

IRISH RAILWAY NEWS

Volume 2 Issue 4

October 1994



11:35 ex Belfast Central to Larne Harbour crosses the Dargan Bridge on Monday 28/11/1994.

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Editorial

Welcome to the October issue and once again thank you for your patience, we are still considerably behind the advertised date of publication, but hopefully up to date in content. I would like to take this opportunity of wish all our readers and our many contributors a happy, prosperous and above all peaceful 1995.

The most historically significant event of the year was undoubtedly the opening of the Cross-Harbour Link in Belfast which promises to be the foundation of much improved rail services particularly in the Belfast area and in due course on the Londonderry line. Indeed the introduction of direct through services from Dublin to the North West seems a distinct possibility within the next few years offering a journey time of little over 3 hours. Further developments on NIR may yet see the re-opening of the lines from Belfast to Comber and Newtownards as well as the line from Portadown to Armagh.

In the Republic the operational program for transport promises significant investment in permanent way, signalling and rolling stock which taken together should dramatically improve the reliability and effectiveness of the mainline railway. The 10% target for traffic growth up to 1999, which is contained within the objectives of the program, seems extraordinarily conservative unless, of course, growth is to be contained within the limits of a rolling stock fleet little bigger than that which currently exists.

The arrival next year of a further twenty two 201 class locomotives for Irish Rail will see this class dominate passenger and freight workings with 071s relegated to services which have had to make do with grossly inadequate motive power for many years. Beneficiaries should include commuters from Dundalk, Mullingar, Athlone and Arklow, all of which services could be dramatically speeded up by the allocation of suitable motive power.

Despite inevitable setbacks from time to time the development of tourist oriented railways in Ireland continues at a steady pace with the already well established operations in Tralee, Londonderry, Downpatrick and Stradbally likely to be joined by several others in the next year or two. While not wishing to single out any of the new developments, it is nonetheless particularly heartening to see track laying in progress in such a spectacular setting as Fintown in County Donegal, a county with an extraordinary railway heritage, but currently entirely without rail passenger services of any kind.

A. Gray - 20/12/1994

Irish Rail

(including CIÉ and DTI)

Operational Program For Transport 1994/1999

The EU-assisted operational programme for transport was finally published in November and although a little vague and confusing does give an indication of intended investment in the both the national railway system and urban rail transit over the next few years. The programme involves a total expenditure of IR£2.6 billion, the bulk of which is to be expended on the roads with lesser amounts being made available to upgrade other elements of the transport infrastructure including the railway as well as sea and air ports. Proposals for the mainline railway and for rail transport in the Dublin area are dealt with below.

Mainline Rail

The introduction to the document acknowledges the significance of the railway in the transport scene and quotes the railway's share of end-to-end journeys in the corridors on which it competes as 24%. In addition the railway carries significant volumes of bulk and other freight traffic, much of which is unsuited to road haulage and approximately 85% of which is import or export related. The document acknowledges past under-investment in the railway and states that most of the assets and infrastructure are now beyond normal life expectancy thus requiring an estimated £800m of expenditure at 1993 prices over the next 30 years. Total proposed spending over the period 1994 to 1999 remains at £275m as announced in the National Development Plan, and is made up of co-financed expenditure of £183m (National funds, EU Regional funds, EU Cohesion fund) supplemented by £92m of non-assisted investment from national funds.

Investment and upgrading is explicitly proposed on all routes radiating from Dublin with the exception of the Dublin to Westport and Ballina line, although it is not clear whether this is a deliberate omission or merely a drafting oversight. The investment proposals outlined in the plan are stated to be indicative and subject to approval in accordance with the rules of the fund from which assistance is being sought. Other projects not mentioned in the program may be proposed for approval and upgrading of each route will be assessed on a socio-economic basis to see what level of investment can be justified. The main points are as follows:

- An increase in maximum speed on the Dublin/Cork and Dublin/Belfast lines to 175 kph by 2000. These routes constitute the Irish element of the Trans European Network of high speed lines.
- An increase in maximum speeds on the (Dublin to) Limerick, Sligo, Tralee, Waterford and Rosslare lines to 145 kph by 1999. These lines form part of the Trans European Network of conventional rail.
- Some 650km of jointed track on timber sleepers will be replaced by CWR on pre-stressed concrete sleepers.
- Ancillary upgrading work will be carried out to facilitate the carriage of standard freight containers throughout the network, to be achieved in part by raising bridges particularly on the Dublin/Belfast line.
- Existing life-expired mechanical signalling systems will be replaced by centrally controlled "electronic/radio signalling" over some 500km of line significantly enhancing both safety and cost effectiveness.

- Some 30 new diesel-electric locomotives will be procured to provide greater haulage capacity with lower operating costs, greater reliability and improved fuel efficiency. Although not actually stated this figure probably includes the ten locomotives of the 201 class which have already been delivered.
- Projected journey times and dates on which they are to be achieved are as under:

Dublin to Belfast ¹	1 hour 35 minutes	1996
Dublin to Waterford ²	1 hour 50 minutes	1998
Dublin to Limerick ²	1 hour 50 minutes	1996
Dublin to Galway ²	2 hours 15 minutes	1998
Dublin to Cork ¹	2 hour 15 minutes ³	1996
Dublin to Rosslare ²	2 hours 35 minutes	1999
Dublin to Sligo ²	2 hours 45 minutes	1999
Dublin to Westport ²	3 hours 10 minutes	1999
Dublin to Tralee ²	3 hours 15 minutes	1999

¹ Both track and signalling upgrading is to be 100% complete by 1999.

² Signalling upgrades on these routes to be 100% complete by 1999. Track upgrading on these routes is to be 70% complete by 1999.

³ Probably includes at least three stops.

The operational program goes on to state that “The planned investment in the railway network will significantly enhance the quality of rail services and will enable Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) to adopt a more aggressive marketing strategy. The investment is intended to result in an increase in passengers carried from 7.9 million in 1993 to 8.7 million in 1999.”

Dublin Transport Initiative

The operational programme contains details of the proposed financing of the DTI initiative, the public transport elements to receive financing being as under:

- 1) IR£200m is to be spent on the commencement of the core LRT system, an amount expected to finance two of the three lines recommended by the DTI. The plan states that “detailed work is urgently in hand to determine the optimum combination of LRT links, based on the DTI recommended system, which could be constructed over the 1994 to 1999 period. The decision will be influenced by major factors such as the relief of traffic congestion, expected levels of peak/off-peak demand, social need, ease of construction and financial viability”. (See LRT Proposals Take Shape below.)
- 2) IR£75m is to be spent on Quality Bus Corridors and related infrastructural facilities.
- 3) IR£17m for public transport measures other than (1) and (2) above. Although not explicitly mentioned this would presumably be the source of funds for such measures as the extension of the DART system to serve Greystones, acquisition of additional DART stock and other improvements to suburban rail services in the Dublin area. There is, however, no explicit commitment to these or any other specific project.
- 4) IR£34m is to be provided for traffic and environmental management measures including traffic calming, increased pedestrianisation, more cycle lanes and priority for public transport at road junctions. Explicitly mentioned in this context is the provision of secure cycle parking at railway stations - a matter largely overlooked at present especially at the busier centre city stations.

Dublin/Belfast Project

Signalling and Layouts

The south trailing crossover at Malahide (No.252) was renewed during a possession of both lines which commenced late Saturday 8th October and finished in time for the following morning's Dublin/Belfast services. The trailing turnout from the Quarry sidings onto the Down main line and the associated traps which together form No.253 connection were renewed at the same time. The existing shunt signals No.382 and No.383, both reading northbound, were repositioned nearer Dublin as the new connections have a considerably longer lead than those which were replaced. Prior to laying in the new trackwork the opportunity was taken to carry out formation repairs and drainage improvements. The long standing 25 mph speed restriction through Malahide has now been removed.

Work on the resignalling of the line between Drogheda and the border is not expected to commence until mid-1995.

Bridges

Overbridge 132, between Castlebellingham and Dundalk, was renewed as a portal-arch in mid-September. At the time of writing in mid-December work on plating the deck of UB 72 at Laytown was almost complete with the bridge now fully ballasted.

Work is in hand at present raising the parapets of underbridges in the Skerries/Rush section so as to accommodate the greater depths of ballast required for CWR.

Permanent Way

Track upgrading continues at a healthy pace with over five miles being renewed between mid-August and mid-November, all of it on the Up road, but in two separate sections as below:

Gormanston/Balbriggan/Skerries	MP 22 ⁵ / ₈ to 20 ¹ / ₂
Dunleer/Drogheda	MP 39 to 36

Some 61.6% of Irish Rail's portion of the Dublin/Belfast route now consists of concrete sleepers and CWR.

The Up platform road at Malahide was excavated on the night of 3rd/4th September in preparation for relaying. In order to facilitate the access of machinery from the car park the Up platform has been temporarily severed at the north end opposite the redundant signal box.

The EU have made a further IR£16.4m for additional infrastructure work on the Irish Rail portion of the Dublin/Belfast line in 1994 and 1995.

Both Up and Down Platforms at Donabate have been raised and a surface composed of red bricks installed.

Rolling Stock

The contract for the supply of passenger rolling stock for the Dublin/Belfast service, mentioned in the last issue, and signed on 6th September at Inchicore covers only the fourteen coaches being supplied to Irish Rail. A similar contract was signed by NIR in Belfast on the same day. Each contract appears to be valued at about IR/STG£14m, i.e. a total expenditure of around £28 million.

The rolling stock is understood to be modelled on the Eurostar stock currently entering service on international trains from London to Paris and Brussels via the Channel Tunnel. First class coaches will seat 47 passengers with seats grouped together, around fixed tables, in a face to face configuration, with four seats on one side of the aisle and two on the other. Standard class stock will seat 72 passengers with a mixture of face to face and face to back seating. There will be on-train telephone and fax facilities in both First class and catering vehicles. As with the Arrow railcars toilet facilities will be

easily accessible to disabled travellers. The total IR/NIR order is for sixteen standard class coaches, four full firsts, four catering vehicles and four driving trailers - the latter providing additional first class accommodation.

The new trains promise a revolution in on-train information with both public address and visual display units, the latter displaying amongst other things, the position of the train as determined via a satellite link!

As already reported the twenty-eight coaches will be pooled and used to form three sets which will operate in push/pull mode along with 201 class locomotives, of which four 206, 207, 208 and 209 will be allocated to the Belfast service. 206 and 207 will be owned by Irish Rail while 208 and 209 will be NIR property. These four locomotives are expected to carry names in the river series - probably Liffey, Boyne, Lagan and Foyle respectively, the same names carried by the GNR(I) VS class 4-4-0s.

Permanent Way - General

Dublin/Cork

A further 5¾ miles were renewed between the end of August and the first week of November, 3¼ miles on the Up line and 2½ miles on the Down line as detailed below:

Up line	MP 162 ⁷ / ₈ to MP 162	Kilbarry - Rathpeacon
Up line	MP 113 to MP 110 ⁵ / ₈	Emly - Limerick Junction
Down Line	MP ¾ to MP 2¼	Islandbridge Junction - west end of Inchicore
Down Line	MP 162½ to MP 163½	Rathpeacon - Kilbarry.

At the time of writing work is continuing on the Up line between Kilbarry and Rathpeacon and between Emly and Limerick Junction. The Down Cork line is now 97.1% CWR while the corresponding figure for the Up road is 95.6%.

The renewal of overbridges continues, the latest to be rebuilt being Nos. 151, 164 and 224, the first two between Portlaoise and Ballybroy, the last-mentioned just north of Thurles. All have been rebuilt to the portal arch design.

Cherryville Junction/Waterford

Work had commenced by early November on the installation of CWR and concrete sleepers south of Lavistown, close to the Southern end of the proposed bypass, with about half a mile of track renewed so far between MP 31 and MP 31½ approximately.

The bypass itself will diverge from the Dublin to Kilkenny line at a point just under a quarter of a mile south of Highrath level crossing and run parallel to the existing line for 350 metres before joining a new 500 metre long chord which will trail onto the Kilkenny/Waterford line at a point 183 metres South of MP 31. The proposed curve is thus a little over 850 metres in length and has a minimum radius of curvature of 250 metres. When completed it will be possible to run from Dublin to Waterford without reversal for the first time since 1963 when the Portlaoise to Kilkenny was closed to all traffic.

