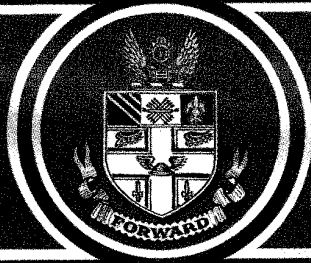


FORWARD



Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

NO 138

Winter 2003

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

Forward is the house journal of the Great Central Railway Society.
The Society founded in 1974, is open to all interested in any aspect of the
Great Central Railway, its predecessors, successors and joint lines.
Full details are available from the Membership Secretary.

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Photograph Front Cover: The naming ceremony of a class 66 diesel locomotive 'Sir Sam Fay' at Rushcliffe Halt with Ward Simpson on the left and Ronny Gee holding up the original nameplate of the former GCR locomotive. Pictured on the right is Rt Hon Edgar Fay, Grandson of Sir Sam Fay. Photo R. Tilden Smith.

'Letters to the Editor' and 'G.C. Today' feature including articles for consideration, must be submitted to the Editor by February 1st 2004

Any views or opinions expressed in 'Forward' are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor or Committee Members of the Great Central Railway Society.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The year 2003 saw two defining events that have brought considerable prominence and prestige to the Great Central Railway Society. The first occasion was at the Ruddington Gala in August when a modern G.B. Rail Freight class 60 diesel railway engine No 66707 was named 'Sir Sam Fay' carrying on the tradition of the famous Robinson designed Great Central steam locomotive of the same name. The Rt. Hon. Edgar Fay the son of Sir Sam Fay performed the naming ceremony.

The second event occurred on November 11th with the unveiling and re-dedication of the Great Central War Memorial at the Holiday Inn Royal Victoria Hotel Sheffield, situated close by to the remains of the old Victoria Station. Following months of hard work by Ken Grainger and several other dedicated society members, also Kevin Curran responsible for negotiating with the Heritage Lottery fund and Hotel General Manager Hermann Beck, the memorial was finally and prominently re-positioned alongside the entrance to the hotel.

Over 450 persons attended the dedication, including President Richard Hardy and Vice Presidents Edgar and John Fay amongst others and many members of the Society. A contingent of servicemen from the last war paraded with banners while The King's Division (Waterloo) Band provided music with the army providing a guard of honour. Other dignitaries included the Lord Mayor of Sheffield and five other Lord Mayors from towns associated within the Great Central area.

The Dean of Sheffield conducted the re-dedication service, with readings by The Reverend Canon Howard Such, Precentor of Sheffield Cathedral. John Fay, grandson of Sir Sam Fay unveiled the plaque commemorating the restoration and re-dedication of the War Memorial on which are inscribed the names of 1304 men of the Great Central Railway who gave their lives during the 'Great War'. Wreaths and other floral tributes were laid, followed by Two Minutes Silence.

After the re-dedication the gathering was invited to a railway line at the rear of the hotel where a new G.B. Rail Freight class 60 diesel locomotive No. 66715 was named 'Valour'. The nameplate was in similar style to the original 'Valour' nameplate, but was dedicated to 'all railwaymen who gave their lives in the service of their country'. Both 'Valour' and 'Sir Sam Fay' locomotives also bear a Great Central Railway Society plaque fitted alongside the nameplate.

Following the naming ceremony guests were invited to a buffet lunch in the superbly restored railway hotel, a magnificent example of Victorian railway workmanship. *(A full descriptive article of the day's events, illustrated with photographs, will be published in the next issue of Forward).*

I am sad to announce that our Chairman Mike Hartley has decided to step down from his position as Chairman at the next A.G.M. Mike having held the position for seven years has steered the Society to greater heights throughout his stewardship and finally achieved his goal of attaining 500 members in the Society. He now believes it is time for someone else to take up the reins. Considering what has been achieved within the last year he has in my opinion chosen the right time, more or less saying to the new incumbent, "now follow that." Mike, you will be sorely missed.

(A formal notice is published on page 29 of this issue).

Finally it leaves me with saying

**On behalf of the President, Vice Presidents and Committee, I wish all members
A Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year**

THE RAILWAY POLICEMAN (Part II)

Brian Bell

Policing the Ports of Grimsby and Immingham 1960 –70

Although the combined ports of Grimsby and Immingham are only five miles apart, their character differs in every way; locality, size, the types of trade involved and numbers of people employed. In 1830 Grimsby was a small fishing village in rapid decline due to the silting of the inland channel to the sea, with only a population of around 3,900. Then within a few short years a sudden transformation took place when on the 1st March 1848 the first public railway in the Grimsby area, that between Louth on the East Lincolnshire Railway and New Holland on the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway opened. With the rapid expansion of the railways it was not long before rich local landowners recognised the possibility of building a new commercial and fish docks complex and by 1852 the Royal Dock had been built and opened by Queen Victoria. The first Fish Dock known as 'No. One' was also completed then gradually expanded to three eventually, just after the turn of the Century by the Great Central Railway. Due principally to the rapid import of timber products from the Baltic States in the 1860's another dock, the Alexandra Dock named after Princess Alexandra, was opened with access to the Royal Dock via the Union Dock Cutting. The upsurge in the need for labour culminated with the population of the town growing to around 80,000 by the turn of the Century and obviously necessitated the building of high density terrace style housing close to the port for its many working class residents.

Grimsby, its Railways, Docks and the resort of Cleethorpes in the 1950/60's.

It soon became obvious that the fishing industry was to become the largest employer of manpower in the area as Grimsby became renowned for its high quality fish with unceasing demand for fresh fish daily throughout the country. The Fish Dock Estate compared in size to a small town, with a complex of many streets containing works premises, engineering complexes, offices, stores, banks, shops and cafés. The covered Fish Market itself stretched for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile and was erected on the quayside of the three separate fish docks. At one time over 400 trawlers were based at the port fishing as far as Iceland and the White Sea in Russia with some of the large trawling companies and several frozen food companies becoming household names i.e. Ross Group, Eskimo, Findus etc.

The main fish landings occurred during the early hours of the morning, with Monday being the heaviest, when fully laden trawlers arrived back at the port on the evening tide and berthed alongside the fish market. Promptly at midnight and 3am, depending on the number of trawlers to unload, several hundred dock porters locally known as 'lumpers' would board each vessel and unload the catch, sorting the different types of fish into large aluminium open boxes called 'kits', capable of holding 10 stone of fish. When all the fish had been unloaded onto the quayside the kits would be assembled into various groups allotted to each trawler owner, awaiting the early morning fish auction. Promptly at 08.00 every weekday, a large collection of fish merchants would assemble at the far end of the fish market ready for the auctioning of fish to begin, with prices obviously depending on quality, freshness and demand. Immediately a merchant had bought the fish he required for orders he would throw handfuls of his own companies paper tallies into the kit he had bought, obviously denoting to all and sundry that these kits belonged to him. The auction would then move on around the market until all the fish had been sold.

The $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long Fish Market was also the location for the business premises of hundreds of small fish merchants, each provided with their own separate small area commonly called 'a stand' with their company name hung on a large board overhead. Offices were provided directly above on a

long balcony also extending the full length of the fish market. *(On beat duty several hundred of these office doors had to be checked four times during the evening and night for security).*

After each merchant had bought his fish he would then instruct his barrow boys to begin collecting the kits of fish with his tallies attached, whereupon it would then be transported to his own personal 'stand' where filleting and boxing would take place. *(This was the most common of fish thefts on the fish market, whereby someone would remove the legitimate owner's tallies and replace with their own. Detecting these offences was assigned to two plain clothes constables experienced in such matters who were prepared to be concealed in the most unlikely of places for several hours).* When the fish had been filleted it would be packed with ice into special wooden boxes pre-labelled for transporting to all parts of the country. When an order was finally prepared the 'barrow boys' would set off around the fish market loading the boxes into several hundred 'pre-destined and labelled' insulated fish vans formed into eight different train loads. These trains were stabled on twin rail tracks alongside the whole length of the Fish Market and formed the renowned eight daily 'Grimby Express Fish Trains' with vans destined practically to every town in the country for delivery the next day. It was a frenzy of activity and loading had to be completed by early afternoon to catch the first train, 'The Banbury' departing at 1.5pm.

Most of the loading was performed by gangs of men pulling large two-wheeled wheelbarrows capable of carrying ten x ten stone kits of fish (around half a ton), but when fully loaded they would be assisted by two or three 'pushers'. By the 1960's several fish merchants had bought ex-army flat back lorries to transfer the fish around. However while working under 'dock estate only' Bye Laws, drivers did not have to hold a Driving Licence and vehicles did not require tax discs or comply with 'Constructions and Use Regulations'. So as can be imagined the streets around the fish dock each workday were full of manually hauled fully loaded wheel barrows, lorries, private cars, three pilot railway engines shunting trains into place and several horse and carts!! Inevitably the narrow streets were constantly jammed requiring several police officers on constant patrol sorting the mayhem out and occasionally dealing with minor road traffic accidents.

Situated on the main road of the Dock Estate was a large shipping store, one of the largest of its kind, called the Coal, Salt and Tanning Company, commonly know as the 'Coal Salt'. It was similar to a large department store, selling every type of ship's provisions, ship and yachting equipment including men's clothes and suits. As well as its many sea faring customers the store also attracted numerous local people. Together with thousands of workers, persons on legitimate business, and countless numbers of visitors on 'day permits' to look around the dock during the holiday season, it soon becomes obvious that a strong law and order presence was required.

Scenes on the Royal Dock were not so hectic or labour intensive. On the West Side most of the traffic consisted of imported bulk scrap material, raw paper pulp destined for a large local paper making factory, masses of timber and huge quantities of pit props; whereas exports were mostly of finished steel products from nearby Scunthorpe. Although large amounts of coal had been traditionally exported through the port in the early 1900's, the lack of deep-water access for more modern large bulk carriers had resulted in the coal hoists being dismantled in the 1950's. On the East Side however most of the trade was imported Danish dairy products and bacon which arrived several times weekly. These products were also highly vulnerable and subject to theft.

The nearby 'L' shaped Alexandra Dock covered a massive expanse of land and water and was used solely for the storage of imported timber although very few ships berthed there because of the lack of cranes on the wooden quaysides. Vast acres of dock-owned land to the south and west were

occupied by several local Timber Merchants where timber brought in by rail would be 'sawn and planed' to order before sending out by rail to builders merchants etc. around the country. (*Timber was also subject to theft by using road vehicles*).

Outside the dock estate were several large freight marshalling yards including two 'goods sheds' one for 'Inwards' and one for 'Outwards' traffic. One of these marshalling yards consisted of several rail lines where numerous local domestic coal merchants unloaded and bagged their coal for delivery. (*Another regular source of theft*). Between the dock estate and Cleethorpes railway station three miles away, were the massive marshalling yards at New Clee. One yard was used primarily for stabling returned 'empty' fish vans, another for assembling the eight outgoing fish trains prior to being placed around the Fish Market, and the third was for coal traffic destined for the fish dock coal hoists for coaling steam driven trawlers. (The coal hoists were dismantled in the 1960's). Throughout summer weekends these massive sidings were cleared and used for stabling up to 40 eleven-coach length holiday excursion trains, three trains on one track alone.

Rail passenger traffic was dealt mainly at Grimsby Town station (three platforms) and Cleethorpes (six platforms). There were also two other smaller stations, Grimsby Docks and New Clee, the latter being often used for football excursions bringing away fans to Grimsby Town's ground.

Immingham

From the outset the contrast between the two ports could not have been greater. Grimsby was the traditional style seaport with a large working class population whereas Immingham looked as if it had been built in open countryside, surrounded by acres of farmland. In 1912 when the King grandly opened the port and Sir Sam Fay was knighted on the steps of the Dock Offices, the village of Immingham itself was quite small with a population of a few hundred inhabitants. Cut off by very limited road access but with excellent rail connections to Grimsby and the main line at Brocklesby, these tracks however were 'freight lines only' resulting in the town of Immingham never having main line passenger train facilities. The only passenger service was a single line working between Immingham Docks – New Holland and Barton on Humber providing access to the railway operated New Holland – Hull ferry. The station consisting only of a single line platform was situated about three miles from the town of Immingham and with no public transport available it served no practical purpose to local residents. The line closed in the early 1960's.

Although only five miles from Grimsby town centre, the main road connecting the two towns was narrow and tortuous stretching over seven miles in length. To provide transport for the many dock workers and railwaymen residing in Grimsby, the Great Central built the Grimsby – Immingham Light Railway, operated with fast 72 seat single deck - double bogie trams which covered the journey in twenty minutes. Unfortunately the nearest tram stop called 'Immingham Halt' was situated over 1½ miles from the town centre and this also was very little used by local people. So it does not require a great deal of imagination why Immingham was a town aptly described as 'back of the beyond'. It is safe to assume that 99% of the population at that period of time and even today do not have any knowledge of where the port of Immingham is geographically and its relative importance.

So why was Immingham Docks built in the first place? When the Great Central assumed control of the port of Grimsby at the turn of the 20th Century, Grimsby was a rapidly thriving and expanding seaport. Unfortunately the dock was a tidal port with access for shipping through the lock pits only occurring twice a day and limited to one hour each side of high tide. With a relative short cill depth of the lock pit, newer more modern freight vessels of the time could not be accommodated

at the port. Unfortunately Grimsby being situated on the south bank of a very wide River Humber is only about ½ mile from a very deep water channel up to 80feet deep in places. This deep-water channel is a natural phenomenon due to the Humber draining a considerable part of the East Midland's and Yorkshire creating a very deep scouring current in the riverbed. In the early 1900's G.C. engineers were aware that this deep - water channel existed and were assigned to survey the river, whereupon they discovered it passed close by the entrance to a small creek at Immingham.

With the Great Central having running powers and serving a mass of coal fields in the East Midlands it was recognised that there was a lucrative trade to be had exporting coal to a power hungry Europe. So with great foresight it was decided that Immingham was the ideal place to build a dock capable of handling the modern shipping required. Unfortunately within two years of the port's opening the First World War began and the many plans and services intended for the port never bore fruition. The twenty years intervening between the end of the Great War and the beginning of the Second World War was interrupted with the world-wide slump of 1926 and the 'Jewel in the Crown' as Immingham was first described never materialised.

Following the end of W.W.II the port of Immingham was recognised as having great potential, considering it had the longest and deepest lock pits of any port on the East Coast and that vessels up to 35,000 tons could enter the dock at any state of the tide. Land situated on the south of the River Humber between Immingham and Grimsby was cheap, plentiful and ripe for development duly attracting several multi-national chemical companies, especially with the prospect that large bulk carriers carrying raw materials could dock close by. Factories soon sprang up covering every inch of spare land, but Immingham Dock however remained principally a bulk cargo port dealing with the export of coal and the import of timber, chemicals and iron ore for the supplying the vast steel-making plants at nearby Scunthorpe.

Law and Order

Obviously the two large sea ports required a semblance of law and order, being owned and operated by the railway, firstly the MS&L.R then GCR, who appointed their own constables. Ownership and police appointments were followed by the LNER in 1923 then eventually by the British Transport Commission after Nationalisation in 1947. In 1961 when I was appointed as a constable in the B.T.C. Police to serve in the Grimsby Sub-Division, both docks were operating virtually as described above.



Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway police officers stationed at Grimsby Docks assemble on the steps of Grimsby Dock offices wearing their Crimean War Medals. GCRS collection

The sub-division comprised of around 45 men with a Sub-Divisional Inspector in charge. Under him were a Detective Sergeant and three Detective Constables including two plain clothes P.C's. The uniform section at Grimsby comprised of five sergeants and varied to around 28 P.C's. The Immingham section comprised of a Sergeant and eight P.C's.

