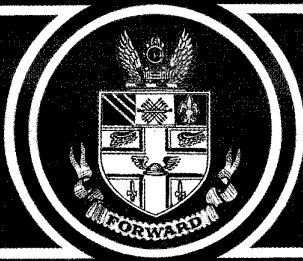


FORWARD



Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

Nº 139

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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.
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Photograph Front Cover: Re-dedication of the Great Central Railway War Memorial.
Richard Hardy was first to lay the GCRS wreath followed by, (from nearest) Jim Cornell, Executive Director of the Railway Heritage Trust; Richard Fenney, Network Rail Regional Director; Dennis Vessey, Royal British Legion; and Dianne Leek, Lord Mayor of Sheffield. **Sheffield Newspapers.**

'Letters to the Editor' and 'G.C. Today' feature including articles for consideration, must be submitted to the Editor by June 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 Society.

EDITOR'S NOTES

As I am sure most members will be aware, the Re-Dedication of the Great Central War Memorial at the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn, Sheffield on 'Armistice Day' November 11th last year, was a milestone in the Society's history. At the society's last committee meeting it was decided that this issue of 'Forward' should be a souvenir edition and contain four extra pages to carry at least 13 coloured photographs of the event. So it is only fitting that the main contents reflect that memorable occasion. There must be over several hundred photographs taken by numerous members that day, many of which have been sent for consideration of publication. Regrettably only a limited number could be chosen but I would like to thank all of you who sent photographs of the occasion. Finally it is only fitting therefore that I leave the foreword from an article by our President Richard Hardy, which I title:

A DAY OF DAYS

One looked forward immensely but with a touch of apprehension to the Service to be conducted by the Dean of Sheffield on Armistice Day 2003 to re-dedicate the Great Central Railway War Memorial now back in its rightful place on the site of the old Victoria Station. It was to be a wonderful and moving occasion, the culmination of months of discussion in which this Society played its part magnificently in supporting Ken Grainger, "Our man in Sheffield", who was so deeply and actively involved. Nothing of consequence will work on the day unless zealous attention is paid to detail so that everybody knows exactly what they have to do. Ken saw to that and the result was a day to cherish and remember.

I had stayed the night with old friends at Conisboro' and how that town has changed since the days of thriving collieries at Cadeby and Denaby pits. Next morning we set off for Sheffield by train! The Service was due to start at 12.00 and a splendid military band was playing on the hotel forecourt amid the bustle, excitement and anticipation.

A few minutes before noon, the same band marched up the long slope at the head of a column of members of the British Legion and of Sheffield railwaymen who had served in the last war, to the tune of 'The Boys of the Old Brigade'. The Service was moving both musically and spiritually. And I realised, not without emotion, that I was close to the spot where I started my last journey out of the 'Vic' on a steam locomotive in August 1945. And what an engine! I was with Driver Joe Oglesby, just him and me on the footplate of the great 'Valour', the War Memorial engine of the Great Central Railway. It was my last trip with Joe who had taken me over lines wherever Sheffield men worked. I had fired hundreds of miles for him but for that last day on 'Valour', I was the driver. No wonder such memories moved me on this very special occasion.



Richard
(centre) deep
in thought
with the
sense of the
occasion
and holding
poignant
memories.
**Mike
Eggenton.**

When the Service was over, the wreaths laid and as the band marched away down the slope, one regretted their departure. But there was no feeling of finality as our Chairman and the General Manager of GB Railfreight Ward Simpson, were to name one of their new class 67 diesels 'Valour' in memory of all railwaymen who gave their lives for their country in both wars. The words have been modified but both the classic shape of the nameplate and the noble message it represents is exactly as it was when the first 'Valour' was built in 1920. A quick lunch in the hotel and then at 2 o'clock, quite a few of us, including Canon Such who had assisted the Dean of Sheffield with the Service, travelled up to Deepcar on the new 'Valour'. The GC main line is now but single track, overgrown even in winter and which bears little resemblance to the railway on which John G Robinson's engines once reigned supreme as they roared up the long bank to Dunford and the Tunnel. We passed the remains of Wadsley and Oughty Bridge stations and were soon at Deepcar where our driver changed ends.



GBRf class 66 No. 66715 having just been named *Valour* following the Memorial Rededication ceremony on a cab-ride run to Deepcar. **Barry Collins.**

I have often felt that today's railway bears little similarity to that which I served for forty-two years. We were there to run trains to time; sometimes one failed to do this but more often than not we were successful. To do this we had to lead from the front and to be passionately involved in the activities of thousands of men. One tends to think that is all in the past and yet I wonder. Our driver was Geoff Brown, a Locomotive Inspector for GB Railfreight at Peterboro'. He was a Scouser and had started his training for the footplate at Lime Street in 1974, a year after I had left as Divisional Manager. He told me he had always wanted to meet me and at once we were on common ground, that unbreakable bond of understanding that exists between real railwaymen of whatever generation. It was the perfect end to a wonderful day.

Eugenie and Edgar Fay were with us throughout the day. He is the son of Sir Sam, the famous General Manager, who had been present at the first dedication of that same GCR War Memorial in 1920. I am 80 and we share the same birthday but he is fifteen years ahead of me. But what a man and what an honour to have both of them as well as his son, John and his wife with us on this 'day of days'.