Both turnouts will be located on straight track and to achieve this it is necessary to place the junction with the Dublin/Kilkenny line some distance north of the divergence. An enabling Railway Works order was published in October in accordance with the Transport Act of 1963 giving CIÉ authority to construct the line for use by Irish Rail within a period not exceeding five years.

It is reported at the time of going to press that earthworks have commenced along the route of the new curve.

Dublin/Sligo

The temporary deviation of the Sligo line near MP 4½ was removed on 9th October when the new bridge carrying the line over the future C-ring motorway was opened for traffic.

Miscellaneous

- A contract for the upgrading of the measuring system on track recording car, EM50, has recently been awarded to Parameter Inc, Columbia, South Carolina.
- Irish Rail have acquired two new four-wheel Matisa inspection cars - these are numbered 722 and 723.

Signalling and Layout Alterations

Preparatory work in connection with resignalling of the area between Waterford and the Barrow bridge has commenced. Some signals are already in place and much of the track in the area has been bonded to facilitate track circuiting. This scheme includes the automation of the level crossing at Belview for which EU funding is being made available.

The trailing connection from the pig bank sidings onto the Up mainline just north of Bray station has been disconnected and the controlling ground frame removed. These sidings were not electrified and have been virtually unused since the commencement of the DART service in 1984.

A colour light fixed distant followed by a two-aspect stop signal has been provided on either side of Ballindine Road level crossing. The new signals became operative on 27th November and replace semaphore distants which were fixed at caution when four manually-initiated, electrically driven, lifting barriers were brought into use at the time of the re-opening of the Athenry to Claremorris line on 5th September last.

Additional lineside telephones have been installed at intervals between Carrowduff level crossing and Galway and are sited in such a way that trains are no more than about three miles from a point of contact should circumstances so require. Carrowduff level crossing is located in the Athlone/Ballinasloe section and is close to the limit of coverage provided by the train radio system.

Locomotives

The third delivery of 201 class locomotives was effected on 19th September when the “Stella Mare” docked at the North Wall Extension around 06:00. The four locomotives on board were 204, 205, 210 and 211 and these were unloaded the following day directly onto the quayside tramway. The engines were first towed one by one into the Point Yard by 182 for later conveyance to Inchicore. The fourth delivery occurred on Thursday 6th October when the Malta registered “Plitvice” docked at the North Wall Extension. The three locomotives, 212, 213 and 214 were unloaded that evening and deposited on the quayside still resting on the wooden platforms on which they had been shipped. The “Plitvice” crane was used again the following morning to place the locomotives on the tramway prior to being hauled to Inchicore.

203 made its first revenue earning trip on 9th September working the 16:45 Heuston/Cork but failed at Buttevant due to damaged electrical cables. The train was, however, able to continue to Mallow where passengers were transferred to the following 17:30 Heuston/Cork. The locomotive was back in traffic by 17th September when it was observed working the 17:30 to Cork. 205, which was not yet in traffic, was in trouble on 24th September due to traction motor problems although this was quickly resolved by swapping one of the bogies with that of 210. 212 and 213 were on trial by 22nd October although 210 did not feature until early November.

The October Holiday weekend saw nine of the ten 201 class in traffic with the 14:10 from Heuston to Galway worked by 201 on the Friday, 213 on the Saturday and 211 on the Monday. By Saturday 11th November 201 class locomotives were being used more extensively with 202 on the 08:30 to Westport, 201 on the 07:25 from Westport and 203 on the 09:00 to Tralee on this date.



212 about to be railed at the North Wall Quay Extension, 6th October 1994.

Virtually all through passenger services between Dublin and Cork/Limerick are powered by the 201 class as are quite a few freight services including, fairly routinely, the Ammonia trains. In some instances locomotives on this latter turn are changed en route, particularly at Connolly, although it is not unknown for the class to work through along the Rosslare line to Shelton Abbey. 201 class locomotives are in fact cleared to operate from Dublin (Connolly, Heuston or North Wall as appropriate) to Cobh, Tralee Limerick (via Limerick Junction), Galway, Waterford (pending reconstruction of UR 114 at Newrath, 201s may not proceed beyond Thomastown and thus cannot actually enter Waterford by any route), Westport, Navan, Rosslare and the border. Normal line speed is permitted to Cork, Athlone, Kilkenny, Bray, Navan and the border while elsewhere 70 and 60 mph limits reduce to 60 and 55 mph respectively. Operation of passenger services on the Rosslare line is permitted only when required to assist a failed train which may be worked to its destination if circumstances so require. Freight trains may be worked to Shelton Abbey subject to the speed limits applicable to the train. 201s are also permitted between Waterford and Wellington Bridge on either liner or beet trains but subject to a 30 mph maximum speed.

Although not yet working cross-border services a 201 class locomotive travelled to Dundalk on 16th October passing Drogheda at 11:50 in the Down direction and 13:20 in the Up direction.

A further 22 locomotives of this type are to be delivered to Irish Rail in early 1995.

A recent trip on the 14:55 Heuston/Cork illustrates the accelerative capabilities of the new locomotives

and is summarised in the table below:

Table 2: 14:55 Dublin (Heuston) - Cork 211 + EGV + 7 Mk3 12/11/1994

	Distance	Mins-Secs	Speeds	Schedule
Dublin (Heuston)	0.00	0.00		
Islandbridge Junction	0.66	1:45		
Inchicore	1.75	2:59	50.03	
MP 2½	2.25	3:37	56.78/57.84	
Cherry Orchard	3.38	4:29	63.34	
Clondalkin	4.40	5:38	69.66/73.38	
Lucan South	6.75	7:24	87.21/85.23	
Hazelhatch	10.00	9:42	87.55/86.33	11:00
Straffan	13.13	11:49	89.55	
Signal CY220	14.50	Sigs 14:37		
Sallins	17.94	Sigs 22:23		16:30
MP 22½	22.50	26:19	78.29	
Newbridge	25.50	Sigs 30:44		22:00
Curragh	27.50	Sigs 33:58	30.69	
Kildare	30.00	Sigs 38:42	19.01	25:30
Cherryville Junction	32.48	Sigs 42:19	71.26/79.75	
Monasterevin	36.43	45:16	89.12	
MP 39	39.00	46:51	87.72/83.18	
Portarlington	41.73	50:17		35:30
MP 43	1.28	2:21	61.14/64.15	
MP 47	5.28	5:25	/88.58	6:30
MP 49½	7.78	7:12	77.92/66.67	
Portlaoise	9.18	9:29		10:30
Clonkeen	2.56	3:25	68.39/72.93	
Mountrath	8.60	7:39	87.21	
MP 65¼	14.35	11:43	86.21	
Ballybroyhy	15.84	12:54	59.11 ¶	13:30
Lisduff	21.53	17:31	80.07/83.26 ¶¶	18:00
Templemore	27.94	21:59	86.00	22:30
MP 85	34.10	26:30	69.76	
Thurles	35.60	28:47		29:30

¶ Yard limit of 70 mph applies.

¶¶ Yard limit of 80 mph applies.

Weather conditions were ideal with a dry rail and as can be seen the steeply graded ascent from Heuston was handled in fine style although even a 201 class locomotive is unable to reach the 70 mph limit which applies through Inchicore. The train was checked briefly at signal CY220 and then followed a Bell liner, 039 + 15 bogies, to Cherryville Junction though as the latter was still in Thomastown at 18:50 it gained little from being allowed ahead of both the 14:55 to Cork and the 15:00

to Waterford.

078 was released from Inchicore works in early December having undergone an "L" exam, in effect a partial rebuild which entails the refurbishment and upgrading of the prime mover. 088 will thus be the last locomotive to be so treated.

The number of 001 class locomotives in traffic remains relatively stable with 003, 011, 012, 015, 036, 039 and 055 in regular use. Apart from the occasional appearance on a suburban train, notably the 15:04 Pearse to Mosney and the 16:11 Mosney to Arklow these locomotives continue to work as described in the last issue.

Contrary to what was stated in the last issue 132 has been withdrawn due to fire damage while 174 is withdrawn due to bodywork defects.

Railcars

The 06:38 Athlone to Dublin and 17:00 Dublin to Athlone services reverted to locomotive haulage with effect from 3rd October. The service is yet again retimed and now departs Athlone at 06:35 serving all stations from Clara to Hazelhatch inclusive and arrives in Heuston at 08:25. Similarly in the evening the service runs non-stop to Hazelhatch and then calls at all stations to Athlone arriving at 18:52. Although the Athlone service was operated by a four-piece set only two cars are released for use elsewhere as the train split at Heuston on arrival with one of the two-car sets being used on Kildare local services until "doubled up" again to form the 17:00 from Heuston. The two-car set no longer required is now based in Dundalk and works the 05:53 Dundalk to Dublin (Pearse), the 08:06 return to Drogheda, the 10:05 Drogheda to Dublin (Connolly) and the 19:15 Dublin (Connolly) to Dundalk. It is not generally used during the remainder of the day as the set is far too small to be of any value on any of the existing links. There is thus one set spare at Inchicore all day while a two-car set remains unused at Connolly from 11:06 until 19:15 (Mondays to Fridays). The seventeen railcars are now therefore allocated as under:

Inchicore	9
Dundalk	6
Connolly	2
Total	17

and work the services listed below:

Monday to Saturdays

All services Dublin (Heuston) - Kildare - Dublin (Heuston)
05:45 (MF), 08:03, 10:40, 12:05, 14:00, 16:10, 18:00, 19:45 (MF) Connolly to Maynooth
07:08 (MF), 09:15, 11:20, 12:50, 15:05, 17:05, 19:00, 20:35 (MF) Maynooth to Connolly
08:00[¶] Dundalk to Dublin (Pearse)
18:27[¶] Dublin (Pearse) to Dundalk
05:53² Dundalk to Pearse (MF)
08:06²« Pearse to Drogheda
10:05²« Drogheda to Dublin (Connolly)
19:15² Dublin (Connolly) to Dundalk
11:05, 15:04[¶] (SO), 15:40[¶] Pearse to Drogheda
13:05 Drogheda to Dublin (Connolly)
17:12[¶] Drogheda to Dublin (Pearse)
05:40 (MO) Waterford to Dublin (Heuston)
17:00 (SO) Dublin (Heuston) to Portarlington
17:05[¶] (FO) Dublin (Heuston) to Waterford.

Sundays

09:50¥ Dublin (Heuston) to Waterford

14:45¶ Waterford to Dublin (Heuston)

18:10¥§ Portadown to Dublin (Connolly)

20:15¥§§ Dublin (Connolly) to Dundalk

¥ Indicates that train is worked by a six-piece set.

¶ Indicates that train is worked by a four piece set.

§ Rostered as indicated but worked by NIR until 4th December. Service commenced 16th October 1994 and appears in the new NIR timetable.

§§ Rostered as indicated but worked by NIR until 4th December. Service commenced 23rd October 1994 but does not appear in any timetable.

« Not currently worked by railcars on Saturdays due to inadequate accommodation.

² This train operates to a non-accelerated schedule.

Observations suggest that the railcars are now being worked in accordance with normal signalling regulations between Heuston and Kildare. This change has greatly eased the disruptive effect of the Arrow railcars on mainline services and also makes it practical to loop Arrow trains to allow closely following expresses to overtake should one or the other be out of path.

Coaching Stock

International Set

Preparatory work is understood to have commenced on the refurbishment of these vehicles at Inchicore. All nine coaches, 99520 to 99528, have now been delivered - the tenth, 99529, remains at Derby and has not been acquired by Irish Rail.

Cement/Tara Traffic

There has been a considerable upsurge in cement traffic originating at the Platin cement plant, due in part to maintenance work at Castlemungret. The Limerick/Cork bogie bulk cement train was thus diverted to Drogheda for a period of five weeks from 20th September, the first working arriving in Platin at 22:25 on this date hauled by 123+133. This train operated on daily basis during this period.

The full program of Tara mines trains operated over the weekends of 11th/12th and 18th/19th November, the first such weekend working for some time.

