (Connolly West interlocking) and the existing Malahide interlocking. Fringe boxes will be at Drogheda, Greystones, Clonsilla and Heuston instead of Malahide, Greystones and Connolly West. Incidentally the present Connolly West panel is in the same building as, and physically adjacent to, the existing suburban CTC console but has been manned separately pending the upgrading of the supervisory computers and associated software.

## ***Bridges***

OB 45, in the Rush/Skerries section, was rebuilt in early January. No other renewals or significant alterations have taken place apart from the completion of the decking of the Glyde river bridge (UB 120), just south of Castlebellingham. This latter work has allowed the line to be ballasted across the bridge - a prerequisite for CWR installation.

## ***Permanent Way***

No further renewals had taken place up to the end of December. However, temporary restrictions to 50 mph on the Up line, due to formation deterioration, from MP 16 to 14¾ and from MP 12¼ to 12, have been lifted following attention to “mucky spots” and reballasting. Both these restrictions were on sections of CWR installed some years ago. There are at present restrictions at Malahide station (40 mph, both lines), from MP 10½, 11¾, (25 mph, Down line), from MP 19¼, to MP 20 (40 mph, Down line), MP 23¾ (40 mph, both lines over UB 65, the Devlin Viaduct) and from MP 26 to 26¾ (25 mph, Down line). Most of these restrictions are on sections of track where renewal was either imminent or in progress when work was suspended.

The Malahide station restriction appears to be due to drainage and formation problems and may well remain in place until the renewal of OB 27, after which there will be greater scope for lifting the formation, if required, at this point.

The slack at MP 23¾ is due to the condition of the Devlin viaduct and has been in place for over two years.

Relaying resumed in early January, on the Down line between Malahide and Donabate and between Dundalk and the border. Up to the 22<sup>nd</sup> 1¼ miles had been relaid (over three Sundays) in the former section and 2¼ miles in the latter. It is expected that Dundalk to the border will be completed over the next few weeks with possessions continuing on a daily basis in conjunction with NIR. In all, Irish Rail intend to install an additional 24 miles of CWR on the Belfast line during 1994.

### ***Timetable changes***

The Dublin/Belfast service was altered with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> January. Departure times from each end are unchanged but the overall journey time is increased by between 2 and 14 minutes, principally affecting Down trains. The most severely decelerated is the 18:20 to Belfast which now takes 2 hours 12 minutes with one intermediate stop - the timings apparently incorporating an additional allowance to cover persistent delays caused by Irish Rail's unpunctual local services.

A new service is provided on Sundays at 17:55 ex Dublin serving Newry, Portadown, Lurgan, Lisburn, Botanic and Belfast (Central) arriving at 20:22. This train has in fact been running as an auxiliary to the 18:20 ex Dublin since 3<sup>rd</sup> October and is normally formed by a six-piece railcar unless NIR's second locomotive hauled set has been released from maintenance.

### **EU Funding**

European funding of £13.8 million was announced in mid-December to cover relaying, bridge strengthening, fencing and level crossing automation projects at 85% of total cost on five routes as follows:

Dublin - Belfast	IR£2.2m
Dublin - Cork	IR£6.0m
Dublin - Galway	IR£1.3m
Dublin - Waterford	IR£2.7m
Limerick Junction - Limerick	IR£1.6m

A further grant of IR£2 million has been made available for the purchase of track-laying equipment to "enable Iarnród Éireann to speed up the upgrading of the rail network".

It is not yet clear what effect, if any, the reduction in the overall allocation of structural funds to Ireland will have on the railway investment proposals contained in the National Development Plan and outlined in the last issue. The reduction in the EC contribution to the £20 billion, six year plan, is of the order of £600 million. There has already been some suggestion of a reduction in the 1994 rail investment allocation as well as a re-phasing of the LRT program - the latter later denied by the Department of Transport, Energy & Communications. Given the minimal investment in the railway for almost a generation, it is vital that the modest but potentially effective program in the National Plan is implemented in full.

### **General Timetable Changes**

In order to cater for buoyant weekend traffic a series of new Sunday-only trains have been added to the timetable with effect from 16<sup>th</sup> January as under:

15:50 Dublin to Longford	serving Maynooth, Mullingar and Mostrim
18:45 Longford to Dublin	serving Mostrim, Mullingar and Maynooth
17:00 Killarney to Dublin	serving Rathmore, Millsteet, Banteer, Mallow and Thurles only
14:15 Cork to Dublin	serving Mallow only
19:00 Heuston to Cork	serving Kildare, Thurles, Limerick Junction and Thurles only

The 19:15 Heuston/Tralee is deferred to 19:25 and now arrives in Tralee at 23:10. These trains have in

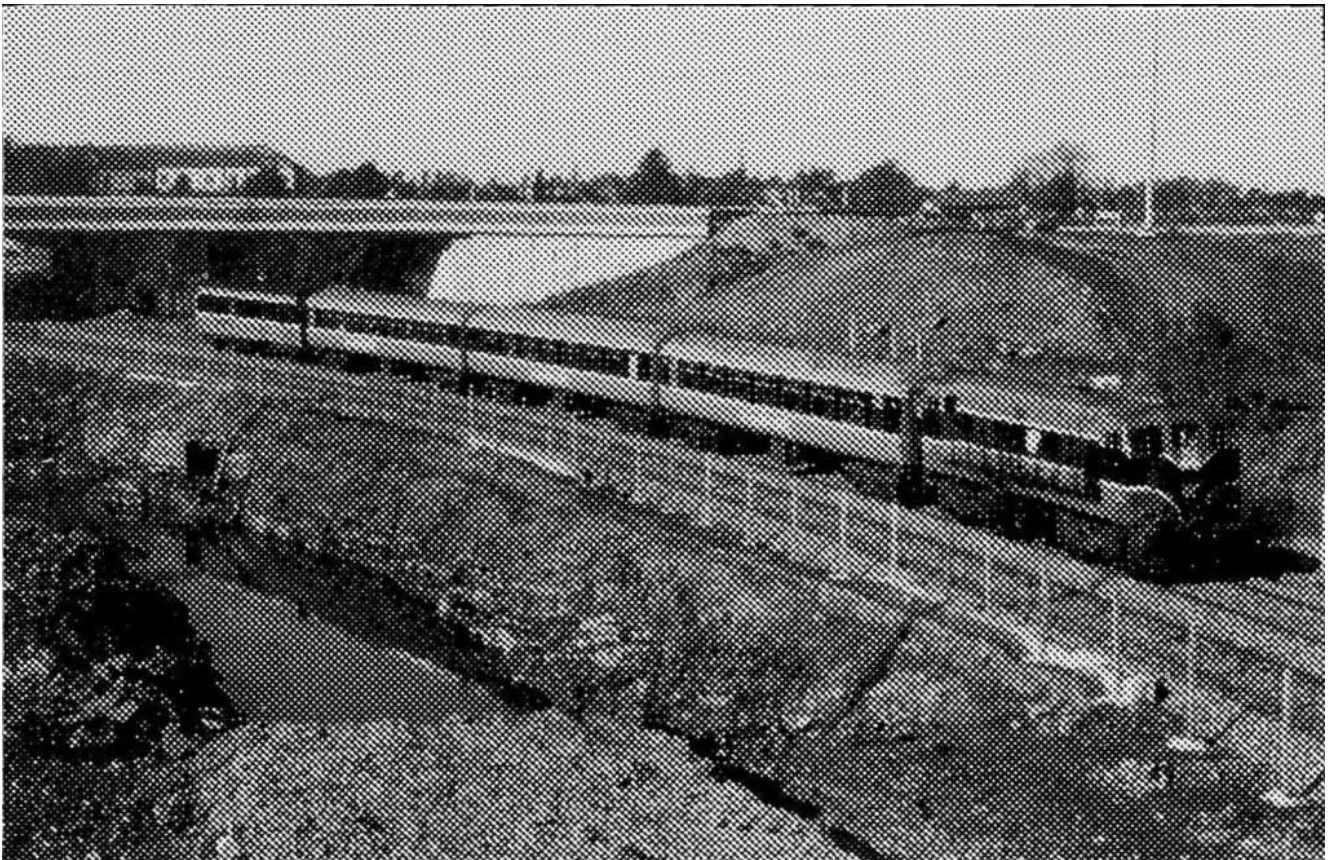


fact been running as auxiliaries, in one form or another since mid-October but were not part of the regular timetable. There are thus four Sunday trains each way on the Sligo road - probably the most intense regular Sunday service ever provided on this line.

A special timetable was introduced to facilitate SLW between Thurles and Limerick Junction, on consecutive Sundays from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 28<sup>th</sup> November inclusive. The 08:50 Heuston/Tralee was advanced to 08:00 and, serving the usual stations, was scheduled to arrive in Tralee at 12:20 - 35 minutes ahead of its normal arrival time. An additional train was provided at 09:05 to Cork, making the same stops as the 08:50 as far as Mallow. This train was scheduled to arrive in Cork at 12:30 - 40 minutes behind the normal arrival time of the 11:22 Mallow/Cork connection. The 10:50 Cork/Mallow and 11:22 Mallow/Cork were both advanced by 30 minutes to connect into, and out of, the 08:00 Heuston/Tralee. Although the changes were advertised, provision was made for road connections from Mallow to Tralee off the 09:05 Heuston/Cork.

### **Permanent Way - General**

Track upgrading and CWR installation has been largely suspended since the last issue. What little activity there has been is detailed below.



*21:30 ex Maynooth passing over the deviation at MP 4½ near Castleknock, 16/10/1993. (B. Carse)*

### ***Dublin/Cork***

The process of “filling in” the gaps in CWR continues with an additional 5½ miles in place since the last report. The mileages relaid are 158½ to 157 and 32¾ to 30¾ on the Up road and 4½ to 6½ on the Down road. The summary of CWR installation in the last issue omitted to include the section of the Down line from MP 2¼ to MP 3. The revised percentages of installed CWR are therefore 95% on the

Down road and 91% on the Up road.

Work commenced near Kilmallock in mid-December relaying the Up road between MP 125½ and 124. A program of ballast cleaning was undertaken between Thurles and Limerick Junction over five consecutive Sundays, commencing on 31<sup>st</sup> October, and necessitating single line working from 06:00 to approximately 15:00.

### ***Dublin/Sligo***

The two mile stretch of line between MP 61½ and MP 63½ has been relaid thus upping the mileage of CWR on this route to 29¼ or 20% of total track miles.

Work is proceeding on the construction of a new underbridge at MP 4½, between Ashtown and Castleknock. The new bridge will carry the “C” ring motorway under the line at this point. A temporary deviation, of both roads, is in place to facilitate this work.

### **Signalling - General**

Pending more permanent signalling arrangements in the Belview area, the signal box at Wellington Bridge is being manned on a twenty four hour basis so as to allow continuous access to the new port in the manner described in the previous issue. The Barrow bridge cabin, which is not a block post, continues to be staffed around the clock in order to operate the opening span above the navigable channel. The bridge is opened for shipping traffic, to and from New Ross, up to five times each day. Passenger trains have priority over ships, but all other traffic must give way to shipping.

### **Locomotives**

It is understood that Irish Rail have ordered two further locomotives from General Motors, which apart from bogie design, should be similar in most respects to the ten 3,250 hp engines currently on order. These additional engines will constitute the Irish Rail share of the Dublin/Belfast Express passenger motive power pool. An announcement in respect of an order for a further twenty locomotives has been expected for some time but had not emerged prior to publication. While the remaining 001 class locomotives will in all probability disappear from service during 1994, another order, if confirmed, would set the stage for the withdrawal of the ageing fleet of 121, 141 and 181 class locomotives, although it is assumed a number of 141/181s would be retained for departmental requirements.

071 class locomotives started working services on the Sligo line in mid-October and, after a few days of training Sligo based drivers, took over virtually all workings including liner trains. The only links not normally hauled by 071s are the 17:05 Dublin/Sligo (FO), the 04:50 Sligo/Dublin (Monday) and the new Sunday Longford trains, mentioned elsewhere. This move has resulted in a transformation in time keeping and general reliability with only two failures reported so far. There is also clearly considerable scope for acceleration - on one occasion recently a Down train was reportedly six minutes early into Sligo having spent ten minutes at Mullingar and Mostrim and four minutes at Carrick on Shannon.

Locomotive 011, up to recently confined to driver training at Heuston, was reportedly in use on beet trains between Waterford and Wellingtonbridge in early December.

General locomotive availability remains poor with typically no more than sixty engines available for unrestricted duty at any time. The 1992 annual report included no less than one hundred and twenty six diesel locomotives in the appended summary of rail assets.

### **Railcars**

The 17 railcars on order from Mitsui/Tokyu were expected to ship from Yokohama in mid-December

and should reach Ireland on 10<sup>th</sup> February. They will be numbered 2601-2617 and will operate in a minimum configuration of two vehicles, one with toilet accommodation and one without. Each vehicle is powered by a Cummins NTA855 under floor engine of 350 hp and is fitted with three-stage hydraulic transmission. The leading two axles on each car are driven, the maximum speed is 70 mph and the power/weight ratio is 8.6 hp/tonne. An independent auxiliary engine/generator set provides 40 kW for heat, light and battery charging.