WOODHEAD AFTER CLOSURE

PART II

Paul White

1984 began with discussions continuing on the possibility of converting the Hadfield-Glossop-Manchester line to a LRT (Light Railway Transport) system, and the Woodhead Tunnel to a road tunnel. At the same time there were fears for local rail transport occasioned by Government plans to abolish the Metropolitan Counties. While local councillors were unenthusiastic about the prospects for 'light rail' and its ability to link many local towns with greater ease than conventional 'heavy' rail, local rail union leaders, no doubt fearing for the future of traditional rail jobs, were also ready to pour cold water on the idea. According to Eddie Wright, Glossop NUR Chairman it was just a 'pipe dream'.

'Rail Into Road' was about to become big news nationally with a proposal to turn Marylebone, situated on a dedicated bus route, into a bus station which would lead to an interchange on the yet to be completed M25 via the A40. This plan was outlined in a Sunday Times article dated 22.1.84 entitled "Non-stop London via St Marylebus?" This article, combined with the 'Woodhead Rail to Road' proposal drew a furious response from the NUR in its 27.1.84 'Transport Review'. Pointing out that the cost of ventilating the Woodhead Tunnel for road use (£14m - some quotes gave £17m) was considerably more than the £12m figure BR used as the estimated cost of re-electrifying the whole of the Woodhead Route at 25KVac, a figure that had been used to justify closure! After contrasting the unfair ways in which methods of appraisal for rail investment schemes were judged, the article asked rhetorically, "Why not a feasibility study into a road to rail conversion?" Why not, indeed. Within a month, Transport Minister Lynda Chalker had vetoed the plan for the tunnel road conversion; obviously the case had not been made strongly enough. While the DoT had not commissioned the study, it had certainly contributed towards its costs.

By May 1984 work was going ahead with the conversion of Manchester - Glossop - Hadfield to 25KVac, this and associated signalling work entailed weekend line possessions and bus substitutions. However disaster struck on June 6th 1984 when Broadbottom Station was gutted in an arson attack. The imposing station building, one of the original stations on the line and classed as a listed building, was unoccupied at the time. As we shall see, this was not the end of the building's life - as with Hadfield station it was to have a chequered career as a bar and restaurant. Worries continued about the future of the remaining passenger line due to reduced funding. These worries were expressed by High Peak Borough Council in a letter to the Tory MP Chris Hawkins, while Councillor Arnold Fender 'Chair of the GMC Transportation Strategy Committee' said that a meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport, Nicholas Ridley "had confirmed his worst fears." Those fears were for the section outside the GMC. Eddie Wright, local NUR Branch Chairman predicted the end of all Greater Manchester's out-of-county local services and the termination of Hadfield line services at Hattersley, which he described as "a purpose-built terminal station." At the same time, a local group calling itself 'C13'!! was campaigning for the re-introduction of Sunday services, adding rather naively that "local amenities such as this are about people, not politics."

While the ruins of Broadbottom Station smouldered so did the anger of another local group. Broadbottom Community Association, with the help of Tameside Council had tried to buy the imposing stone-built warehouse from BR, but having had their plans for demolition to build houses on the site turned down, promptly offered it back to the Community Association - for £30,000.

In the autumn of 1984 Reddish Depot finally closed, with any necessary repairs to the class 506 units being carried out at Longsight until the end. Meanwhile the 1500Vdc electrification gradually faded

away, with the interruption of a loud bang. This occurred at 6.15am on the last Friday of October with a cable fire at Newton causing rush hour chaos and taking over one hour to control. The final day of class 506 working, Saturday November 17th, was marked by a 'non-stop' special, the 14.27 ex Piccadilly, the brain-child of Steve Cornish, Area Traffic Manager at Guide Bridge. The train ran direct to Hadfield, cutting out the Glossop stop and taking only 20 minutes. This did not go down well with NUR Chairman Eddie Wright, who accused BR of having 'a higher regard for scrap metal than for people.' Referring to an appeal for funds to save one of the units, he stated that the money would be better used if sent to the Ethiopia appeal.

I travelled on one of the 'last day' class 506 units, recalling the detonators that greeted the departure of the last train from Hadfield and very busy they were on that day. With the departure of the last train, Hadfield Box, together with most of the others, closed, leaving only the much changed Ashburys and Guide Bridge. A sad day indeed, not least for the redundant signalmen, as indeed the line closure had made so many rail staff redundant in 1981 - something we should never forget. One of the class 506 units went to a preservation scheme based in Bradford, which subsequently collapsed. I believe the unit was broken up. Perhaps someone could provide more details?

1984 closed with the announcement of big changes to Glossop Station with the track being diverted to the opposite side of the building (a former bay and loading dock). This was to enable supermarket chain 'Shopping Giant', who had previously converted the warehouse to a superstore in the mid-70's, to extend their building further. The estimated cost of the changes, to be entirely funded by the supermarket, was £500,000.