As previously mentioned, Immingham was a bulk cargo handling port and opportunity for the theft of property compared to that at Grimsby was minimal. However the dock unusually had a public house situated next to the massive lock pit entrance known as the 'Lock Inn' which was frequented mostly by foreign seamen, but members of the local public also had legitimate access. Problems occurred here regularly when foreign seaman unused to our strict licensing laws could not understand why they had to leave at 10.30pm, while another problem was of trespassing on the dock especially by 'Ladies of the Night'. However the nearby 'Seaman's Mission', which served as a resting-place for seamen included a restaurant and several rooms available for accommodation, was always relatively quiet. So with very little private property to guard and road traffic at a minimum, Immingham was relatively quiet prior to the late 60's when big changes took place.

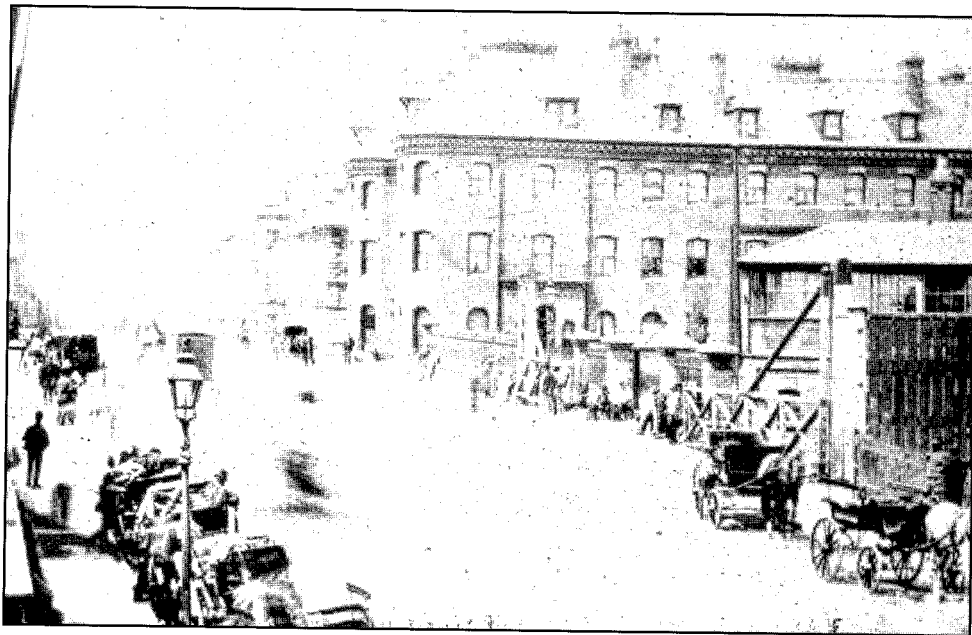
Grimsby however was totally different, a small very busy town in effect and subject to all the normal misdemeanours, crime, accidents, road traffic offences, office and shop-breaking. (In those days burglary could only be committed against a dwelling house). There were four entry and exit points to the dock estate, which at one time were manned 24 hours per day. These comprised of the Main Gate (No. 1 Beat). Fish Dock Road (No. 3 Beat). Royal Hotel Entrance (No. 5 Beat) and Humber Bridge Road Entrance (No. 7 Beat). Number 1 and 3 beats were manned 24 hours, the other two No 5 and 7 were manned as and when manpower was available. *(The Royal Hotel fronting the main Cleethorpe Road was quite a large hotel built around 1880 by the M.S.&L.Railway Company. It was originally designed to accommodate long distant rail passengers intent on travelling to the Continent and Scandinavia. It still remained under B.T.C. Police jurisdiction).*

The Main Entrance to the Dock Estate was situated in the centre of the notorious Cleethorpe Road level crossing and was recognised as one of the busiest level crossings in the country, bisecting one of the towns' busiest main roads. The road itself was exceptionally wide and required four massive crossing gates to close the road off. These gates were so heavy they were hydraulically operated. (Hydraulic power was originally created from the head pressure of several massive water tanks situated at the top of the 309 ft high Dock Tower powering the opening and closing the lock pit gates and operating dock side cranes). The Dock Tower, a local landmark is now a preserved building. Not only was the crossing a busy entrance to and from the main road into the dock, but on the opposite side of the road was Railway Street with access to Grimsby Dock station..

When the signalman required to close the gates (they were more closed than open during the day causing numerous delays and constant congestion) he would ring a bell which would be the signal for everyone in the vicinity, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to try and avoid being held up. Such was the crossing's notoriety. The bell was also the signal for the duty policeman to walk into the centre of the road and stop all traffic and pedestrians. There was a laid down set procedure of traffic control and when all movement had stopped the signalman would operate the gates one by one. The gates being power operated and quite long in length moved quite quickly and suddenly, so anyone attempting to beat the gates could be hit a hefty blow. Signalman and policeman worked well as a team and accidents were rare, but when they did occur they could be quite nasty and create delay to all and sundry.



Cleethorpe Road level crossing, Grimsby c. 1959. The large numbers of cyclists in the centre of the crossing indicates the time is around lunchtime when dock workers returned home for their dinner hour. The Dock Police officer on the left stands by ready to sort traffic out. **Grimsby Evening Telegraph**



Cleethorpe Road level crossing from the opposite direction in a different era, pre 1900. In the background stands the impressive Royal Hotel built by the MS&L Railway. **Grimsby Evening Telegraph**

No. 2 Beat covered the Royal Dock, assisting with any office duties and accompanying the Duty Sergeant on patrol. (Usually performed by a more senior constable!).

No. 6 Beat covered the Fish Docks, a massive area with hundreds of offices, shops, cafés, banks etc. to police. During and up to that period, especially during the evening and night, policing, even in the civil forces, consisted mainly of checking private premises. (Door knob rattling). It must be remembered that in those days, constables did not carry personal radios so once you were out 'there' you were on your own. To maintain contact the Duty Sergeant would at the beginning of the shift give each officer a certain place and time (called 'point'), usually two per shift, where you could meet and report anything unusual. My first year on the beat was in the winter of 1962/63, one of the coldest in the 20th Century and when the Sergeant requested my pocket book my hands were so cold I could not make any entry or even open it. All the more experienced P.C.'s knew of several places where you could visit a night watchman for a chat and enjoy a cup of tea, but being totally new to the job I did not know where to go or even dare. In those days Sergeants were very strict disciplinarians and even with other P.C.'s it took a long time to build up a position of trust.

No 8 Beat covered the wide open Alexandra Dock area comprising of acres of stacks of timber and a few Timber Merchants offices, several of which were at the farthest end of the beat. This was a walk of several miles following the perimeter of the 'L' shaped dock waters and it was amazing the distance you could walk in such a short time.

The last beat and I suppose my favourite was No. 4 beat. This covered the rail side away from the docks and took in several large marshalling yards, the main Goods Shed, Grimsby Dock Station and Grimsby Town Station. It was here that you met the public and usually set up friendly conversation. (On the docks however certain workers always regarded you with suspicion but to be fair they were in a minority). On this beat you were also responsible for investigating ticket frauds (T.I.'s) and these could become quite involved requiring intensive investigation. It was also your responsibility to learn to type reports and statements, which in those days usually required five carbon copies. This could be quite time consuming if you had to rectify a typing error. (Often).

Although in the early 60's most large companies were now beginning to transport their own merchandise by H.G.V., a large proportion of general goods traffic was still transported by rail. It was in reality a cumbersome process with the Railway Company picking up goods traffic from various company premises by road vehicles, loading it into goods vans, then transporting it by freight train to various marshalling yards around the country. Here it would be shunted into various trainloads, finally arriving at its destination to be unloaded once again from goods van to delivery vehicle at the local Goods Depot.

Traffic classed as highly vulnerable i.e. property most liable to be stolen such as cigarettes and spirits was closely monitored. Goods van doors loaded with such traffic were sealed with a thick steel wire and sometimes padlocked. The police would be advised and all major stations en-route would be informed with each van being checked and recorded before arriving at its final destination. Goods sheds were patrolled regularly and especially when goods were being unloaded, plus they were always kept under strict police surveillance especially around the Christmas period.

Another type of vulnerable traffic was the transfer of bulk coinage by rail from bank to bank. This necessitated a police officer riding 'shot gun' when being delivered from the goods shed to the bank. However sitting in a very small three wheel 'Scammel' (Iron Horse vehicle), employed for 'round the town use deliveries' was not in my opinion very conducive to the policeman's image.

Changes Ahead

After I had only served one year as a police officer, rumours began to circulate of big changes and possible redundancies ahead. The outset of this was the 1962 Act of Parliament resulting in the abandonment of the British Transport Commission resulting in the formation of two separate bodies. (The British Railways Board and The British Transport Docks Board, now known as Associated British Ports or A.B.P.). The profit making Docks Board now freed of the shackles of railway influence and debt, could now make use of the acres of redundant railway sidings on their dock estates which were ripe for re-development and attracting interest from multi national companies. (Grimsby and Immingham especially, expanded rapidly).

Policing the Railways.

It was at this point that the force also separated into two separate divisions, 'docks' and 'rail'. The effect at Grimsby was that five officers and a Sergeant were transferred into a rail section based on Grimsby Docks station, using a converted 'waiting room' as a police office. We were given the brief of policing all railway lines and stations from Cleethorpes to Barnetby, Barton on Humber, and Firsby to Skegness on the G.N. This also included coverage of the Cleethorpe Road Level crossing, note NOT the Main Gate to the Docks. At that time after many years of debate a new flyover was being constructed eliminating the need for the crossing. When completed, about a year later, four officers would be made redundant but sent to four new posts being created at Immingham. Until this time to provide traffic control on the crossing we were provided with quite a large well equipped wooden cabin on the opposite of the road separating us from the dock estate.

At this time during the summer weekends up to 20 and 30 Holiday Excursion trains were still running into Cleethorpes every Saturday and Sunday. Considering the trains were fully loaded with up to 600 passengers and with trains departing on the homeward journey every ten minutes, some form of policing was required around the station forecourt. As can be imagined several long snaking queues had to be formed and kept in order especially to control 'queue jumpers'. Long queues also formed at the ladies toilet, as they were the only ones available in the area, made more impracticable because the penny slot machines soon became full and had to be continually emptied by one of the Booking Office staff.

This was what policing was about, dealing with the public, being helpful and providing some authority and order. A regular practice was to put several sweets in your pocket because inevitably you would have to deal with a child who had lost their parents. Regrettably, some parents told their children "if they were naughty a policeman would take them away." This usually resulted in a lost child yelling its head off and taking ages to pacify. Sweets usually did the trick accompanied with a nice smile especially when you removed your helmet to reveal a human face. The procedure was to stand next to the railings on platform six, situated alongside the main promenade already thronging with hundreds of people. Fraught parents looking for their lost 'offspring' spotting a policeman would soon be hurrying onto the station with signs of relief. The child by now usually quiet and content, would be instantly grabbed and usually cuffed around the ears causing further crying, however with a brief expression of thanks the entourage would be soon off into the nearby throng.

Sometimes we were sent to assist at Skegness on similar duties. The scene here was somewhat slightly different with a considerable number of 'Butlins' specials arriving and departing. It was rather amusing to note a 'Butlins Redcoat' usually saying goodbye to some attractive young lady, crying her heart out, promising to write etc. then as soon as the train left, latch onto some one else just arriving on the next platform.

On the 8th August 1963 a group of armed men held up a Royal Mail train at Cheddington in Bedfordshire escaping with over £2.5million in bank notes. This resulted in some mail trains having to have police presence for the full journey, including the 8.5pm Grimsby – Peterborough passenger train which also carried a large amount of bulk money being transferred to main clearing banks in London. This was especially so during the summer holidays due to additional money being spent at Cleethorpes and Skegness. As a result a police officer accompanied with two special postmen had to travel in a separate mail van attached to the train. To monitor the train's progress we were provided with a two-way radio, the size of a large television set, so that we remained in contact with every county police force the train travelled through. On arrival at Peterborough the police officer would assist with policing duties there before returning to Grimsby on the 3.0am Newspaper train.

Training and the Law

All police officers have very wide powers under the law, but powers of arrest do not apply to every offence committed. Make a false arrest and those legal powers will be used against the offending officer. It is therefore essential that police officers are highly trained in all aspects of the law and its complicated procedures, including regular refresher courses because new laws are continually being legislated for and amended.

B.T.Police training was and still is today conducted at the B.T.P. Training School in Tadworth, Surrey, although at the current time basic training is conducted at civil police establishments. The initial Recruit Course, if I remember correctly, lasted 13 weeks, followed by 1st Year and 5th Year Refresher courses. I always enjoyed Tadworth, being situated in beautiful stockbroker countryside with its superb main building, training ground and spacious sports field overlooking Epsom. It was here that several different aspects of the law were taught and studied i.e. Common Law, Criminal Law, Laws applicable to the railways, Ticket Irregularities, Road Traffic law and Railway Bylaws.

Before dealing with an offence you had to understand the Rules of Evidence, these are essential when questioning a suspect or witness and taking statements. There were also certain court procedures that had to be studied, minor offences could be tried at Magistrates Courts, more serious offences at Quarter Sessions, commonly known because a Circuit Judge would hold court once every three months. Finally there was the majesty and aura of the Assize Court (locally Lincoln) where only the most serious crimes were dealt with. (Now known as Crown Courts). Fatalities regrettably occurred on railway and dock property involving intense investigation and eventual attendance at a Coroners Court for an inquest to be held.

Accidents and Fatalities

All police officers at some time in their career will inevitably come into contact with death and dealing with fatalities, and although train accidents in the Grimsby area were very rare a tragic accident occurred just outside of Lincoln station. This happened one Sunday in the early 60's when the driver of a Kings Cross – Newcastle express, diverted because of engineering works on the ECML, failed to slow down for a sharp bend approaching the station and the train derailed. Several passengers were killed. Officers from Grimsby were sent to assist at the scene, first to rescue passengers, attend to the injured, take care of personal property and establish the cause. Although I never attended it was brought home to me afterwards by other officers of the tragedy and carnage such incidents cause and the later affects on the rescuers.

An amusing accident, which could have had serious consequences, occurred at Barnetby again in the mid 60's one late evening, when the 9.0pm Grimsby Docks – Mottram (Manchester) express freight train derailed at high speed on the main line between the station and Wrawby Junction. The

train consisting of modern insulated goods vans contained large quantities of butter and bacon off-loaded from the Danish butter boat that day. Although no one was injured the resulting crash caused a considerable number of 56lb casks of butter being thrown all over railway lines in the vicinity. Police Officers were sent there to guard these products until the whole mess was cleared up. It was amusing to see large mounds of butter embedded with ballast being secreted around the sidings obviously for later removal by local rail workers. However we turned a blind eye because at least it was clearing the crash site up and the butter was beyond recovery, at least for some.

Policing Immingham Dock

By the mid 60's Immingham was expanding rapidly with Fisons Fertilisers building a massive new factory on the dock estate, also chemical company ICI, including several prominent oil companies building large tank farms for storing petroleum products shipped in by sea. The one major company to have a decisive major affect for the future prosperity of the port was the Swedish Company 'Tor Line' inaugurating a regular passenger ro-ro service between Immingham and Esjberg in Sweden. A large new terminal and freight yard was built on the old timber/pit prop quay area to berth two brand new vessels the 'Tor Anglia' and 'Tor Hollandia' capable of carrying several hundred passengers and cars. The service was extremely popular and for the first time hundreds of car carrying passengers streamed in and out of the port several times a week.

The most profound affect on the port and surrounding area was that two major oil companies the USA Company 'Conoco' and the combined French/Belgian Total/Fina Company decided to build two massive oil refineries at nearby Killingholme. Their decision was based on the requirement of cheap available land; close proximity to the vast industrial area of the East Midlands and Yorkshire; good rail and transport links and finally and most importantly an estuary with deep water to build an oil terminal capable of handling 300,000ton oil tankers. A massive jetty ¾ mile long capable of berthing two super tankers was required and construction began opposite the East Gate. A smaller finger pier was also constructed halfway along for loading smaller coastal vessels and inland barges with finished petroleum products. By now Immingham was being recognised as a major seaport, but with all these highly volatile products being manufactured or transported through the dock it was becoming a veritable 'time bomb' meaning highly intensive security to prevent a major disaster.