Timber

This traffic continues to expand with trains being loaded in recent months out of Arklow, Ballina, Derry, Dundalk, Enfield, Ennis, Galway, Killarney, Kildare, Longford, Mullingar, Roscommon, Westport and Sligo. Further air-braked wagons have been converted for this traffic including 30503, 30505, 30508, 30515, 30521, 30523, 30526, 30529, 30533 and 30536. It typically takes 7 to 10 hours to load a full ten-bogie train although this is somewhat dependent on the number of lorries used to bring the timber from the forest site and the distance involved. On arrival at Clonmel trains are unloaded at the Up siding, the timber being transferred by road to the Meddite plant at Redmondstown, a short distance from the station.

Work commenced in August on the construction of a new £40 million plant for the manufacture of

Oriented Strand Board on a site close to the Belview terminal. This project is a joint venture between Louisiana-Pacific and Coillte and can be expected to attract timber supplies from around the country when it opens in Autumn 1995. It is reported that rail access will be provided not from the Waterford/Rosslare line but from the New Ross branch as the gradients involved in approaching the site from the latter line are considerably easier. A further wood processing plant is expected to be built at Carrick on Shannon by Masonite, a US-based company, and will manufacture mouldings for doors and windows. It is not clear at the time of writing if this development will also be rail-served as being much closer to the potential sources of supply it might be expected to draw its raw materials directly by road.

Late News

088 worked an empty timber train into Londonderry on 16th December, returning laden the next day, the first recorded working of an 071-hauled freight into the city.

Beet Campaign

Although 071s are not entirely new on beet trains, having been used occasionally in previous years between Waterford and Wellingtonbridge, the 1994 season saw the extensive use of these locomotives with two or three allocated to this traffic on most dates throughout the season. Preparatory to using 071s on beet trains between Waterford and Mallow, 073 worked a trial into the beet factory sidings on 15th September as these locomotives had not previously operated in the Mallow factory yard.

A further change this year sees 071s, six motor 001s and pairs of 121s/141s/181s permitted to haul 25 laden wagons between Waterford and Mallow with single 141s, 181s and five motor 001s allowed to take 20 wagons over the same section. The maximum trailing load is thus increased from 744 to 775 tonnes and, although less than the 868 tonnes once allowed, is nonetheless a useful improvement. More important, however, is the increase in the number of laden wagons permitted between Wellingtonbridge and Waterford, 071s and pairs of 141s/181s now being allowed to haul 25 wagons. This limit reduces to 18 for six motor 001s and 14 for five motor 001s as well as single 141s and 181s.

The Wellingtonbridge/Waterford section proved difficult to operate last year due to the conflicting requirements of Bell traffic, beet trains and the operation of the opening span of the Barrow bridge, all of which require the exclusive use of the Abbey Junction to Wellingtonbridge ETS. The additional throughput per train will help alleviate the problem although the final solution lies in resignalling which will allow a train to occupy the ETS section irrespective of movements between Waterford and Belview or the status of the Barrow bridge, all of which will be independently protected by track circuit block.

Grain Traffic

Approximately three trains a week are currently operating to the Avonmore co-op facility which is located on the stub of the former Portlaoise/Kilkenny line at Conniberry, a short distance on the Kilkenny side of the permanent way depot at Portlaoise. The trains generally consist of twenty-two 20ft containers and originate in either North Wall or Foynes. One of these trains was observed passing Sallins on the Up line at 09:30 on 28th October, on which date 202 provided the motive power.

Disruption

The locomotive and first three bogies of the Down evening Sligo liner train were derailed at the trap points protecting the exit from the Midland Yard at 20:43 on Thursday 21st July. The locomotive involved, 073, was re-railed with the assistance of road cranes the following day and was quickly returned to traffic, being observed on the 14:10 to Galway on 23rd July.

The 14:10 to Galway, hauled by 076, struck a tractor on an accommodation crossing some 2½ miles East of Geashill loop on Sunday 24th July. Nobody was injured and the train was able to proceed after a delay of over an hour, still hauled by 076 which completed the round trip. Over the next few days the locomotive had its damaged bodywork repaired and, reflecting the shortage of motive power, was returned to traffic sporting primer at one end.

Intending passengers from Dundalk for the 09:00 ex Belfast on Saturday 6th August were taken by bus to Drogheda as there was no space on the train to accommodate them. Drogheda passengers for the same train were brought to Mosney on a special working which terminated there and returned to Drogheda to form the 11:30 service to Dublin. Unfortunately, despite setting down a large group, the Belfast train was still unable to accommodate all the traffic offering at Mosney and in consequence the 11:30 from Drogheda made a special stop to pick up those left behind. Sadly such overcrowding is common during the summer months due largely to the sparse nature of the current local service - it was traditional for many years to run an express train from Dundalk on summer Saturdays departing a few minutes in advance of the cross-border service and serving Drogheda, Mosney, Balbriggan and Skerries.

Services on Bank Holiday Monday 31st October were badly disrupted by the failure of a four-piece Arrow railcar set at MP 40¼, outside Portarlington, shortly after 13:00. The following 09:40 empty ammonia train from Shelton Abbey to Marino Point, hauled by 015, was stopped at Cherryville Junction and eventually shunted onto the Waterford line to give precedence to the 13:00 Heuston to Westport and 13:20 Heuston to Cork which both worked wrong line to Portarlington. These trains were each delayed by almost 80 minutes with the result that the Up and Down afternoon Westport trains crossed at Clara instead of Roscommon. The next movement was the 14:10 to Galway, 211 + EGV + 10 Mk2 + EGV, which was in turn followed by two empty Arrow sets destined for Cork and formed by 2607/8/13/10/11/12 and 2617/14/3/4/5/6. The railcars returned to Dublin working the advertised 17:30 and 17:50 reliefs arriving at 21:24 and 21:59 respectively. The next pair of trains was the 14:35 and 14:55 to Cork which were formed by 130 + 6 p/p (6103) and 203 + 8 Mk3 + EGV respectively. These trains returned as the 18:20 and 19:00 from Cork and arrived in Dublin at 22:28 and 22:31 respectively. The 17:30 from Cork was nominally advanced to 17:20 on this date but in the event did not leave until 18:01 formed by 202 + 8 Mk3 + EGV and arrived in Dublin at 20:24. The Down line was cleared in time to pass the 17:30 to Cork although single line working was cancelled as soon as the 14:55 to Cork got away from Portarlington at 16:35. Up afternoon trains thus escaped serious delay, the 14:00 from Cork being one of the worst affected. This train, formed by 128 + 6 p/p (6111), departed at 13:44 and arrived in Heuston around 17:30 followed by the 14:35 from Cork which arrived at 17:37 and consisted of 204 + 8 Mk3 + EGV. Evening departures from most provincial points including Waterford, Galway and Westport were also delayed due to the late running of Down afternoon trains.

202 failed on the 18:55 Heuston/Cork at Mallow on 20th August, the locomotive being replaced in due course by an 071 class.

The 10:26 Heuston/Kildare Arrow service was formed by a locomotive hauled set on 1st September due to the late running of the incoming 09:05 from Kildare which had been looped in Sallins for an extended period due to mechanical problems with the railcar unit operating the service.

The annual leaf fall season commenced in earnest on Tuesday 18th October with windy conditions and rain reducing available adhesion to the point that many trains were either unable to complete their journeys or were severely delayed in reaching their destination. Although by no means the only incident on the Cork line that night, the problem manifested itself particularly acutely with the 19:00 from Cork, hauled by 205, being cancelled at Ballybroughy sometime after midnight. Confusion in regard to the numbers on the train meant that only two buses were ordered to convey the stranded passengers to Dublin with the result that quite a few people did not complete their journey until

sometime after 04:00. This incident and a litany of others over the following few weeks, involving locomotives of various classes as well as railcars, received enormous media publicity with all sorts of silly questions being asked and even dafter solutions proposed. The core issue of sanding did not however receive an airing although it can only be assumed that policy in this area is under review given the scale of the disruption and the extremely negative publicity which it engendered.

The 16:11 from Mosney to Arklow, 176 + GSV + 4 Cravens, failed at Rush on Friday 4th November thus blocking the main line for over an hour. Passengers travelling from Dublin to Arklow were brought by DART to Bray and offered conveyance by bus for the remainder of the journey. The failed train was eventually able to resume its trip at 17:50 but further delays at Malahide meant that it did not pass East Wall Junction until 18:28. It was closely followed by the 11:35 Liner from Adelaide, 160 + 11 bogies, and the 15:00 from Belfast, 113 + 11 Mk2, which passed East Wall Junction at 18:35 and 18:38 respectively. The return 18:20 to Belfast departed at 19:14 preceded by the 18:27 Pearse to Dundalk, 2605/6/1/2, which started from Connolly at 19:09 due to the late running of the 17:12 ex Drogheda. Fortunately the Belfast train was given precedence at Howth Junction and thus avoided unnecessary further delay.

The early morning Drogheda/Cabra bulk cement train found itself unable to proceed up the “dip” between Church Road Junction and North Strand Junction on Thursday 17th November. Assistance was summoned from the rear in the form of 205 which had worked an incoming liner train and was awaiting a path to Inchicore. However on approaching the cement train the driver noticed that the track immediately ahead of him had been torn up and he brought the assisting engine to a halt. Sometime later as 205 was returning wrong line towards North Wall, the trailing bogie became derailed on the catch points protecting the Church Road Junction.

The second derailment caused little further damage although it was necessary to use road cranes to re-rail 205. The original mishap proved highly disruptive, however, as the derailed wagons came to rest under the bridge carrying the Dublin/Belfast line, an unfortunate positioning that made recovery extremely difficult. The line was thus blocked until at least the following Saturday afternoon, 19th November, during which period liner trains destined for the Southern main line were routed via Newcomen Junction to Pearse Station where they ran-round and retraced their steps to Connolly before continuing via North Strand Junction to their ultimate destination. Amongst the trains to visit Pearse in this context was the Ballina-bound Asahi liner train.

The 14:00 Connolly/Maynooth train, 2605/2606, became disabled at Ashtown on 19th November due to a mechanical failure. The Down line was thus blocked until around 17:45 with the result that the 16:10 to Maynooth and 17:15 to Mullingar were cancelled. The next service was thus the 17:45 relief to Sligo, 073 + 4 Cr + GSV, which left Connolly at 17:57 followed by the 18:00 to Maynooth, 142 + 2 p/p (6105), which left at 18:08. Further problems were caused on this date when a Drogheda to Tullamore bulk cement train was unable to proceed beyond East Wall Junction thus blocking the Up main line for an hour and a half, and trapping the 16:40 ex Howth behind it. Pending clearance of the obstruction, 192+172 and 18 four-wheel hoppers, all trains used the Down line between Connolly and the crossovers just North of Killester with some services being delayed by up to 20 minutes as a result.

New Ross Branch

This line has now re-opened for traffic and has reportedly hosted a number of fertiliser specials, full details of which are not known at the time of going to press.

Limerick/Ennis/Athenry/Claremorris

A regular liner train is in operation between Limerick and Claremorris on Mondays to Fridays leaving

Limerick around 10:00 and returning from Claremorris around 16:00. These new services connect at Limerick with Bell liner trains to and from Waterford. The first timber train to be routed via Tuam is understood to have left Limerick around 22:00 on 23rd September destined for Ballina and returning laden the following day en-route to Clonmel.

The Up liner train on 13th September consisted of 131 + 3 bogies, each carrying a 40' foot container, plus 2 empty bogie flats + 15 empty coal wagons. This type of load is not untypical although on occasions the train is double-headed for part of the trip and enlarged to include empty four-wheel bulk cement wagons returning from the storage silos at Athenry to Limerick.

Ballina Branch

Local representatives and community leaders from the Ballina area including at least one Mayo TD occupied the Down evening Westport train at Westport station for over two hours on Friday 11th November. The demonstration was intended to further highlight the erratic provision of services on the Ballina branch, particularly in the light of the alleged failure of Irish Rail to honour commitments given in October. The protesters claimed that during the ensuing period some fifty services had been cancelled and passengers forced to either abandon their journey or endure bus substitution to or from Ballyhaunis. The protesters joined the train at Castlerea having earlier been unable to travel on the 18:15 from Ballina which was yet again cancelled on this date.