1985 opened with criticism of the replacements for the class 506 units and former Glasgow 303 'Blue trains'. The latter were famous for spectacular fires when first introduced, and by then long in the tooth, were proving even more unreliable than the 506's in their twilight years, hardly a day going by without delays, failures, long-term cancellations and bus replacements. With the prospect of subsidies being withdrawn, some saw them as the thin end of a closure wedge. In January the disastrous fire involving a petrol train in Summit Tunnel on a rival Trans-Pennine line raised hopes of a revival for Woodhead, but the damage, though extensive, was repaired. Once again the local Tory hierarchy sought to calm fears of a Hadfield-Glossop-Manchester shutdown. High Peak MP Chris Hawkins met the minister for local Government, Kenneth Baker, who gave assurances that the line and the Manchester-Buxton line "would not be affected."

In July 1985, the local Social Democratic Party announced that they were to investigate the possibility of re-opening the Hadfield-Woodhead section as a 'tourist facility' with trains, tourist attractions and refreshment facilities, citing the popularity of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. They also announced they were to press for a station at Gamesley. I pointed out, through the local press, that the idea was a non-starter for a number of reasons: nothing to attract the 'tourist' at the Woodhead end and no prospects of any building being permitted. Others questioned the point of such a project and urged the SDP to pursue the more positive aim of restoring the line to the national network. In any event, no more was heard of the plan, except from High Peak Borough Council who in July 1986 stated that they were "sorry the flood prevention scheme would limit the tourism potential of a reinstated Woodhead Line with steam trains."

In August the redundant line claimed two casualties in a bizarre fashion when two goats became stuck fast in the melted bitumen of an abandoned cable junction box on the lineside at Crowden. It took eight hours to free the unfortunate creatures. The same month the Broadbottom Community Association succeeded in raising the £30,000 needed to secure the building for conversion to a 'Riding for the Disabled' centre - a valuable function that it performs to this day.

A further blow to the integrity of the line came in August 1985 when the 'North West Water Authority' announced its intention to raise the dam-crest at Crowden as a precaution against a 'One in 10,000 years' event of the dam being overcome by flood water. As we now know, this plan became a reality four years later, but it is interesting that the engineer's plans show how the line could be diverted around the breach at some future date. Controversy surrounded the possibility of the proposed Light Rapid Transit scheme being extended to Glossop and Hadfield, the main opposition to such a move coming from the NUR who of course feared for members' jobs. Although it never came to fruition, it was certainly a hot topic throughout 1985.

1986 opened on a now familiar note of disharmony with Labour councillors from both Derbyshire and Greater Manchester asserting that rail cuts were imminent while Tory spokespersons asserted that they were not. The impending abolition of the GMC, scheduled for April 1986 no doubt contributed to the stridency of the debate, which by now ran on well-trampled and familiar lines. Public Meetings held in April 1986 to discuss the future of the Manchester-Hadfield and Manchester-Buxton lines generated more heat than light, but sparked a Glossop Chronicle 'campaign' to 'Save Our Railways'. The campaign amounted to no more than one front page, where the local politicians traded blows while agreeing that local railways were a 'good thing'.

The first week of February 1986 saw a strange ceremony taking place on the platform of Hadfield Station when Simon Bain's book 'Railroaded - Battle for the Woodhead Pass' received its press launch. The author was photographed in a little group consisting of Eddie Wright, local NUR Chairman and Secretary of the Trades Council, Councillors John Hallsworth, Dave Wilcox, Martin Doughty, Eric Read and myself. Simon Bain wrote many of the stories in the Glossop Chronicle detailing the fight to save the line; later moving to the Sheffield Star, where he won the 'Young Journalist of the Year' award then subsequently moving to the 'Scotsman'. He is now Business Correspondent on the Glasgow-based Sunday Herald. His contribution to the campaign for Woodhead was immense, and I am very proud of my copy of the book, which is signed by Michael Foot. The book received generally favourable reviews, with the notable exception of BR's 'RailNews' correspondent who described it as 'politically motivated' and 'wholly one-sided'. Of course, no one could describe BR's campaign to close the line in such terms - could they?

At the same time, track removal was proceeding apace east of the tunnel, beginning with the stretch between Deepcar and Penistone then going on to Penistone-Dunford Bridge. The beginning of April also saw track removal beginning in earnest between Hadfield and Woodhead. Construction work on the Stocksbridge By-pass, which was on completion to bring long-term traffic chaos to this side of the Pennines also, resulted in the line being blocked by the road embankment. Interestingly there had been a number of complaints in the local press about increasing traffic levels through Hollingworth and Tintwistle before the by-pass opened. It had not dawned on the local residents or indeed their councillors what a dramatic increase in traffic was to come. The north-west CBI was pressing for the Woodhead (A628) road to be upgraded to a dual carriageway, but Councillor Martin Doughty, Transportation Chief of Derbyshire County Council seemed unaware of the impact the Stocksbridge By-pass would have, calling for "improved links from the M1 to the M62."