Transfer to Immingham

To increase security two new police boxes were built at the East Side and West Side entrances, the former becoming the main communications centre and officers were equipped for the first time with mobile radio. With several thousand members of the public also entering the dock for access to Tor Line it was obvious that the police establishment had to be increased. By this time the Cleethorpe Road flyover had been finally constructed and four constables, myself included, were transferred to Immingham, leaving a Sergeant and one P.C. with rail responsibilities.

Another innovation was the provision of multi-handler police dogs. Normally a police dog would only respond to its own personal handler but these dogs were older and trained to respond to any police officer having been trained for this particular task. I was pretty apprehensive at first but eventually after special training I quite enjoyed having a dog with me and it was very reassuring especially when required to remove truculent drinkers at the nearby 'Lock Inn' at closing time. You were always accompanied with a dog on walking beats in the evening and at night-time, otherwise beat work was conducted in a police van because of the massive area to be covered.

The 'Tor Line' service proved to be a pleasant diversion and it was the responsibility to have two police officers present when their boats berthed, not only for pedestrian and traffic control

but also to assist with Customs and Immigration. However with a dramatic increase in freight traffic, additional vessels were required and the terminal became larger and larger with the effect that this Scandinavian service attracted other major shipping companies to the port with further expansion.

After ten years on the force and ten years on the footplate, I resigned in 1970 to take up a position in one of the new oil refineries. It was a remove I was not to regret, because in 1984 ABP decided that they no longer required the style of policing offered by the B.T. Police. So ended over 100 years of Railway Police service at the former ports owned originally by the railway companies.

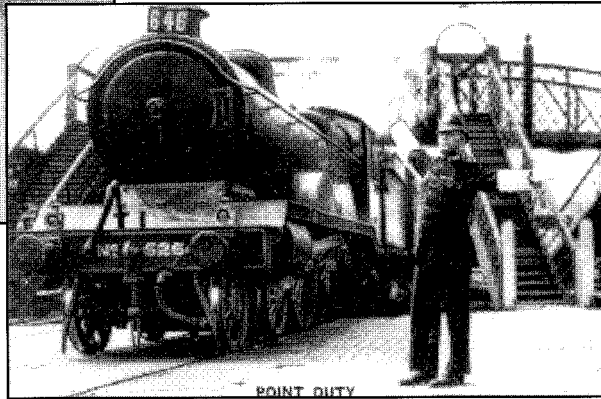
Today the Humber Port complex of Grimsby and Immingham is now recognised as the largest in the UK for the annual tonnage of freight handled. Millions of investment in new river jetties have been built and further planned at Immingham and 20% of all UK rail freight traffic is dealt with at the port. Although Grimsby's fishing fleet was practically decimated following the 1970 'Cod Wars' with Iceland, a vastly smaller more modern fish market has been built with fish being landed primarily by foreign vessels and transported overland from Scotland. Grimsby is still renowned throughout the country for its high quality fish and it is also the second largest port in the UK for the import and export of cars. The legacy of the Great Central Railway naming Immingham as its 'Jewel in the Crown' is testimony today to the Company's foresight nearly 100 years ago.



Photo Left. The author on duty at Cleethorpe Road level crossing in October 1965 on an unusually very quiet Sunday afternoon. Looking towards the Lock Hill direction. The tall chimney is part of the Royal Hotel, which was still open at that time, but closed shortly afterwards and was pulled down. **Brian Bell.**

Photo Below. This is a Senior Service cigarette card produced in the 1930's. The engine is a class B7 5264 on holiday excursion duty.

On the rear it states "There can be few level crossings in England, which requires a policeman on point duty. This photograph shows the level crossing at Grimsby Docks station, which crosses the Grimsby - Cleethorpes road. This is said to be the busiest level crossing in England, and nearly 40 trains pass every hour during the day." **Authors collection.**



MODEL NOTES
Great Central Bogie Coal Wagons
Anthony Miller

The main purpose in writing this particular article is to offer some further information, comments and speculations on the GCR Bogie Coal Wagons, and to add a little to the splendid article by Lawson Little in "FORWARD" No.136.

The following GCR wagon diagrams have been supplied through the good offices of Peter Hall of the LNER Study Group. (*Regrettably it has not been possible to include all these diagrams. Ed*). There is a sequence of different versions of these Wagon Diagrams, the versions have dark backgrounds, and are believed to be copies of actual GCR Wagon Diagram Blueprints. These seem to have been first collected together into a Wagon Diagram Book in the late 1890's or very early 1900's, which was then added to as new wagon types were introduced. GCR Wagon Diagrams usually contain lots of useful information about the wagons, including in many case details of the wagon running numbers. In GCR days, the Wagon Diagrams were numbered in a series between 1 and 150. The number was marked very boldly in the top right hand corner of each diagram. There was much use of suffix letters (A, B, C etc.) when new diagrams had to be inserted in the original list, or if wagons were modified for new purposes.

The second versions are copies of LNER prepared Wagon Diagrams, of which they are copies of the GCR originals. However, the LNER decided to renumber its inherited Wagon Diagrams, and this renumbering has caused some confusion in the past. Soon after the LNER was formed, the surviving pre group Wagon Diagrams were collected into new Sectional books. The ex-GCR ones were designated 'LNE - C', and a completely new series of Diagram Numbers were allocated, between 1 and about 200. All suffix letters were done away with (originally, at any rate), and curiously, different diagram numbers were given to wagons which were intended for different purposes but which were otherwise identical. These LNE - C Wagon Diagram numbers are NOT the same as the GCR ones. Eventually, suffix letters complicated these numbers, particularly because the ex -CLC Wagon Diagrams were inserted among the GCR Diagrams in the 1930's.

Around 1938, the surviving pre-grouping Wagon Diagrams were renumbered again by the LNER, this time into a new 4-digit series, with a Sectional initial number. The ex GCR Wagon Diagrams were renumbered into the "5xxx" series, occupying the range from 5001 to about 5235. The Key for Bogie Coal Wagons is:

Date Intro.	Description	GCR Wagon Diagram No.	1924 LNE - C Diagram No.	1938 LNER Diagram No.	Number of Wagons built
1903	30 ton Original	26	147	---	29
1903	30 ton, All Wood Body	26A	148	5165	1
1904	40T, Diamond Bogie	27	149	5166	24
1904	40T, Plate Bogie	28	150	---	1

The lack of 1938 LNER Diagram Numbers for the first and last of the GCR Diagrams supports the view that these wagons had been, or were about to be, withdrawn at that date. There are hand-written notes on some of the diagrams indicating withdrawal dates in 1937 and 1938. Since wagons in railway service tended to have a life of between 30 and 40 years, final withdrawal of the last survivors at about the end of WWII is quite believable. Survival in use until the 1970's is stretching it a bit, but

more of that later.

Having dealt with the Diagrams, there are several things to observe about the wagons. Mr. Little mentions, but does not emphasise, that these wagons were vacuum braked. This was *astounding* for coal wagons in Britain in 1903! High capacity was thus obtained not just by the physical size of the wagons, but also by the potential ability to reduce transit times and hence increase the number of journeys that the wagons could make. Maximum advantage could only be taken of this potential if the methods of loading and unloading could also be speeded up, and on this account the GCR wagons have to be considered in combination with the loading/unloading facilities. Loading is straightforward, but there is no evidence of automated unloading; the concept is thus a near miss for the GCR. It is a pity that consideration was not given to making them hopper wagons. Having to unload by hand must have been a handicap. It is also likely that attempting to use the wagons like the conventional (smaller) wagons would involve shunting. This would require coupling and uncoupling vacuum hoses and creating and destroying vacuum in the brakes, a practice which would not have been popular with the men who had to perform it. A workable solution was eventually devised by B.R. with their "merry-go-round" trains, which remain permanently coupled and are loaded and unloaded while on the move. The concept of considering the use of the wagons and investing in appropriate 'infrastructure' (modern word) is not a new one, but seems not to have happened in the case of these wagons. Or does anyone have any evidence to prove otherwise?

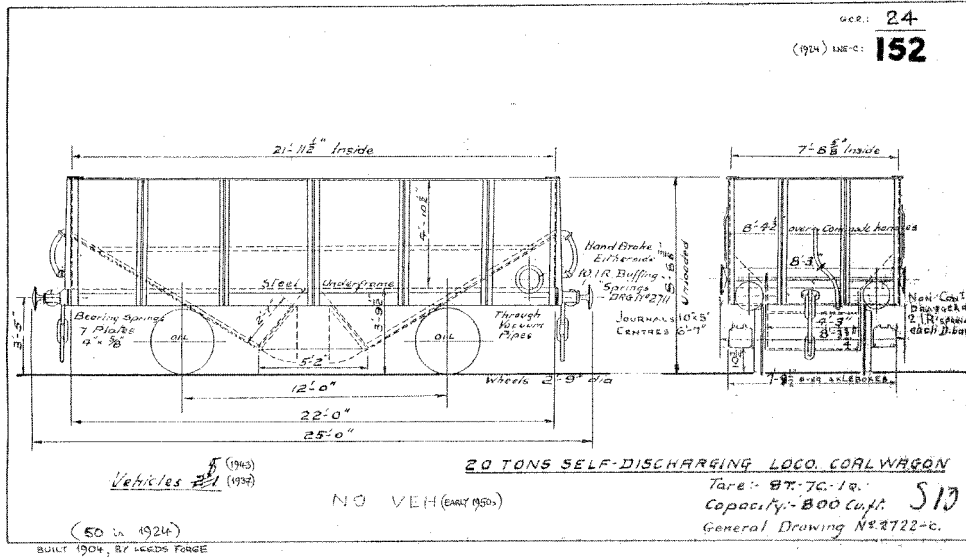
There was quite a vogue in Britain for high capacity coal wagons at about the same time, and a surprising number of railways experimented with them. The NER did introduce large bogie hopper wagons, and did eventually fit them with power brakes; they already had extensive facilities for emptying hopper wagons, having gone over to that method of handling coal almost from the beginning of its existence. The LNER also bought some 40 ton bogie coal hoppers, which were used at Ashington in Northumberland, alongside the NER examples. These wagons were used until after WWII but seem to have passed to the NCB sometime in the 1950's (which would correspond to a 30-year life). The NCB eventually transferred some of these wagons to Markham Main Colliery, which I believe were LNER wagons surviving into the 1970's, rather than the GCR wagons.

The GCR did introduce hopper wagons for coal, but these were 4-wheelers. There was one 15ton example, GCR Wagon Diagram 23, and a fleet of 20ton capacity wagons, GCR Wagon Diagram 24. Some of these seem to have ended up in East London in the 1930's their particular use is still being researched. Does anyone know the original GCR use of these hopper wagons? They were used for Loco Coal, but which GCR sheds had hopper unloading facilities? Gorton?

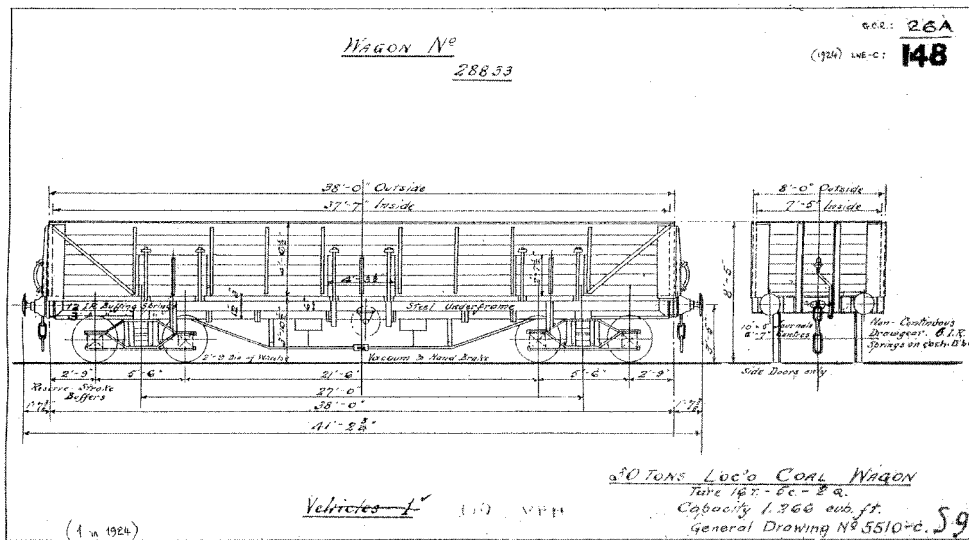
Photographs of the GCR Bogie Coal Wagons can be found in a number of publications, including 'Per Rail and 'Great Central, Volume III'. One significant photograph is worthy of note. It shows the then-new LNER 2-8-2 Express Locomotive No.2001, 'Cock of the North', on its way to France in the early 1930's for testing on the Vitry Locomotive Test Plant. The loco took its own supply of coal for the tests, being loaded into several ex-GCR 40ton Bogie Coal Wagons! The coal was from Yorkshire Main Colliery, near Doncaster, and words to that effect were painted on the wagons. The fact that the wagons had vacuum brakes must have been a factor in their choice.

In conclusion, it is not too fanciful to speculate on what might-have-been on the GCR. The Bogie Coal Wagons were clearly one element in a thought process involving the more efficient movement of coal. This thinking led eventually to the idea of the GCR Garratt (which transmogrified into the LNER Garratt) and the GCR fuel experiments in the years after WWI. I am a firm supporter of the Jackson/Russell theory that the Garratt was obviously intended as a main-line freight locomotive,

and NOT employed as a banker. The pulverised fuel and colloidal fuel experiments were most likely aimed at reducing the intolerable burden on the firemen that would have resulted from wide use of a fleet of Garratts. The clincher is that the LNER Garratt was fitted with a vacuum train brake system, which is utterly redundant on a banker! The 'vision' is or was for trains of vacuum fitted high capacity bogie coal wagons being hauled from the collieries to the super-port of Immingham at high speed by powerful Garratt locomotives, the locos being automatically fired using the pulverised or colloidal fuel. All with 'Great Central' painted proudly on the side! What an epitaph this vision would have been for the GCR and for J. G. Robinson.



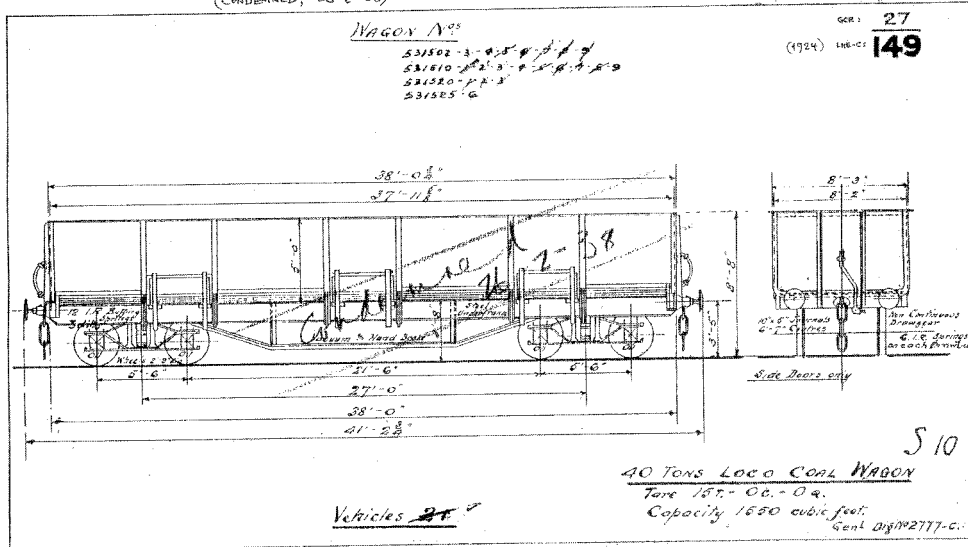
20ton self discharging loco coal wagon.