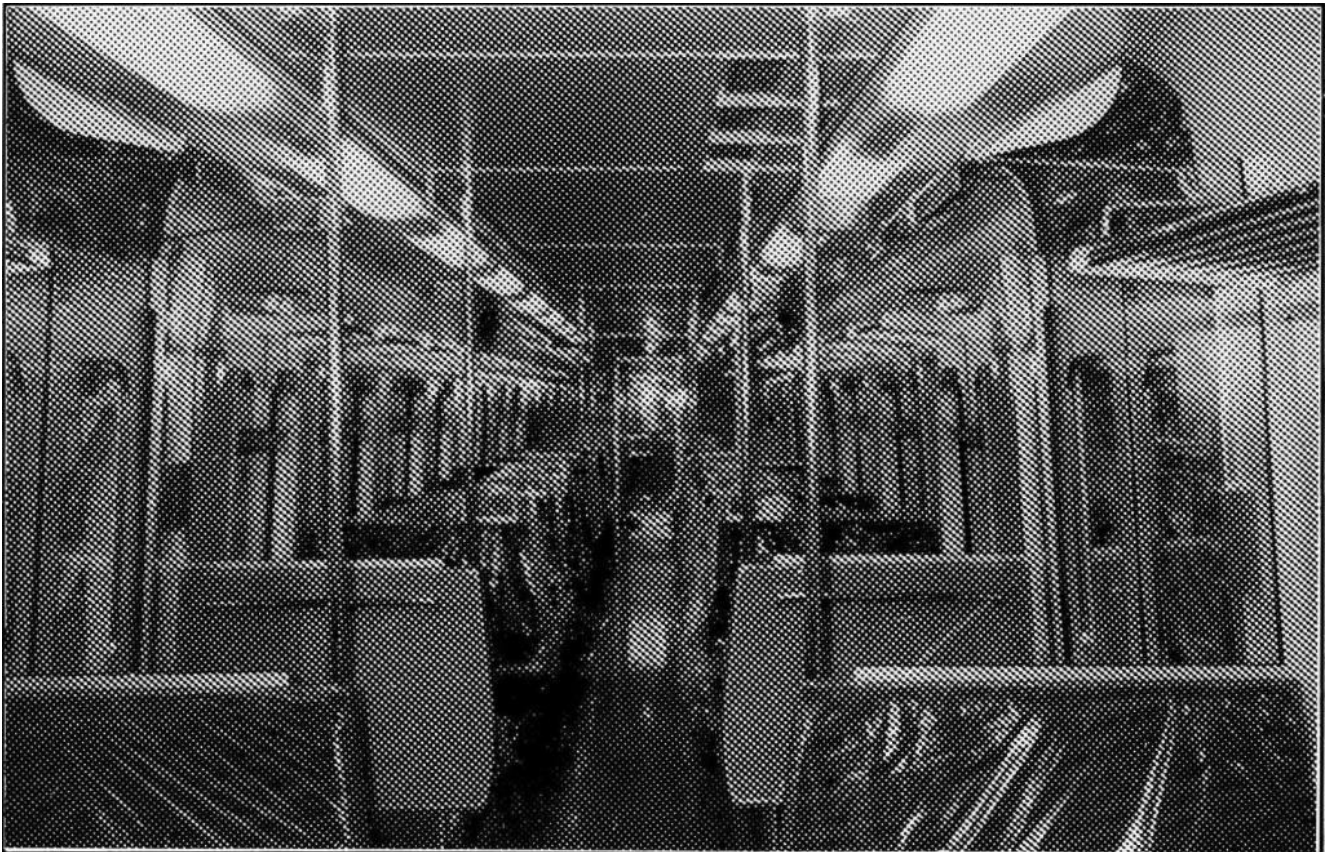
*Motor coach 2601 prior to shipment from Japan. (Irish Rail)*

The interior is very similar to DART vehicles although the upholstery is blue rather than green. Unlike DART, luggage racks are provided, although there is no mistaking the suburban nature of the internal layout. A two-car train has seating accommodation for 129 passengers and a nominal capacity of 335, including standees. There is also provision for wheel chair accommodation as well as for use of the toilet facilities by disabled people. Nine of the 17 cars are fitted with a retention toilet - the first Irish railway vehicles to be so equipped. Each car has four double-leaf sliding doors, two on each side, which open to a width of 1,300mm. The units have Deliner fully automatic couplers (similar to DART) and as a result do not have conventional buffers and coupling equipment - it will thus be interesting to see how a failure situation will be dealt as in most instances assisting vehicles will not be able to directly couple to the units. The car bodies are of carbon steel construction and can withstand a compression load of 1,500 kN over the couplers and 300 kN distributed beneath the windscreen.

It is understood that the new units will be allocated as follows: 06:57 ex Mullingar (4 car), 06:40 ex Athlone (4 car), 08:07 ex Dundalk (4 car) and Heuston/Kildare locals (2 x 2 car), leaving one vehicle spare. The Athlone cars will be integrated with the Heuston/Kildare links thus in effect allocating four two-car units to this service. The Mullingar set is expected to split on arrival in Dublin and to be used to cover an enhanced local service to and from Maynooth. These new train sets are thus being little

used on the service where they could be expected to make the greatest impact - that is from Dublin to Drogheda which is currently crippled by inadequately powered and highly inflexible push/pull sets which do virtually nothing during the off-peak periods.

Given the seating arrangements, automatic door characteristics and inability to conveniently split into smaller sets it is very difficult not to come to the conclusion that these latter vehicles would be far better off in smaller sets working services such as Limerick - Limerick Junction - Waterford - Rosslare, Cork/Tralee and Cork/Cobh. Given that there are 24 push/pull vehicles and only 5 driving trailers, some 8 or 9 Mk3 intermediates could be reconverted to mainline use thus helping to alleviate the overcrowding now being experienced on most routes. The priority rolling stock requirement would therefore be more railcars rather than mainline-type vehicles, so as to provide Drogheda/Dundalk services with equipment which would deliver the operational flexibility to integrate effectively with the planned high-speed Dublin/Belfast service.



*Interior view of railcar saloon. (Irish Rail)*

### **Stop Press**

A special trial train, consisting of 080 + barrier + 9 laden ammonia tank cars + barrier, operated from Marino Point to Shelton Abbey on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. It is believed that the intention, given successful trials, is to run two rather than three round trips daily - an arrangement which better meets the customer's requirement for larger trains less often. The amount of traffic moved would remain the same. While the weight of the trial train was not particularly spectacular - 755 tonnes approximately - there is some doubt as to the ability of an 071 class locomotive to haul such a load out of Cork in conditions of reduced adhesion.



### **Park Royal Coaches**

Only three of these coaches remain in regular traffic - 1400, 1944 and 1946. All three are based in Limerick and are used in combination with Cravens on Limerick/Limerick Junction and Limerick/Rosslare services. 1383, 1384, 1402, 1403, 1415 and 1416 are stored out of use and in varying states of dereliction at Limerick Junction.

### **Silvermines**

The final laden barytes train left Silvermines on 29<sup>th</sup> October. The train was stabled in Limerick over the weekend, and was worked to Foynes on 1<sup>st</sup> November, hauled by 187. The 1¼ mile Silvermines branch once regularly originated 3 trains each weekday - two barytes and a Mogul train - the latter conveying lead and zinc to Foynes for export. The Mogul mine has been inactive for many years, while the movement of barytes had become increasingly infrequent and erratic since the early 1980s. It is understood, however, that renewed exploration in the Silvermines area may result in a revival of mining activities in due course.



*Final barytes train unloading at Foynes 1/11/1993. (J. St.Leger)*

### **Foynes Branch**

As reported above the last barytes train ran on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Traffic on the Limerick/Foynes branch is currently somewhat erratic although two grain trains operate most weeks to Portlaoise in addition to the weekly coal and oil train to Ballina. Molasses, an agricultural feedstuff, is also loaded ex Foynes to various locations throughout the country including Enfield, Mullingar, Longford, Boyle and Belfast. On 20<sup>th</sup> December, fertiliser and grain trains were being loaded simultaneously, while Molasses was being pumped from lorries into tank wagons parked adjacent to the disused signal box. Molasses traffic is usually attached to either grain or coal and oil trains as the volume is not normally sufficient to

justify a separate train.

### **Mail Traffic**

The carriage of mail by Irish Rail, and the operation of the Day and Night Travelling Post Office services to Galway and Cork, had virtually ceased by 15<sup>th</sup> January. This move has been on the horizon for some time with various dates announced over the past eighteen months, only to be subsequently deferred. An Post transferred up to 400 staff from the Central Sorting Office at Sheriff Street to a new premises on the Naas Road over the weekend of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> January. Both the Sundays-only 20:10 to Galway and 21:15 to Cork carried TPOs as usual on the 16<sup>th</sup>, but these were in fact unmanned, although the day and night mails, are apparently to continue running until 31<sup>st</sup> January. Most passenger trains currently carrying mail will probably outlive this change, although it appears that one or two services will be cancelled including the 21:05 ex Dundalk - thus even further reducing the skeleton local service currently provided at off-peak periods from Dundalk and Drogheda. As TPOs are restricted to 60 mph, their removal from passenger trains, particularly on the Galway line, should lead to long overdue accelerations - perhaps by up to a half hour in the case of the weekday 07:55 Heuston/Galway and 15:10 Galway/Heuston. The 20:10 Heuston/Galway on Sundays should similarly benefit. The only passenger carrying train similarly affected on the Cork line is the Sunday-only 21:15 Heuston to Cork which should see an acceleration of about an hour.

### **Beet Traffic**

Movement of beet from the South Wexford area was further complicated this year by the new Waterford port at Belview, in that trains to and from this facility require possession of the electric train staff for the 17 mile Abbey Junction/Wellington Bridge section. Following the closure of Campile signal box in 1989 this section has been saturated from early morning to late evening during the beet season and was really under pressure to accommodate Bell liner traffic as well. Fortunately much of the latter runs at night while beet trains are only active from 05:00 to 22:00 approximately. As in recent years locomotives were in short supply with five motor 001 class featuring extensively. The engine off the 16:00 Limerick/Rosslare passenger returned light each evening to Wellington Bridge to work the 21:10 Beet special from there to Waterford. Similarly, in the morning, the engine off the 05:00 empty from Waterford worked on to Rosslare as it was needed for the regular 07:15 Rosslare/Waterford passenger service. The locomotive was again available to work beet traffic until required for the 17:00 Waterford/Rosslare passenger train.

The sequence of movements below were noted on 13<sup>th</sup> November and give some idea of the operating environment:

LEs	189+163	Abbey Junction	pass	11:00
11:20 Ex Belview	163+189+15 bogies	Belview	dep	11:32
11:35 Ex Wellingtonbridge	005+16 laden beet	Belview	pass	12:20
12:30 Ex Waterford	005+35 empty	Wellingtonbridge	arr	13:46
14:00 Ex Waterford	164+21 empty	Wellingtonbridge	arr	14:32
Bell Liner		Waterford	dep	15:31
13:10 Ex Wellingtonbridge	164+15 laden beet	Wellingtonbridge	dep	15:45
<i>Bridge to open for one boat at 16:30</i>				
17:00 Waterford/Rosslare			dep	17:00
<i>Bridge to open for two boats at 17:35</i>				

Four laden beet trains, each with up to 24 wagons maximum, were scheduled to run from Waterford to Mallow at 00:01 (Tuesday-Saturday), 10:00 (Monday-Saturday), 14:10 (Monday-Saturday), 18:35 (Monday-Saturday) and 21:20 (Saturday only). Return empties were due to leave Mallow Beet factory at 01:15 (Sunday), 04:00 (Monday-Saturday), 05:50 (Monday-Saturday), 10:20 (Monday-Saturday) and 22:40 (Monday-Saturday). It is believed that the 071 class locomotive, off the 18:10 ex Dublin, was sometimes used to take laden beet wagons from Waterford to Limerick Junction. Trains so worked were occasionally split at Limerick Junction and brought forward, in several portions, attached to southbound liner trains. The beet season was probably a little less intense this year and concluded on Christmas Eve - about a week earlier than usual.

## **DTI Phase II**

The second phase of the Dublin Transportation Initiative which began in February 1992 is drawing to a close. The purpose of this phase is: 1) to produce a long-term transportation strategy for the Dublin area up to the year 2011 - the Recommended Strategy; 2) to prepare an Investment and Implementation Programme based on the Recommended Strategy and covering the period 1994-97; 3) to provide the tools and skills required for ongoing transport planning. The interim Phase report II issued in December 1992 proposed, inter alia:

- The extension of DART to Greystones and Malahide.
- The construction of new DART stations at Fairview and Barrow Street.
- The purchase of additional EMUs to increase the capacity of the existing DART service.
- The doubling of the Clonsilla/Maynooth line to allow for an increased (diesel) service.
- The construction of LRT routes as under:
  - Tallaght - Naas Road - Inchicore - Heuston Station - City Centre
  - Cabinteely - via the former Harcourt Street railway - Camden Street - City Centre
  - Ballymun - Collins Avenue - Drumcondra Road - City Centre.
- Investigation into the feasibility of extending Maynooth and South West Corridor trains to serve Tara Street and Pearse stations. \*
- A rail link to Dublin Airport off the Dublin/Belfast line in the longer term.

Assuming the final Phase II report confirms the interim recommendations, the above projects are likely to be strong candidates for funding from the resources already promised to the DTI in the National Development Plan. The more cynical will await physical evidence of activity on the basis that seeing is believing! The Minister for Transport, Energy & Communications, Mr Brian Cowen TD, speaking at the Light Rail '93 conference in Birmingham on 23<sup>rd</sup> November indicated that LRT construction will start in Dublin by early 1995. This is welcome news, although the starting date is up to a year later than appears to have been originally envisaged by the DTI.