Both High Peak and Derbyshire County Council expressed regrets over the likelihood that the flood scheme would jeopardise any chance of Woodhead reopening as a railway. Adapting the scheme to provide for re-opening would cost an estimated £205,000, a sum that now would hardly build a decent house. On the 'cultural' front a play entitled 'Woodhead Cathedral' performed by the Partington Players of Glossop, received good reviews and featured such diverse characters as Lord Wharncliffe and 'Peg Leg Annie'. I'm afraid I didn't get round to seeing this gritty northern drama, and I don't think it has been revived in the past 18 years.

To conclude: by the end of 1986, the Woodhead Line had noticeably shrunk in terms of infrastructure. By the beginning of the year all the gantries had gone, returning the line to something of its pre-war appearance and by the end of the year a substantial proportion of the track had gone as well. The tunnel itself, built a mere 32 years earlier, was rail-less and fenced off. A huge investment was visibly fading away.

TRAGEDY AT BEIGHTON

Alan Rawles

Railway accidents, including relatively minor ones, have always been news and even the derailment of a few wagons will merit a paragraph or two in the national press. However there are exceptions and disaster at Beighton on Wednesday the 11th February 1942 certainly comes into that category.

Fourteen dead and many more seriously injured and not a word in the 'Times' or any other national newspaper of the day. At a time when the War was not going well, such setbacks were not good for morale and were therefore either understated or simply ignored all together. For example whilst researching this article and reading through newspapers for the above month it is of interest to note that whilst relatively minor successes on the war front were given front page coverage, the disastrous fall of Singapore merited only two or three columns, and was hidden away on the inside pages.

It is therefore not surprising that a major railway accident involving our armed forces and resulting in significant loss of life did not feature large in the media. Consequently it was unanticipated when I discovered in-depth coverage in three local newspapers.

The accident occurred approximately 200 yards south of Beighton station and about the equivalent distance north of the spot where on February 7th 1880, Earl Manvers cut the first sod on the Beighton to Chesterfield section of the M.S.& L. At 9.56 on the evening of February 11th 1942 a northbound troop train came into contact with a heavy steel plate projecting over the side of a wagon stationed on the No. 1 road in Holbeck Colliery Sidings.

The train consisted of thirteen vestibuled bogie coaches with two x four wheel vans at the rear and was hauled by a former GC B7 mixed traffic 4-6-0. All the stock was LNER and had steel underframes and wooden bodies with the exception of the fifth, sixth and seventh coaches, which belonged to the Southern Railway and had steel panelled bodies. The train was fully vacuum fitted and on board were nearly 400 people, the vast majority consisting of 195 officers and men from the army and 170 sailors.

Loading and Shunting the Plate Wagon.

The wagon at the centre of the incident had started its fateful journey from Frodingham to West Tinsley at 3.30am on the day of the accident. Loaded by experienced men of the Appleby Frodingham Steel Company on the 8th, an Examiner passed the wagon before railway staff took charge. Because it was classed as an ordinary load it did not call for special attention during transit and it was last seen during daylight at Broughton Lane sidings in the east-end of Sheffield.

The plate concerned was one of seven, each measuring 9ft 6ins x 8ft 7ins x ¾in and weighed 25cwt. At Frodingham it was loaded with the other six plates on to a 20ton LNER plate-wagon with an inside width of 8ft 4in, a length of 2ft 7ins and sides 1ft 2ins high. It had had been standard practice for many years for plates a few inches wider than the inside width of the wagon, to be loaded lengthways on the vehicle, with one edge on the floor and the other resting on top of the opposite side, and so it was in this case. The plate-wagon was the widest of its type and to avoid the edges slipping off the wagon side and dropping within the wagon, thereby bulging the sides, vertical steel packing pieces

were placed between the lower edges of the plate and the other side of the wagon.

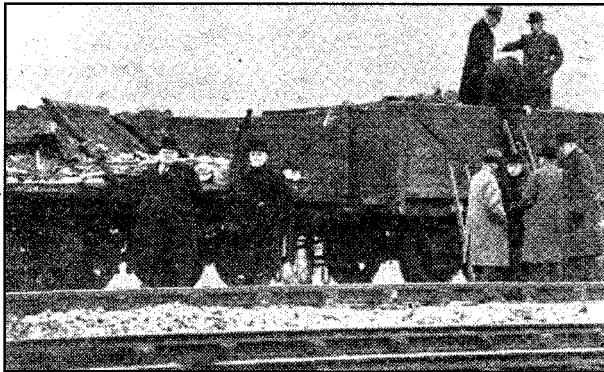
The packing strips were slightly wider than the steel plates, but did not overhang the side of the wagon. In order to distribute the load, the plates were loaded into two piles, one of four and the other of three, six feet apart and with their upper edges on the opposite sides of the wagon.

With Guard Helliwell in charge the train left Broughton Lane at 6.5pm consisting of seventeen vehicles for High Hazels in the front and eight others and a brake van for Holbrook in the rear. On arrival at High Hazels to the east of Darnall at 7.5pm the vehicles for that destination were disposed of in the siding. The engine re-attached, and with the plate wagon the second vehicle proceeded to Holbrook where it duly arrived at 8.15p.