On a more positive note a new service commenced on 11th December departing Ballina at 07:45 and connecting at Manulla Junction into the 07:55 from Westport. All Dublin/Westport/Dublin services now have advertised rail connections to Ballina for Down trains and from Ballina for Up trains. Manulla Junction retains its unique status in that it is the only station in Ireland open exclusively for interchange traffic, a situation that has persisted since the station was re-opened in November 1988.

Traffic

The All-Ireland GAA hurling semi-final double bill, Limerick v Antrim and Galway v Offaly, resulted in heavy traffic particularly from Limerick City and on the Portarlington to Athlone branch as indicated below:

Sunday 7th August 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Notes
07:50 ex Galway	076+6Mk2a/b+DV	360	Portarlington pass 09:15
07:40 ex Limerick	2610/13/14/17/6/5	410	Glasnevin Junction pass 10:11
08:30 ex limerick	080+10Cr+GSV	600/650	Glasnevin Junction pass 10:31
09:10 ex Athlone	6p/p(6101)+122	300	Glasnevin Junction pass 10:49
08:20 ex Galway	084+7Mk2+EGV	400/480	Glasnevin Junction pass 10:56
08:55 ex Limerick	189+160+7Mk2+EGV	460/480	Glasnevin Junction pass 11:09
Extra ex Limerick	3p/p(6104)+131	250/270	Glasnevin Junction pass 11:31
08:30 ex Cork	121+146+GSV+10Cr	630/680	Glasnevin Junction pass 11:43
08:55 ex Sligo	087+7Mk2+EGV	250/280	Glasnevin Junction pass 11:58
09:30 ex Charleville	6p/p(6102)+124	450/480	Glasnevin Junction pass 12:07
10:00 ex Ballinasloe	2612/11/04/03	160/180	Glasnevin Junction pass 12:32

On the Northern line there were just two trains departing Belfast at 09:30 and 10:15 and arriving in Connolly at 12:42 and 12:56 respectively. Return services to Belfast departed at 18:07, 18:26 and 19:07

formed by 112 + 9 Mk2, 94+4+95 and 82+4+96+2+95 respectively.

The Portarlington/Athlone line was very busy in the evening as evident to an observer on the 18:10 Galway to Heuston. A summary of the journey from Galway appears below:

Sunday 7th August 1994
18:10 Galway/Heuston, 082 + 8 Mk3 + EGV

Galway	dep 18:14	About 350 passengers
Athenry	18:28/18:29	
Attymon Junction	18:37/18:38	
Woodlawn	18:46/18:47	
Ballinasloe	18:58/19:02	
Athlone	19:18/19:27	Cross 17:40 Connolly/Galway, 076+EGV+7Mk2
Clonnydonnin	pass 19:32	Cross 17:30 Connolly/Athlone, 122+6p/p(6101)
Clara	pass 19:42	Cross 18:00 Heuston/Westport, 074+EGV+8Mk3
Tullamore	19:50/20:08	Cross 18:20 Connolly/Galway, 080+EGV+6Mk2a/b+DV dep 19:51 Cross 18:45 Heuston/Galway, 086+EGV+8Mk3 dep 20:05
Geashill	20:17/20:18	Cross 18:40 Connolly/Athlone, 2603/04/11/12 dep 20:18
Portarlington	20:31/20:32	
Kildare	20:44/21:06	Points failure, loop to Down main.
Dublin	21:32/ --	22 minutes late, see Kildare above.

The All-Ireland GAA football semi-finals between Cork and Down (senior) and Kerry and Armagh (minor) produced various special trains, the return trains on the Northern line being as in the table below:

Sunday 14th August 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Notes
17:50 Newry	94+4+69	330/380	Mosney pass 18:21
18:05 Dundalk	2605/6/13/10	150/160	Mosney pass 18:38
18:20 Belfast	112+12Mk2	650/780	Mosney 18:50/18:51
18:45 Belfast	113+6Mk2	230/250	Mosney pass 19:19
19:05 Lurgan	82+2+98+4+95	500/600	Mosney pass 19:36

Services in the morning were the 09:30 ex Newry, 10:15 ex Lurgan, 11:20 ex Dundalk and 10:15 and 10:30 ex Belfast. All except the first-mentioned were badly delayed at Mosney by single-line working between there and Skerries, the latter in connection with relaying on the Up road.

There were also specials from Cork, Tralee and Mallow returning in the evening at 17:30, 17:40, 17:50, 18:00 and 18:30 from Connolly to Cork and 18:35 from Heuston to Tralee. In contrast to previous years these were relatively small trains being formed by 072 + EGV + 8 Mk2, 146/160 + 6 Mk2a/b + DV, 080+6 Mk2a/b+DV, 079 + EGV + 7 Mk2 and 128/161 + DV + 6 Cravens. A further special formed by the Executive set also operated from Cork to Heuston and back, formed in the evening by 186 + EGV + 4 Mk3.

The All-Ireland GAA football semi-final between Leitrim and Dublin produced a number of Special trains on the Sligo Line on Sunday 21st August. Services in the morning were as under:

Sunday 21st August 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Notes
07:50 ex Boyle	079+9Mk2+EGV	500	At Killucan 09:58 to Cross the 09:00 ex Dublin
08:00 ex Sligo	134+142+9Mk2+EGV	480/500	Sligo dep 08:26, Mullingar pass 10:26
08:55 ex Sligo	088+DV+11Mk2a/b+DV	700/750	Sligo dep 09:15, Mullingar 11:22, Dublin 12:26
10:30 ex Boyle	177+153+DV+4Cr	35	Glasnevin Junction pass 13:18

Return services were at 17:25, 18:15, 18:55 and 19:15, the first of which was formed by the Mk2 air-braked set. Having unloaded its passengers at Sligo this train continued to Sligo Quay freight yard so as to run round without fouling the Boyle/Sligo section. Also on this date the 07:55 from Westport ran through to Heuston and an 18:30 relief operated to Dundalk behind the 18:20 to Belfast.

A number of specials ran on 27th August to bring participants to the annual community games at Mosney. These are shown in the table below along with a bulk cement train which became entangled with them. The cement train stopped briefly at signal ND352 before crossing back onto the Down line at 12:35. The 07:00 Limerick/Heuston was formed by a railcar set on this date in order to release stock for the Ennis special. Three return specials ran on 30th August due ex Mosney at 10:40, 10:50 and 11:32, being destined for Cork, Ennis and Heuston respectively. A second group arrived on 2nd September and left on the 5th, the arrangements being similar to that for the first group.

Sunday 27th August 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Notes
Empty Cement	185+16 Bulks		Skerries pass 12:28, on the Up road
08:45 ex Galway	164+182+5Cr+ GSV	270/300	Skerries pass 12:33
08:10 ex Ennis	088+DV+8Mk2a/b+DV	400	Skerries pass 12:45
08:50 ex Cork	080+DV+4Mk2a/b	200	Skerries Pass 12:51

One of Irish Rail's busiest days continues to be the Sunday of the GAA hurling final, the teams this year being Limerick v Offaly (senior) and Cork v Galway (minor). By and large the day went well although there were some delays in the morning due to brake problems on the 08:40 ex Limerick which delayed no less than ten following trains, although the delays were generally less than 30 minutes.

The rather mixed up sequence of return departures from Dublin was primarily due to the rate at which trains loaded, the Limerick and Galway supporters being in no hurry home. The last Connolly/Limerick special actually left on time but when stopped by signals at Islandbridge Junction a number of passengers got out of the train and onto the track complaining of severe overcrowding. After some delay the train was worked into Heuston to give those not already on the track the opportunity to leave the train if they so wished. In all about 150 passengers disembarked and joined the 21:30 to Cork.

While the 19:05 Connolly/Limerick was in Heuston the 19:15 Connolly/Cork was finally able to get away having been blocked behind it for almost an hour.

Evening services from Dublin via Kildare are summarised in the table below:

Sunday 4th September 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Kildare
17:50 Connolly/Cork	087+7Mk2a/b+DV	400	pass 17:57
17:20 Connolly/Limerick	074+GSV+10Cr+GSV	650/750	pass 18:07
18:20 Connolly/Cork	171+149+6p/p(6101)	430/480	pass 18:22
17:50 Heuston/Cork	088+EGV+8Mk3	430/460	pass 18:26
18:00 Heuston/Westport	080+EGV+8Mk3	480	18:37/18:39
17:30 Connolly/Limerick	182+153+EGV+7Mk2	430/450	pass 18:43
18:15 Heuston/Waterford	081+EGV+7Mk3	350/380	18:49/18:51
17:40 Connolly/Galway	075+6Mk2a/b+DV	380/410	pass 18:55
18:30 Heuston/Limerick	134+126+7Mk2+EGV	500/550	19:04/19:05
18:00 Connolly/Limerick	086+DV+6Cr	430/450	pass 19:09
18:55 Connolly/Cork	189+184+6p/p(6103)	360/400	pass 19:14
18:30 Connolly/Limerick	085+EGV+8Mk3	550/600	pass 19:19
18:45 Heuston/Galway	071+EGV+8Mk3	530/550	19:27/19:29
18:55 Heuston/Cork	201+EGV+6Mk2	400/430	pass 19:38
18:40 Connolly/Athlone	2613/10/15/16/5/6	350/430	pass 19:43
19:15 Heuston/Tralee	077+EGV+7Mk3	450/480	pass 19:51
19:15 Connolly/Cork	2607/8/17/14/11/12	360/450	pass 20:40
19:05 Connolly/Limerick	159+3p/p(6104)	220/240	pass 20:59
20:20 Heuston/Galway	190+DV+5Cr	400	21:35/
21:30 Heuston/Cork	076+5Cr+GSV	380/400	Hazelhatch pass 21:48

The Waterford line was worked by an assortment of equipment on this date as below:

09:50 Heuston/Waterford	2603/04/01/2
09:45 Waterford/Heuston	088+7Mk3+EGV
14:50 Heuston/Waterford	130+155+6p/p(6105)
14:45 Waterford/Heuston	2604/2603
18:15 Heuston/Waterford	081+EGV+7Mk3
18:00 Waterford/Heuston	155+130+6p/p(6104)

The 09:50 ex Heuston was split on arrival in Waterford with a two-car set being held for the following morning's 05:40 Waterford/Dublin. (The normal routine is to hold a two-car set off an incoming six-car formation.)

Commencing on Saturday 5th November and continuing up to 17th December an 07:45 (SO) Dublin/Belfast relief train has been operating. Initially this train returned at 16:00 but was deferred in stages to its current 16:55 path. A similar relief started running on Thursdays commencing on 1st December and returns at 16:55 as on Saturdays. The regular 07:55 ex Dublin is generally made up to ten Mk2s except on Fridays. A return fare of £13 applies each day except Fridays and Sundays.

Due to the failure of the 15:10 Westport/Dublin on 13th November, a large group of passengers missed

the last scheduled connection at Kildare for the Waterford line. Fortunately there was an empty railcar set en route to Waterford and this was used to form a special from Kildare which departed around 20:35. The empty train was a balancing working to replace the railcar set which would normally work the Monday only 05:40 Waterford to Heuston. This latter set, 2603/4, had been used to form a relief to the 18:00 from Waterford on this date and arrived in Heuston at 20:17 with about one hundred passengers.

Dispute

A rostering related dispute at Cork depot badly disrupted services on 22nd and 23rd November. The first trains affected were the 14:45 Cork/Heuston and 15:15 Cork/Tralee. Later in the evening the 17:30 Heuston/Cork terminated at Limerick Junction while the following 18:15 Heuston/Tralee is understood to have terminated at Mallow. The next day in addition to Cork/Cobh services the 05:20, 07:35 and 09:00 Cork/Heuston were cancelled as was the 09:00 Heuston/Tralee, 07:30 Tralee/Heuston and 10:45 Heuston/Cork. According to Irish Rail buses were being provided in place of cancelled trains although these were only intended to cater for people not in a position to make their own alternative arrangements.