Local representatives in North Wicklow have expressed concern at the omission from the National Development Plan of any explicit commitment to extend the DART service from Bray to Greystones. The position will presumably be clarified when the final DTI report is issued.

\* Track capacity across the loop line, platform accommodation at Connolly, and terminal facilities at Pearse would need to be considerably improved to make this practical. It is also likely that peak-period DART frequency would have to be reduced slightly and set sizes correspondingly increased so as to get maximum benefit from each available timetable slot. The existing arrangements for terminating outer-suburban trains in the Boston Yard at Pearse station is highly impractical, extraordinarily disruptive

and merits fundamental review and redesign in any event.

### **Athenry/Tuam**

The level crossing at Ballindine Road, referred to in the last issue, had not been restored as of mid-December. An inspection car travelled the length of the line around the end of November, though it still remains closed to regular traffic. The public footbridge formerly located just north of the station level crossing at Tuam has been removed, possibly for re-use in the Dublin area.

### **Rumblings on the Burma Road**

Proposals to re-route the N17 road over part of the disused Claremorris/Collooney line, in the Tubbercurry area, have met with strong local opposition. Unlike the other routes closed in 1975, this line has not been lifted and has been the subject of various local initiatives seeking its reopening.

### **Presidential Special**

President Robinson travelled to Cork on 6<sup>th</sup> November on a special train formed by 074 + EGV + 3 Mk2, which included the state coach. The train left Heuston at 13:30 and arrived in Cork at 16:25, just behind the 13:20 ex Heuston which is due at 16:20. The Presidential party returned attached to the rear of the 18:55 ex Cork. This trip was unusual in that the President usually travels attached to a regular train, although the latter arrangement often requires the substitution of Mk2 vacuum-braked stock on a link normally worked by, and timetabled to take advantage of, air-braked Mk3.

### **Passenger Traffic**

A special train consisting of 074 + EGV + 5 Mk3, and including the basic Executive set, ran from Dublin to Balmoral halt on 20<sup>th</sup> October in connection with a Chamber of Commerce function. Return from Balmoral was at 20:30.

A similar train operated from Belfast to Dublin at 12:00 on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November, returning from Dublin at 13:00 the following Sunday. The formation on the latter occasion was 171 + EGV + 4 Mk3.

1<sup>st</sup> December saw an unusual working of the Executive set, this time from Leixlip (Louisa Bridge) to Limerick, via Dublin. Departure time was scheduled for 18:12, but due to the late running of the 17:15 Dublin/Mullingar, the empty train was slightly delayed leaving Maynooth where it was awaiting a path onto the single line section to Clonsilla. The party on this occasion were guests of the Intel Corporation, who have established a major computer chip manufacturing facility nearby.

The October Bank Holiday weekend was, as usual, one of busiest weekends of the year but, unfortunately, and perhaps inevitably, was marred by wholesale overcrowding. This is the only holiday weekend which falls during university terms and many students thus join the general exodus. The Cork Jazz Festival combines to produce a peak in traffic beyond the limits of the reduced coaching fleet available to the Irish Rail. Most of the principal departures from Dublin on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October are listed in the table below.



Service	Formation	Actual Departure Time	Estimated Load	Minutes Late (-) Early (+)	Notes
13:00 Heuston/Westport	078+EGV+7Mk3	13:04	480	-4	
13:15 Heuston/Limerick Junction	073+EGV+7Mk3	13:23	250	-8	(*)
13:20 Heuston/Cork	079+EGV+8Mk3	13:29	48f+480	-9	
13:30 Heuston/Tralee	077+EGV+7Mk2	13:39	550 **	-9	FO
14:10 Heuston/Galway	083+DV+6Mk2a/b	14:14	500 **	-4	(1)
14:45 Heuston/Cork	088+EGV+8Mk3	14:58	500	-13	(2)
14:55 Heuston/Cork	076+EGV+8Mk2	15:05	520	-10	(*)
15:00 Heuston/Waterford	175+190+EGV+7Mk2	15:41	430	-41	(3)
16:45 Heuston/Cork	075+V+8Cr	16:48	530 **	-3	FO
17:00 Heuston/Ballina	135+185+V+6Cr	17:08	440 **	-8	(4)
17:15 Heuston/Waterford	CANCELLED				(5) FO
17:30 Heuston/Cork	074+EGV+7MK3	17:34	60f+580 **		(6)
17:40 Heuston/Limerick	142+188+EGV+7Mk3	17:50	510	-10	(7)
17:45 Heuston/Tralee	073+EGV+7Mk3	18:01	590 **	-16	(8)
18:05 Heuston/Westport	080+EGV+7Mk3	18:16	650 **	-11	
18:10 Heuston/Waterford	087+EGV+7Mk3	18:27		-17	
18:35 Heuston/Tralee	071+EGV+7Mk3	18:49	550 **	-14	
18:50 Heuston/Cork	072+EGV+8Mk3	19:08	500	-18	(*)
18:45 Heuston/Galway	081+V+8Cr	19:10	500	-25	
19:15 Heuston/Cork	084+EGV+8Mk3		200?	-37?	(9)
17:05 Connolly/Sligo	122+6 p/p	17:09	500	-4	FO
17:15 Connolly/Mullingar	CANCELLED				(10)
17:25 Connolly/Arklow	183+4Cr+V	17:30		-5	
18:20 Connolly/Belfast	112+10Mk2	18:20	300	40	
18:30 Connolly/Sligo	184+149+EGV+8Mk2	18:41	540 **	-11	
18:30 Connolly/Rosslare	162+EGV+6Mk2	18:35	400	-5	
16:05 Connolly/Maynooth	129+2 p/p	16:08	-3		
16:30 Connolly/Drogheda	164+3Mk2a/b+DV	16:36	-6		
16:52 Pearse/Drogheda	157+4Mk2a/b+DV	17:01	-3		(12)
17:13 Pearse/Dundalk	124+6 p/p	17:23	520	-2	(11)
17:42 Pearse/Drogheda	128+5 p/p	17:53	480	-5	(11)
18:27 Pearse/Dundalk	131+4 p/p	18:37	250	-3	(11)

**Table 1: Departures from Dublin 22/10/1993**

Notes relating to the Tables 1 and 2 - October Bank Holiday Weekend

- (\*) Indicates special train.
- f Indicates Intercity Gold.
- FO Indicates regular Friday-only service.
- (P) Indicates Portarlinton time.
- (1) Passengers left behind due to severe overcrowding.
- (2) Ran non-stop to Cork.
- (3) Delayed awaiting locomotives.

Most of the principal Bank Holiday Monday arrivals are include in the table below.

Service	Formation	Actual Departure Time	Estimated Load	Minutes Late (-) Early (+)	Notes
09:55 ex Tralee	088+9Cr+2V	13:17 (P)	300	+4½	(*)
11:35 ex Galway	072+8Mk2+EGV	13:42 (P)	280/300	-10	
11:20 ex Cork	074+8Mk3+EGV	13:48 (P)	3f+400	-7	
13:30 ex Westport	080+7Mk3+EGV	17:22	580 **	-7	
14:00 ex Cork	CANCELLED				(13)
14:35 ex Cork	071+7Mk3+EGV	17:30	550 **	-10	(*)
14:45 ex Cork	082+7Mk3+EGV	17:44	630 **	-9	
14:00 ex Tralee	073+7Mk3+EGV	17:51	600 ***	+9	(*)
15:15 ex Waterford	075+8Mk2+EGV	18:07	530	-17	
14:05 ex Ballina	126+6 p/p		220		(14) (*)
15:10 ex Galway	078+7Mk3+EGV	18:23	600 **	-13	
15:40 ex Mallow	131+6 p/p	18:29	180	-9	
14:20 ex Tralee	083+7Mk3+EGV	18:40	500	-20	
17:30 ex Cork	087+8Mk3+EGV	19:45	20f+480	+10	(15)
17:30 ex Cork (auxiliary)	127+6 p/p	20:37	430		(16) (*)
17:55 ex Limerick	088+9Cr+2V	20:47	560		(*)
18:25 ex Waterford	190+164+8Mk2+EGV	21:10	380	-10	
18:05 ex Galway	084+9Mk2+EGV	21:17	550	-7	
17:40 ex Cork	086+DV+11Mk2a/b+DV	21:28	280	-53	(*)
18:20 ex Cork	076+6Mk2a/b+DV	21:35	300	-30	(*)
17:35 ex Tralee	079+9Cr+DV	21:58	600	-28	(*)
19:00 ex Cork	081+8Mk3+EGV	22:03	440	-18	
18:25 ex Westport	077+8Mk3+EGV	22:27	750 **	-7	
18:05 ex Tralee	005+6Cr+V	23:14	350	-24	

**Table 2: Arrivals in Dublin 25/10/1993**

Notes relating to the Tables 1 and 2 - October Bank Holiday Weekend (continued)

- (4) 17:00 Athlone extended as on a normal Friday.
  - (5) This train is often cancelled if rolling stock is in short supply.
  - (6) Set size reduced from 9 to 8 due to coach defect - no replacement available.
  - (7) Odd Motive power for a 90 mph schedule!
  - (8) 17:45 Limerick Junction service extended as on a normal Friday.
  - (9) Formed by the set of the 13:20 Heuston/Cork, which returned to Dublin at approximately 16:50. This latter was to have been an empty train but in fact carried 200 passengers.
  - (10) Alternative road services to be provided.
  - (11) Connolly departure time shown.
  - (12) Failed at Howth Junction. 17:13 ex Pearse ran via the Up platform at Howth Junction – Dundalk, arrived 19:05. Connolly pilot to assist.
  - (13) Rostered push/pull failed at Cork.
  - (14) Ran to Pearse station serving Connolly and Tara Street. About 50 passengers disembarked at the latter station.
  - (15) Departed ahead of schedule.
  - (16) Set originally rostered for 14:00 Cork/Heuston special.
- \*\* Indicates severe overcrowding.

There was much overcrowding on the Sligo line also. The 17:40 ex Sligo, 8 Mk2, departed with 305

passengers. This figure rose to 449 ex Boyle, 520 ex Longford and 613 ex Mullingar. A push/pull operated auxiliary ran from Boyle at 17:15 and had about 230 passengers on board leaving Longford. The 17:40 was further relieved by 5 buses, 3 from Longford and 2 from Mullingar. The 13:30 ex Sligo is also understood to have consisted of no more than 8 coaches and to have been thus heavily overcrowded.

The Saturdays leading up to Christmas saw the operation of the usual shopping auxiliaries, notably: 08:45 ex Longford and 17:45 to Sligo, 07:55 ex Waterford and 17:15 return, 07:45 ex Cork and 17:10 return.

Traffic over the Christmas Holiday period followed the same pattern as in previous years with a steady, if unspectacular, build up to Christmas Eve. The latter day was quite busy in the early morning and afternoon although few auxiliaries were operated. Table 3, below, shows departures from Heuston between 12:40 and 15:00.

Service	Formation	Actual Departure Time	Estimated Load	Minutes Late (-) Early (+)	Notes
12:40 Heuston/Athlone	088+6Mk2a/b+DV	13:49 (P)	120	-16	(*)
13:00 Heuston/Westport	083+EGV+8Mk3	13:20	560	-20	
13:20 Heuston/Cork	086+EGV+8Mk3	13:52	720/770	-32	
13:30 Heuston/Tralee	145+192+GSV+7Cr+DV	13:55	380	-25	FO
14:10 Heuston/Galway	074+EGV+7Mk2	14:10	500	+0	
14:45 Heuston/Cork	148+5Cr+GSV	14:46	150	-1	(*)
14:55 Heuston/Cork	082+EGV+8Mk3	14:56	300/350	-1	
15:00 Heuston/Waterford	084+EGV+7Mk3	15:00	300	+0	

***Table 3: Departures from Dublin (Heuston) 24/12/1993***

Notes re Table 3 above:

- (\*) Indicates special train.
- F Indicates Inter-city Gold.
- FO Indicates regular Friday-only service.
- (P) Indicates Portarlinton time.

There was a near riot on the 13:20 Cork due to the severe overcrowding, which was even further exacerbated by additional passengers off the Galway line, who attempted to join at Portarlinton. The Inter City Gold accommodation was nearly as crowded as the rest of the train as the sheer volume of people sought out whatever standing space could be found. The 10:45 to Cork likewise had no auxiliary and is also understood to have been badly overcrowded.

On the Sligo line a well-filled relief train, consisting of five Cravens, operated ahead of the regular 13:25 Dublin/Sligo service - 071 + EGV + 8 Mk2. Having unloaded at Sligo, the empty relief train propelled out of the station and ran down the goods line to Sligo Quay to run round. It was thus able to leave Sligo at 17:05, ahead of, rather than behind, the 17:40 ex Sligo. (It is not possible to run round at the passenger station without holding the staff for the 27¾ mile single line Boyle/Sligo section.)