Holbrook Colliery Sidings consisted of three roads adjacent to the 'down' side of the main line commencing at the south side of the level crossing at Beighton station. Access to the sidings was generally via the southern or Killamarsh end and it was here that the short train backed across the 'down' line and into No. 3 road in the siding. Another guard, Leonard Calladine was acting as shunter and he instructed Guard Helliwell to be responsible for controlling the vehicles into the sidings. Several shunts were made, until only a common-user wagon and the plate-wagon remained attached to the locomotive in the shunting neck.

The points were then set for No.1 road and Calladine gave the driver the green light to set back in order to allow him to release the coupling and loose shunt the plate wagon. This was followed by a red light when the train had travelled only a few feet, as he wished to shunt the common-user wagon into No.2 without having to reverse the engine. Helliwell was waiting for the wagon between No's. 1 and 2 roads about sixty yards away down the 1 in 165 incline from Calladine, and at the enquiry he said he remembered breaking into a gentle run in order to lower the brake lever, which he did without difficulty.

Subsequently this aspect of the wagon's movements was the one that featured large in the ensuing enquiry. Neither of the two men heard anything unusual as the plate-wagon made contact with the other vehicles in No.1 road. As no further movements were required the engine was released at 9.20pm and Guard Helliwell then travelled back along the 'down' main line on the footplate, passing close by the plate-wagon in No.1 siding but in the darkness neither he or the enginemen saw anything amiss.



Officials surveying the damaged wagons in No 1 Holbrook Sidings. **Sheffield Star.**

Maybe not the best quality photographs available, but invaluable nevertheless. My thanks go to Sheffield Local Studies Library and the Sheffield Star for an excellent effort to reproduce rather poor quality newspaper photographs. A Rawles.

Guard Calladine also finished duty soon afterwards and before doing so made a tour of the yard. He had no occasion to pass along the somewhat narrow space between No.1 road and the 'down' main line, where by now the steel plate was overhanging, otherwise he would have doubtless seen it and the accident may well have been avoided. A goods train followed the light engine along the 'down' main line at 9.23pm without incident, followed 30 minutes later by the 'troop' train.

The Tragic Consequences

The night was fine but dark and there was a sharp frost as at 9.56 the Glasgow bound 'troop' train travelling at about 35mph and under clear signals ran down the incline towards Beighton Station. As the train passed the protruding plate the locomotive being marginally narrower than the coaches avoided it, however some of the handles on the first and second coaches were struck slightly. Being three inches narrower, the third coach evaded the obstacle, but the fourth struck the corner of the plate halfway along its side causing it to rotate further and cut more deeply into the fifth. The plate then embedded itself in the side of the sixth coach to a maximum depth of six feet. Spinning around, the plate was prevented from falling to the ground by the intermittent contact with the wagons in the siding, which in turn caused it to cut its way through the sides of the seventh and eighth coaches. Fortunately the corridors of the sixth and seventh coaches were on the damaged side of the train or casualties would doubtless have been greater. Having struck the eighth coach the plate found itself opposite the tenth vehicle in the siding, a low sided wagon and this enabled it to free itself, tearing away the sides of the eleventh wagon and coming to rest on a load of pig iron on the twelfth.

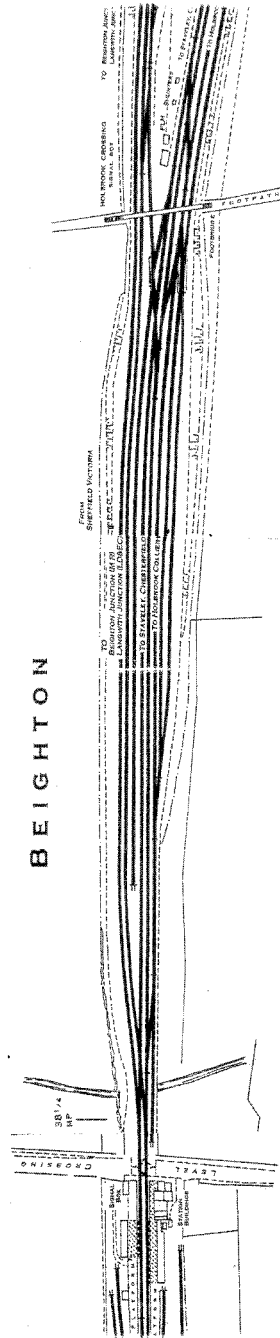
As this was happening, and before any action could be taken to stop it, a mineral freight train went by on the 'up' line striking a section of protruding woodwork from the sixth coach of the troop train. This did not affect the number of casualties, and it was fortunate that it did not go by a few moments later when injured men would have been on the track. Joseph Chadwick the driver of the mineral train said he heard a loud crash and something struck his engine. He stopped at Killamarsh to report what had occurred and found bits of wood and cushion stuffing on nearly every wagon. On the troop train the driver, fireman and guard had no indication that anything was untoward until a damaged vacuum pipe automatically brought the train to a standstill nearly 600 yards beyond the scene of the accident and 250 yards beyond Beighton signal box. On board the train a strange situation ensued with many in the front and rear coaches unaware that anything was amiss, but in the centre portion it was a scene of chaos and carnage. Eleven soldiers had been killed, nearly forty badly injured and many more trapped inside the mangled wreckage.