30ton loco coal wagon.

(CONDEMNED, 26-2-38)

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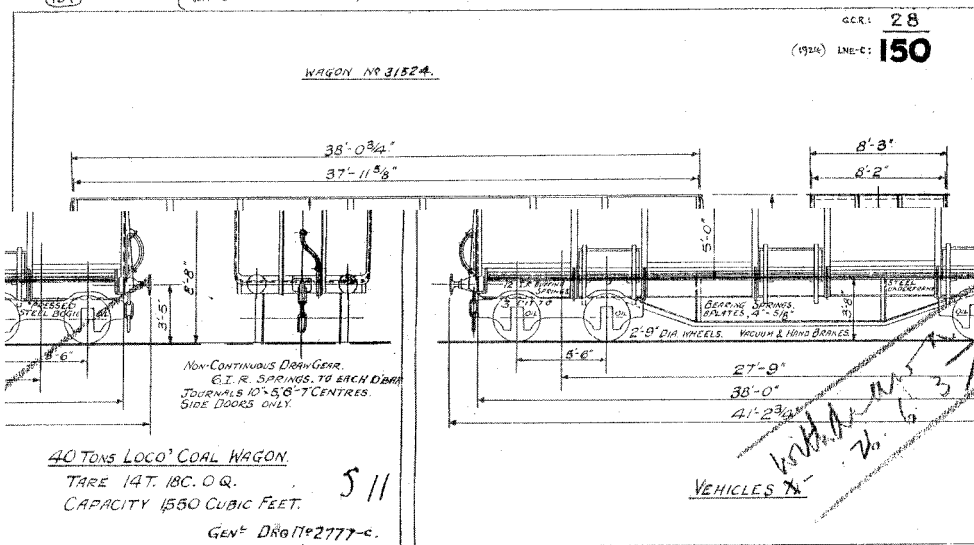


40ton loco coal wagon.

(154)

(WITHDRAWN 26-6-37)

(338 L.N.R.) CODE NO



40ton loco coal wagon with pressed steel bogies

'RUDDINGTON GALA' LINKS GCR OLD AND NEW

Richard Tilden Smith

Sunday 31 August Ruddington – Dry weather, busy programme and some wonderful guests brought a big influx of visitors to Great Central Railway (Nottingham) for the GCR Gala and the 10th Anniversary of steam returning to the site. This action packed event showed how strongly the interest is in seeing GCR's longstanding projects completed and new ones started. The structure and roofing of the 180ft long locomotive running shed was "nearly" topped out and the tape cut to mark the start of construction of the Centre's terminus and the appeal for help to fund the £300,000 project.

The commemoration of the life of Sir Sam Fay, General Manager of Great Central Railway in his hey days from 1902 to 1923, was the main theme; with the Hon. Edgar Fay QC, his last remaining son, and John Fay his grandson, joined with 'GB Railfreight' to name a Class 66 diesel locomotive No. 66707 Sir Sam Fay in his honour. As 'GB Railfreight's' General Manager Ward Simpson said, "Sir Sam would have been at home in the progressive and forward looking railway operation that we are today".

To celebrate the ten years of the return to steam at the former M.o.D. Depot that is the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre today; GWR No. 7822 'Foxcote Manor' was brought in specially from Llangollen Railway. This locomotive shared the passenger services for the day's workings with Class 50 No. 50007 "Sir Edward Elgar" paired with the newly named 'Sir Sam Fay'. The crowds turned out and the five-coach train was packed with standing passengers for the first three services.

Jim Cornell, Chief Executive of Railway Heritage Trust and a Network Rail Director, launched the construction of the first phase of the new station complex that, under the direction of GCR(N) Director Peter Wilson, is to consist of the concourse and the 900ft. long principal platform, 'Platform One'.

As Jim Cornell said: "In the short time since I last visited there has been a major and impressive transformation at Ruddington. It is now vital that this station complex provides the customer facilities for the growing visitor numbers."

Richard Hardy, President of the Great Central Railway Society, joined with Stuart Copson, former Director of GCR(N), to mark the progress of the large locomotive running shed that will allow main line locomotives direct access to the national network by way of GCR's live spur at Loughborough. Stuart Copson has been a major inspiration behind the Ruddington project for many years. With the structure complete, the fitting out with two roads can now proceed, paralleled by the installation of lighting, doors and workshop. The impressive building could accommodate up to four large main line locomotives.

The GCR theme of the day was reflected by the Rolling Stock Trust's erecting two partitions in the MSL No. 946 six wheeler coach, built in 1888. Meanwhile the 'Nottingham Society of Model and Experimental Engineers' who shares the Centre with its own 1.8 km. of miniature railway in three gauges, played host to Bill Holland's GCR locomotive fleet and the first run of Colin Garton's GCR goods train in 5in. gauge. The Rolling Stock Trust had a very special visitor in the form of Joseph Holtby, now 93, a former C&W wheel tapper and fitter, who started work at Gorton works in 1927.

As GCR(N) Director Alan Kemp commented; "We were astonished at the interest this event caused with a doubling of visitor numbers. We have an extremely worthwhile cause here and we hope that this will encourage even more people to visit and help us to fund the key projects, especially the Centre's station, the first terminus to be built on the GCR this century."

Two special memories were those of Edgar Fay and John Fay showing just some of their unique family memorabilia of Sir Sam Fay, and of Ronnie Gee displaying an original number plate from No. 423 'Sir Sam Fay'.

The days formalities were concluded with a fitting tribute made by Eddie Johnson to the memory of Sir Sam Fay, followed by the award of the 'John Quick GCR' prize quiz of £100 being presented by Mike Hartley, Chairman of the GCRS, to a delighted GCRS Member Howard Turner.

The event was jointly hosted by Great Central Railway (Nottingham),
GCR Rolling Stock Trust, and the Great Central Railway Society.



Members of the GCRS and the NTHC raise a drink to former GCR Director Sir Sam Fay. **R.Tilden Smith collection.**

NEW MEMBERS

Mr S Karski Loughborough Leics. Mr B.L Wesley, Chorleywood, Herts.
Dr. N.B. Foley, Bedford. Mr B.G. Cloxton, Grantham, Lincs.
Mr R. Jones, Chelmsford. Mr A.N. Simkins, Keighley, W. Yorks.
Mr R.J. Sugg, Piddington, Bucks. Mr J.D. Trevitt, Cleethorpes, Lincs.
Mr R. Bemand, Defford, Worcester.

Following the untimely death of member Geoff Royston, (his obituary appeared in Forward 137) I recalled that one or two of his unpublished articles still remained in my archives. The following one on 'Class Q1 Locomotives at Frodingham' was originally sent to the late David Jackson in 1998 for his approval, and after reading it David wrote to Geoff asking a him a number of questions regarding the capabilities of the Q1. I reproduce the article below which I have slightly adapted and also include David's questions and Geoff's relevant answers. Ed.

THE THOMPSON CLASS Q1 TANK ENGINES AT FRODINGHAM **Geoff Royston.**

Following WWII the J50 class 0-6-0T was the standard LNER shunting tank engine of which there were quite a few based at Frodingham. However due to the large amount of various steel products then being manufactured at the massive nearby Scunthorpe steelworks and consigned to the railways for transportation, it was felt that for heavy shunting a more substantial locomotive was needed. The ideal locomotive turned out to be the 0-8-0 class Q1 tank engine.

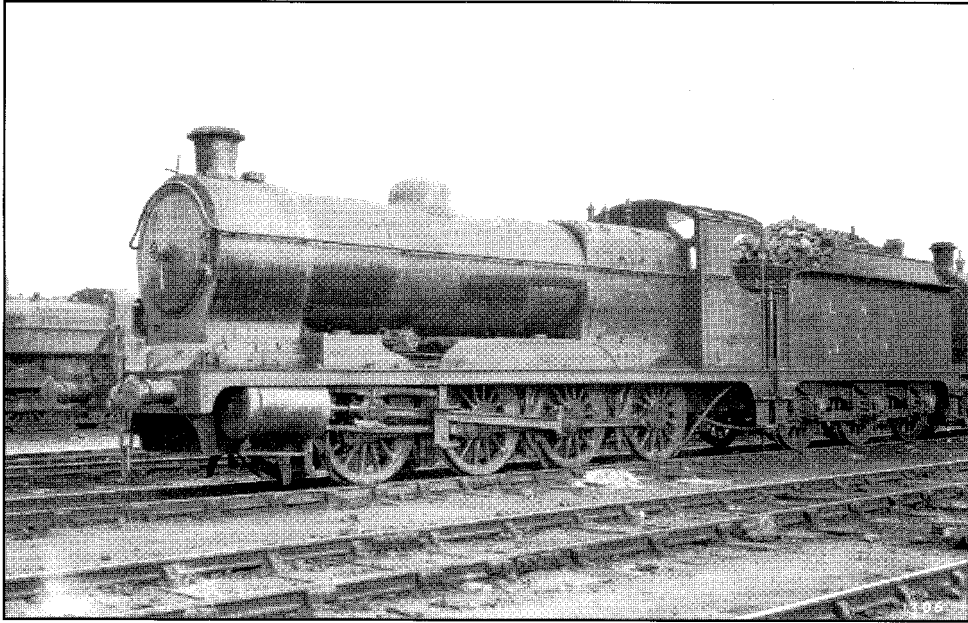
These engines were originally Robinson's class Q4 0-8-0 tender engines dating from 1902 to 1910, and were destined to be withdrawn in the late 1930's, but the onset of the Second World War gave them a new lease of life. Between 1942 and 1945 Edward Thompson began converting 13 Q4's and many survived to become British Rail property and re-classed as the new heavy shunting tank engine Q1.

The conversions were carried out at Doncaster Plant so the chimney was a built up GN affair similar to those on a class N1. The drive for the inside Stephenson eccentrics was altered from the third axle in the Q4 to the second axle in the Q1 due to the boiler being shortened otherwise there would have been no access between the motions and the firebox. This should have made oiling the inside motions easier but you had to be a contortionist to climb inside. All the Q1's were fitted with slide valves, a legacy from the Q4 and they were also fitted with a vacuum ejector and gradual steam brake.

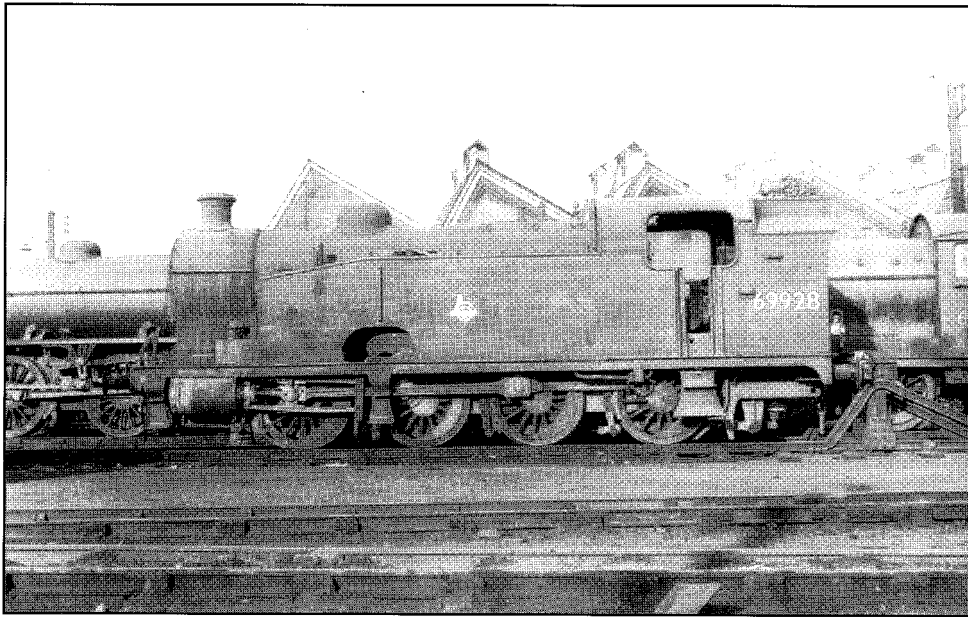
For such a small class of locomotive their travelling over a great area of the LNER was phenomenal, including Eastfield at Glasgow, Gateshead, Mexborough, Retford, Langwith and of course Frodingham. However it must be stated that at most of these depots their stay was on an experimental basis as they were not suitable for main line work due to insufficient braking capabilities plus their tanks did not hold enough water. When working from Mexborough/Wath to Rotherwood Sidings they had great difficulty braking through the Darnall Curve on the return journey.

During the late 1940's I remember seeing a Q1 banking on the Worsborough incline complete with the LNER lozenge style motif and I believe one retained this to the end, but those at Frodingham were all painted unlined black with no motif. Contrary to popular belief I found the cabs quite comfortable with toadstool upholstered seats located at the bunker end. The regulator handle was of the B1 type, but in this case was arranged for right hand drive, and the Q4 Robinson screw reversing gear was replaced with a lever which was much handier when shunting. The Gresham and Craven combination lifting injectors from the class Q4 were retained and there was a sight feed lubricator located each side of the cab.

Nine of the Q1's were adapted with larger coal-bunker's including an extra 500 gallon water tank built under the bunker, but the main frames had to be lengthened accordingly. When converted the



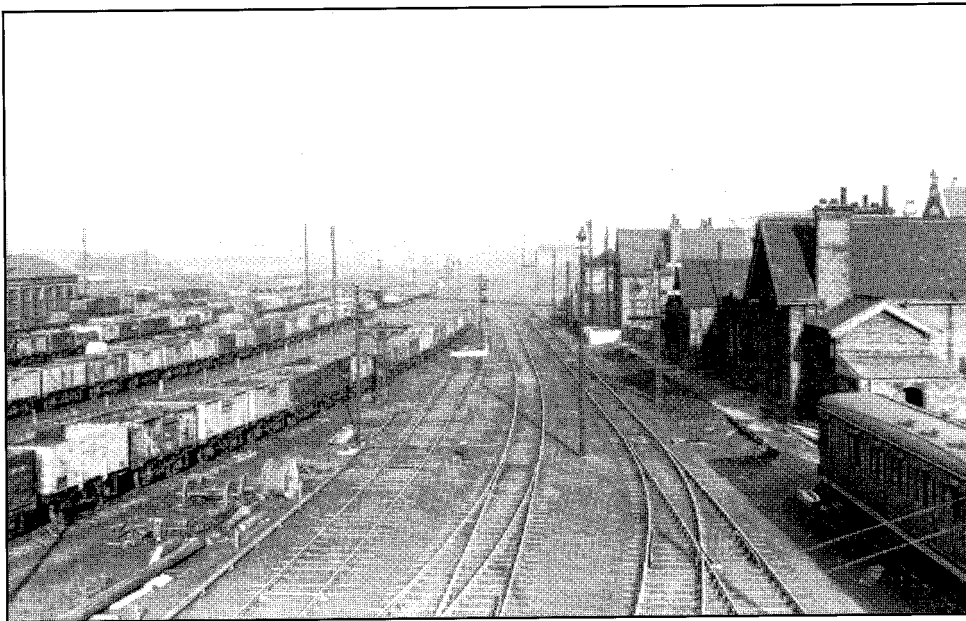
0-8-0 class Q4 No. 5049. GCRS collection.



0-8-0 class Q1 No. 69928 Q1 converted into tank engine from class Q4 above. Seen at Langwith 16.6.58. A.R. Goult.



Frodingham Trent Sidings looking towards North Lines Junction c. 1960. **John Oxley.**



Frodingham Old Station (Yard Masters Office Yard 2) looking East c. 1960. **John Oxley.**

Q1's retained the GC style wheel-locking device on the smoke box door but which was later altered to the more modern two-lever type.