LRT Proposals Take Shape

With some £200m allocated for the construction of an LRT network in the operational program for transport, the implementation agents, CIÉ, are finalising route options with a view to deciding the basic alignment of the two initial routes by the Spring of 1995. It is proposed to put a detailed design on public display by May/June 1995 after which a Planning Inspector would be appointed to conduct a public enquiry. Assuming no undue difficulties or controversy, physical construction work is expected to commence in the Spring of 1996 and take some three years to complete. The priority objective is to reach Tallaght, the secondary objective to proceed along the former Harcourt Street alignment at least as far as Sandyford where the depot to service the entire system will be built. The following details have been made public:

- The route between the Centre of the City and the canal is as yet undecided and might be via either Grafton Street, Dawson Street or George's Street or possibly a combination of more than one street in the event of the incoming and outgoing lines being segregated. Either way the LRT is most likely to run along at least part of Stephen's Green West before joining Harcourt Street.
- It is a requirement that underbridges on the former Harcourt Street line be restored in such a way as to provide at least 5.3 metres clearance above the public road - in some places the additional clearance is as much as 2 metres higher than the original elevation. The standard clearance will also apply to the reinstated Grand Canal bridge at Grand Parade as there are public roadways on both sides of the canal at this point. The transition between street running and reserved right of way will have to be made just north of the canal bridge in an area which is currently awaiting redevelopment.
- A station may be provided at the point where the alignment crosses Ranelagh Road, just north of Ranelagh Village although as this is an elevated site there may be some problems in providing satisfactory access for disabled patrons. The next two stations are likely to be at Beechwood Avenue followed by Milltown, both located at street level, the latter just south of the Nine Arches. As a general rule the distance between stations would be approximately 800 metres.
- The eventual terminus of the Harcourt Street line is planned to be at Wyattville near the proposed junction of the Southern Cross portion of the C-Ring and the South East Motorway. Some 5 acres have been set aside at this location for the construction of Park and Ride facilities as well as a bus

interchange.

- The vehicles will be of the low floor type with 70% of the underside, including the entrances, no more than 30mm above the ground. There will be about 25 articulated trams to cover both the Tallaght and Harcourt Street lines, each with a crush load capacity of 250 people. The intended maximum speed of 70 kph seems a little disappointing, although with stops every 800 metres it is acceleration and braking which will determine performance.
- No signalling is planned on the reserved right of way although signals of some sort interlinked with road traffic lights will be required for street running.
- The system will be electrified at 750 volts DC.

New Timetable

A new mainline public timetable leaflet has been issued valid from 7th November and is effectively a reprint of the current timetable incorporating the various changes which have been made since 16th May.

The only additional alteration of any consequence is the provision of a new Sunday-only 16:45 Claremorris to Heuston train which serves all stations to Kildare and arrives in Dublin at 20:10. This train had in fact been running since mid-October as a relief to the 15:10 from Westport and brings the number of regular Up Sunday services on this line to four. The other new Sunday-only services at 18:10 from Portadown to Dublin and 20:15 from Dublin to Dundalk are not shown, a fact that helps to explain the very light loading of the latter train which naturally enough does not appear in the NIR timetable either.

South West Corridor

Details of peak-period arrivals at Heuston on Thursday 26th October give some indication of the extent of commuter type traffic into that station and as can be seen many passengers continue to arrive on trains which pre-date the introduction of Arrow local services. Details are shown below:

Train	Schedule	Actual	Formation	Load
07:29 ex Kildare	08:10	arr 08:14	2608/7	120/130
06:35 ex Athlone	08:25	arr 08:26	080+DV+5Mk2a/b	230/260
05:20 ex Cork	08:40	arr 08:38	084+6Mk2+EGV	270/300
08:25 ex Kildare	09:06	arr 09:13	2610/13	85
07:00 ex Limerick	09:25	arr 09:25	204+GSV+5Cr	180

Although the Cork train arrived ahead of schedule and connecting buses left for the City commendably quickly thereafter, at 08:41 and 08:42, some thirty intending passengers were unable to board and were still in the station at 08:56 - a fact that perhaps explains the single minded dash to the buses as soon as the train arrived! Passengers for Dublin Airport had less luck with connecting buses as the 08:55 departure did not operate and those disinclined to take a taxi had to wait until the 09:30 departure which left as scheduled.

Dundalk

Work is well advanced on the new Ardee Road freight terminal which is being built in the former Irish North yard at Dundalk (Junction) station. The new container gantry crane had been erected by the end of November and work was well advanced on the laying of a concrete apron to allow road vehicles to

move about within the yard. The number of sidings is now reduced from six to four, the most northerly - Manisty's siding - is much shortened and is now little more than about 75 metres in length while two of the other three still have temporary buffer stops in place pending commissioning of the area within the travel range of the crane.

Because of the necessity to acquire lands from Dundalk Urban District Council a railway works order has been published in respect of the final 84 metres of twin track at the western extremity of the depot, as despite the amount of land available in the Irish North yard it was not possible to lay out the 275 metres of straight track serviced by the gantry without breaching the boundaries of existing railway property. The new freight yard is expected to cost about £2.5m and should be ready for use in early 1995. The gantry crane was supplied by Wellmann-Booth and is of 35 tonnes capacity.



Ballina to Clonmel timber train unloading at Clonmel, 14/10/1994.

Miscellaneous

- Penrose Quay freight depot in Cork has been awarded ISO 9002 certification for the quality handling, storage and distribution of cement. This is the first Irish Rail operation to receive such endorsement although it is hoped that all cement depots will be operated in accordance with the requirements of the standard in due course.
- The contract for the conveyance of stone from Balleece Quarry, near Rathdrum, to Killinick, in connection with coastal defence work, ceased on or around 23rd August. The stone trains had been running approximately twice weekly and were formed of barytes wagons which were based at Wellington Bridge when not in use.
- Included in a request for planning permission by Ogden Entertainment Services (Ireland) Limited is a proposal to build a new station at Ashtown a few hundred yards on the Clonsilla side of the level crossing. The station would be linked by two covered pedestrian walkways with an

arena/stadium and a hotel/conference centre/shopping centre/casino/Imax theatre.

Northern Ireland Railways

Cross Harbour Link

The Cross-Harbour rail link and associated works have been completed at a final cost of some £29m of which 75% came from the European Regional Development Fund. The new link diverges from the Bangor line just East of the 1970s-built Lagan viaduct by means of a double junction known as Lagan Junction and is then carried on a short embankment before crossing Bridge End Road on a single span steel bridge. From this point onwards the line runs along an elevated pre-cast concrete box viaduct some 1,425 metres long which terminates at the two span steel bridge at Dock Street, the latter immediately adjacent to Yorkgate Station. The initial section to Queens Quay Junction is double track, the remainder of the line being single except for a short loop at Donegall Quay which is capable of accommodating a six-piece railcar set.

Included in the viaduct section is the new 191 metre long River Lagan crossing named after William Dargan. The reason for the lengthy viaduct, particularly at the Yorkgate end, is due to the nature of the ground on both sides of the river where the sub-soil consists of sleech - a soft grey silt which would not have been sufficiently stable to support earthen embankments. The piers supporting the viaducts on either side of the Dargan bridge are built on piles driven some 30 metres into the firmer glacial deposits underlying the sleech. The river spans are constructed on even deeper piles which extend some 36 metres below the river bed to the bedrock beneath. The box viaduct consists of precisely cast post-tensioned segments erected in accordance with the balanced cantilever principle, i.e. one at a time on either side of the supporting pier leaving a narrow gap at mid-span which was subsequently filled with concrete poured in-situ. The segments were manufactured in a purpose built plant at Queen's Island close to the construction site.

Provision has been made in the design of the viaduct to accommodate masts should these be required in the event of future overhead electrification. Track on the viaduct consists of ballasted wooden sleepers with long-welded rail set on neoprene shock absorbing pads. Check rail is in place over the entire section of viaduct in accordance with normal practice for such structures. Noise containment measures include the provision of parapets extending 450mm above rail level along the entire length of the viaduct, a measure claimed to reduce noise levels by 50%. The main contractors for both the rail and road links was a joint venture company formed by two well known Northern Ireland concerns, Grahams of Dromore and Farrans of Dunmurry. Once the right of way had been handed over to NIR, the latter installed the track and arranged the completion of the rail link.

Three piece Castle class DEMU, No.451, worked a trial train from York Road to Central and back around mid-day on 21st September thus becoming the first train to traverse the full length of the new link. A second Castle class DEMU, No.452, worked empty from Central to the new York Road maintenance facility around 17:00 the same day returning around 19:00 with a VIP party. (The first movement of passenger stock over the river crossing took place on 12th August when DEMU, No.459, worked a test train from Yorkgate to the County Down side of the Dargan bridge.)

The first public services across the new link operated on 26th November when a shuttle service was provided between Central and Yorkgate as part of celebrations marking the completion of the road and rail crossings. The first train left Central at 10:38 and consisted of 452+4+454 and, in common with subsequent trains throughout the day, proceeded at a sedate pace in order to give passengers time to

savour the spectacular and unfamiliar views available from the elevated railway viaduct and river crossing. The same set continued to operate services until 16:07 when the last train departed Yorkgate for Central. Special souvenir tickets costing £3 return were issued on this date, the proceeds from which were donated to local charities. Special services also operated the following day for railway staff and their families.

Regular scheduled services commenced on 28th November, the first passenger-carrying train being the 06:35 Central to Larne Harbour which was formed by 2+95. This train left sharp to time and covered the eight miles to Greenisland in 10 minutes 25 seconds, the section from Central to Yorkgate taking 2 minutes 50 seconds. Despite pilot working on the Larne line, between Kilroot and Whitehead, the new integrated service ran fairly smoothly on the first day with the signalling arrangements on the Cross-Harbour link being sufficiently flexible to avoid significant additional delays due to out of course working.

- The general speed limit on the Cross-Harbour link is 45 mph although the initial restriction from Lagan Junction to Queens Quay Junction is 25 mph. The latter limit also applies to trains entering and exiting the loop at Donegall Quay.
- Mileage is measured from Dublin via Belfast Central, York Road depot being thus located at MP 115. Existing mileposts from York Road to both Larne and Londonderry continue to apply as heretofore, the changeover point being in line with the buffer stops of the old York Road terminus.
- The Cross-Harbour link includes gradients of 1 in 62 between Lagan Junction and the Dargan Bridge and between York Road depot and Yorkgate.
- A new passenger information system has been provided at Belfast Central and Botanic stations whereby details of train services are displayed on overhead colour monitors in the concourse and on the platforms. The information is normally displayed in two ways, a summary format on monitors in the general circulation areas and in detail for the next train on the platform monitors. The system is computer driven and is fed automatically to stations covered by the long line public address system. The contract for the supply and commissioning of the necessary equipment was awarded to British Rail business systems and, although not fully operational for the opening of the Cross-Harbour link, the new system has the potential to be very useful and will give NIR an information system considerably in advance of anything so far installed in Ireland.
- While some 73 passenger trains are scheduled to use the Cross-Harbour link on Mondays to Fridays, total movements are understood to exceed 130 trains when empty stock movements from York Road to Belfast Central are taken into account. This level of activity makes the line by far the busiest stretch of single track railway in Ireland.

Dublin/Belfast Project

Progress on this project has been slow in recent months with resources concentrated elsewhere. Relaying of the Down line recommenced at the beginning of November though up to the time of writing in early December barely half a mile of new track was in place commencing near MP 78^{1/4} just north of Acton accommodation crossing. LWR is however in-situ through Scarva to approximately MP 79^{3/4} and also from MP 85^{1/2} to 87. Still on the Down line, 20 metre rail lengths are awaiting welding preparatory to replacing jointed rail on concrete sleepers between MP 77^{3/4} and 78^{1/4} approximately.

The rehabilitation of the Lisburn/Belfast section is to commence in early 1995 and will, it is understood, require closure of sections of one or other line for extended periods as the work progresses.

- OB 189 located about a mile south of Newry has been demolished and replaced by a raised and elongated structure which will carry the Newry by-pass road. The bridge sections were cast

adjacent to the line on the Down side.