Normal suburban services ran on Christmas Eve, except that DART services ceased around 21:30 and the 22:00 Dublin/Dundalk was cancelled. Also cancelled on Christmas Eve was the 20:30 Heuston/Cork. No services, of any sort, ran on Christmas Day or St. Stephen's Day. A reduced Sunday service ran on 27<sup>th</sup> December, with normal mainline and suburban trains resuming the following day. On New Year's Eve, most of the normal Friday-only mainline auxiliary trains were cancelled as was

the 20:30 Heuston/Cork. Suburban trains ran as on Christmas Eve. A reduced Sunday service operated on New Year's Day with a regular Sunday service on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. 3<sup>rd</sup> January, a public holiday, was a bit of a disaster with a full suburban service and a normal Monday mainline service, including Earlybirds operating. Needless to say, suburban traffic was very light while the Earlybird services are understood to have been poorly patronised. (The 04:50 ex Sligo reportedly had twelve passengers on board leaving Mullingar.) As the day progressed, the undersized regular services were overwhelmed with massive overcrowding particularly on the 13:30 ex Westport, 14:45 ex Cork. 15:10 ex Galway and 14:20 ex Tralee. The 13:30 ex Westport, 073 + EGV + 6 Mk3, left with 158 passengers, had 418 leaving Claremorris, 508 leaving Castlerea and 670 leaving Portarlinton - seating accommodation was 388. The 14:45 ex Cork, 083 + EGV + 7 Mk3, reportedly carried 849 passengers - seating accommodation was 460. A few additional unadvertised trains ran at short notice including the 12:00, 15:15 and 18:00 ex Limerick and the 17:35 ex Tralee. Overall traffic on this date was, if anything, a little less than might have been expected at the end of a long holiday period and was well within the capacity of the railway, had it organised itself accordingly.



*Irish Rail's executive Train at Belview, 4/9/1993. (J. St.Leger)*

### Connolly

The ramp access to Connolly station, from Amiens Street now presents a most untidy and disorganised appearance for most of the day with lines of Bus Éireann buses stabled there. The road surface is broken up and much of it is covered with oil and grease. Rail passengers approaching on foot are forced to endure clouds of exhaust while cars and taxis, dropping passengers in the station forecourt, are often faced with the task of weaving through shunting buses, which sometimes completely block access to the station by this route. There have also been a number of near-misses at the foot of the ramp as the parked buses obscure the view of merging traffic from the Financial Services Centre and indeed



are often parked over the STOP markings on the road.

### **Heuston Station**

Proposals have gone to the Irish Rail board for the redevelopment of Heuston station. The layout would be altered in such a way as to provide a total of ten platforms, six of which would be in the main part of the station. A pair of platforms would be provided in the former Guinness yard for excursion traffic while the new South West Corridor commuter services would operate into and out of a second set of new platforms to be located on the up side at the station end of the former goods yard. The concourse would be extended 75 metres towards Cork thus providing a circulation area more appropriate to the volume of traffic now being handled.

Additional running lines would be installed on the Liffey side of the existing valeting plant so as to provide alternative routes to the platforms on the northern side of the station. The proposal also includes the re-signalling of the station area, the mainline through Inchicore as far as the existing CTC boundary and the North Wall branch as far as the boundary with the Connolly (West) interlocking. Operational flexibility would be further enhanced by the introduction of reversible working between Heuston and Inchicore. The total cost of this package of proposals is understood to be about £8.5 million.

### **South West Corridor**

The new local services from Heuston to Kildare are expected to commence on 16<sup>th</sup> May coinciding with the new system-wide timetable. It is anticipated that two services will operate every hour in each direction serving a new station at Cherry Orchard and re-opened stations at Clondalkin, Hazelhatch and Sallins in addition to the existing stations at Newbridge and Kildare. The journey time serving all stations will be approximately 45 minutes.

Work commenced in early December on the reconstruction of Hazelhatch station and is expected to start at Sallins on 24<sup>th</sup> January, though as yet there is little evidence of activity at the other sites. It is understood that planning objections have been raised in respect of the proposed Cherry Orchard station as no provision has been made for car parking or bus interchange. This latter station is intended to serve the Ballyfermot area.

### **New Gantry Cranes**

A new container gantry crane of 45 ton capacity was erected at the Sligo Quay goods yard in November and is expected to be commissioned shortly. It will replace the existing 30 ton crane. Access to the deep water quay was obstructed during erection and, in addition, the oil, Guinness, van road and second road sidings were temporarily shortened by 50 metres.

Parts arrived at North Esk for the new gantry there at the end of October and were erected between 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November, although parts of the yard were still out use on 6<sup>th</sup> December.

### **Sligo Quay Tramway**

The tramway from Sligo goods yard along the deep water quay to the Cold Chon premises was out of use from November to early January, during which period it was partially relaid and otherwise upgraded to accept 071 class locomotives, which now frequently power the North Wall to Sligo liner trains. Some 400 tar containers are delivered to Cold Chon annually, the busiest period being during the summer months. The wagons are propelled down the tramway for unloading at around 04:00 and are collected either around mid-day, by the engine(s) off the 08:40 passenger ex Dublin, or later by the engine(s) for the 23:00 Up liner. The locomotive links are organised in such a way that the Down liner

engine(s) work the 07:45 Up passenger while the engine(s) off the 18:30 passenger ex Dublin work the Up liner. On occasions the Up and Down liners swap engines at Longford especially when the Down train is not worked by an 071 class and the Up one is. (This practice pre-dates 071s as on occasion the Up liner might have been double-headed and the Down liner hauled by an 001 class locomotive.)



*Bulk Cement train at Sligo Quay, 18/4/1981. (B. Carse)*

### **Dun Laoghaire**

The Department of the Marine is planning a new ferry port facility on the site of the existing St. Michael's Pier at Dun Laoghaire. The new ferry port is designed to handle Stena Sealink's new high capacity catamaran, currently under construction in Finland. The new vessel will have a capacity for 1,500 passengers, 275 cars and up to 50 trucks. It will make up to five return trips between Dun Laoghaire and Holyhead, each journey taking 1 hour 50 minutes.

The plans apparently include an aspiration for a direct link to the nearby DART station, but do not include any proposal for bringing the latter up to the standard which might be expected of an international facility. Indeed the existing station lost its main entrance in pre-DART days after which all passengers have been obliged to enter via a side gate leading directly onto the narrow footbridge. Crowd control is totally inadequate with frequent congestion occurring on the footbridge and the steps leading from it onto the platform. Indeed, on safety grounds alone, there must be a strong case for restoring the station buildings to railway use even if this means finding a new home for the widely acclaimed Restaurant Na Mara.

### **Derailments**

The 09:55 Tralee/Cork passenger train, 001 + 3 Cr + GSV, was derailed just beyond the Bog Road overbridge, some three miles from Tralee, at Ballyseedy, on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November. The line

emerges from a cutting and is curving to the right at this point. The locomotive and first coach broke away from the remainder of the train and continued about a quarter of a mile remaining upright, but with the coach partially derailed thus causing chairs and sleepers to be broken over this distance.

The second coach (1519) was completely derailed and came to rest minus its bogies, on its side, on the Up side of the line. The third coach (1525) remained upright but detached from, and at a 90° angle to, the second coach. It nonetheless came to rest some distance from the running line. The GSV (3176) was also completely derailed and came to rest in an upright position clear of but somewhat nearer and at a less severe angle to, the formation.

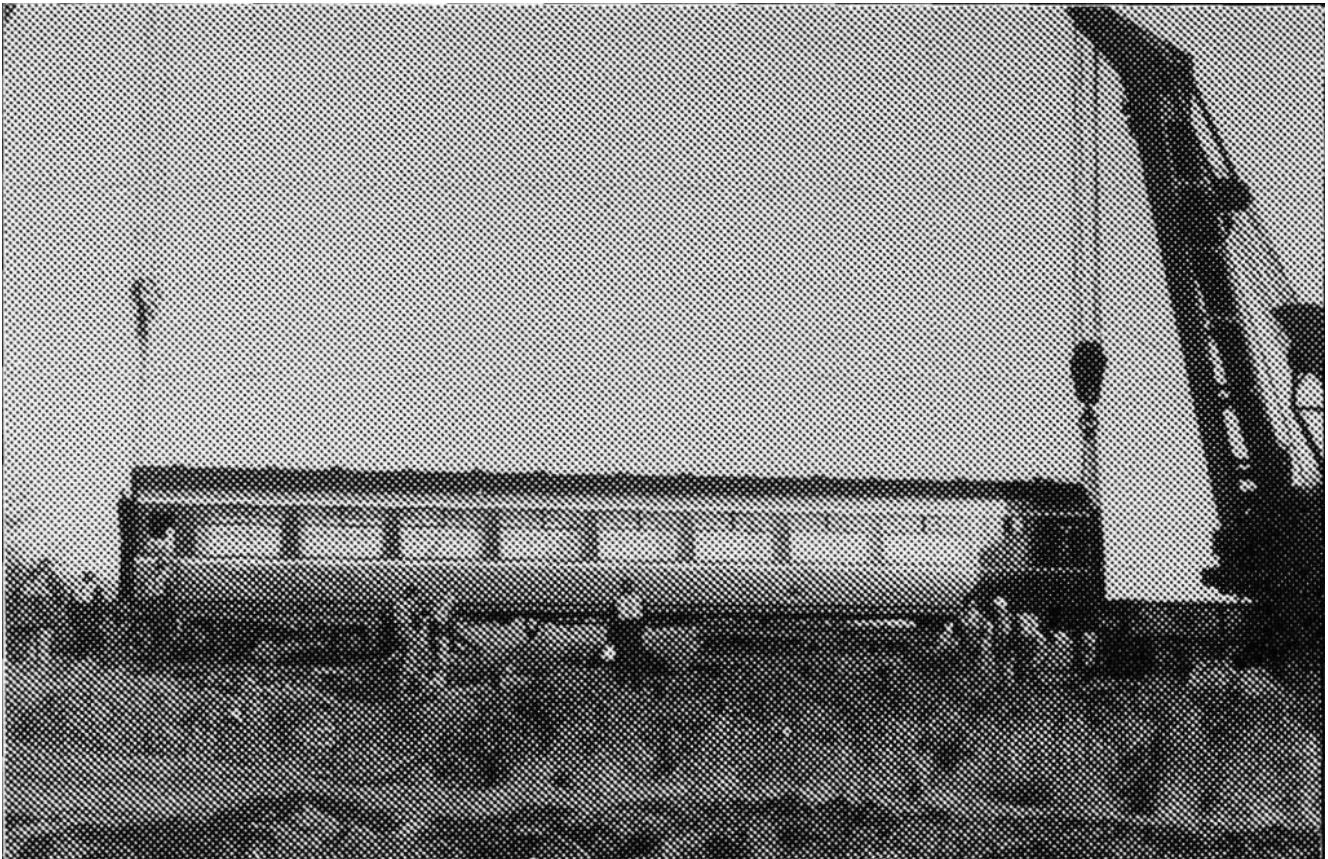


*Aftermath of the Ballyseedy derailment.*

Of the 35 passengers on board 13 were taken to hospital, five of whom were released later that day with the remainder being released on the following day. Injuries were fortunately minor in nature consisting mainly of bruising and lacerations. The damaged track was made passable by 17:00 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, thus allowing the Inchicore crane to stable overnight in Tralee in readiness for recovery operations the following day. On the Sunday the Inchicore crane moved out to the site and, assisted by a road crane, rerailed 3176, 1525 and 1519 in that order, the last lift being completed at 17:10. The Tralee/Farranfore section reopened to normal traffic in time to pass the 19:25 Heuston/Tralee later the same evening. While the cause of the accident has yet to be officially revealed, in common with the Belview derailment, media speculation centred around the condition of the track. Unlike Mk2 and Mk3 stock, Craven coaches have conventional screw-type couplings and lack Pullman style gangway connections. They are thus less likely to remain upright, coupled, and in line in the event of a derailment of this nature.

Coincidentally the crossing gates at Ballinalane, near Ballybrack, were demolished by a Tralee bound train at 08:45 on the morning of the derailment.

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November locomotive 158, hauling a three coach empty carriage working from Mallow to Cork, was partially derailed as it emerged from the south end of Cork tunnel. The leading bogie left the track and embedded itself in the ballast on the cess side immediately north of platform 5. It is understood that the rear of the train blocked the trailing crossover, which is located just inside the tunnel. It was therefore necessary to bring a locomotive behind the disabled train, via Rathpeacon, to remove sufficient of its tail as to allow Down trains to run into platform 6 via the crossover already mentioned. The 13:20 ex Heuston was detained for some time at Rathduff and eventually arrived in Cork at about 17:05. The locomotive was rerailed by 20:20 but delays of up to 40 minutes continued throughout the evening and well into the following day, largely due to damage sustained by signal cabling during the course of the derailment. As the train involved was scheduled to work the evening Cork/Cobh service and as no other stock was available these latter were cancelled and replaced by buses for the remainder of the day.



*Recovery of Craven No.1519 at Ballyseedy, 14/11/1993.*

Further information has come to hand in regard to recovery operations following the Belview derailment (IRN 1.1). The four more severely derailed vehicles were lifted using the Inchicore steam crane at the Waterford end and a Crane Hire Ltd road crane at the Rosslare end as illustrated in the accompanying photograph.

One of the Cravens forming the 09:05 Limerick Junction/Limerick was partially derailed near MP 17¾ on 10<sup>th</sup> January. Little damage was caused and the line was re-opened to traffic around 12:00 the same day.