At Frodingham there was no trouble with water supply as there were plenty of columns around the marshalling yards and the Q1 coal-bunker was quite sufficient for 24 hours working. One hazard was that the bunker was so designed that if you climbed inside you would never be able to get out as the sides were tapered. During conversion the boilers were shortened and raised about 1½ inches above those on the Q4 and the superheaters were removed. This gave rise to a big problem as the Q1 had a tendency to prime causing water to enter the cylinders resulting in the engine working hydraulically, with the possibility of blowing the cylinder end covers off. To counter this happening the driver would automatically open the cylinder drain cocks to blow off any water in the cylinders. *(Cylinder drain cocks are fitted to all locomotives to reduce the build up of water in the cylinders when a locomotive is stationary due to steam cooling and turning back to water. This explains why when an engine moves off after being stationary for some time, large jets of steam are blown out to disperse any water build up). Ed.*

At Frodingham the Q1's found their natural home and gave good service dealing with the heavy steel traffic in the marshalling yards. The priming referred to earlier was not helped by the antics of a certain 'Passed Fireman', a surly fellow, who when refilling the water tank would pour common engine oil into the tank. Once asked why he did this he replied that it lubricated the regulator handle and in his opinion made the injectors work much easier. However the resulting priming invariably caused large white oil blobs to coat the outside of the smokebox!

I understand a Q1 was even stationed at Barnetby depot, but it would not have been a success there owing to its poor braking on one or two steep gradients in that area. Despite their limitations and unpopularity in some area of the country, the Q1's worked well at Frodingham and although the large bunker somewhat restricted the rearward view this was overcome by the large cab side 'cut outs'. I only fired one on the main line when with Driver Walter Wood we took one to Mexborough, light engine, on its way to Gorton for overhaul.

In 1950 the following Q1 class were based at Frodingham 69930, 69932, 69934, 69935, 69936, and 69937. The last five Q1's in existence 69928, 69934, 69935, 69936 and 69939 were withdrawn from Frodingham in 1959 due to the arrival of diesel/electric shunters.

David Jackson's Questions with Geoff's Answers.

- Q1.** Which 'turns' at Frodingham were the ones usually associated with Q1's?
A. Usually worked by Q1 classes were North Lincoln Junction (Redbourne Steelworks).
Trent Junction (Appleby-Frodingham Steelworks).
No 3 Pilot (Cliffes).
No 2 Pilot J50 shunted Empty Sidings while No. 7 Pilot Q1 shunted Loaded Sidings West end of the New Yard.
In later years the North Lincoln and No 3 pilots were sometimes worked by class L3 2-6-4T's or S1 0-8-4T's.
- Q2.** How were these engines fired?
A. Method of firing was with a reasonably thick fire with plenty under the fire hole door, which was the usual GC circular hinged door with inward hinged opening trap.

- Q3.** Was there ever a problem with the limited bunker coal capacity?
A. No problem with bunker coal capacity at Frodingham. Engines re-bunkered every 24 hours.
- Q4.** Would you think the removal of superheaters when the locos were converted was a mistake from a practical point of view?
A. I think that the superheaters should have been left in at conversion.
- Q5.** How good were these machines for the work done at Frodingham and what sort of reputation did these engines have with local men?
A. The Q1 classes performed their duties reasonably well with few failures but were not too popular owing to their persistent priming.
- Q6.** Was the cab as cramped to work in as it looks?
A. The cab had a wooden footplate and was comfortable. There may have been some restrictions when handling long clinker shovels during fire cleaning, as with most tank engines.
- Q7.** Rear-ward visibility seems very restricted. Was it a problem when looking out of the back of the cab?
A. Rear-ward view was taken by looking out of the side cab 'cut outs'. No problem really.
- Q8.** Was priming a problem and did these engines have extra chemical treatment placed in their tanks?
A. Priming was a problem although the water was treated on shed. No provision was made at Frodingham for treatment in the engine tank. I believe a Q1 at Langwith did have a pipe fitted on the tank to insert chemical treatment tablets.
- Q9.** Why did some of the Q1's have screw couplings and others had the three link type?
A. I once heard of a B16 failing on a passenger train at Selby and being worked forward by a Q1 to Gascoigne Wood where it was replaced, so this engine must have had a screw coupling. The vacuum ejector also came in handy. Most Q1's had three link couplings.
- Q10.** What was the water capacity and weight of the Q1's?
A. Small bunker: Water capacity 1,500 gallons. Weight 69ton 18cwts.
Large bunker: Water capacity 2,000 gallons. Weight 73ton 13cwts.
- Q11.** What type of coal was used at Frodingham and from which collieries was it supplied?
A. Frodingham was a freight depot with coal much removed from that supplied to a grade 1A or 1B passenger depot. Generally it consisted of Cardiff briquettes, Yorkshire or Nottinghamshire coal and small ovoids of cemented coal dust. The briquettes and ovoids threw out plenty of heat but left much dirt and dust. Some coal however had a yellow seam running through it and was a fine steam coal leaving very little ash.

The previous article raises several important questions, which some interested readers may find needs an explanation.

Priming and the Advantage of Superheated Steam over Saturated Steam.

Q 1. What is priming?

A Priming is when steam from the boiler header becomes contaminated with water and is carried into the main cylinders when the driver opens the engine's regulator. Steam is highly elastic and increases in area 1,700 times at atmospheric pressure (sea level approx. 14.5lb's per sq. inch). Therefore 1 cubic inch of water converts into 1 cubic foot of steam. However when under pressure at 250psi it only occupies 1/15th of that space.

Unlike steam, water is not compressible, i.e. 1cu. foot occupies 1 cu. foot of space. Therefore if a considerable amount of water enters a cylinder, the piston when moving towards the cylinder end cover cannot compress the water which either forces the cover to blow off or creates the possibility of bending side rods etc.

Q 2. What causes it?

A. There can be several causes. Overfilling the boiler by the fireman. (Way above the top nut in the gauge glass). - Poor boiler design. - Not fitted with a superheater - Untreated or contaminated water. - Boiler requires washing out leaving a residual amount of sludge etc.

To prevent the build up of water in the cylinders: -

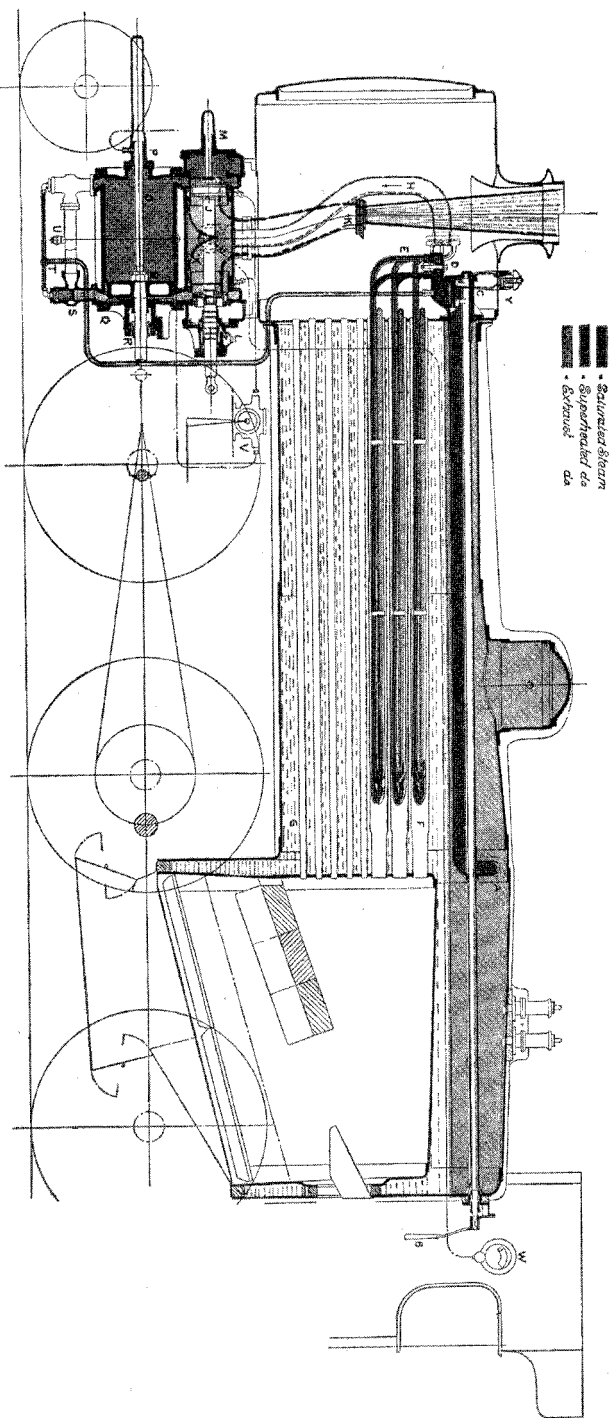
When a locomotive is at rest, a small amount of steam can leak into the cylinders and when coming into contact with the cold cylinder walls condensation occurs, turning the steam back into water. To prevent a build up of this water all cylinders are fitted with drain off cocks at both ends of the cylinder. Therefore the last act an engineman performs when leaving a locomotive is to ensure that the cylinder cocks are left open. (The cylinder cock is situated in the cab usually on the fireman's side). Also when moving off after being stationary for a length of time the driver will move off with the cocks open ensuring that all water is drained off fully. This explains the sudden jets of steam appearing from the cylinder cocks occasionally when an engine moves off.

Q 3. What action should a driver perform when priming occurs?

A. If priming occurs when running, the regulator must be closed and the cylinder drain cocks opened immediately to prevent damage. The loss of steam pressure in the cylinders ultimately means a considerable loss in power and speed, especially when under load.

SUPERHEATED STEAM

There are great advantages resulting from superheated steam over saturated steam. When saturated steam leaves the boiler it is wet and has a temperature determined by its pressure. The principle of superheating steam is to add further heat to it after it has left the water, which in a boiler is naturally always at the same temperature as the steam. The results of superheating are threefold, the most important advantage being economy; an engine using superheated steam, engaged on the same work as a saturated locomotive, will use from 35 to 40% less water and from 25 to 35% less fuel. The second benefit is that the volume of steam produced - and hence the hauling capacity of the engine - is increased as the water normally present in the steam is converted into steam; this increase may be as much as 33 per cent. Thirdly the absence of water in the steam plus the increase in the heat of it enables a greater amount of work to be extracted from it. This means that, from the designer's point of view, an engine may develop the same power by lowering the steam pressure and enlarging the cylinders. Lower pressures also have the advantage of reduced maintenance charges



SUPERHEATER AND FITTINGS

- A Steam collector pipe.
- B Regulator handle.
- C Regulator in smokebox.
- D Steam collector or header.
- E Elements.
- F Large flue-tubes containing elements.
- G Small smoke-tubes.
- H Steam-pipes.
- I Piston-rod and spindle.
- K Blast-pipe.
- L Rear steam-chest cover, guide and gland.
- M Front steam-chest cover and guide.
- N Piston and rod.
- O Piston-rod tail rod.
- P Piston-rod tail guide in front cylinder cover.
- Q Hind cylinder cover.
- R Air-cooled metallic packing for piston-rod.
- S Cylinder relief valve and by-pass (automatic).
- T Steam-pipe to by-pass.
- U Drain to by-pass pipe.
- V Mechanical lubricator.
- W Pyrometer in cab.
- X Pyrometer bulb in steam-pipe.
- Y Vacuum relief valve on header.

PLATE 2—facing p. 126

Diagram of superheater and fittings. Simpson & Roberts' Locomotives & their Workings 1952.

Immediately steam enters the cylinders a drop in temperature occurs, as the cylinder cover, piston and cylinder walls are relatively colder. In the case of saturated steam this temperature drop results in partial condensation. Superheated steam may have had from 200° to 400° added to its temperature and it will be obvious that a very big drop in temperature may occur without condensation.

There are several similar types of superheater designed for British locomotives but all have the same purpose, so without becoming too technical I will try to illustrate how superheated steam is generated.

The steam immediately above the water in the boiler contains many fine particles of water therefore the higher above the surface of the water the drier the steam. In order, therefore, to ensure that the steam reaching the cylinders from the boiler is as dry as possible it is desirable to take it from the highest convenient point. Another reason for this is that when the locomotive is running, the surface of the water is continually moving, especially when starting and stopping, or when running over a changing gradient. Any change in level of the water due to these causes is most marked at the front tube-plate and the boiler back-plate. It is therefore best to collect steam for the cylinders and other purposes at a point somewhere near the middle of the boiler and as high above the water as possible. A dome is generally but not always used for this purpose explaining why its height is usually made as great as possible, however the more modern powerful locomotives with large diameter boilers and the restriction of the loading gauge had to be designed with the flatter banjo style dome.

When the regulator is opened, saturated steam is carried from the dome to the 'collector head' from where it then enters several banks of small diameter superheater tubes. These elongated narrow tubes are so shaped and bent at the ends that they are quadrupled in length and are fitted inside larger 5in. diameter boiler tubes. The saturated steam in the superheater tube flows under pressure up and down four times the length of the boiler tube and is dried out before finally entering the main steam pipe and being distributed to the cylinders via the position of the piston valves.

Source: Adapted from Simpson & Roberts 'Locomotives and Their Working'

CHAIRMAN MIKE HARTLEY

Mike Hartley wishes it to be known that he has reluctantly decided to resign his position as Chairman of the Society at the next A.G.M.

Mike has held the position for seven years and feels that it is time for someone else to take over the reigns and to promote new ideas. No one can doubt the countless time and energy Mike has given to his position in promoting the Society and his long-term objective of having 500 members. In the last three years membership has grown rapidly through Mike's stewardship and this grand total was finally achieved during the summer and still hovers around this figure.

If any member would like to be considered for the position at the 2004 A.G.M. please contact the Secretary Brian Slater with the name of a proposer.

WOODHEAD AFTER CLOSURE

PART I 1981 - 83

By Paul White

The Woodhead Route has now been closed for 22 years, however, like the London extension it refuses to lie down. Members will no doubt be looking forward with interest to the outcome of the progress through Parliament of the “hybrid” bill, due for November 2003 containing Central Rail’s proposals for using parts of the GC system as an element in a freight route from Liverpool to Lille. I hope to be able to show in a series of occasional articles how this once busy rail route continues to exercise minds both locally and nationally.

In the latter part of 1981 following the closure of the line, calls for its retention continued, principally from the rail unions, who had secured a worthless agreement that the rails would not be removed for a two-year period. There were other interventions, perhaps most bizarrely on the grounds of increased noise from the re-routed freight trains on the Diggle route causing disturbance to the sleep of local residents in the Ashton-under-Lyne area. This chorus of protest was led by a Mr Glyn Wright, who said he was prepared to go to jail for non-payment of rates if the problem was not addressed, while the leader of Tameside council, Roy Oldham said that if the noise had been caused by a new road, affected residents would be able to claim compensation from BR. BR, who stated that relaying with CWR (continuous long welded rail) would reduce any noise nuisance, dismissed this. Further fears were expressed about the transport of dangerous chemicals on the same line, which had previously been routed via Woodhead, no doubt prompted by the April 1981 near disaster involving an overturned tanker of anhydrous ammonia at Hadfield station, which had caused widespread evacuations. These fears were dismissed by BR as “groundless”.

At the same time, fears for the future of the Manchester-Glossop-Hadfield service were compounded by a reduction in frequency, which was approved in October 1981. A guard’s strike then took place against a backdrop of reduced funding for rail, making the picture even bleaker. In November 1981 Shadow Transport Secretary Albert Booth stated that .. “while closure of the line and the removal of its infrastructure.....would make it difficult to reverse the decision.....a future Labour Government would look at the situation immediately on coming to office and would consider reversing the decision if physically possible”. Needless to say, nothing of the sort happened in May 1997!