- The level crossing at Poyntzpass was excavated towards the end of October during the course of which the track was renewed and a segmented, removable road surface installed. The crossing remains gated and is be manually operated from a wheel in the signal box - the last location to be so worked on NIR.
- OB 248, Balteagh bridge, near MP 89½ between Portadown and Lurgan has been demolished. This stone arch structure has been redundant for many years and will not be replaced.
- The footbridge at Windsor Park, just north of Adelaide, has been renewed.

York Road

The redundant station buildings at York Road were demolished in mid-September. These rather basic facilities were opened in 1975 and included a booking office, toilets, shop and small concourse.

The new facilities at York Road including the train running shed, two-stage carriage wash and fuelling points were all completed in advance of the final clear out of CSD which took place over the weekend of 26th/27th November. Amongst the movements observed on the 26th was 111 hauling 101, a ballast wagon and a Mk2 coach which passed through Yorkgate at 13:50.

Great Victoria Street

Work is well advanced on this project with the formation graded and ballasted along the former mainline to a point within a short distance of Central Junction and also along much of the alignment of the new Blythefield curve, although as yet the cutting at the City Hospital end has yet to be opened out. (The Blythefield curve will facilitate direct running from the soon to be re-opened Great Victoria Street Station to the Larne and Bangor lines via City Hospital, Botanic and Belfast Central.)

The contract for the signalling of the Great Victoria Street area, including both the planned junction west of City Hospital halt and the soon to be re-instated Central Junction was awarded to Westinghouse of Chippenham, Wiltshire, at the beginning of September and is valued at £1.5m. Grant Lyon Eagre of Scunthorpe have been awarded a contract for the supply of trackwork in the same area and this is to be delivered as a package consisting of a double junction, six crossovers and three turnouts. Central Junction which was disconnected in October 1965 is to be restored in the form of two turnouts trailing onto the Up line, separated by a facing crossover and arranged in such a way as to function as a double junction. The new junction adjacent to City Hospital Halt will be a conventional double junction with moving switch diamonds on the Down road.

Tenders have been called for the assembly of 2,500 metres of track between Donegall Road and Great Victoria Street, the work to include the installation of twelve turnouts supplied by others. This latter contract appears to include the laying and alignment of the three running lines entering the station and the connections between them but excludes the installation of the junctions with the existing line. (NB: A crossover constitutes two turnouts in this context).

- The station at Great Victoria Street, which will form part of an integrated transportation centre, is expected to open in September 1995.

Bleach Green Junction/Antrim

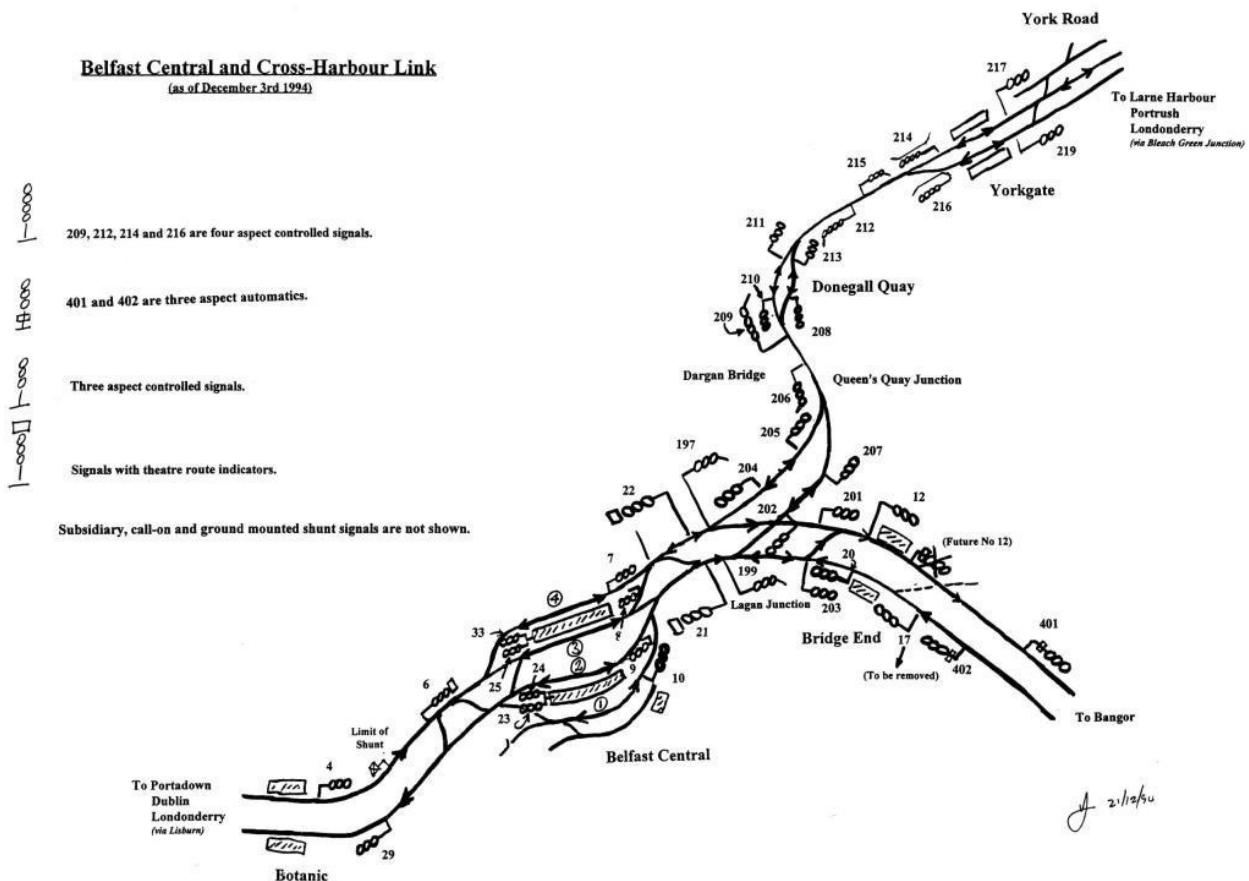
Coincident with the opening of the Cross-Harbour link it was formally announced that the Bleach Green Junction/Antrim line is to be re-opened to regular traffic although not until mid-1997. Work will include the installation of concrete sleepers and CWR, the automation of level crossings at Kingsmoss

No.1, Kingsmoss No.2, Kingsbog Junction, Ballymartin and Kilmakee, as well as the provision of modern signalling. This section of line was part of the NCC mainline from Belfast to Londonderry and although little used after the diversion of services to Belfast Central (via Lisburn) in 1976 remained double track until 1986, when the Up line was abandoned. Although unlikely to be restored as a double road, the additional cost of doing so would hardly be much greater than the extra signalling costs likely to be incurred in the provision of passing loops.

When work is complete Londonderry and Portrush services will revert to their pre-1976 routing thus saving up to thirty minutes on current journey times. The Cross-Harbour link made this development almost inevitable as trains running via Bleach Green Junction can now run directly to Central, Botanic and (in 1995) Great Victoria Street. It should also be possible to considerably upgrade commuter services from Coleraine, Ballymena and Antrim to Belfast although the full potential of such services might not be realised in the context of a single track. The possibility of re-opening intermediate stations at locations such as Monkstown and Templepatrick is believed to be under active consideration although no firm decisions had been announced up to the time of writing in early December.

Signalling, Layouts And Level Crossings

Following the completion of trackwork at Lagan Junction and the re-modelling of the layout east of Central Station reported in the last issue, attention shifted to the signalling system in and around the new junction as well as on the link itself.



27th/29th August saw the commissioning of the integrated signalling panel at Belfast Central which in addition to controlling the Lisburn/Bangor line, as before, also assumed control of the lines from Yorkgate to Carrickfergus, Whitehead to Larne Harbour and Bleach Green Junction to Monkstown - the latter section comprising the remaining 1½ miles of double track on the ex NCC mainline to

Antrim. The thirteen miles from Monkstown to Antrim continues to be worked as a single line section controlled by radio linked tablet instruments located at Belfast Central and Antrim.

Preparatory to the transfer of control of the Yorkgate area to Belfast Central the de-railers located in advance of signals 217 and 219 at the former station were removed on 27th August. These had been in place since the opening of Yorkgate station and were intended to facilitate storage of stock at the elevated platforms, whilst at the same time guarding against the possibility of a run-away down the 1 in 62 gradient linking the station with the former NCC mainline.

On 4th September signals 7, 8, 9, 10 at Belfast Central were converted to 3-aspect operation, the green aspect being temporarily disabled on the latter three signals as the only route available from Platforms 1, 2 and 3 was that along the wrong line to signal 18 at Bridge End. The subsidiary indications were removed at the same time, the amber aspects being used to control forward shunting movements.

On 2nd October four-aspect signals 214 and 216 were brought into use at the Central end of Yorkgate platforms, but were fixed at danger for the time being. Also on 2nd October signals 12A on the Down line and 20 on the Up line, both located between Belfast Central and Bridge End, were taken out of use. Hand-signalling was introduced at signals 7, 8, 9, 10 and 21 on 4th October from which date the pointwork east of Central Station was converted to manual operation.

During a series of possessions of the Belfast Central / Bridge End section from 27th to 30th October, the new signalling and trackwork east of Central station, including Lagan Junction and the Cross-Harbour link, were brought into operation as shown on the diagram. The layout at Belfast Central is now much more flexible than formerly, with bi-directional working available through all platforms, on both lines to Queens Quay Junction and on the Up Bangor line as far as the trailing crossover east of Lagan Junction. Amongst other things it is possible to have simultaneous arrivals from Bangor and Larne or simultaneous departures to Bangor and Larne or indeed any combination of an arrival from either Bangor or Larne and a departure to either Bangor or Larne.

The loop at Donegall Quay is also bi-directional as are both platforms at Yorkgate. The signal spacing particularly around Donegall Quay is such as to require the use of four-aspect signals at various locations in order to provide adequate braking distance. Signals 214 and 216 at Yorkgate are four-aspect due to the short distance between the next two signals, 212 and 210. Likewise 212 is four-aspect due to the distance between signals 210 and 206, while in the Down direction 209 is a four-aspect because of the positioning of signals 211 and 215. A train approaching a red aspect at signals 206, 210 or 215 will find the two immediately preceding signals displaying a double-yellow and a single yellow respectively, the first restrictive indication being encountered at full braking distance from the stop signal to which it refers. As the advance sighting for signal 217 is less than ideal due to the rapid drop in the elevation of the line beyond Yorkgate, this latter is repeated by a banner signal located on the Donegall Quay side of the station, an arrangement currently unique in Ireland.

The trailing crossover between the Up and Down Bangor lines at Bridge End (No.111) together with the mainline end of the facing crossover from the Down line to the CSD headshunts (No.112) were removed on Tuesday 29th November consequent upon the closure of CSD the previous weekend. No.18 signal at Bridge End which was fixed at danger and marked the limit of wrong line working on the Up Bangor line has also been removed as have all subsidiary and ground-mounted shunt signals in the area, including that mounted on No.18 signal. In addition to facilitating Bangor/Bridge End/CSD movements the latter subsidiary allowed wrong line movements originating on Platforms 1, 2 and 3 at Belfast Central to gain access to the depot. The depot site is required by the Department of the Environment for the construction of access routes to the Cross-Harbour motorway.

A new 50 mph turnout, facing in the Up direction, was brought into use about half a mile east of the former station at Kilroot on 28th November from which date traffic was resumed on the Down line

between Carrickfergus and MP 12½. It is unclear when, or if, double line working will be restored over the final 2½ miles to Whitehead as considerable and costly work will be required to restore the sea wall at MP 12½. New two aspect signals 467R and 469 have been provided on the Down line, the former at the site of Kilroot station, the latter a short distance in advance of the turnout. The former mid-section Up automatic signals, 472R and 470, have been re-commissioned and are now located on the landward side of the Down line, east of the facing turnout. Pending final commissioning of signalling arrangements between Kilroot and Whitehead, this latter section was worked by pilotman thus causing some delays on the first day of public service on the Cross-Harbour route. With the partial re-instatement of the double line and the restoration of track circuit block working, the Carrickfergus/Whitehead section has reverted to centralised control and like the remainder of the Larne line is the responsibility of the Belfast Central signalman. (Pilot working between Kilroot and Whitehead ceased on 7/12/1994.)