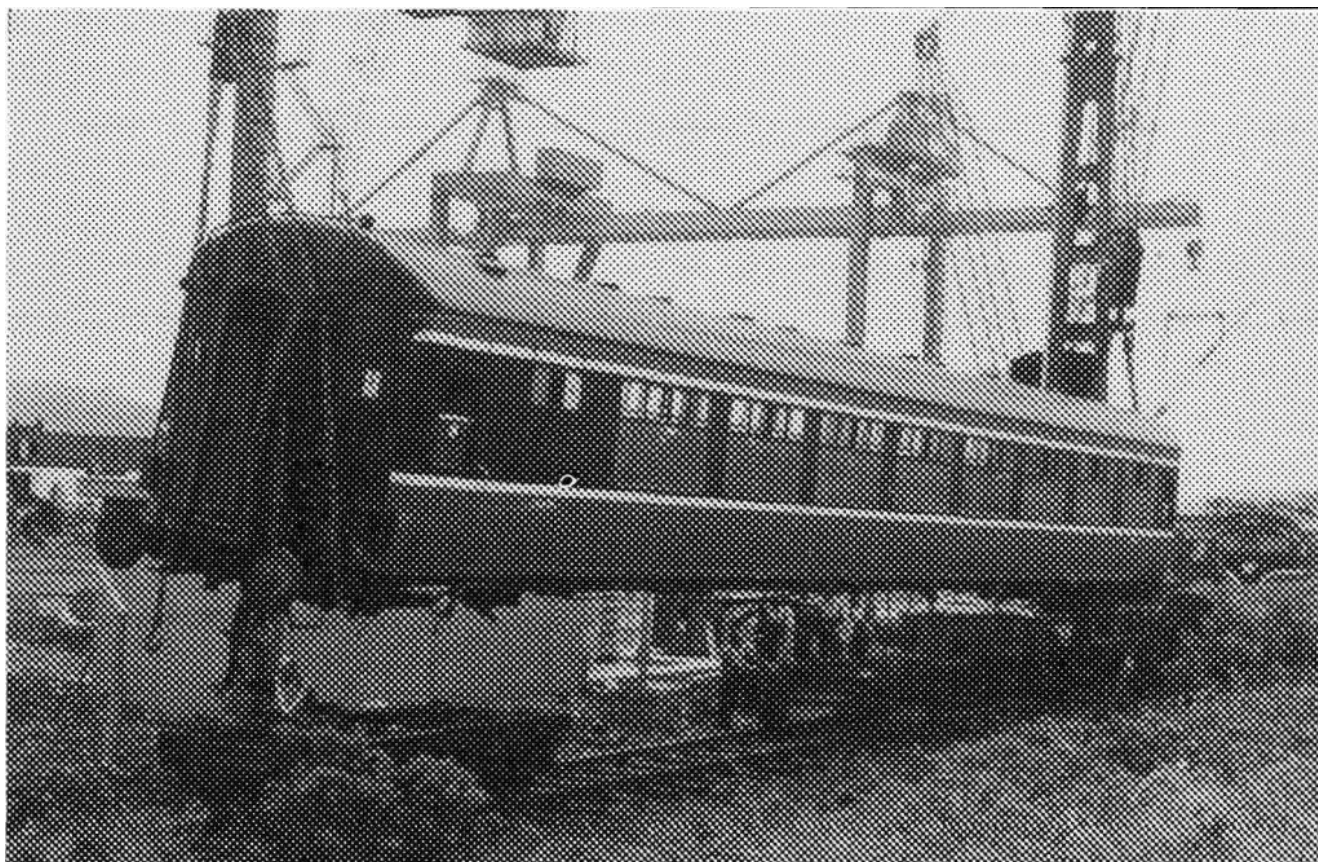
### **Incidents**

A selection of the more serious failures and disruptions are included below.



26/10/1993: The 08:40 Dublin/Sligo service arrived at 12:44 - 64 minutes late - due to problems with the trailing engine, 149.

9/11/1993: The 17:40 ex Sligo failed between Mosttrim and Mullingar and was delayed over three hours, eventually arriving in Dublin sometime after midnight. The 18:30 to Sligo was cancelled at Mullingar and passengers taken by bus, arriving in Sligo between 23:20 and 00:50.



*Recovery of Craven No.1549 at Belview, July 1993.*

10/11/1993: Overnight single line working between Kildare and Portarlinton badly over-ran and was not cancelled until about 08:10 with consequent disruption to traffic. The worst affected passenger train was the 07:30 to Cork which was delayed 35 minutes. The Up Claremorris liner was 3½ hours late while the 05:00 Limerick/Athy cement was delayed almost 2½ hours.

14/11/1993: The 15:00 Dublin/Belfast, 127 + 192 + EGV + 7 Mk2, was delayed almost 40 minutes at Dundalk due to extended single line working between Dundalk (North) and Newry.

15/11/1993: The 07:16 ex Drogheda was cancelled at Laytown due to door detection problems and ran empty to Mosney loop. The 07:32 ex Drogheda was delayed 20 minutes as a result of this incident. Further delays were caused in the Howth Junction area due to track circuit failures and the necessity to change crew with the 06:57 ex Arklow at Raheny.

17/11/1993: The 16:52 ex Pearse to Drogheda, 173 + 4 Mk2a/b + DV, left Connolly 24 minutes late and chaotically overcrowded due to crew shortage. The 17:13 ex Pearse to Dundalk, 127 + 6 p/p 6103, followed a few minutes later with more than ample accommodation. No attempt was made to spread the load either by altering the stopping patterns or informing the waiting crowds of the imminence of a second service.

20/11/1993: The 13:25 Connolly/Sligo, 087 + EGV + 6 Mk2, failed at Dromod with a broken fuel pipe.

As there was no possibility of assistance for several hours, the passengers were taken by bus to Sligo. Likewise passengers ex Sligo were brought to Dromod by road. Meanwhile the engines off an Up Belfast liner train were requisitioned to work the 17:15 from Connolly to Mullingar, which was extended to Longford. This train returned, with a single engine, in the path of the 17:40 ex Sligo. The second engine went on to Dromod to work forward the continuation of the 17:40 ex Sligo - thus relieving 087 some four hours after it had failed. This illustrates the downside of 071 haulage in that there is no possibility of struggling on with a second engine in the event of a failure.

23/11/1993: A points failure at Howth meant that there was no southbound service ex Howth for almost twenty nine minutes after the departure of the 08:00. The 07:30 ex Bray was turned at Howth Junction reducing the gap there to eighteen minutes. There was thus much overcrowding as the service at this time of the morning runs alternately at ten and five minute intervals. The 08:10 ex Howth got into more difficulties, this time at Killester, due to problems with the automatic doors - thus causing a further delay of fifteen minutes. Incoming DART and outer suburban trains passed Fairview as follows: 08:37 (Ex Howth Junction), 08:40 (07:32 ex Drogheda), 09:04 (08:10 ex Howth), 09:08 (08:15 ex Howth), 09:12 (08:25 ex Howth), 09:15 (07:25 ex Dundalk), 09:20 (08:35 ex Howth), 09:24 (08:50 ex Howth) and 09:31 (09:00 ex Howth). These services, starting with the Drogheda train, were 4, 37, 36, 31, 18, 28, 17 and 14 minutes late respectively.

24/11/1993: The 05:50 Heuston/Cork mail train was halted just beyond Cherryville Junction having set off the hot box detector located at MP 31¼. Examination revealed a severe problem on 3187 and it was therefore decided not to move the train until a more detailed examination could be carried out. Single line working was therefore introduced between Cherryville and Portarlinton. Delays were as below:

07:30 Heuston/Cork	approx.	46 minutes
07:55 Heuston/Galway	approx.	16 minutes
08:30 Heuston/Westport	approx.	63 minutes
09:00 Heuston/Tralee	at least	60 minutes
07:00 ex Limerick	approx.	40 minutes
07:30 ex Waterford	approx.	27 minutes
07:35 ex Cork	approx.	114 minutes (see below)
08:00 ex Galway	approx.	96 minutes
08:30 ex Limerick	approx.	108 minutes
07:30 ex Tralee	approx.	70 minutes

The inordinate delay to the 07:35 ex Cork and subsequent trains was caused by the failure of the Cork train just beyond Hazelhatch at which stage it was running in or around 40 minutes late. The failed train was pushed to Inchicore by the following Galway service, at which point a fresh engine was provided to haul it into Heuston. Meanwhile the mail train left Cherryville around 09:06, at extreme caution, and was eventually shunted clear of the main line at 11:44. It later continued to Cork, having dumped 3187.

The method of operation at the Cherryville Junction end of the single line section was interesting in that Down trains were signalled onto the Waterford line and proceeded sufficiently far onto the branch so as to clear the Up Home signal (CY 189). The route was then made from this and the train propelled onto the Up road via the trailing crossover normally used by Up Waterford traffic.

25/11/1993: The 07:30 Dublin/Cork was delayed for the second morning in succession, this time due to a failure in the Cherryville/Portarlinton section. Arrival in Cork was 41 minutes behind schedule.

26/11/1993: The 05:53 Dundalk/Pearse train was badly delayed due to the failure, at Dundalk, of the rostered push/pull set which was apparently suffering from the effects of overnight frost. The first Up commuter service was thus about 36 minutes late. As there was one set short in Dundalk, the 08:07 was

cancelled between there and Balbriggan and passengers from Dundalk and Drogheda were brought directly to Dublin by road. The 08:06 Pearse to Drogheda was cancelled at Balbriggan and returned, more or less, in the path of the 08:07. The resuscitated push/pull eventually worked the 10:05 ex Drogheda, having followed the 08:00 ex Belfast from Dundalk. A bus was apparently provided from Laytown in the path of the 08:07, but was unable to accommodate all the passengers offering - thus leaving some behind for the 10:05 ex Drogheda.

1/12/1993: The 20:10 North Wall/Sligo liner train stalled near Glasnevin Junction around 22:00. The North Wall pilot was sent to help restart the train. The next problem was at Reilly's gates, where the crossing was found to be unattended - thus entailing a further delay while somebody was summoned, by taxi, to attend to the matter. The train later reported the loss of 14 kegs destined for Longford and Ballybofey.

3/12/1993: The 15:00 Bell liner ex North Wall failed at MP 8. A relief engine was sent from Inchicore to push the disabled train the remaining two miles to Hazelhatch. As a result the 16:45 to Cork was held at Inchicore until 17:15, the 17:00 to Ballina left Heuston at 17:17, the 17:15 to Waterford at 17:32 and the 17:30 to Cork at 17:39.

4/12/1993: A Bell liner failed south of Kilkenny resulting in the termination of the 17:15 Dublin to Waterford (auxiliary) at Kilkenny.

5/12/1993: DART services were disrupted by the failure of a northbound working at Booterstown caused by a faulty control handle in the leading cab. There was a considerable gap in the northbound service and the usual dearth of public address announcements - probably the most consistent and long-running complaint about DART.

Also on the same day, the 17:07 ex Drogheda failed at Donabate and delayed the following 17:48 and 18:16 ex Drogheda as well as the 17:00 from Belfast. There was thus no set for the 18:27 Pearse/Dundalk and intending passengers were obliged to travel on the 19:15 ex Connolly which ran about 40 minutes behind schedule, due to the general disruption caused by the two incidents mentioned.

Due to an isolation affecting the Up road between Howth and Howth Junction, services were suspended on the branch for almost an hour with no trains leaving Howth after about 20:10. The isolation was required to facilitate emergency OHLE repairs.

Due to the failure of the 83.33 Hz supply to the signalling interlocking at Bray, which occurred around 23:05, all signals south of Dalkey were either extinguished or placed at danger. All traffic was thus suspended until the resumption of normal working at 00:02 the next morning by which time the 22:25, 22:40 and 22:55 ex Howth were standing one behind the other at Dalkey, Glengageary and Sandycove. These three trains were thus 49, 36 and 23 minutes late respectively.

8/12/1993: There was considerable disruption throughout the country due to the high winds and heavy rain which became progressively more severe from early afternoon onwards. The 15:00 to Belfast did not reach its destination until after 18:00 due to block failures between Dundalk and Drogheda.

(Incredibly, irrespective of whether the line is clear or not and regardless of the availability of alternative communications all trains are required to proceed at 15 mph in such circumstances. This rule, enforced only in the past few years, and applicable to sections of line controlled from cabins south of the border has made a laughing stock of Dublin/Belfast services time and again. On one celebrated occasion, last February, long after the storm which caused the damage was over, a train was required to run at 15 mph from Balbriggan to Newry - a distance of 47½ miles. While the same rule was applied to single track sections for a time, it caused such total and absolute chaos that it now applies only to the first train over the section after which normal speed operation is resumed regardless of the condition of

the block circuit.)

The 18:00 ex Belfast left around 18:22 and arrived in Dublin at 21:04 - over an hour late.

The 18:30 to Sligo made a delayed departure from Dublin but ran more or less normally as far as Boyle (depart 21:56), at which point it was cautioned due to block failure in the 27¾ mile Boyle/Sligo section. The train subsequently stopped between Boyle and Kilfree Junction due to a fallen tree which was removed by the crew. Restarting the 071 class hauled train on the severe gradient proved difficult, given ideal conditions for slipping, with the result that Ballymote was not reached until 23:25 and Sligo at 00:45 - exactly 3 hours late.

The 17:30 ex Cork was one of the worst affected, being delayed by a failure in the Charleville area in addition to storm related delays. This train is also understood to have been held at Limerick Junction to pick up passengers re-routed via Shannon due to the closure of Dublin airport. It arrived in Heuston with close to 400 passengers at 23:25, not too far in front of the 19:00 ex Cork which arrived around 23:50.