For the first time, rumours of another use for the Woodhead Tunnel surfaced – as a nuclear bunker ! This came from Tameside Councillor Wilf Birtwistle, an NUR member, and was immediately denied by Sir Frank Cooper of the MOD. Throughout 1981 and 1982 the rail unions continued to hold talks with the local authorities and anyone else who would listen in an attempt to protect or re-open the line. These discussions seemed to become less and less focused perhaps in recognition that the situation was hopeless despite the fact that the rails remained in place. Local Authorities expressed themselves sympathetic, but could make no financial commitment.

The first ‘big’ issue involving the closed line came in September 1982 with the setting up of a study headed by Prof. Peter Hall of Reading University into the possibility of converting the Woodhead Tunnel into a road tunnel. The study also involved the Department of Transport and Sir William Halcrow and Partners, the engineers who designed the tunnel for BR. The obvious inference was that the tunnel would become part of a motorway link between the M67 and the M1. These fears were compounded by other issues current at the time; the trunk road to Sheffield via Castleton had been permanently closed due to the Little Mam Tor landslip in 1979, and the A57 Snake Pass was also subject to landslip and had been rumoured to be heading for the same fate, which would have

left only one Manchester-Sheffield trunk road – the A628 Woodhead road, parallel to the Woodhead rail route for much of its length. Added to this were ongoing worries about the CEGB proposal for a ‘pumped storage’ reservoir and power station scheme scheduled to be built on the high moors above Tintwistle. Thus were the residents of the Longendale Valley troubled by the possibilities of large-scale construction spoiling their rural retreat? However, the road scheme received a welcome on the other side of the Pennines, at least in the pages of the ‘South Yorkshire Times’ of October 22nd 1982 which pointed to the advantages of an “all weather” road would bring, which if routed through the tunnel would avoid snow blockages on the high moors. This approval was echoed by the Peak Park Planning Board, which hoped that the new route under the Pennines would relieve pressure on the A628, which might even become a bridleway.

Throughout 1983, all rail issues were overshadowed by the Serpell Report, Option A of which envisaged a rail network of a mere 1600 miles.

In February 1983 the Rail Study Group of Greater Manchester Transport made their first proposals for a Light Rail scheme. The possibility of converting the Glossop and Hadfield line to this system was discussed, but the outcome was the line’s conversion to 25 Kva ac.

In April 1983 for the first time the possibility of converting the Woodhead Rail Route into a bridleway was discussed by Derbyshire County Council Planning and Countryside committee.

In May 1983, the CEGB plan to build a pumped Storage Plant above Tintwistle was rumoured to have been ‘shelved’, and an official announcement to this effect was made in August 1983. The CEGB said that the extra capacity might be needed by the end of the century, but the plan has never been heard of since.

Renewed calls were made in May 1983 for a station at Gamesley, led by Tory Councillor Ron Ferguson, who had previously consistently opposed the closure of the Woodhead line. A petition was presented to BR, but with no effect. County Councillor Eric Read raised the possibility of using the staff platform at the disused Mottram Yard, but this suggestion was not pursued.

Attempts by local BR management to get NUR members to remove sections of track from the Woodhead line led to disputes at Guide Bridge, with suspensions, threatened walkouts, and reinstatements “pending discussions”. BR’s response to this unrest was stark and to the point: they had agreed that the track was to be left in place for two years and that time was now up. Sir Peter Parker BR Chairman re-iterated this message to Barnsley and West Penistone MP Allen McKay, stating “We do not have any plans to re-open Woodhead”. The track worth over £1m was needed elsewhere. In a mysterious incident in July 1983 a section of track was stolen from Torside and oxy-acetylene cutting equipment was found abandoned nearby. The culprits, and the track were never found.

While arguments raged about the possibility of service cuts in the area due to reductions in subsidies, BR announced in July 1983 its intention to re-electrify the remaining Hadfield-Glossop-Manchester section at 25KVac at a cost of £4.5m. This would involve replacing the electro-pneumatic signalling which extended to Guide Bridge from Manchester and dated back to 1919. Interestingly, the heavy copper cable which carried the 1500Vdc power supply is still (2003) in use, nineteen years since this power supply was discontinued.

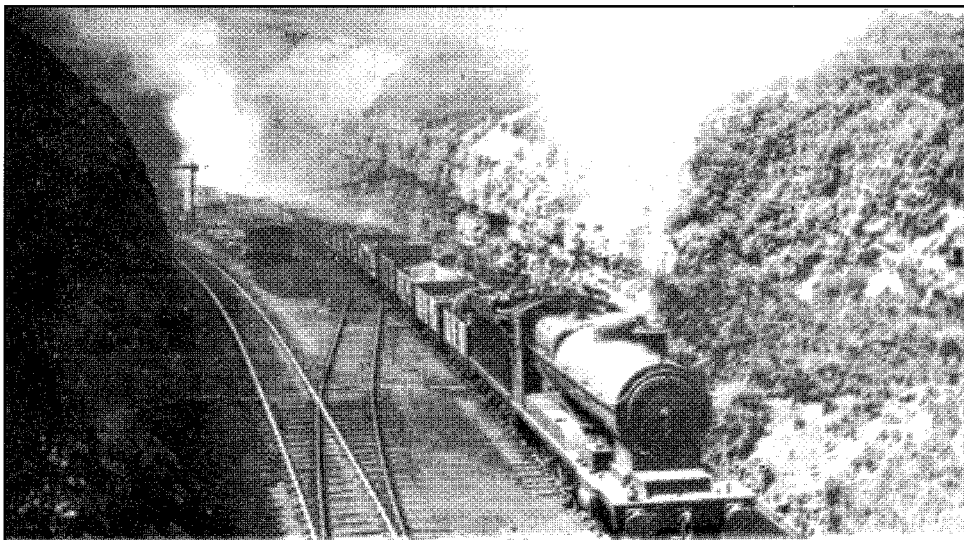
In August 1983, the Rees-Jeffries Report “New Uses for Redundant Railways: Study No 1; Woodhead: Trans-Pennine Highway” was published. For £9.50 you could discover that it had come to “no clear-cut conclusion”. The report found that conversion to road use was technically feasible: it looked at the possibility of both two-way and one-way eastbound use of the tunnel by road traffic and the use of the trackbed as a relief road. Full two-way operation within the tunnel would entail the fitting of a complex ventilation system at a cost of £17m. Even converting the trackbed into a road would have

cost marginally more than starting from scratch. Surprisingly, the engineers' projections showed minor benefits for the one-way version, and *dis-benefits* for the two-way version., principally because a 40mph speed limit would have to be imposed in the tunnel, and also because the 'low' level of through traffic did not justify the expense. I wonder what the conclusions would be if a similar study was done today, as the level of traffic on the A628 has been used to justify the go-ahead for plans to build a Hollingworth-Tintwistle by-pass. However, it was found that the building of a two-way road would give the biggest benefits in environmental terms, as it would allow the closure of the existing A628. As we now know, this was the end of the matter; instead, the Stocksbridge By-pass was built in the late 1980s, breaching the Woodhead Line and pouring an enormous amount of extra traffic onto the A628 from and to the M1. The road conversion could possibly be justified today on the grounds of this extra traffic, but most of the route has subsequently been converted to a cycle/bridleway.

In September 1983 residents of the former railway cottages at Woodhead were having their power restored. This had formerly come via a cable routed through the 'new' tunnel, but this had been removed in July by BR engineers, leaving the residents quite literally in the dark. It seems incredible that such an uncoordinated series of events could happen between two public bodies – doesn't it?

At the same time as these happenings were taking place the infrastructure was being removed; first the signal boxes, Valehouse being burned down, then the wiring, then the gantries. But at the end of 1983 the track, outside the two-year agreement accepted by the Unions, remained in place.

Part II follows.



2-8-0 class O4 emerges from the Woodhead Tunnel (or is it Dunford) on eastbound goods duty in pre electrification days. **GCRS collection.**

G.C.R.S.WEB SITE

Numerous members have enquired about the address for the G.C.R.S. Web Site produced by member David Annable.

The GCRS web site can be found at

To open the web site, click on the GC Crest when it appears.

THE 'CENOTAPH' (Coaling Plant) **Lawson Little**

For almost a hundred years after their introduction, steam locomotives had their coal supplies replenished the hard way - by manual labour. It was realised at a fairly early date that this back-breaking task could be made easier if wagons were raised to a level where their contents could be shovelled sideways or downwards into the tender or bunker, and quite elaborate structures were introduced to achieve this. Nevertheless there was still a great deal of labour-intensive work involved, and by the 1920's, when wage rates began to rise, railway companies began looking for more mechanised ways to tackle the problem. The best-known solution was the overhead bunker, filled in most cases by hoisting loaded wagons up the side and inverting them into the top. The resultant structure, almost invariably built in reinforced concrete, was generally known amongst railwaymen as 'The Cenotaph', owing to its tapered shape generally resembling the National War Memorial in London.

Although recognising the cost benefits, the cash-strapped LNER was unable to progress matters as quickly as it would have liked. 'Top Shed' (Kings Cross) got the first Cenotaph in 1931, an 850-ton capacity two-road affair with a divided bunker allowing two grades of coal to be accommodated, the superior variety being reserved for passenger locos. Gorton was next, in 1933, but there were few developments thereafter until 1935, when the LNER benefited from Government-guaranteed loans totalling £6 million. Most of this sum was devoted to improving the infrastructure, and Cenotaphs began to appear in greater numbers, though their distribution appears to have been somewhat arbitrary - Kittybrewster for example had one before 1938 whilst the large shed at Mexborough wasn't equipped until post-war days, and many smaller sheds like Tuxford had to manage with low-level coaling stages until the end.

The first mention of a mechanical coaling plant at Langwith was in a memo dated 24 April 1930, when one of the improvements proposed for the depot was a 2x100ton bunker coaler to replace the existing wooden raised coaling stage. Because of the cramped site, the approach ramp to the latter was very short and steep, leading to considerable difficulties in shunting; it was not unknown for the excessive speed necessary to climb the ramp resulting in wagons being propelled rapidly through the stage and through the buffer stop at the far end! Nevertheless nothing could be afforded until, as mentioned above, cheap capital became available in 1935 (a further £4 million was received in 1937). Mitchells of London, who built most of the LNER bunkers, were contracted to provide a Cenotaph at Langwith in 1936, and by June of that year it was complete, allowing the old and dangerous coaling stage to be demolished.

Most examples of Cenotaphs seemed to be individually designed; certainly I never saw an exact duplicate of the Langwith one, which was a one-road single bunker affair with twin delivery chutes, the latter being used individually for loading a tank engine bunker or together for a tender. Capacity is believed to have been around 350 tons, sufficient for about three days requirements; Mitchells, or to give them their full title, The Mitchell Conveyor & Transporter Company, Holborn Viaduct, London E.C.1, had quoted the sum of £5,892 in 1930, but no doubt this had increased by 1936.

Although it has not been possible to locate a scale drawing of the plant, some measurements are known, and a friend used these and the few available photographs to produce an outline sketch which indicates that the Cenotaph occupied an area 30' long and 23' wide; the estimated height was 72' and the massive structure was supported by four legs each a mere 3'x2' in size, a tribute to the strength of reinforced concrete.

The coaling plant was served by a siding which held 18/20 wagons and was inclined slightly upwards

so that the operator could drop individual vehicles onto the lifting platform by gravity, in the process running them beneath a water spraying gantry to reduce the effects of dust. Despite this, emptying wagons into the hopper was a dirty business, as well as creating a distinctive rattling roar as coal dropped into the hopper. This sound, which can still be recalled by those who experienced it, could be heard at all times of day or night. To reduce the strain on the twin electric winches, the wagon hoist was counterbalanced by a pair of wheeled metal boxes filled with old fishplates which ran on rails down the outside of the hopper; normally they were at the top but would be lowered as the wagon ascended.

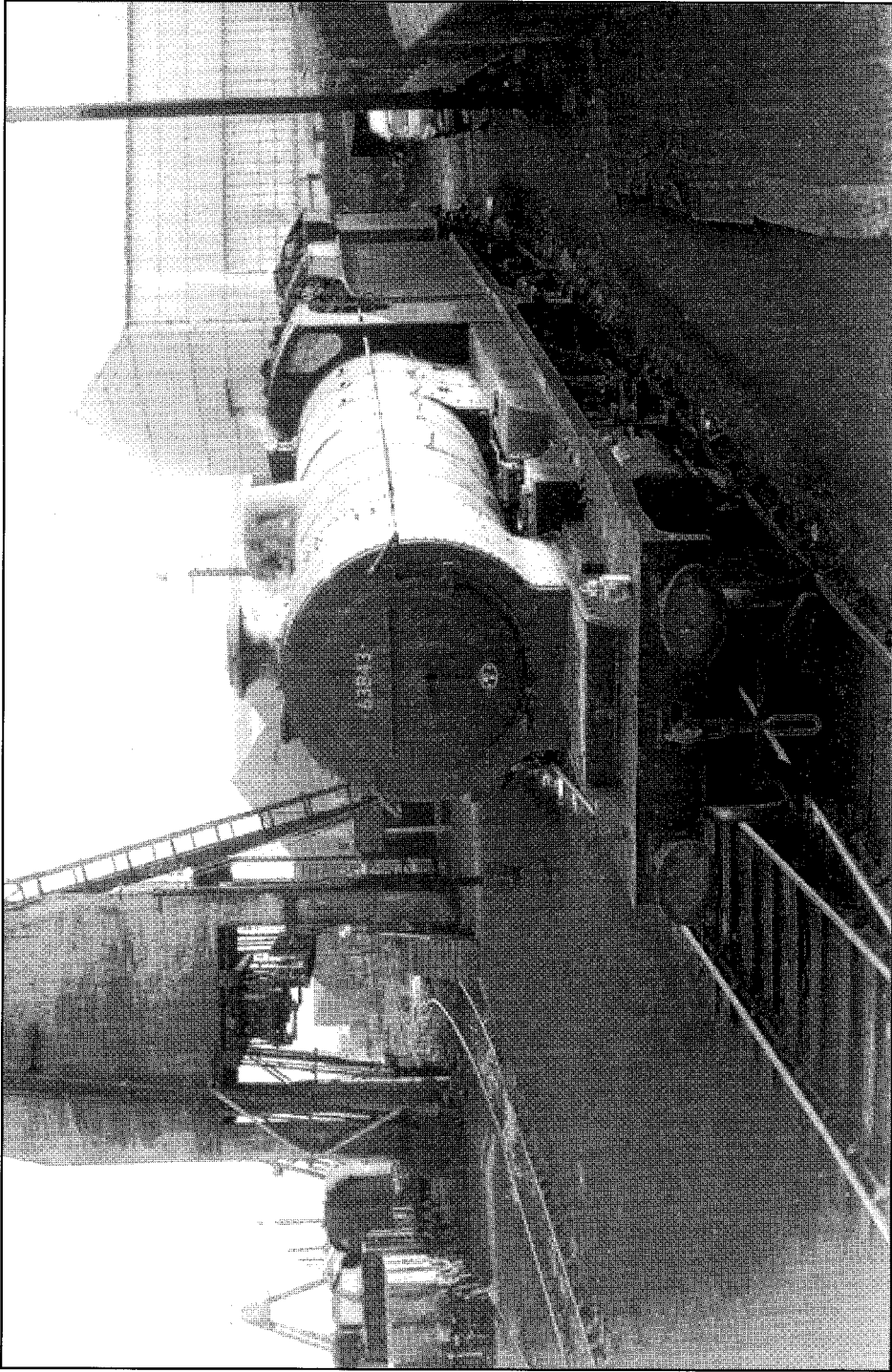
During the period before and during WWII when coal wagons were of wooden construction, there were quite frequent problems caused by wagon floors following the coal into the hopper! The floors were built of individual planks which often became loose, and whilst this was not a problem during loading and transit, the planks being held in place by the weight of the load, once the wagon was inverted!! The feed chutes would usually become jammed, and the only remedy was for some unfortunate labourer to climb into the hopper (a fixed ladder being provided for the purpose) and free the obstruction. If the hopper was well filled at the time, this could involve emptying it piece-meal out of the top, an unenviable task.