Rescue in the Dark

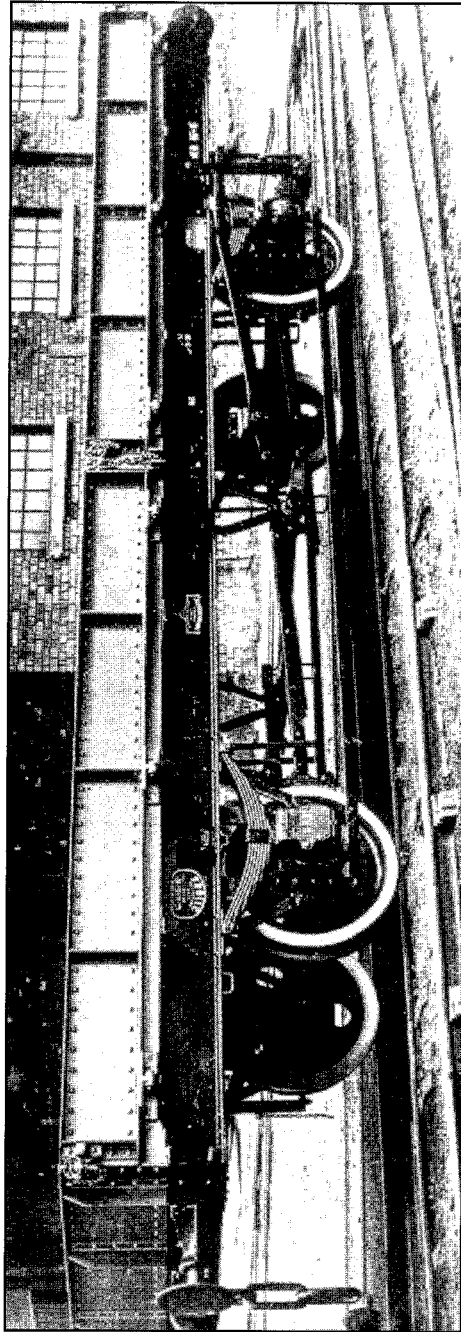
Roused by the sound of the crash, people in the neighbourhood were quickly on the scene and led by Station Master Edgar Allan they rapidly formed rescue parties. Among the first to arrive was a group of miners who were returning from nearby Waleswood Colliery on the 'pit' bus. They were approaching the level crossing when the accident occurred and offering their services acted as stretcher-bearers, with those who were able, rendering first aid. For the first few minutes everyone toiled in almost total darkness but limited illumination was soon forthcoming revealing a grim spectacle as rescuers fought to save lives amid the dim light provided by lamps and torches.

More assistance was soon forthcoming as members of the local St Johns Ambulance Brigade, Red Cross, Home Guard, A.R.P. and Civil Defence arrived to work tirelessly throughout the night, searching the wreckage, extracting the dead and injured and caring for both the helped and helpers. Ambulances were despatched from Sheffield and Chesterfield hospitals, as well as from nearby pits and the local A.R.P. depots at Swallownest, Woodhouse, Eckington and Killamarsh. Two local G.P's, Dr De Dombal from Beighton and Dr G.R. Lipp from Killamarsh worked magnificently throughout

the night assisted by first aid parties until eventually doctors and nurses arrived from Sheffield and Chesterfield. There was soon a long queue of waiting ambulances and having been extricated and given first aid the injured were soon on their way to hospitals in the Sheffield area.



Plan of Beighton Station



An LNER plate-wagon of the type at the centre of the disaster. A Rawles collection.



Looking north from the footbridge (which still exists) approx. 400 yards south of Beighton station. The three roads which constitute Holbrook Colliery Sidings are on the left, and the offending plate-wagon was situated just this side of the derailed wagon. The buildings of Beighton station are visible a few yards beyond the footbridge, whilst over on the far right are the gasworks. On the far right in the long siding between the former GC main lines and connecting lines to the old M.R. and LD&EC routes is what appears to be a plate wagon. Is this the wagon concerned having been removed away for examination? **Sheffield Star.**

As it later transpired all the sailors escaped injury but tragically 14 soldiers lost their lives and 35 others were severely injured. Eleven of the dead were taken to the station waiting room which served as a temporary mortuary, whilst three other unfortunate servicemen died on their way to, or at Sheffield Royal Infirmary. The porters room was one of a number of places used to treat the injured. Local residents helped wherever they were needed, rescuing those who were injured, supplying refreshments and in many cases providing a bed for the night. Many of the uninjured were catered for at the nearby Miners Welfare Club, the Church Institute and some were even given shelter at a local grocery shop.

Stories were told of fortunate escapes and brushes with death. "We did not see or hear a thing," said a soldier who was in the carriage in which a number of people were killed. "We only realised that there had been an accident when the train stopped." Another explained he was awakened by glass falling on his head. A soldier said that in his compartment he and his five colleagues were just settling down to sleep when they heard what sounded like something being dragged along the corridor. Instinctively they ducked to avoid to whatever was coming. There followed a terrific crash, the lights went out, glass flew everywhere and the corridor wall caved in. And then there was the man who said he owed his life to the fact that minutes earlier he had changed his seat during a card game. Another soldier although injured did not want to leave the train until his rosary had been found. Such were the many stories of good fortune, stoicism and courage circulating Beighton – of men badly injured who made no complaint, of a soldier who died in the arms of a sailor with the words on his lips "The Navy is too late this time chum."