Other trains delayed more than an hour included the 14:45 ex Cork, 14:20 ex Tralee, 18:55 to Cork, 18:30 to Rosslare, 18:05 to Westport, 18:25 ex Waterford and 14:55 to Cork. Because of the delay to the 19:00 ex Cork, the 17:35 ex Tralee ran through to Dublin arriving shortly after the 17:30 ex Cork. The 18:30 to Tralee was cancelled at Rathmore due to the failure of the 18:25 Liner ex Tralee. Passengers for Tralee eventually arrived by bus at 01:20 - over 3 hours late. A special is understood to have operated from Limerick to Dublin at 01:05 the following morning arriving in Dublin around 03:20.

10/12/1993: Northside outer suburban services severely delayed this morning by block failure regulations – the aftermath of previous day's storm damage to signal telegraph. 07:25 ex Dundalk had only reached Drogheda, 22 miles away, at 08:34. Trains originating in Drogheda had to contend with a 15 mph block failure restriction between Malahide and Rush - a distance of 5 miles.

The 17:45 Heuston/Tralee, running almost 40 minutes late, was cancelled at Mallow with passengers being transferred to the closely following 18:30 Heuston/Tralee. This latter would have been badly blocked otherwise due to the relatively long block sections on the branch.

11/12/1993: Due to the stalling of a cement train across Glasnevin Junction, the 09:07 Connolly to Maynooth was delayed for about 40 minutes while the obstruction was restarted with assistance from the rear. Meanwhile the 08:45 special ex Longford followed the 07:45 ex Sligo from Killucan due to a confused crew change which left the special with a driver but no guard. The 11:30 ex Maynooth was luckier than the 09:07, it was routed via Newcomen Junction after the 10:30 ex North Wall to Waterford Bell liner stalled across North Strand Junction. The 08:40 Dublin/Sligo did not reach its destination until 13:00 - one hour late - due to the failure of the ETS circuit between Boyle and Sligo.

15/12/1993: The Irish Rail operated 07:55 Dublin/Belfast service terminated at Dundalk as the driver refused to continue without an operating NIR radio - as required by regulation. The passengers were taken forward by bus, although at least one first class passenger is understood to have hired a taxi and sent the bill to Irish Rail.

19/12/1993: The 09:50 Heuston/Waterford terminated at Kilkenny due to the failure of tamper south of there. Passengers were brought by bus to Waterford. The 14:30 ex Waterford was formed by the set of Monday's 06:00 Earlybird service and ran to Kilkenny only, at which point passengers were required to change trains.

1/1/1994: A man was killed by a DART train on the city side of Kilbarrack station around 23:30.

3/1/1994: The 12:00 Auxiliary ex Limerick was failed at Kildare as the locomotive, 183, was unable to create more than 14" of vacuum in the train braking system. Relief engines left Inchicore at 14:45 and

brought the train forward to Dublin arriving around 15:45 - eighty minutes behind schedule.

4/1/1994: DART services were severely disrupted when an EMU tripped power to the northbound road, from Blackrock to Sandymount, shortly after 17:00. It is not clear whether the overhead wires were damaged although it is understood that the pantograph disengaged from the contact wire. Reversible working was introduced, initially between Lansdowne Road and Dun Laoghaire, pending manual operation of disconnects near Booterstown which allowed the Merrion to Sandymount section to be re-energised. There were still up to 3 trains stranded without power, North of Dun Laoghaire, as of 20:20, although by this time reversible working was confined to the Merrion/Dun Laoghaire section.

6/1/1994: The 07:16 ex Drogheda was terminated at Laytown and ran empty to Mosney loop due to frozen air lines. Snow started falling in the Dublin area shortly before 09:00 and within about 30 minutes was being compacted in the points at Howth Junction, causing the loss of points detection. The 08:07 ex Dundalk and 08:00 ex Belfast were thus blocked outside Howth Junction and were delayed 33 and 19 minutes respectively. Problems with snow blocked points at Howth meant a gap in Southbound DARTs of about an hour, between 09:45 and 10:45 approximately. There were also points failures at East Wall Junction, Connolly, Tara Street and North Strand Junction during this period - though traffic gradually returned to normal from 11:00 onwards as the snow had ceased falling by then. Given that only a small number of staff were available to clear points the disruption on this occasion was much less than might have been expected - a credit to those actually out wielding the brushes.

9/1/1994: Due to the failure of a PW machine on the Up road between Charleville and Limerick Junction, this section remained under possession for almost an hour beyond schedule. The 14:15 and 14:30 ex Cork as well as the 13:40 ex Tralee were thus delayed approximately 40, 30 and 10 minutes respectively.

The 20:10 Heuston/Galway, 184/182 + 10 bogies (including TPO), failed between Inchicore and Hazelhatch due to continual tripping of a protective earth relay on 184. The train was pushed to Hazelhatch loop but the exchange of locomotives was complicated by heavy traffic on the Up road. The 21:15 to Cork was held in Heuston until 21:50 awaiting a clear road.

10/1/1994: Problems with the supervisory computers monitoring the mainline CTC area resulted in considerable disruption to evening services to and from Heuston. Amongst the trains affected was the 17:00 Heuston/Athlone which was almost 30 minutes late as a result.

A man was killed at Skerries when struck by a train sometime after 16:30.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Various changes in staff work practices are proposed by Irish Rail in a document presented to the Trade Unions and published in November. Locomotive drivers would be paid an additional 16%, in respect of actual hours worked, on one person operated freight and empty passenger trains. For one person operation of passenger trains (railcars and push/pulls) the additional payment would be 20.5%, the same as DART, and as in the case of freight and empty carriage working, would apply to the actual hours worked. Also proposed is the buy-out of mileage payments, existing drivers have the option of receiving a flat rate allowance based on 1992 payments or receiving a lump sum payment equivalent to 2½ years mileage earnings. Mileage payments would not apply to new recruits to the locomotive grade, but they would benefit from a gradual increase in basic pay as mileage payments were gradually phased out. A general increase of 3% plus £4.85 is proposed to cover a range of productivity issues including the use of mobile phones - the latter providing a relatively cheap means of communication with trains outside the normal radio coverage area and potentially invaluable in a breakdown or other emergency.



- Irish Rail advertised four new management positions in mid-December. The new posts, reporting to the Managing Director, are titled Transportation Director, Engineering Director, Chief Finance Officer and Director Road Freight and are intended to strengthen the senior management team at a time of increased awareness of, and investment in, the Irish railway system.
- Hanna Moran, aged 81, ceased selling sweets and fruits from her pram under the portico of Heuston Station last August following a High Court order obtained by CIÉ. Hanna wheeled her pram from her home on the Quays to Heuston Station each day via Smithfield Market and had been trading at the same spot since 1925 - a total of 68 years. Hanna was quoted in the Irish Times some weeks later, "Why couldn't they have left me for the short time I had to go? If they saw the friends I saw at that railway - maybe they would understand. I can't stick the loneliness now."
- Following a spate of complaints about missed connections involving inter-station transfer between Dublin's Heuston and Connolly stations, Irish Rail have decreed that the minimum connecting time between services arriving at one station and departing from the other is one hour. This is to allow for delays to incoming trains and transfer time between the two stations. For instance the 08:00 ex Belfast, due in Connolly at 10:00, no longer officially connects with the 10:45 Heuston to Cork. (The next train for Cork leaves at 13:20.) Incidentally Heuston and Connolly are a little under 2¼ miles apart and the new official connecting time emphasises just how pathetically inadequate the (bus) link between the two actually is. The journey time by taxi, if available, generally takes between 7 and 20 minutes depending on traffic.
- It is reported that Irish Rail intend moving their freight operation in Dundalk from Barrack Street to the former INWR yard at Dundalk Junction - we will carry further details in the next issue.
- A number of mail bags were discovered alongside the line, close to the Devlin viaduct at Gormanston by a liner train on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. It appears that raiders had thrown these from the earlier 22:00 Dublin/Dundalk passenger/mail, though it was not clear what, if anything, was actually stolen.
- Dredging of the Royal Canal in the vicinity of Newcomen Junction was near completion by the middle of January. The lifting bridge at the foot of the Newcomen branch, which was removed many years ago and replaced by a culvert, is to be restored thus making the canal navigable again at this point.
- An Army bomb disposal unit carried out a controlled explosion on a grenade found in Dublin (Connolly) on 27<sup>th</sup> December. The grenade was discovered in a plastic bag by a station employee around 18:30 - it was found to be harmless.
- An 071 class locomotive worked the 22:00 Connolly/Dundalk mails on both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November - it is still very unusual for these engines to be rostered on a suburban link.
- CIÉ Consult has been awarded contracts in Pakistan and Lithuania worth US\$1 million. These contracts, funded by the EC and the world bank, will involve a restructuring of Lithuania Railways and a study of cargo-handling facilities at Karachi port. Under a contract with Eurotunnel a number of Irish Rail staff have been seconded to that organisation to help draw up operational and safety rules for the Channel Tunnel. In addition three recently retired Irish Rail locomotive inspectors have been retained to provide training instruction in the operation of the Shuttle trains - a recognition of the excellent work done in introducing DART and in absorbing the large number of new diesel drivers appointed in recent years.
- At 08:48 on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November, there was a queue of at least 30 people at the booking office in Carlow just as the 07:30 ex Waterford was arriving. The Up train was still waiting as the 07:35 Heuston/Waterford departed five minutes later - yet another instance of the Crouzet system

delaying traffic.

- The smaller of the two gantry cranes at the former Bell yard at Abbey Junction has been removed. The rail sidings are as yet unaltered. The two Morris built 48 tonne gantries and four berths at Belview were fully operational by the end of December.
- Lisney, the auctioneers, estate agents and valuers, have announced that they have agreed terms on behalf of CIÉ for a night club and restaurant licence at Tara Street station.
- Trinity College is to build a block of student accommodation on a derelict site adjacent to Pearse Station, at the junction between Pearse Street and Westland Row. The  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre site is believed to have been sold by CIÉ for £600,000. The ground floor of some 6,000 ft<sup>2</sup> will be laid out for retail use and will revert to CIÉ who will be free to either sell or rent it as appropriate.

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## Northern Ireland Railways

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### Cross Harbour Link - Position As Of Early January

This project has proceeded rapidly in recent months, so much so that the contractors expect to hand the finished works to NIR two months ahead of schedule at the end of January, by which stage track laying can commence.



*Dock Street overbridge, taken from Yorkgate station, 11/12/1993. (W. Watson)*

A hand-drawn map of the Belfast Lagan Canal area. The map shows the Lagan River (R. LAGAN) flowing from the bottom towards the top. A proposed rail route is indicated by a line with cross-ticks. Key locations and features include:

- Top Left:** "HARBOUR VIA BLEACH (GREEN JUNCTION)" and "ERRY".
- Top Center:** "York Rd." and "YORKGATE (1992)".
- Left Side:** "Donegal Quay (Loop only, Station Later)".
- Center:** "Central Services Depot" with an arrow pointing right towards "TO BANGOR".
- Right Side:** "BRIDGEND (1977)" and "LAGAN Junction".
- Bottom Center:** "BELFAST CENTRAL (1976)".
- Bottom Left:** "NIC)".

The single span steel bridge carrying the new line over Middlepath Street had been erected by mid-November while one of the two steel spans at Dock Street were placed in position by mid-December.

The second span of the latter had been erected and the bridge decking almost completed by 22<sup>nd</sup> January, at which stage the short approach embankment at the Yorkgate end remained to be finished.

Irish Rail locomotive 184 worked a train of steel coil, from Larne Harbour to Adelaide yard, on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December. The train, which consisted of five bogie wagons, was routed via Yorkgate and Antrim. This movement is believed to have been a trial in connection with a possible contract for the conveyance of steel, via the Cross Harbour link, to points in the Republic of Ireland.

### **Dublin/Belfast Project**

Relaying of the Down Belfast line with concrete sleepers and CWR had advanced to just beyond MP 63½ by the middle of December with rails in place as far as MP 65¼ - the point from which a 9½ mile stretch of CWR was installed some fifteen years ago. Preparations for relaying of the Down line from MP 78½ northwards have commenced with 20 metre rail lengths in place, awaiting welding.

### **York Road**

Work is continuing on the new three-road maintenance facility on the site of the former York Road station. Each road will be capable of accommodating eight coaches. The main works roof has been renewed and further track alterations, in the yard, now allow DEMUs to run directly from Yorkgate station to the fuelling plant. Foundations are in place for a new wash plant on the Down side at the Milewater footbridge.

### **Great Victoria Street**

Preparatory work on this project has now commenced. It is understood that the direct curve from City Junction to Westlink Junction will not now be in tunnel as had originally been expected.

### **Bleach Green to Antrim**

A castle class DEMU, No.453, worked an inspection train over this section on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Included amongst the group on board was the Northern Ireland Economy and Environment Minister, Mr Robert Atkins. NIR are awaiting Government approval for the upgrading and modernisation of this section as detailed in the last issue.

### **Fares Promotion**

NIR have been offering bargain fares for internal standard class travel after 18:30 on Mondays to Fridays and all day Saturdays and Sundays. The Go As You Please unlimited travel tickets cost £1 (Monday-Friday) and £2 on Saturdays. During the Christmas holiday period and up to 31<sup>st</sup> December internal travel on NIR was free after 18:30, being sponsored by Guinness, the Department of the Environment and NIR itself.

### **Locomotives and Rolling Stock**

It is understood that NIR have ordered two locomotives from General Motors for use in the Dublin/Belfast Express pool. These will be identical to the pair ordered by Irish Rail for the same purpose - i.e. 3,300 hp Co-Cos weighing approximately 108 tons and fitted for push/pull operation. The cost is understood to be of the order of £3.8 million.