The crossover giving access to the Up Platform from the single line at the Larne end of Whitehead station was renewed in November. No signalling alterations have yet been carried out at Whitehead consequent on the singling of the line from Kilroot other than the alteration of the Up starting signal No.476 to read across the west facing crossover onto the former Down road instead of reading along the Up line as formerly.

Tablet working between Ballymena and Ballymoney is now understood to have ceased with the last timetabled movement on 21st July with track circuit block working, supervised from Coleraine, being in force for the first trains the following morning. (See July issue.)

Rolling Stock Renewal

NIR have published notice of the existence of a qualification system in respect of eligibility to tender for the supply of two or three car diesel-electric or diesel multiple unit railcars. Such qualification will be valid for 3 years commencing 1/4/1995, during which period NIR are expected to invite tenders for the replacement of much of its existing fleet of DEMUs.

Derailment

The leading vehicle of the 14:15 Ballymena/Belfast Central service was partially derailed on Thursday 24th November as a result of a collision between the train and a stationary tractor/trailer unit on an accommodation crossing a little north of Crumlin on the Lisburn/Antrim branch. Eight passengers were injured although only one was still in hospital later that evening. The train was formed by a 3-car 80 class set, 739/763/87, with the driving trailer leading. Damage to 739 is believed to be significant and the vehicle may be beyond economic repair. About 150 metres of track was damaged, the line thus remaining closed until the following Sunday morning when traffic resumed with the 10:10 to Londonderry.

The following day, Friday, some trains were diverted to run via Bleach Green Junction to Yorkgate and although in some instances the sets continued to Central via the Cross-Harbour link the passengers were obliged to complete their journey by bus. The first train to run to Yorkgate was the 06:00 from Coleraine, although limited capacity between Antrim and Monkstown meant that other services such as the 16:05 from Belfast to Londonderry ran to Crumlin with bus transfers to Antrim. There were no diversions into or out of Yorkgate on the Saturday.

Rail-Link Bus Service

Consequent on the opening of the Cross-Harbour link the bus service between Yorkgate and Belfast Central Station, via the City Centre, has been altered to operate between Central Station and the City

Centre only. As before the service operates daily, except Sundays, and now follows a circular route from Central Station via May Street, City Hall, Donegall Place, High Street and Oxford Street. Services operate every eight minutes from 07:17 to 17:52 Mondays to Fridays and at approximately twenty minute intervals thereafter up to about 21:00, On Saturdays services operate at ten minute intervals from 09:55 to 17:57 and at approximately twenty minute intervals outside this period, commencing at 07:35 and terminating at 21:00.

The re-opening of the former GNR(I) terminus at Great Victoria Street in 1995 will doubtless, see the demise of the Rail-Link bus as the latter is a mere two to three minutes walk from the City Hall. The proposed, but as yet un-financed, Donegall Quay Halt on the Cross-Harbour link is within a few minutes' walk of High Street and, if built, would bring most of the City Centre within easy reach of one or other station, be it Great Victoria Street, City Hospital, Botanic, Belfast Central or Donegall Quay.

Traffic

A temporary block post was established at Myroe level crossing, near Limavady Junction, on 13th August in order to facilitate additional traffic into Londonderry in connection with the annual Apprentice Boys demonstration.

With Down playing Dublin in the GAA football finals there was a considerable amount of extra traffic on the Belfast/Dublin line on 18th September. Although noticeably quieter than the previous Down appearance in 1991 (due at least in part to the restricted accommodation currently available at Croke Park) the evening trains are worth summarising and are tabulated below:

Sunday 18th September 1994

Train	Formation	Load	Notes
17:35 Dundalk	2607/8/17/14	90/130	Skerries pass 17:56
17:55 Belfast	96+4+85+2+93	550/600	Skerries pass 18:09
18:20 Belfast	113+11Mk2	550/600	Skerries pass 18:41
18:50 Newry	92+4+87+2+81	550/600	Skerries pass 19:12
19:05 Belfast	98+2+84+3+95	450/500	Skerries pass 19:20
19:25 Belfast	83+4+90	250/270	Skerries pass 19:55

As mentioned elsewhere an additional service is now provided on Sunday evenings leaving Portadown at 18:10 for Dublin. This train consisted of 67+4+94 on 23rd October and left Drogheda with some 200 passengers. The following 18:00 from Belfast, 172/128 + 8 Mk2 + EGV, had some 550 passengers departing Drogheda on the same date and was running about twenty minutes behind schedule due to the late arrival in Belfast of the incoming set and the less than ideal motive power. With effect from 11th December this train has been worked by an Irish Rail set, 2616/15/14/17/4/3 forming the first working.

An 07:00 Newry/Tralee special ran on Sunday 27th November formed by 85+4+92 and carried some 350 Down football supporters to a league fixture. The 20:00 Newry/Bangor on this date was formed by 452+4+459 and had about 90 passengers leaving Newry, 7 more joined at Poyntzpass, 40 at Portadown and about 20 at Lurgan. Many of these transferred to the 20:45 Belfast to Londonderry at Lisburn, the latter formed by 98+3+67, which departed at 21:08 with about 250 passengers.

Saturday 3rd December was a busy day with trains to Dublin at 07:45, 08:00, 08:30, 09:00, 09:20, 11:00, 15:00, 16:55, 17:00, 18:00 and 18:10. These were formed by 95+4+92, 113 + 11 Mk2, 68+4+90, 112 + 11 Mk2, 83+4+84, 086 + EGV + 9 Mk2, 113 + 11 Mk2, 087 + DV + 7 Cr, 112 + 11 Mk2, 086 + EGV + 9 Mk2 and 98+1+67 respectively, much of the additional traffic being due to an International

Rugby match in Dublin, although shoppers from the Republic accounted for most of the additional activity in the evening. Some indication of the scale of the shopping traffic on this date can be gauged from the loading on the 07:55 from Dublin which is understood to have had some 900 passengers on board arriving in Belfast, this despite an 07:45 relief which had at least 450 passengers leaving Dublin and picked up along the way.

Saturday 10th December was a little quieter although there were reliefs to the 08:00, 17:00 and 18:00 ex Belfast. Shoppers from Dublin were accommodated on trains at 07:45, 07:55 and 08:05 which were formed by 075 + 6 Mk2a/b + DV, 077 + EGV + 9 Mk2 and 127/151 + 6p/p (6102). The 07:45 ex Belfast was formed by 85+4+97.

On Fridays only, since at least the beginning of November, additional trains have been operating from Belfast Central to Newry at 14:48 and 16:55 thus forming reliefs to the 15:00 and 17:00 to Dublin respectively. The 14:48 stops at Botanic and Portadown only while the 16:55 serves Botanic, Lisburn, Lurgan and Portadown.

Locomotives and Rolling Stock

Motor coach No.68 re-entered revenue service on 21st October following overhaul at York Road.

No.111 has been out-shopped sporting reconditioned bogies and yaw dampers although as of early December the locomotive had not been released for general traffic.

Magheramorne

The possibility of rail-hauled containerised waste from Belfast to Magheramorne Quarry, on the Larne line, has been raised again in the context of a renewed application by Blue Circle Industries to develop and operate a containment landfill site at this location. It is estimated that the site could absorb up to 300,000 tonnes of domestic and industrial waste per annum. It remains to be seen, however, if the company can overcome objections from local residents and environmentalists.

Timetable Alterations

A new system timetable was introduced on 28th November to coincide with the opening of the Cross-Harbour link. The various routes are reviewed below:

Belfast/Dublin

Services to and from Dublin on weekdays are subject to detail alterations in respect of intermediate times and are accelerated by up to 9 minutes in the Up direction (11:00 ex Belfast, arrive 13:16) and decelerated by up to 4 minutes in the Down direction (07:55 ex Dublin, arrive 10:19). The fastest Up train, the 08:00 ex Belfast, currently takes two hours while the fastest Down train, the 18:20 ex Dublin, takes two hours and seven minutes. Both trains stop in Portadown only, the morning Up service being scheduled to complete the 87½ miles to Dublin in 87 minutes, probably the fastest schedule yet published from Portadown to Dublin.

The 16:55 Bangor to Poyntzpass (Mondays to Fridays) now runs to Newry arriving at 18:32 and returning as a new service at 18:40 serving Poyntzpass, Scarva, Portadown, Lurgan, Moira, Lisburn and Botanic before continuing to Bangor.

On Sundays the 10:15 Belfast/Dublin and 10:30 Dublin/Belfast are advanced to depart at 10:00 and 10:15 respectively although this change has been deferred to 7th January 1995. Again up trains are accelerated by up to 8 minutes (14:30 ex Belfast, arrive 16:52) while Down trains are decelerated by up to 5 minutes (15:00 ex Dublin, arrive 17:30). A new service is shown from Portadown to Dublin at 18:10 serving Newry, Dundalk and Drogheda and arriving in Dublin at 19:55. This train actually

commenced running on 16th October and is rostered to be formed by a Dundalk-based Irish Rail 2601 class railcar set although a Portadown-based eighty class set was used up to 4th December.

Bangor/Larne Harbour to Portadown

Weekday Services from Bangor to Portadown and vice-versa are little altered up to 18:30 after which time the service is somewhat re-cast as follows:

New Service 18:10 Bangor to Belfast Central serving Bangor West only.

Central Depart 19:00

18:15 (MF) Bangor/Lisburn deferred to 18:25, extended to Portadown and altered to run non-stop from Botanic to Lisburn, then Moira, Lurgan, Portadown. This train extends to Newry on Fridays only.

Formerly left Central at 18:45 and served all stations to Lisburn.

18:45 (MF) Bangor/Portadown cancelled, formerly departed Belfast Central at 19:05 and ran non-stop from City Hospital to Lisburn, then Knockmore (R), Moira (R), Lurgan, Portadown.

Central Depart 19:30

19:05 (MF) Bangor/Portadown advanced to 19:00 and serves all stations to Lisburn except Crawfordsburn and Cultra. No longer runs to Portadown.

19:50 (MF) Bangor/Belfast Central deferred to 20:00.

Central Depart 20:00

19:25 (MF) Whitehead/Portadown serving all stations except Trooperslane - effectively a new service as between Central and Lisburn.

Central Depart 21:00

20:20 (MF) Bangor to Portadown deferred to 20:30 and serves all stations except Crawfordsburn.

Central Depart 22:00

20:50 (MF) Bangor/Portadown deferred to 21:30 and altered to run non-stop from Botanic to Lisburn, then Moira, Lurgan and Portadown.

Central Depart 22:03

21:35 (MF) Bangor/Lisburn operates from Central only, serving all stations.

Central Depart 23:00

22:20 (MF) Bangor/Portadown deferred to 22:30 and runs to Lisburn only, serving all stations except Crawfordsburn. This is the last Up train of the day.

The net effect of the above changes is reduce from six to five the number of departures from Bangor between 19:00 and 22:30. Similarly the number of trains serving all stations between Central and Lisburn between 18:45 and 23:00 is reduced from six to five although the total number of trains remains the same.

On Saturday evenings a similar service to the above now operates except that the 19:00 ex Bangor leaves at 19:15 and serves all stations between Central and Lisburn. The 19:25 ex Whitehead to Portadown runs non-stop to Lisburn, then serves Moira, Lurgan and Portadown. The only other change of consequence on Saturdays is the cancellation of the 12:50 from Bangor to Lisburn.

Services on the Larne line are radically altered and now run through to Belfast Central with a few continuing to other destinations including Londonderry, Portrush, Portadown, Balmoral and Botanic. Generally speaking, however, Larne line trains are timed to arrive in Belfast Central at or around the same time as Bangor line trains with the latter continuing in most instances to Lisburn or Portadown.

The time available for connection is in some instances as little as two minutes, ample time for cross-platform interchange, but somewhat short should it be necessary to transfer between Platforms 1/2 and Platforms 3/4. Designated Boat trains leave Larne Harbour on weekdays at 06:20 (MF), 06:25 (SO), 10:05, 14:15, 19:05 and 21:52. The 14:15 ex Larne is probably the most interesting as it serves Whitehead only and arrives in Belfast Central at 14:53 giving cross-platform connection into the 15:00 to Dublin.