Throughout the long night, local LNER workers played a prominent part in the rescue effort, with men whose shift finished at 10pm remaining on duty well into the following morning. When it was safe to do so, the damaged train was reversed into Beighton Station where the extent of the damage

could be more easily ascertained. It was seen that some of the bodywork on the middle coaches had been completely ripped away, as had the partition walls between several compartments. Inside the compartments was a confusion of scattered kit, tin hats and service respirators. During Thursday the station platforms were crowded with weary servicemen recovering their kit. Although some spent the night at a Sheffield Army depot, most of the injured had stayed at a variety of establishments including being welcomed into people's homes in Beighton and the surrounding villages. With the likes of the W.V.S. once again on board to provide refreshments, the soldiers and sailors left Beighton, a village few if any had heard of 24 hours earlier.

The Inspecting Officers Conclusions

The inquest took place at Beighton Miners Welfare Club and was presided over by Mr F.D. Worthington the Chesterfield Coroner. Initially he confirmed the identities of the deceased and then took medical evidence. He also paid tribute to the dead and injured and also those involved in the rescue effort. This done the Court stood in silence for a few moments and the inquest was duly adjourned. What really threw light on the accident was of course the subsequent enquiry. Carried out by Mr J.L.M. Moore, the Inspecting Officer for what in 1942 was the Ministry of War Transport, the report concluded that the movement of the plate occurred during loose shunting at Holbrook. Tests made with a template vehicle proved that the load could not have been overhanging the plate wagon by more than 1' 2" between Broughton Lane and Holbrook without fouling a retaining wall, and this was not marked in any way. The force of the impact was governed by two main factors, the speed at which the shunting was carried out by Guard Calladine, followed by the application of the brake by Guard Helliwell. As regards the first, there was independent evidence to confirm that Calladine shunted with caution and this was borne out by the fact that he made that and the following shunt within 20yards without having the engine reversed. On the other hand both brake levers were found to be on their respective rests after the accident, pointing to the fact that Helliwell did not apply the brake.

Tests made by Mr Moore in which the men took part shunting a similar load showed that the wagon when braked stopped well short of the train in the siding. With no brake application it came into sharp but not excessive contact, with it. The three plates in the rear of the wagon slid forward and struck the other four, swinging round towards the main line, leaving the upper, middle and lower projecting 1ft 2ins, 5ins and 4½ins over the side of the wagon. The tests proved to the Inspector's satisfaction that the brake was – for whatever reason - not applied on the night of the accident. He also considered the possibility that a faster shunt was made at that time, but stated that although the plate shifted considerably further on that occasion it was not necessarily proof of this. He explained that a wagon would run more freely at the end of a journey, and that the plate would slide more readily under frosty conditions,

Responsibility for the accident rests with Helliwell stated Mr Moore. He is over 60 years of age and apparently not over alert either in mind or in body; it is also noteworthy that he had been on duty for eight hours and did not expect to have to take part in the shunting at Holbrook. In either case the extent of the blame, if any, must not be judged by the results said the Inspector. A man controlling wagons into sidings in such circumstances has to consider in a few moments during which the vehicle is within the light of his handlamp, its speed, the type of brake fitted and what is required of him to ensure that it comes to rest at the desired point. Mr Moore also explained how a guard had to be prepared to decide in the event of difficulty with the brake lever, whether in the interests of his own safety, he would be justified in abandoning the attempt at braking and instead allowing the vehicle to run. The load in this instance, and class of traffic usually found in the sidings were such that Helliwell had no cause to anticipate serious results from letting the wagon run. He may also have been influenced by the conditions underfoot. Mr Moore stated that he hesitated to criticise Guard

Helliwell unduly for his failure to apply the brake on this occasion although he felt a younger and more active man would have checked the vehicle. He also pointed out that owing to Holbrook yard having been in existence for a considerable time, the clearances between No 1 siding and the main line were not in accordance with modern practice and had there been the full 9 feet as now required, the accident would not have occurred.

The Inspector's Recommendations

Apart from establishing responsibility for the accident the tests had the added advantage of revealing the surprisingly slight impact required to move the plates and the consequent risk incidental to this method of loading. After careful consideration it was agreed that there was no practicable means of making loads secure if carried in this manner and there was no alternative but to recommend the immediate discontinuance of the existing practice. The representatives of the LNER agreed with this view and orders to this effect were issued forthwith throughout the Company. Advantage was also taken at the meeting of the R.E.C. Operating Committee on the following day, to pass on to representatives of the other Companies the circumstances of the accident, and the steps taken to guard against recurrence.

In Conclusion

The pure accident – one caused by fate alone – is rare on the railway. Invariably human fallibility is responsible and so it was at Beighton. A method of transporting large metal sheets that was fraught with danger; a siding with insufficient clearance between it and the main line; and the failure to apply a wagon brake during a loose shunt all combined to produce a major accident.