GM 112 has been out of traffic since at least 30<sup>th</sup> November, pending overhaul at York Road.

GM 113 re-entered traffic on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December after an absence of no less than six months during the course of which the bogies were extensively refurbished and fitted with yaw dampers. As detailed elsewhere the first two weeks back in traffic were anything but inspiring, although the locomotive appears to be performing satisfactorily at the time of writing in mid-January.

DL 102 was used on the Portadown based relaying train from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November, working into Dundalk on each date. The locomotive returned to CSD every night as few Portadown drivers are passed to work this class. The same engine ran from CSD to York Rd on 10<sup>th</sup> November to substitute for 105 on CE Department duties. It powered the GN relay train on 26<sup>th</sup> November and was back on similar duties a few days later, being observed in Dundalk working a ballast train on 29<sup>th</sup> November. Unfortunately it failed on this occasion due to a broken fuel pipe and was returned dead to Belfast as part of a goods train.

DL 102 worked an empty carriage train from CSD to York Road on 6<sup>th</sup> November. The train consisted of 901, 934 and 547 and ran via Ballymena to pick up MV 105 which had been the victim of an engine-room fire while on overnight CE duty at Killagan. The MV was attached to the rear of the train between Ballymena and York Road.

Motor coach No.69, together with trailers 743 and 767 were released from York Road on 16<sup>th</sup> December, following overhaul.

Motor coach No.83, badly damaged by a terrorist explosion and subsequent fire in August 1992, has been returned to NIR from Derby works following extensive repairs. It was hauled from Larne Harbour to York Road by 102 on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Motor coach No.85 suffered fire damage at Portadown on 21<sup>st</sup> November and was out of traffic for eight days during which repairs were carried out at York Road.

Motor coach No.89, allocated to the Portrush branch, was failed at Coleraine on 16<sup>th</sup> November due to a wheelset defect. The vehicle was worked to York Road the following day and returned to traffic on 22<sup>nd</sup> November working Yorkgate/Larne services.

Motor coach No.95, out of service since September 1992, entered the works for overhaul towards the end of November.

Brake standard 915 has been refurbished and fitted out with 16 first class seats. It returned to traffic on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

The gradual refurbishment of the Eighty class fleet continues; up to 17<sup>th</sup> December trailers 739, 761, 762, 764, 765, 766, 768, 769, 771, 778, 779 and 780 had visited York Road for attention to the toilet cubicles.

### **Equipment Exchanges**

IR locomotives worked the NIR semi-fast Dublin services from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December. 154 worked the link until 1<sup>st</sup> December, but having run a hot engine on the 17:00 ex Belfast was replaced by 084 which worked the 20:15 to Belfast, as well as the 07:00 ex Belfast, 08:00 ex Portadown and 09:00 ex Belfast the following day. 155 then worked the 13:00 ex Dublin until replaced by 150+189 on the same train the following day. On Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 150 failed leaving 189 to soldier on.

IR again provided motive power for the semi-fast Dublin links from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December due to continuing problems with 113. The latter double-headed the 18:50 liner ex Adelaide with 127 on the 16<sup>th</sup>, en route to Inchicore, where some tests were carried out the following day after which 113 returned to Belfast working the 20:15 ex Dublin. Due yet again to problems with 113, IR 172+135



worked the 18:20 to Belfast on 21<sup>st</sup> December returning, on time, the following morning with the 08:00 ex Belfast.

NIR 111 is understood to have replaced IR 039 at Belfast (Central) on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January prior to working the 18:00 departure.

## **Traffic**

There has been a notable upsurge in traffic over the last few months necessitating the introduction of several relief trains as follows: 14:50 Belfast to Newry (Friday only) serving Botanic and Portadown only. 16:55 Belfast to Newry (Friday only) serving Botanic, Lurgan and Portadown only. 17:55 Dublin to Belfast (Sundays) serving Newry, Portadown, Lurgan, Lisburn and Botanic.

The first two trains have been running since early November as reliefs to the 15:00 and 17:00 Belfast/Dublin services, while the third has been in operation since 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and was incorporated into the public timetable with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> January.

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November was a busy day with specials out of Belfast for Dublin at 08:10 and 09:30 returning at 17:45 and 18:30. The latter two trains were observed at Dundalk and are included in the table below.

17:13 ex Dublin (Pearse)	153+3Cr+GSV	arr 18:41	(+3)	50/55 off
17:45 ex Dublin (Connolly)	84+4+87	pass 18:53	(+6)	250
18:20 ex Dublin (Connolly)	112+10Mk2	pass 19:19	(-6)	370
18:30 ex Dublin (Connolly)	90+4+93+86+3+81	pass 19:41	(-8)	550
18:27 ex Dublin (Pearse)	131+4p p/p 6104	arr 20:04	(-1)	65/70 off
20:10 Dundalk/Bangor	2+455	dep 20:15	(-5)	35

The 18:20 and 18:30 were delayed by the now notorious 17:42 ex Pearse to Drogheda (six-piece push/pull), which was overtaken at Mosney by the 18:20 and followed from there to Drogheda by the 18:30. The slightly delayed departure of the 20:10 ex Dundalk can be attributed to the de-manning of the North Cabin which makes for some extremely convoluted operations in the station area. The 08:05 ex Londonderry, 84+4+87, was observed leaving Ballymena at 09:27 with over 300 passengers. The 09:20 ex Portrush, 2+457, had about 170 passengers leaving Ballymoney at 09:49, and was preceded from Ballymena by an auxiliary formed by 1+89. This set had earlier run empty from York Road.

The 08:10 ex Belfast and 18:30 ex Dublin auxiliaries also ran on the following two Saturdays, to cater for pre-Christmas shopping traffic, and were formed by 67+4+84 on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 67+2 on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

On 18<sup>th</sup> December, in order to cater for increased loadings, many sets were made up to five or six piece formations including most Londonderry line links. The 08:05 ex Londonderry on this date was formed by a nine-piece set, including motor coaches 92, 82 and 87.

## **Signalling, Layouts And Level Crossings**

The new loop track at Killagan was in place by 26<sup>th</sup> November although neither of the turnouts had been installed up to that date. Preliminary work in connection with the new Ballykelly loop, including the placing of signal bases, was evident immediately west of the former Limavady Junction station on the same date.

The relay room at Crumlin, on the Lisburn/Antrim branch, was damaged by a malicious fire which had been started in a store room at the Belfast end of the station building on the night of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> November. The fire spread through the roof space, over the passenger waiting area, and resulted in

smoke and water damage to the signalling equipment which is housed at the Antrim end of the building. The loop and signalling at Crumlin was thus rendered unusable and pilot working had to be introduced between Ballinderry and Antrim pending the resumption of normal working on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

The north spoil siding and run-round road at Magheramorne have been removed, leaving only the mainline and running loop at this Larne line location.

## **Incidents**

Frozen brakes, on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, caused the failure of both the 06:03 and 06:30 departures from Coleraine to Bangor and Portrush respectively. The 07:00 Portadown to Newry, motor coach 97, was failed at Poyntzpass on this date, also for the same reason.

26<sup>th</sup> November was an operational nightmare for NIR due to a combination of factors, not all of which were under the company's control. The 09:00 ex Belfast left Portadown for Dublin at 09:52, 15 minutes late, due to the failure of a preceding train (81+2) near Lisburn. There was thus no set for the 09:55 ex Portadown, eventually formed by 86+1, which arrived empty at 10:02. The 10:05 Belfast/Portrush, 68+4+91, was in turn, held at Lisburn until 10:28 and thus delayed the 09:40 ex Londonderry at Magherabeg for about five minutes. Due to heavy traffic on the branch, the 12:15 ex Portrush was extended through to Belfast and as a result the 11:55 ex Londonderry terminated at Coleraine. Late running of the 11:25 ex Belfast (87+4+84) caused the 12:15 to be 11 minutes late leaving Ballymoney. Little improvement was possible between there and Lisburn due to pilot working between Antrim and Ballinderry. The 12:55 Belfast/Ballymena, 97+2, was crossed at latter instead of Crumlin and was thus delayed 36 minutes in total.

The well-filled 13:50 Belfast to Londonderry, 93+4+90, got away from Lisburn two minutes late at 14:07 but due to a contactor fault with motor coach 93 terminated at Ballymoney and exchanged passengers with the Up 14:40 ex Londonderry. The continuation of the latter - the 13:50 set - made very slow progress from Ballymoney and eventually arrived in Lisburn 44 minutes late at 17:24. Due to the ongoing signalling problems on the Antrim branch the 16:05 ex Belfast, 91+4+68, was unable to proceed to Crumlin and was held at Ballinderry for almost forty minutes. Meanwhile on the Dublin line the 14:50 Belfast/Newry (2+98) passed Lisburn at 15:04 well ahead of the 15:00 to Dublin (111+10 Mk2) and the 15:10 liner ex Adelaide (149 + 6 bogies + 14 four-wheelers). These latter trains passed Lisburn 26 and 19 minutes late respectively at 15:37 and 15:43. The 14:50 ex Belfast returned (empty) from Newry and formed the 16:55 Belfast/Newry passing Lisburn as scheduled at 17:09.

In order to accommodate passengers for Newry off the delayed 14:40 ex Londonderry, the 16:55 Bangor to Poyntzpass, 97+2, was extended the extra few miles although passengers for points further south would have to wait for the 17:37 Bangor to Dundalk. As there was no set for the 17:30 Belfast/Portrush, the 17:00 Bangor/Portadown, 457+2, ran to Portrush while the 17:15 Bangor/Lisburn, 2+92, was extended to Portadown thus entailing a delay of 16 and 30 minutes respectively. The 14:40 set, which normally works the 17:30 Portrush, split at Belfast Central, the front portion continuing to CSD while the rear set ran empty to form the 18:20 Lisburn/Bangor which should have been formed by 92+2 above.

The next problem arose from a loud unidentified explosion in South Armagh which resulted in the precautionary closure of the Dundalk/Newry section at 17:50. As a result the 17:00 ex Belfast (112 + 6 Mk2) terminated at Newry, the 18:00 ex Belfast (074 + 6 Mk2 + EGV) at Portadown and the 18:20 ex Dublin at Dundalk. There were thus 250 passengers stranded at Newry, 200 at Portadown and 300 at Dundalk. Buses were produced fairly quickly at Dundalk and passengers off the Down train got away from Newry in two portions at 20:27 (112 + 6 Mk2) and 20:54 (86+1). The same buses returned to

Dundalk with passengers off both the 17:00 ex Belfast and the 17:37 ex Bangor (1+86) and connected with a special train which left Dundalk some time after 20:30, over two hours late. Passengers off the 18:00 ex Belfast were similarly delayed, being eventually brought by road from Portadown to Dundalk, in order to connect with the 21:05 departure to Dublin, due to arrive at 22:06. The 18:50 liner ex Adelaide was cancelled before departure.

Finally the 18:45 Bangor to Newry, 2+96, was held at Lisburn to take connection off the 17:00 ex Londonderry, which in turn had been blocked for at least twenty minutes at Ballymoney awaiting the delayed 16:05 ex Belfast. A further delay at Poyntzpass, caused by congestion at Newry, resulted in a final arrival there at 20:28, 17 minutes behind schedule. This set returned in due course as the continuation of the 20:15 ex Dublin.

The Newry/Dundalk section reopened around 09:20 on the following day. The 07:55 ex Dublin was thus delayed about 40 minutes, while the 08:00 and 08:10 ex Belfast were each at least half an hour late arriving in Dublin. As indicated in the table below, sets were somewhat mixed up and did not return to their intended links until later in the day.

Down Trains			Up Trains		
Set	Service	Formation	Set	Service	Formation
1 ×	07:55 ex Dublin	111 + 10 Mk2	3 ×	08:00 ex Belfast	91+4+68
2 ×	11:20 ex Dublin	112 + 6 Mk2	2 ×	08:10 ex Belfast	112 + 6 Mk2
3 ×	13:00 ex Dublin	68+4+91	4 ×	09:00 ex Belfast	074 + 6 Mk2 + EGV
4 ✓	15:00 ex Dublin	074 + EGV + 6 Mk2	6 ✓	09:30 ex Belfast	81+3+86+93+4+90
5 ×	17:45 ex Dublin	84+4+87	5 ×	11:00 ex Belfast	87+4+84
1 ✓	18:20 ex Dublin	112 + 10 Mk2	1 ✓	15:00 ex Belfast	112 + 10 Mk2
6 ✓	18:30 ex Dublin	90+4+93+86+3+81	2 ✓	17:00 ex Belfast	111 + 6 Mk2
2 ✓	20:15 ex Dublin	111 + 6 Mk2	4 ✓	18:00 ex Belfast	074 + 6 Mk2 + EGV

***Dublin/Belfast/Dublin - Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 1993.***

Notes: × indicates wrong set.

✓ indicates correct set.

Set 5 worked the 08:05 ex Londonderry.

There were problems on the ex-NCC section on 27<sup>th</sup> November as well. The 11:05 ex Londonderry did not leave until 11:23 due to brake problems with the leading set, 98+2. The remainder of the train, 2+97, ran to Coleraine where it arrived at 12:03 - still 18 minutes late. At this stage, 94+2, were attached prior to departing at 12:11, but due to poor performance another 20 minutes was lost to Botanic, which was reached at 14:00, some 44 minutes behind schedule. Due to the long section north of Ballymena and the temporary arrangements on the Antrim branch Down trains were severely affected by this out of course working. The 11:30 ex Belfast was held at Ballymena for 30 minutes awaiting the delayed Up service, while the 12:20 ex Bangor departed Lisburn for Ballymena at 13:44, 24 minutes late. The new loop at Killagan should ease the operational problems experienced on this and the previous date, although an improvement in the mechanical reliability of the Eighty class is clearly essential as well.