15:30 Scarva/Portadown, at Scarva, 13th July 1994 (see previous issue).

Belfast/Londonderry/Belfast And Coleraine/Portrush

Changes on this route are very minor, the most significant being the tidying up of crossings, particularly those involving local trains between Belfast and Ballymena some of which are slightly retimed and generally accelerated. The other change relates to the Cross-Harbour link and the through running of trains to and from Larne Harbour. On Mondays to Fridays the 07:15, 08:50, 11:20 and 13:40 Belfast to Londonderry now start from Larne Harbour at 06:20, 07:53, 10:20 and 12:45 respectively. Similarly the 17:30 to Portrush now starts from Carrickfergus while in the Up direction the 06:00 ex Coleraine runs to Larne Harbour with the 08:05 and 14:40 ex Londonderry running through to Carrickfergus.

Portadown To Bangor/Larne Harbour

As in the Up direction services between Portadown and Bangor are little altered except in the evening, the principal alterations being as under:

18:20 (MF) Lisburn to Bangor advanced to 18:15 and diverted to Whitehead, thus the 18:47 from Belfast Central to Bangor is cancelled.

19:30 (MF) Lisburn to Bangor is cancelled. This train served all stations to Bangor except

Crawfordsburn.

18:50 (MF) Portadown to Bangor runs from Newry at 18:40, thus leaving Portadown at 19:06 and is extended to Bangor, serving all stations except Bridge End, Cultra and Crawfordsburn.

A new service is provided to Belfast by the 20:25 ex Lisburn which serves all stations to Larne Harbour except Trooperslane, Magheramorne and Glynn.

The 20:10 Portadown to Bangor departs at 20:05, but no longer serves stations between Hilden and Finaghy inclusive, this being left to the 20:25 above.

On Saturdays the 09:30 ex Portrush terminates at Belfast Central instead of running to Bangor. This change precipitates the cancellation of the 13:50 Lisburn to Belfast Central as the 12:50

Bangor/Lisburn no longer runs. Later on the 19:30 Lisburn/Bangor is cancelled but is replaced by a new 19:05 Portadown/Bangor running in a similar path to the 18:40 (MF) ex Newry above. Likewise there is a new 20:25 ex Lisburn and the 20:10 ex Portadown is similarly altered as on Mondays to Fridays.

As in the Up direction services on the Larne line are re-cast with trains generally originating in Belfast Central although there are through trains from Londonderry, Coleraine, Portadown and Lisburn.

Departures generally coincide with trains to Bangor originating in Lisburn or Portadown and as with Up trains the connection time is often as little as two minutes. In the case of the 17:52 to Larne Harbour the connecting 17:05 ex Portadown arrives at 17:51 and departs for Bangor at 17:52. In most instances connections in the Down direction are cross-platform and should not present too much difficulty.

Although the last departure for Larne is at 21:55 ex Belfast Central, replacing the 22:00 ex Yorkgate, there is a new service at 23:00 to Carrickfergus which connects with both the 20:15 ex Dublin and the 22:33 ex Lisburn.

Services on the Larne line are summarised in the table below:

Belfast/Larne/Belfast
Summary of services from 28/11/1994 (*)

	Monday to Friday	Saturday	Sunday (**)
Belfast/Carrickfergus	37(36)/7	23(24)/1	7(7)/0
Carrickfergus/Whitehead	31(34)/5	22(24)/1	7(7)/0
Whitehead/Larne	22(22)/3	19(20)/1	6(6)/0
Larne/Larne Harbour	18(20)/2	15(17)/1	6(6)/0
Larne Harbour/Larne	18(20)/4	14(17)/1	6(6)/0
Larne/Whitehead	22(22)/5	18(20)/1	6(6)/0
Whitehead/Carrickfergus	31(34)/9	21(24)/1	7(7)/0
Carrickfergus/Belfast	36(37)/9	21(24)/1	7(7)/0

(*) Figures in brackets refer to frequencies effective from 16/5/1994 - 24/7/1994 inclusive.

‘/’ Figures after indicate services to/from points beyond Belfast Central.

(**) Winter Services.

Links

The new timetable requires a minimum of 22 sets to operate, the same as the one it replaces. These sets are based in Portadown (4), Londonderry (2), Larne Harbour Bangor (2), Coleraine (2) and York Road (10). On Monday 28th November there were actually 23 sets in use as the 08:00 from Portadown was

formed by railcars rather than the second locomotive hauled set which did, however, work the 09:00 to Dublin. The allocation of sets on this date was as shown below:

NIR Set Allocation 28/11/1994

First day of public service on the Cross Harbour Link

1	08:00 Belfast-Dublin	113 + 10 Mk2
2	09:00 Belfast-Dublin	112 + 6 Mk2
3	08:10 Lisburn-Bangor	451+2
4	07:50 Bangor-Lisburn	459+4+452
5	08:15 Bangor-Portadown	457+4+453
6	08:00 Portadown-Central	2+454
7	07:39 Central-Larne Harbour	456+2
8	07:52 Lisburn-Whitehead	2+458
9	06:10 Londonderry-Central	67+3+98
10	07:53 Larne Harbour-Londonderry	68+2
11	07:15 Central-Carrickfergus	69+2
12	Portrush Branch	81+2
13	09:00 Lisburn-Central	82+2
14	07:30 Newry-Bangor	2+83
15	08:05 Londonderry-Carrickfergus	84+2
16	07:35 Portadown-Bangor	2+85
17	08:30 Portadown-Bangor	89+2
18	06:00 Coleraine-Larne Harbour	90+2
19	06:55 Portadown-Bangor	92+2
20	06:20 Larne Harbour-Londonderry	93+2
21	07:30 Bangor-Portadown	2+94
22	06:35 Central-Larne Harbour	2+95
23	09:00 Central-Bangor	96+1

Request stops on all lines have been made either unconditional or services withdrawn, a change which affects a number of stations, notably Moira, Marino, Crawfordsburn, Glynn and Trooperslane. The latter two stations as well as Magheramorne have a very spartan service with little or no trains calling at off peak periods or on Sundays.

Miscellaneous

- A very welcome development is the recent completion of the system-wide installation of standardised road sign posting to stations throughout Northern Ireland.
- A new lighting system has been installed in the twin tunnels located between Castlerock and

Downhill and was commissioned in July.

- It is reported that the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland has turned down investment proposals put forward by NIR in respect of Newry station. The current facility was opened in May 1984 on the site of the former Bessbrook station and utilised the original platforms which were raised and resurfaced. The platforms were subsequently extended and the shelters enlarged although there are as yet no permanent buildings either for staff or passengers. The decision is expected to be reviewed following pressure from local representatives.

Private Railways and Museums

Railway Preservation Society Of Ireland

The ex-GNR(I) 4-4-0 compound No.85 "Merlin" has been restored to traffic following extensive firebox repairs. It double-headed the Yorkgate-Londonderry "Atlantic Coast Express" with No.171 on 17th September. No.85 has since worked Santa specials from Belfast to Whitehead via the Cross-Harbour link.

Irish Traction Group

This group have acquired DH locomotives Nos. 1, 2 and 3 from NIR, all of which are presently stored in a headshunt near the site of the disused rail welding facility at the south end of Adelaide freight yard. Two of the locomotives were hauled from Larne Harbour via Antrim to Lisburn on 11th September. Having attached DH1, the cavalcade headed by a 2-car 80 class set, motor coach 67, continued to Adelaide.

Downpatrick And Ardglass

The ex-LMS(NCC) 36 ton steam crane, built by Cowans of Sheldon in the 1930s, and stored out of use at Larne Harbour for some years, has been acquired by the Downpatrick and Ardglass railway. It was removed to Downpatrick by road at the beginning of September.

South Donegal Railway Restoration Society

The SDRRS is understood to have acquired the ex-CDRJC stationmaster's house in Donegal town and intends establishing a museum, information centre and shop in the premises which will also become its new HQ. The society's revised objectives centre on the restoration of the Ballintra/Rosnowlagh section of the Ballyshannon branch.

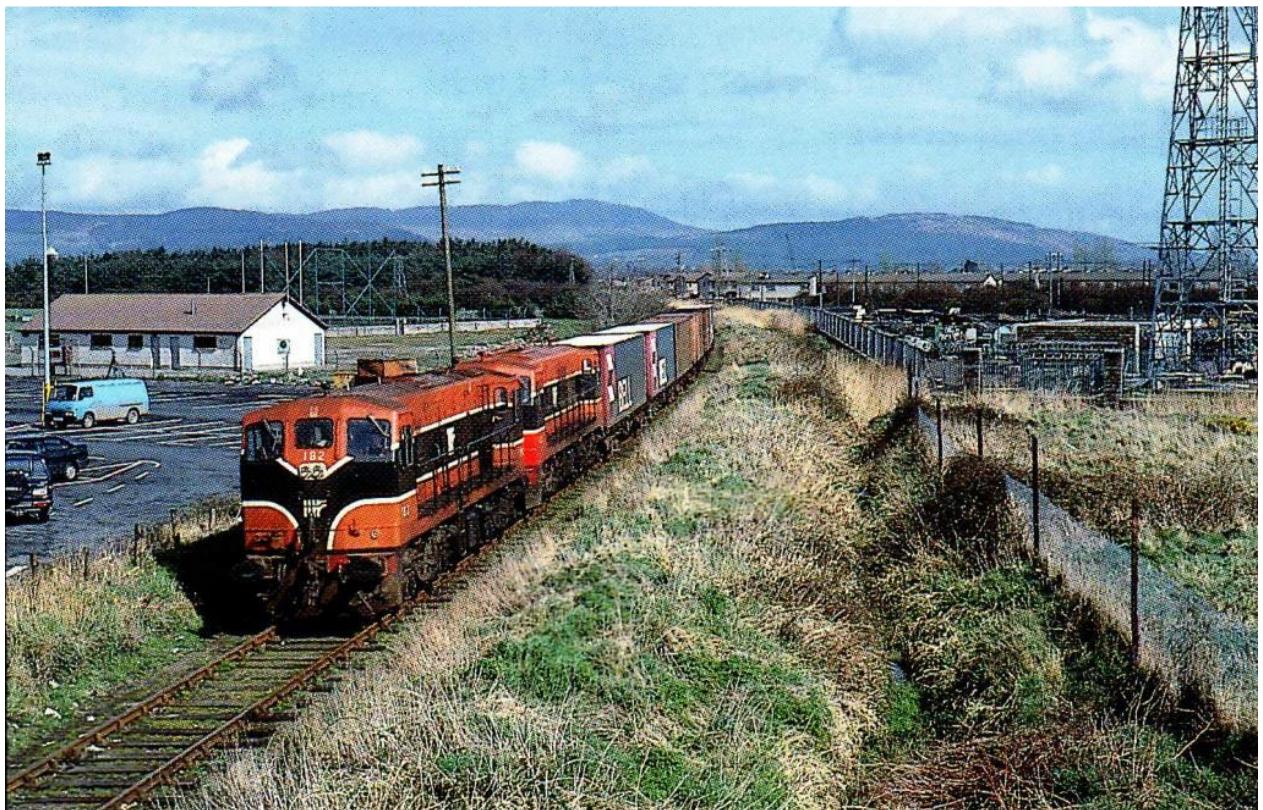
Fintown

Work started at the end of September on the restoration of the first 2½ miles of the Fintown to Glenties line when Cathal Mac Suibhne, Regional Manager Udaras na Gaeltachta, drove the first spike of the new line adjacent to Lough Finn. There are reportedly as many as thirty-one people working on the project supported by Udaras sponsored employment schemes. It is hoped to run the first trains in 1995.

Shane's Castle

This 3ft gauge tourist line, built within the confines of the Shane's Castle estate, outside Antrim, ceased

operations after the summer season. The line was operated by three steam locomotives, Tyrone, Shane and Nancy respectively an 0-4-0T, an 0-4-0WT and an 0-6-0T.



182+162 hauling six bogies on Dundalk (Barrack Street) to Dundalk Junction transfer, 8th April 1994.