As each loaded wagon reached the top of the hopper, a steel crossbar automatically dropped across the top of the body to hold the wagon in place. Very occasionally this would malfunction, resulting in the whole wagon disappearing into the hopper, which necessitated bringing in the Breakdown Crane to extricate it. A less serious problem was the leaking of oil from axleboxes when wagons were inverted, which resulted in a heavy deposit of sludge down the face of the bunker; it was the unenviable task of one of the shed cleaners to scrape this off from time to time, the lad being hoisted up on the empty wagon lift for the purpose.

The Langwith Cenotaph dominated the local skyline for almost thirty years during which time it must have dispensed something like 1,500,000 tons of coal. Towards the end of 1965 the plant suffered a rare breakdown, and with the depot already living on borrowed time (the replacement diesel shed at Shirebrook had opened in June that year) it was decided that repairs were not justified; a grab-fitted crane served the few remaining steam locos until the depot finally closed in February 1966.

By this time the writer was living in Suffolk, but on a chance visit to Langwith Junction some months later, I found the scrapmen busy removing all the metalwork from the coaling plant, and I was able to rescue the makers plate for the price of a beer. The stripped carcass then stood silent for several years until W.H.Davis Ltd, who had bought the site to extend their adjacent wagon works, needed the space to erect a large travelling crane to handle new shipping containers. Then the structure was finally, and with some difficulty, demolished. Of the dozens, which were built, only the crumbling LMS example at Camforth still precariously survives; when that one is finally condemned, the Cenotaph will be extinct.

(As an interesting postscript, it may be mentioned that the widespread introduction of mechanical coaling plants like the Langwith example tolled the death-knell for the ex-Great Central bogie coal wagons of 30/40-ton capacity, which had been used for loco coal since 1903. These wagons were of course too long for the lifting cradles, and it cannot be coincidence that they were withdrawn from service in 1938.)



5. A visiting class O4 63843 (41F) at Langwith Junction, stabled alongside the 'Cenotaph'. 7th March 1964. M.S. Casteldine

MANUAL COALING FACILITIES

Brian Bell

Despite most of the large Motive Power Depots having automatic coaling plants (Cenotaphs) all depots retained their manual coaling facilities, no doubt in view of a 'cenotaph' break down which obviously would cause a major problem. At the larger depots these manual coaling stages were massive structures bearing in mind that the loading platform had to be at a height above the cab of a locomotive to facilitate tipping, plus the fact that it had to support a considerable number of coal wagons at this height. For access to the loading deck of the coaling stage, which could accommodate around twenty coal wagons, a long gradual incline had to be built so that an engine could push up the wagons for unloading. At some depots a spur was constructed so that 'empties' could be stabled awaiting removal. Normally, once the wagons had been left in position adjacent to the coal stage, they could be moved manually by the coal stage operators (labourers – engine cleaners) using a 'pinch bar' which when placed under a wagon wheel could move a fully loaded 16 ton coal wagon, albeit very slowly.

The 'operators' would then shovel the coal by hand from the wagons into large half-ton capacity steel tubs fitted with a hinged door at one end so that they could be tipped. The loading platform was built of flat steel plates so that the steel tubs could be manoeuvred by hand, either into a storage position awaiting to be tipped or when required pushed onto a loading platform situated directly above the centre of a locomotive tender. Usually there were twenty or thirty tubs to be filled and stored on the platform to one side.

New England M.P.D having a mixture of express passenger and predominantly freight workings had a 'cenotaph' fitted with two hoppers, one holding freight engine coal and the other for passenger engines 'only'. However at other main depots without this facility, express passenger engines and in the case of Immingham, their 'fish' engines also were coaled by hand. The best top quality steam coal supplied to Immingham was from the Yorkshire 'Main' colliery, which was a very hard shiny coal, which cracked easily down its seam. All 'Fish' engines and the two London express engines, as well as being coaled by hand had all their coal cracked down to a manageable firing size and their tenders stacked to absolute capacity. *(B1's responsible for working the Cleethorpes-Kings Cross (156 miles) on a through working required every bit).*

Most of the labouring duties (coal stage and shed cleaning) at Immingham M.P.D. was performed by Engine Cleaners due to the fact that the depot employed well over one hundred during my period there in the 1950's. Two cleaners manned the coal stage on shift every twenty-four hours plus several were given shed cleaning duties during the day. These jobs for 16 to 18 year olds were highly sought after because they were paid at a much higher 'adult labourer' rate of pay and were assigned to the top senior cleaners who were not engaged on 'firing' duties. Coal stage duty was a combination of dirty hard manual work and could be extremely hazardous demanding a high degree of self preservation, so it would very interesting in this modern Health and Safety era how anyone would write a 'risk assessment' for the job.

At smaller engine depots, such as Grimsby where they coaled 17 pilot engines and several main line visitors daily, their coal stage was a much smaller affair. Originally it was a small-prefabricated type structure with the loading platform situated at ground level. To raise the steel coal tubs above engine tender height for loading, it was equipped with a large permanently positioned crane that was hand operated. (I remember well, being sent there as a cleaner to coal engines one weekend). Around 1953 this antiquated affair was replaced with a small mechanical coaling plant. Although again the much smaller steel tubs were filled by hand, at least they ran on a narrow gauge railway line and were hand

pushed to the coaling plant, which lifted and tipped the tubs mechanically above the engine tender.

One other laborious labouring job which had to be contended with, no doubt time consuming and undoubtedly expensive, was the fact that most large depots had to have the facility to store several thousands of tons of coal at ground level. This was due to the fact of the severe 1947 winter whereby the railways became snow-bound for several weeks and engine coal could not be delivered. After every winter the coal would have to be picked up and used, then replaced the next autumn.

At Immingham the method employed to empty coal wagons and build the coal stack was assigned on a voluntary basis to cleaners/labourers as a bonus payment. Normally the task would be performed after completing your normal half-day shift on a Saturday morning (40 hour week in the 50's). At first the coal had to be unloaded by hand either by throwing out large lumps then by shovel when the wagon floor had been reached and the side door could be opened. When emptied (12ton) you took the wagon loading ticket to the cashiers and received the princely sum of £1, bearing in mind it represented in some cases 25% of your weekly wage. I knew of one married cleaner who emptied two wagons at a time!! However this did not remain a major headache for the railway authorities as within ten years steam motive power came to an end.

It can well be understood the high degree of manual labour required by the railway companies simply to coal locomotives, amongst their many other activities.

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ONE MAN AND HIS BOX

Tony West

Anyone engaged in historical railway research will have a small list of 'holygrails' information or photos that are seemingly always just out of reach for one reason or another. In my own researches on the Rugby to Leicester section there is a small list, which includes photos of Barby box and sidings, Whetstone Junction box and Aylestone box. So imagine my surprise and delight when during a chance conversation with society member Bob Withers he mentioned that he knew of the existence of a photo of Aylestone box and not only that, it was still in the possession of the grandson of a former signalman. Needless to say that when I had picked myself up of the floor little time was lost in arranging to meet this gentleman.

The Man.

The signalman posing proudly on the steps of Aylestone box is Walter Kenney, a local chap he lived in a terraced house on Aylestone Lane Whetstone (the terrace as a whole was known as Sunnyside). In fact he spent all his life there. This may have been a great influence on young Walter as the GC crossed the lane only yards from his home, this being the first bridge north of Whetstone Station. As a young man he would have witnessed the line's construction and it seems to have made a great impression on him.

Unfortunately not many details of his railway career are known, however it is recorded that he worked a number of local signalboxes including Lutterworth, Ashby Magna, Whetstone and Aylestone. He also spent a period in the Aylesbury area. Sadly Walter was not blessed with good health in his middle age and following an operation for a brain tumour he died in February 1935 at the modest age of 52.

The Box.

Some members of longstanding may recall an old article of mine in Forward No 99 (Nov 94) titled 'Newton to Aylestone in Two and a half Years'. I of course highly recommend this as further reading as it provides the historical background to the photographs. Utilisation of the 20 lever frame was nominal as it only controlled home and distant signals in both directions. Study of the photo will reveal the box to be painted in the pre 1911 colour scheme of stone and Indian red and a motley collection of plant pots on the cleaning stage, as I said Aylestone was not the busiest box in the section.

My most grateful thanks are due to Arthur Kenney who so kindly allowed me to share his family's history with the society, to Bob Withers who pointed me in the direction of Arthur's doorstep and to Mike Mitchell who so kindly made a beautiful job of copying the photo.

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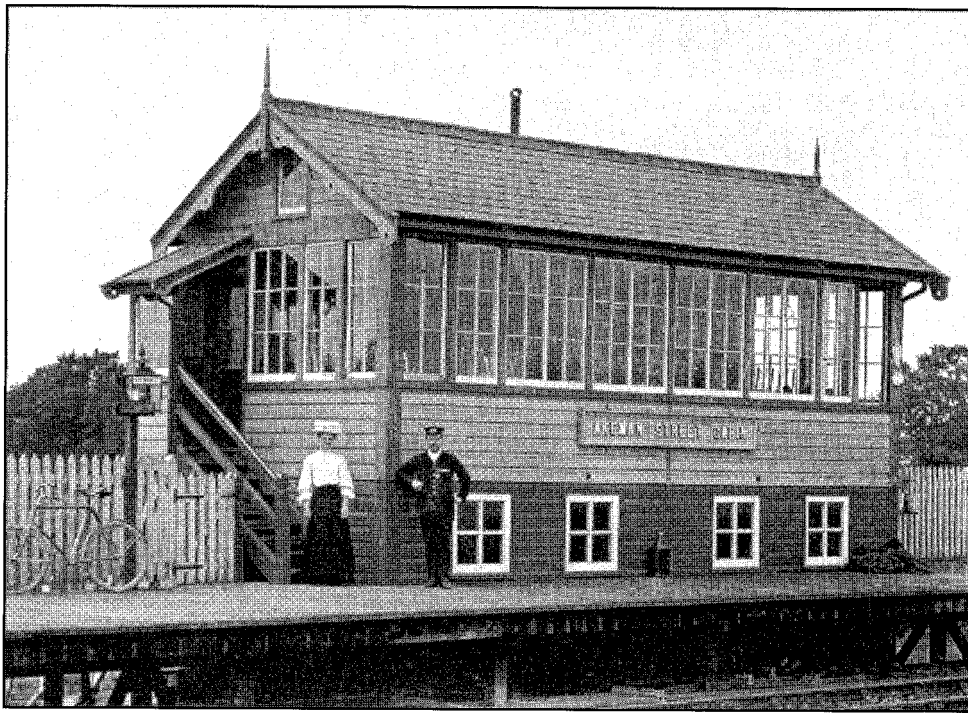
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Write to the Editor, O. Russell, 30 Hollincross Lane, Glossop SK13 8JQ.

Cheques/Postal Orders payable to the same.

Walter Kenney standing outside
Aylestone signal box.
Tony West collection.



Walter with his wife Mary outside Akeman Street cabin. **Tony West collection.**

GC TODAY

The High Marnham branch reopened on Tuesday 26th August for the removal of stockpiled coal from the closed power station, which is going to Ratcliffe. 66216 worked the 1st train with empties coming from Worksop and departed at 1513 hrs.

An unusual sight at Woodburn Jctn. on the 27th August was class 59201 working an ECS Pullman set from Chesterfield.

A daily train runs over the branch usually four or five times each weekday, class 66 locos are the usual motive power, on the 18th Sept. 60049 was used this being followed by 56119 on the 22nd.

The last remaining but closed MSL signalbox at Worksop West is still standing but partially vandalised.

Due to engineering work in the Scunthorpe area, increased use is being made of the Brigg branch for freight diversions especially at weekends and at night from the end of September.

Damage to a bridge at Treeton on the Midland route during September resulted in the closure of the line for almost three weeks with freightliner services from Southampton to Wakefield and Leeds and return being diverted via the WCML and Guide Bridge. This also resulted in the virtual suspension of MGR services via Woodhouse to and from the North Midlands.

On the 2nd September class 67010 made the first visit of the type over the 'Immingham light railway' to turn a train of ECS for a private charter from Barnetby to Doncaster and Kings Cross. It was organised by a consortium of Rail Freight Group Members who had been visiting various freight operations on South Humberside.

October saw several interesting workings via Woodburn as follows; on the 14th a Serco railtest passed at 11.25 worked by 31128 with four vehicles. On the following day 66027 worked ECS from Chesterfield off a Northern Bell Landeruise Excursion, which originated at London Victoria, this was followed shortly afterwards by 56109 at 14.07 on a train of scrap from Toton to Aldwarke.

Saturday 25th saw steam loco class B1 61264 return to its old haunts when it worked an excursion from Grantham to Immingham Reception via Woodburn and the Brigg Branch, bringing a return to steam traction to this route after many years. The return working was via Wrawby and Lincoln.

Steam was also observed at Mexborough on the same day when 6233 worked a return Excursion from Birmingham to York.

Thursday 2nd October saw condemned class 86 electric locos 205/212 being hauled through Scunthorpe at 10.37 hrs en route to Immingham for Storage.

66044 became derailed at Ellencliff sidings, Deepcar on the evening of the 23rd and to facilitate recovery, 56095 was sent L/D from Scunthorpe. It arrived at 09.10 the following morning to remove the 15 loaded scrap wagons back to Aldwarke which departed at 10.10 so that re-railing operations and track repairs could begin. 66044 departed at 21.08 L/D to Doncaster.

In conjunction with the forthcoming War Memorial 'Locomotive Naming Ceremony' at Sheffield Victoria, GB Railfreight loco 66704 ran L/D from Doncaster via Retford to Deepcar and return passing Victoria 14.15 hrs stopping briefly on the Wicker on its return at 15.15 hrs. Full details of this notable event will be in the next edition of Forward.

The Autumn Sandite working commenced on Monday 6th October over the Penistone Branch with the first train being push and pulled by 37516/17 passing through Penistone at 23.01 returning at 23.53 hrs.

Sandite trains to combat the effects of Autumn leaf fall are also operating over the GC routes between Sheffield and Worksop and the Rose Hill branch.

A new traffic flow operated by EWS began on the 13th October between Tees Dock to Trafford Park.

66063 worked the first train passing Guide Bridge at 00.22 hrs the following morning.

G. C. TODAY (Wales)

David Wrottesley

On Tuesday 28 October I travelled on the 10.32 from Bidston, arriving at the single platform that now remains at Wrexham (Wrecsam) Central at 11.31, two minutes late. Some 30 people alighted from the train, composed of single Diesel rail car 153312 with around 30 people waiting to board the train. Three minutes later, after the train crew had changed ends, the 11.32 to Bidston departed on its return journey. The unit that performed this swift 'Turn Round' was conveying the Heart of Wales 'Vynils' for working from Shrewsbury to Llanelli. This service from Wrexham Central to Bidston has been transferred from 'First North Western' to 'Wales and Borders' and is marketed as the 'Borderlands Line'. The unstaffed terminus station at Central, adjacent to 'Argos' is in the heart of what is becoming 'The Capital of North Wales'. Originally the station used to be an 'End on' junction with the Cambrian/GWR route to Ellesmere, which was closed to all traffic in 1962.

There are some thirteen stations on the 27-mile route to Bidston, which is a fascinating mixture of town and countryside. All but two stations (Wrexham General and Shotton High Level) are request stops, except peak hour services into and out of both Bidston and Wrexham. Hawarden Bridge station is however served by minimal request stops. On departure from Central, the train goes under the Chester - Shrewsbury (ex GWR) line, turns slowly northwards and stops at Platform 4 at Wrexham General. This is now all that remains of the facilities that used to be at Wrexham Exchange station, which was adjacent to Wrexham General (GWR/WR) junction station. The route is double track throughout but becomes single for the last half mile between the two Wrexham stations. A connection from ex GWR lines is maintained north of General and is used regularly by ECS (empty coach stock) trains from Chester and Shrewsbury that service the line from their depots. Fourteen services are provided in each direction Mondays to Saturdays to and from Wrexham General, with five services on Sundays in summer and three in winter, but Wrexham Central is not served on a Sunday.