113 failed on 11<sup>th</sup> December just north of Newry on the Craigmore viaduct, while working the 20:15 ex Dublin. The failed engine and its nine coaches were eventually hauled to Portadown by a railcar set, 96+2, which then continued to Bangor leaving Portadown at 00:55 - almost three hours late.

113 again failed on 13<sup>th</sup> December, this time at Poyntzpass, while working the 17:00 Belfast to Dublin service. 87+2 completed the trip and returned with the 20:15 ex Dublin.

The 18:20 Dublin/Belfast was delayed in Dublin until 19:02 on 21<sup>st</sup> December awaiting substitute power for 113 which had to be taken off the train (see Equipment Exchanges for more detail).

### **Timetable Changes**

Consequent to the alterations on the Dublin/Belfast line, mentioned elsewhere, the 20:00 ex Portadown, 21:25 ex Bangor and 22:30 ex Lisburn are deferred 10, 8 and 3 minutes respectively on weekdays. The 13:10 Portadown/Bangor on Saturdays now departs at 13:15 while the Sunday-only 19:55 Newry/Bangor, has been deferred to 20:00. Additionally the Monday-Friday 20:35 Portadown/Bangor and 22:05 ex Bangor/Belfast have been cancelled.

### **Terrorist Activity**

The Dublin/Belfast line was closed between City Hospital and Belfast (Central) for about three hours on 18<sup>th</sup> November due to the presence of a number of beer kegs adjacent to the line. These were declared to be harmless in due course. The 07:55 ex Dublin terminated at City Hospital, but due to demonstrations for Peace in the City it proved difficult to arrange substitute buses and many passengers reportedly completed the journey on foot. The 11:00 ex Belfast was about an hour late arriving in Dublin.

As mentioned elsewhere the Dundalk/Newry section was closed from 17:50 on 26<sup>th</sup> November to 09:20 the following morning, due to fears that there might have been an explosion on or near the railway in South Armagh.

A bomb scare in the Botanic/Belfast (Central) area disrupted services for about an hour and a half on 14<sup>th</sup> January. The 15:00 Dublin/Belfast terminated at Lisburn, as there are no convenient run-round facilities between there and Belfast (Central). This set, 076 + 6 Mk2 + EGV, returned from Lisburn as the 17:00 ex Belfast arriving in Dublin at 19:51 - 28 minutes behind schedule. The line was reopened in time for the 18:00 ex Belfast, 111 + 8 Mk2, which departed to time. This train was blocked at Newry and Dundalk, due to the long block sections which currently apply when both Dundalk (North) and Dunleer are switched out. It nonetheless managed to arrive in Dublin at 20:11 - 9 minutes behind the current schedule.

### **Miscellaneous**

- There have been some calls for the provision of a rail connection into the new £22 million port development at Lisahally. Although this development is located within yards of the Belfast/Londonderry mainline, it seems unlikely that such a connection will be provided unless some specific traffic flow emerges.
- The refurbished station at Whitehead was re-dedicated on 1<sup>st</sup> December following the completion of an extensive program of reconstruction and renewal costing £360,000. The project was a joint venture between NIR and its holding company and was 68% grant aided by the European Regional Development Fund. A commemorative plaque was unveiled in the waiting room on the Up side by Mr Ian Doherty, chairman of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company.
- The passenger waiting facilities on the Up platform at Lisburn have been refurbished, while a new heated waiting room has been opened on the Down side. A determined effort is being made to announce all trains at Lisburn in a timely, clear, informative and professional manner. (Irish Rail could learn from a visit here!)

- The 20:10 Dundalk/Bangor, 86+3+85, was observed at Dundalk on 11<sup>th</sup> December replete with Christmas decorations hanging from the luggage racks and internal partitions - presumably part of a pre-Christmas promotion of rail travel on NIR local services.
- A British soldier was killed when struck by a train just outside Londonderry on 8<sup>th</sup> December. He was apparently crossing the line en-route to a river launch.
- A number of soldiers were injured by an explosion on or adjacent to the railway property just outside Londonderry at 21:50 on 14<sup>th</sup> December.
- A man was seriously injured when struck by a train at Cultra on 13<sup>th</sup> January.
- The NIR system closed down completely on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> December as well as 1<sup>st</sup> January. A limited service operated on 27<sup>th</sup> December from 11:00 until around 19:00. Saturday services, with some additions, ran on 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. Regular services recommenced on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. Irish Rail ran services between Dublin and Dundalk on 1<sup>st</sup> January to an amended Sunday schedule.



*MRSI special of NIR railcars 98+1+85 at Howth on 9/10/1993. (W. Watson)*

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## Private Railways and Museums

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### Tralee & Dingle Railway

The Tralee & Dingle Railway project has been selected as the Regional winner of the FAS Community Initiative "Economic Benefit" award which was presented by Mary O'Rourke, Minister for Labour Affairs. The line which runs from a new station at Ballyard, on the outskirts of Tralee, to Blennerville -



a distance of about 1½ miles - reportedly carried 35,000 passengers from April to September 1993. Motive power is provided by ex-Tralee and Dingle locomotive No.5T, a 2-6-2T built by Hunslet in 1892. Future plans include the construction a station house at Ballyard, the purchase of an additional steam locomotive and restoration of two further carriages. Apart from the initial quarter of a mile or thereabouts at the Tralee end, the line follows the formation of the original Tralee and Dingle Railway and appears destined to become a major tourist attraction.

### **South Donegal Railway Restoration Society**

The body of ex-CDR 4-wheel trailer No.5, built in 1929, has been recovered from a farm near the village of Doochary and moved to a site near Donegal town for restoration. FAS Social Employment Scheme workers who are currently completing renewals on ex-CDR bogie passenger van No.28, built in 1893, will also work on No.5.

### **Cavan & Leitrim Railway**

Work has commenced at Dromod to rebuild part of the old 3ft gauge line that linked the MGWR with the GNR(I) at Belturbet via Ballinamore. The initial plan is to rebuild half a mile of line to the first road crossing at Clooncolry, and in the long term an extension to Mohill (MP 5¾) is a distinct possibility. The project has been awarded a 75% grant under an EU program for border counties known as INTERREG although major fundraising will still be necessary.

The Cavan & Leitrim Railway Company Limited was re-incorporated on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1993 to be the property holding and operating body for the project. A Cavan & Leitrim Railway Supporters Association has also been established to raise funds and recruit volunteer labour to help rebuild and operate the railway. Currently there are three full-time staff working at Dromod, and this is expected to increase during 1994 with the commencement of a FAS/SES scheme. The first quarter mile of trackbed has been cleared and ballasted in readiness for tracklaying. The narrow gauge yard has been cleared, and the loco shed and water tower refurbished. 23<sup>rd</sup> December saw the return of the former Cavan & Leitrim station house to railway ownership, and it will be refurbished for office, waiting room and staff accommodation. Visitors to the site are welcome 7 days a week at all reasonable hours. Photographs and mementoes of the line are urgently required, as are financial and physical support. Send SAE to The Secretary, Cavan & Leitrim Railway Supporters Association, Station Road, Dromod, Co Leitrim for more details.

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## **“Freight on the Move” - by Barry Carse**

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### **Cement**

Production of cement started in 1938 with the opening of the Boyne Road plant at Drogheda, which was served by a 1¼ mile long branch, built by the GNR, and trailing into the Up Belfast line at MP 32½. Almost twenty years later, in October 1957, CIÉ constructed and opened a 3 mile branch from the North Kerry line to the Limerick plant at Castlemungret. In 1972 another factory commenced operations at Platin which is on the freight only branch from Drogheda to Kingscourt. During the early 1960s research indicated that new methods of handling and storage would be required, and this resulted in the introduction of bulk cement wagons and the opening of a silo at Cabra in 1965. The Boyne Road plant remained in production for some years after Platin opened, but became redundant when the latter reached full production with the completion of a second kiln and associated work towards the end of

the 1970s. The Boyne Road branch continued to be used for oil transfers to Platin well into the 1980s but was mothballed when the latter was converted to coal burning operation.

The silos at Cabra have storage capacity for two thousand tons. The wagons are discharged by compressed air. Four bulk cement wagons can be discharged simultaneously - 84 tons in thirty minutes. A twenty-wagon vacuum braked train of bulk cement has a payload of 420 tons. CIÉ built the first of its fleet of one hundred and fifty wagons (25050 - 25199) in 1964, using a tank portion which was imported from Sweden. The gross weight of a fully laden wagon is 31½ tons. These were not the first bulk cement wagons, as the GNR built twelve wagons of 16 ton capacity in the mid-1950s. This small fleet passed to CIÉ in 1958, and worked between Limerick and Athy for many years.

In November 1978, CIÉ sought permission to erect silos at a number of locations. These were at Athenry (2 silos), Waterford, Tullamore and Sligo (4 silos). These were in addition to the then existing facilities at Cork, Athy, Cabra and Adelaide. The Athy location is a private siding serving the plant of Tegral Building Products Ltd. Access to this siding is from the stub of the former Ballylinan branch. Recent reports have indicated heavy traffic into this plant, with several trains of twenty wagons running weekly. On 8<sup>th</sup> October 1993 at 11:50, 182 left Athy for Limerick with twenty empty wagons.

A fleet of twelve air-braked bogie bulk cement wagons was introduced in 1979, and initially worked between Platin and Cork. Built by Linke Hofmann Busch in Germany, they are of monococque construction (i.e. they have no underframes, the unit forming its own frame). The bogies are of the French Sambre-et-Meuse pattern. Overall length of the wagon is 42' 9" and it has a capacity of 52 tons giving a total laden weight of 74 tons. There were some initial difficulties unloading these wagons at Cork - a problem which was never completely resolved. These wagons now operate between Castlemungret and Cork, usually one return trip Mondays to Fridays, although they have occasionally operated to Athenry (via Ennis).

As already mentioned, Castlemungret supplies Athenry, Cork and usually Athy. In recent months it has been supplying Tullamore, although this could be served from Platin also. Waterford is an interesting location, particularly during the beet season. The 06:30 Limerick/Waterford bulk cement often has to wait in Tipperary for at least an hour while the lengthy 24½ mile section to Clonmel is occupied by beet or Bell trains - the block post at Cahir is thus sorely missed. On occasions the empty cement wagons are returned to Limerick attached to the 19:55 liner/mail, or, as happened on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1993, attached to a Bell liner. The formation of the 14:00 Waterford/Limerick special on that date was: 156 + 10 bogie Bell + 16 empty cement hoppers.

Platin serves Cabra and Adelaide. Trains leave Drogheda at 14:30 and 21:00 for Belfast, the latter stabling in Dundalk until 07:30 the following morning. Empty wagons are generally returned at 09:20, 11:35 and 18:50 ex Adelaide - in the case of the last two mentioned attached to the rear of liner trains conveying general traffic. The Drogheda/Cabra service operates on Mondays to Fridays and is scheduled to leave Platin at 04:30 and run via North Wall and Heuston to Cabra. (The removal of the crossover at Cabra some years ago means that trains from the North Wall direction can not access the yard other than via Heuston.)

Movement of cement by rail was in bagged form only for many years, and was conveyed in manually loaded wagons known as "H" vans. This labour intensive method was the chief handling system in 1960 when 18,300 tons of bulk cement and 396,700 tons of bagged cement were carried. Trials started in 1974 with palletised loads and these in turn led to the introduction in 1976 of a 20 ton palletised cement wagon which was built in Inchicore. These vacuum braked, side loading, four wheelers are numbered 28001 to 28172. Covered stores are provided in about 40 locations nationwide. An attempt was made a few years ago by Irish Rail to reduce the number of these locations, but Cement Ltd. protested with the result that most of those proposed for closure were reprieved including Mullingar, Boyle, Gort, Nenagh and Roscrea.

Generally speaking, bagged cement trains run from Platin to the Wexford and Sligo lines, to the Galway line as far as Ballinasloe, to the Westport and Ballina lines and to the Cherryville Junction - Waterford line as far as Kilkenny. Most of the rest of the country is served from Castlemungret including the southern end of the Cork line, the Kerry road, Waterford via Clonmel, Galway via Ennis and Roscrea via Nenagh.

There has been a significant decline in both bagged and bulk cement traffic to the Northwest with the result that cement trains to the Sligo, Westport, and Ballina lines are much reduced in frequency compared with earlier years. This decline is apparently due to the ready availability of imported cement from a Northern Ireland based operation located close to the Fermanagh border. The overall tonnage of cement handled in 1992 was 554,000 - a decline of 50,000 tons on the previous year. While the halcyon days of the 1970s appear to be over Irish Rail should be able to protect its existing carryings, provided that locomotive and crews are available to meet the customer's needs. This sadly hasn't always been the case over the last few years, due in particular to the dramatic cutback in the size and reliability of the locomotive fleet - a problem which will hopefully be remedied in the near future.



*Ex GNR(I) railbus No.1 at Lisburn en route to Cultra, 21/3/1993. (T. Tynan)*

The production of IRN would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and encouragement of many people including Barry Carse, David Donlon, Alan McFerran, David Hegarty, Michael McMahon, Paddy O'Brien, Joe St.Leger and William Watson. Thanks are also due to the staff of Irish Rail and Northern Ireland Railways.