The 11.32 on this day stopped and set down/picked up passengers at all stations except Cefn -Y-Bedd between Wrexham General and Shotton. This included Gwersyllt, only two miles from Wrexham, in an area where the GCR and the GWR used to have a very complicated network serving North Wales heavy industry.

The disused high level platforms at Hope Exchange (GC), closed in 1958, could still be seen between Pen-y-ffordd and Buckley where the line crossed the LNWR/LMSR 'Chester-Mold- Denbigh line' which closed in 1962. Hope Exchange (LNWR) Low level platforms also closed in 1958. The freight sidings to the Cement works at Pen-y-ffordd appeared to be intact and connected, but no wagons could be seen. A dedicated bus connection is in operation from Buckley station. The 11.32 from Bidston to Wrexham Central passed by in the opposite direction at Hawarden/Penarlag and a south bound six wagon freight train hauled by a Class 66 was observed passing Shotton High level at 12.20, crossing the ex LNWR Chester - Holyhead lines below at Shotton Low Level.

The Northern Terminus at Bidston where connection is made with ex Wirral Railway/ Merseyside DC electric services is the end of ex GCR metals, but diesel Wrexham services continued on to Birkenhead North until 1979. Prior to this they had taken the Bidston North curve, and terminated at New Brighton or Seacombe.

Plans have existed for many years for the Northern urban section of this line in Merseyside/Wirral to be electrified as part of the Liverpool third rail system, at least as far as Shotton, in a similar way to

that introduced to Chester. In my view the section of the route within Wales from Shotton to Wrexham needs to be included as well.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mr E. Dyson, Beckenham, Kent.

In Forward 137 I was interested in the article by Lawson Little on the LD & EC Railway, and in particular to his reference to errors on the map on page 17.

From 1941 to 1943 I was at a radar station near Donnington-on-Bain and regularly used the Louth – Lincoln line. I confirm that Five-Mile-House is on the line between Bardney and Lincoln and that the one that is fictitious is the one from Kingthorpe more directly to Lincoln which I believe was once proposed to join the Boston line at Five-Mile-House.

All traffic between Louth and Lincoln was via Bardney where carriages reversed. The map also fails to show the stations at Withcall and Hallington which lay between Donnington and Louth. In those days Bardney was fairly important as beside the station was a sugar beet processing plant and during the season or ‘campaign’ as it was termed, beet used to arrive, much of it by rail. Cane sugar and petroleum products were imported and in short supply whereas coal and beet were home produced. At that time many of the fields were ploughed not by tractor but by steam ploughing engines on either side of the field pulling a ploughing rig by hawser from one engine to the other for similar reasons.

Also, Mr Lawson states that no attempt was made for the proposed extension to serve Alford or Horncastle. Actually the extension was to cross the Grimsby – Boston line at Alford. A book by A.J. Ludlam on the ‘Louth – Mablethorpe and Willoughby Loop’ shows several interesting maps on page 4 and on the back cover, of the lines as I knew them.

From Mr C. Gilligan, Roose, Cardiff.

Re. your query on the question of the gauge of 4’ 8½” which we have on the railways today. What might it have been like today if we had Brunel’s 7’ 0”?

In ‘Our Iron Roads’ by F.S. Williams he refers to the gauge being determined by the coal tramroads in the North of England, not by any scientific theory but purely by convenience as five feet was the usual width of the gates through which the lines led. When the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was built George Stephenson saw no reason to change from the gauge already established. Williams goes on to say that, “regret was expressed by some engineers that the gauge had not been set a few inches wider.” Another important factor of course was the cost of land acquisition, roughly three quarters of an acre per mile extra for the broad gauge. We only have to look at what the MS&L had to pay for the ‘standard gauge’ extension to London and in particular the land costs through Nottingham, Leicester etc.

A totally different theory that I read some years ago and I cannot now recall the title of the book but in it the author stated that the gauge had been set by the width of the ruts left in the road by the horse and carriage! If we were starting today would we select 4’ 8”?

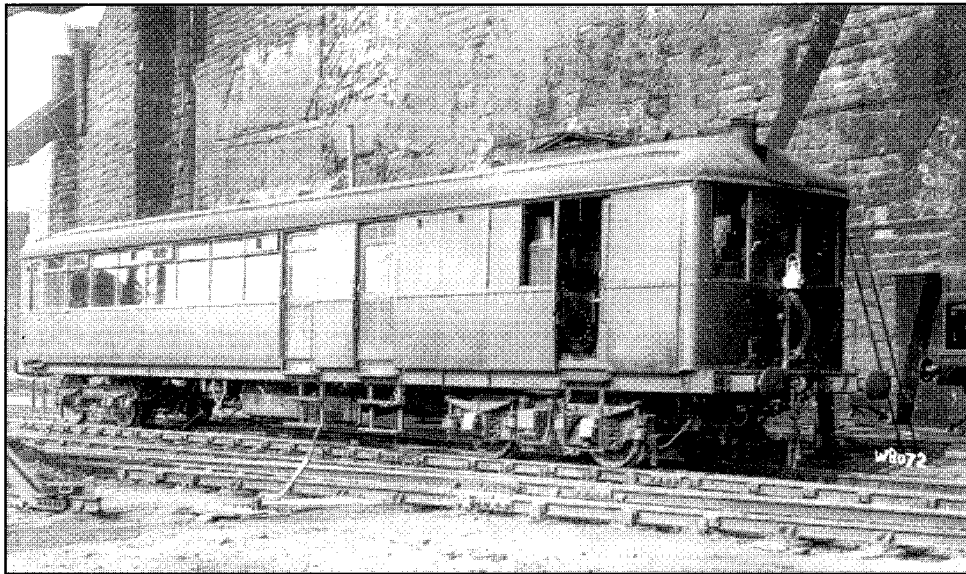
From David Wrottesley, Bradway, Sheffield.

The Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay railway which became an integral part of the GCR, is described in 'Great Central' Part III by George Dow. It had a 3¼mile branch to Brymbo, which connected to the Wrexham - Connah's Quay tracks just before Gwersyllt by a triangular junction entitled 'Brymbo North, South, and West'. There were initially two GCR intermediate stations on this very short and steeply graded branch - Moss & Pentre and Plas Power (Adjacent and connected to Plas Power (GWR).

In 1903 it became fashionable to operate steam rail motor cars with some two dozen railway companies experimenting with them; this included the building of new 'halts' in order to reduce costs and in an effort to increase traffic on branch line trains and local services on main lines. They were an indifferent success, and the GC was no exception. Three were built initially at Gorton, one for the Barton - New Holland branch, one for the Seacombe branch on Merseyside, and one for the Wrexham - Brymbo service. A vehicle apparently put in a brief spell between Marylebone and South Harrow.

I find it hard to agree with 'Dow' that the Seacombe vehicle ran regularly all the way from Wrexham. In connection with the railcars, two new halts were built on the Brymbo branch at Highfield Road and New Broughton, plus an additional halt at Rhos Ddu outside the 'WM & CQ' works between Wrexham Exchange and Gwersyllt. Five possible stops on a three mile branch line!!

What was the frequency of the GCR Brymbo Branch service in Rail Motor days and how successful was it? Did the branch ever return to normal loco haulage and what year did the branch close to passengers, bearing in mind the GWR rail motor services from Wrexham General to both Brymbo and Moss were withdrawn in 1931 due to severe bus competition on very short rail routes. What was the frequency of the Wrexham Exchange LNWR/LMSR service to Mold via Hope Junction, was it a Rail Motor service as well and when was it withdrawn? Finally what services to and from the Ruabon direction ran over the connection from Wrexham General (GWR) to the GCR? The Mold to Brymbo passenger service jointly run by the (LMSR/GWR) was withdrawn in 1950.



CLC steam rail car No.602 seen at Brunswick. **GCRS collection.**

From M. Waters, Huntington, York.

Many thanks for another issue of the GCR magazine, which was full of interest. It was good of you to publish my letter on the proposed line through Bottesford, I hope that someone comes up with some facts on this matter. I would have liked to have attended the Remembrance Day service at Sheffield Victoria but alas my limbs are even more creaky than usual, so I will have to be content with the service at the NER memorial here in York. I hope that the service in Sheffield is well supported and that everything goes according to plan. I served for some thirty years as a regular and a territorial, so these matters are important to me.

The Standard 4' 8½" Rail Gauge

Many thanks for the replies to the many members who answered my query. The general consensus of opinion is that the gauge relates to the distance between horse drawn wagon wheels and someone even stated Roman chariots!! (Ed)

BOOK REVIEW

Goods Traffic of the LNER., Geoff Goslin, 112 pp, A4, card backed, 120 photographs, some full page, 18 tables, 11 track diagrams. Wild Swan Publications printed by Amadeus Press. £15.95.

Although the LNER's goods traffic brought in twice as much revenue as its passenger services, very little has been recorded about the details of goods business despite the intricacy of the operations and the variety of locomotives and wagons involved,

Geoff Goslin's book does not attempt to cover the entire spectrum of goods traffic but in nine chapters, seven are devoted to studies of selected aspects of operation in each of the company's three Areas. In the Southern Area these are the Peterborough to London coal and brick traffic; the Nottingham and Grantham line; the GC section at Woodford and Hinton; the GE section at Ely and St Ives; two joint lines the GN and LNWR from the East Coast main line through to Melton Mowbray and beyond, and the GN and GE at Whit Moor. In addition there is a welcome insight into the Waverley route, and two chapters on motive power – a study of the variety of steam locomotives employed, with a special note on the effects of the purchase of 273 ex-WD 2-8-0's of Robinson design. Finally, a survey of the use of electric traction in goods haulage in the North East and over Woodhead. The working timetables and crew rosters will be new to most readers.

For the GC specialist, in addition to reference to the connection with the GN at Nottingham Victoria and a description of the goods traffic in the days when the Woodhead route was electrified, the main interest lies in a study of the focal point of Woodford and Hinton. This is centred on the last pre-war summer, but begins earlier in the 1930's and is projected well into BR days, with consideration of the mineral, fish, milk, parcels and passenger traffic dealt with. Favourite photographs must include one of the 'Directors' No. 5504 *Jutland* heading a milk empties through Harrow on the Hill, and an O2 with almost all its train in view, at Charwelton in 1937. Enthusiasts will also appreciate the author's comments on the economics of the London extension, asking if having regard to the increase in goods and mineral traffic, this really was the expensive failure that certain observers have concluded.

All in all, a book well worth studying, especially if some of the locations are unfamiliar to the reader. A good portrayal of LNER goods traffic operation. Geoffrey Hughes 10 July 2003.

NOTICES

Grimsby/Cleethorpes Branch.

RAFA Club. Alexandra Road, Cleethorpes. 7.45pm.

Awaiting dates at time of going to print.

Scunthorpe Branch

Kingsley Hall, Labour Club, Cole Street Scunthorpe 7.30pm.

Dec 18th. 'Railways Around Sheffield' Mike Hayes.

Awaiting dates at time of going to print.

Rotherham Branch

'The Atlas', Bawtry Road, Brinsworth. First Thursday of each Month at 7.30 (but note January date).

January 8th (note not Thursday). 'Classic Film Night' Mike Hayes (video).

February 5th. 'GC Locomotives, Prototype and Model' John Quick.

March 4th 'The Wonderful World of Charters' Ken Horan.

Sheffield and Chesterfield Branch (Spinkhill).

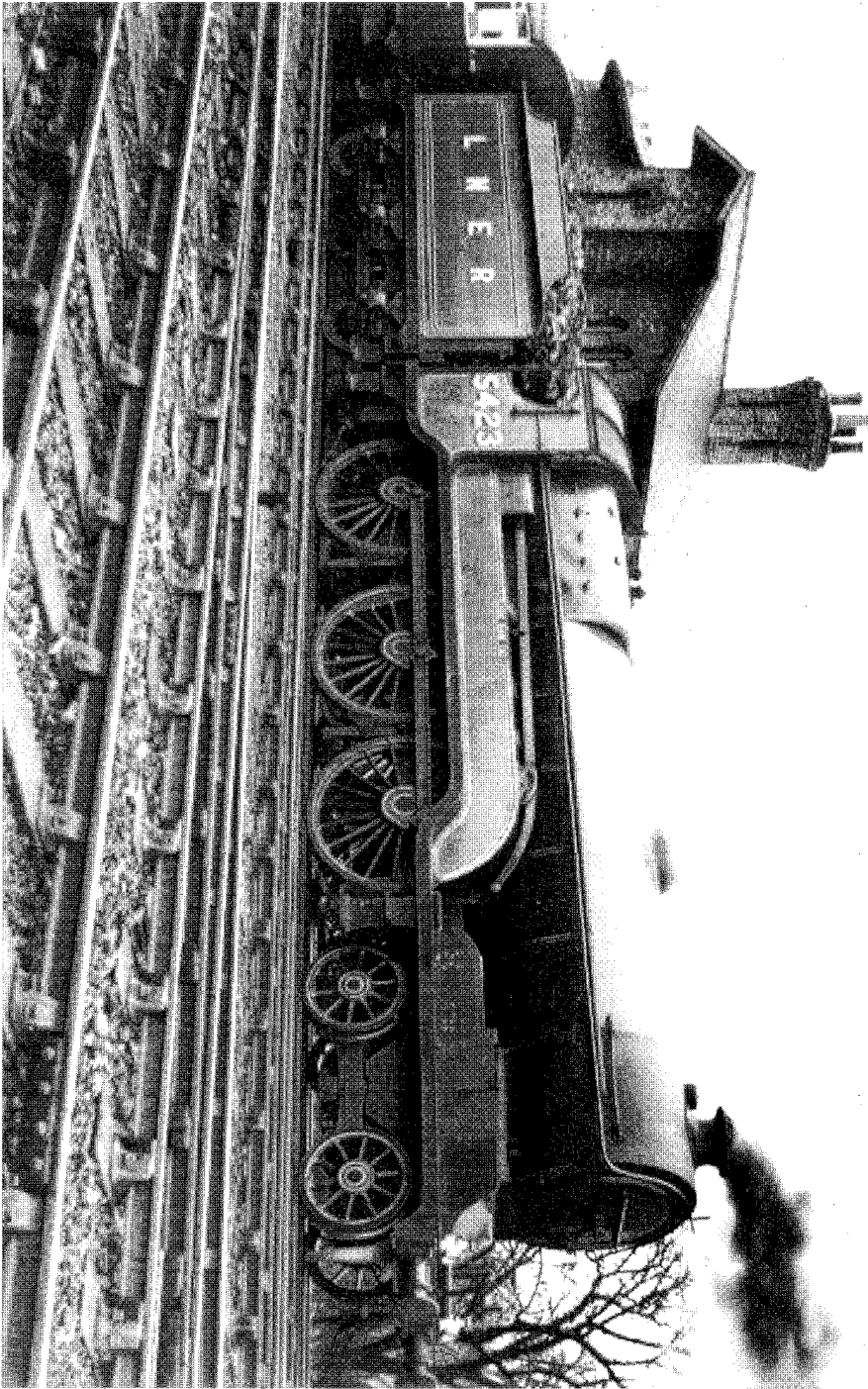
'The Angel Hotel', College Road, Spinkhill. Third Tuesday of each month start 7.30pm.

Nothing arranged.

Southern Area Branch

'Crockers', Aberdeen Place, London NW8. First Monday of each month start 7.30pm.

Awaiting dates at time of going to print.



Class B2 4-6-0 No. 5423 'Sir Sam Fay' departs Spalding with a pre WWII excursion train. **Photograph Eric Woods.**