It may seem a paradox but it is hardly an exaggeration to say that accidents such as the one at Beighton have helped to make Britain's railway network one of the safest in the world. The goal may be unattainable, for precautions however painstaking can never be proof against catastrophe, but from a disaster such as at Beighton safer working practices were put into operation. From such tragic accidents, throughout all industry, not just the railways, major lessons are learned and adapted to prevent such accidents happening again.



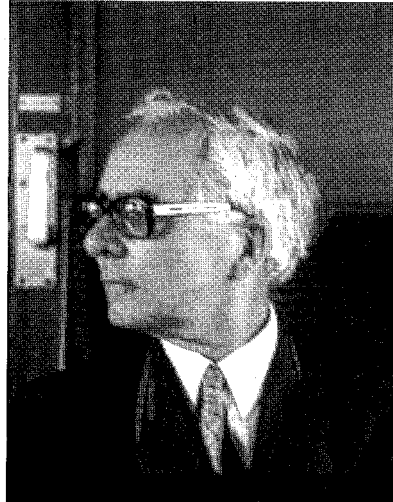
33 years on and the former main line to the south, beyond the level crossing at Beighton is now just a truncated branch line leading to Arkwright Colliery, eight miles away. The track formation has been altered slightly in the ensuing years with the 'down' road, now little used, being given a 'U' to access the old Holbrook Sidings. The semaphore signal arrived with the recent alignment and the initial point of impact in the accident occurred a few yards beyond the nearest wagon. 25.4.1975. **Courtesy of M.A. King.**

OBITUARY
Eric Woods

The Society has lost a true enthusiast in Eric Woods, who died in December after a short illness. I didn't know Eric for very long, but from our first meeting enjoyed his *company* very much. His stories of railways in the Spalding area where he grew up, and of events in the 1930's were always fascinating, especially of the 'Hush-Hush' passing late at night, and staying out late to see it. Photography was his forte and he faithfully recorded the railways on film and although he had a special place for the M&GN, he also had a soft spot for Mr Robinson's locomotives, which became familiar at that time in Spalding. It was through one of his photo's published in the Steam Railway magazine that I made contact with Eric, the magazine kindly forwarding my letter to him. After a period of about three months he sent me the requested photograph, and when I duly rang to thank him, I also made arrangements to visit him at his home in St. Anne's, Blackpool. Eric had lost his wife not to long before my visit, after he had nursed her through a long illness.

Eric was kindness personified and offered his complete set of G.C.R. related negatives to the Society to copy. Several have been published in Forward recently, in fact the superb photograph of 'Sir Sam Fay' on the rear cover of the last issue was one of his, photographed as usual in the Spalding area. Eric became a member of the Society and attended many of our main meetings, despite his years. He also had more than a passing interest in model railways. We shall miss him. I pass on our deepest sympathy to his two daughters and son. *Mike Hartley.*

Eric Woods. Photograph David Woods



ERRATA

My apologies for several errors in the last edition of Forward which occurred during printing. These were the misprint of the photograph of the GC Police officers on page 5 and the plan of a 40 ton coal wagon on page 17. For some mysterious reason also, the address of the GCRS web site on page 32 was regrettably not printed. For those interested in viewing our web site, it is, I repeat hopefully www.gcrs.org.uk To open the web site, click on the GC crest when it appears.

2004 GCRS Annual Subscription

Members are reminded that the Society's Annual Sub of **£12** are due on April 1st.

Please forward cheques etc. to the Treasurer/Membership Secretary
Mr E. Latusek, 41 Spire Hollin, Glossop, Derbyshire. SK13 7BJ.

THE RE-DEDICATION OF THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY WAR MEMORIAL

Dateline: November 11th, 2003, Sheffield Victoria Railway Station

Ken Grainger

Armistice Day, 2003, will last long in the memory of those GCRS members who were at Sheffield for the momentous restoration, to its original position, of the Great Central Railway's memorial to its 1,304 Great War dead. For thirty-three long years, ever since shortly after the January 1970 closure of Sheffield Victoria railway station, the memorial had languished under a dingy draughty passageway behind a urinal, under a pedestrian passageway of the Wicker Arch. Largely unseen and completely uncared for, coated in filth and daubed with graffiti, the memorial had been shamefully neglected, but it could have been a lot worse!

Back in 1970, the Sheffield area ASLEF Branch Secretary was Sid Rimmington, a Staveley GC driver until the shed closed in June 1965 and he was transferred to Tinsley. At that moment in time, as the stonework of the war memorial was being reduced to rubble, along with Sheffield Victoria's edifice, the memorial's plaques were destined to be reduced to scrap until Sid intervened, and thank goodness he did! In 1970 the Great War had been over for 52 years: the friends and workmates of many of the fallen, even some of those who had subscribed from their pay packets to the cost of a memorial to their colleagues, would still have been amongst us. What sort of message would the memorial's destruction have communicated to them? "*Their name liveth for ever more*" indeed! Sadly, its now too late to thank Sid personally for saving the Memorial from the skip, he too was lost to us about 11 years ago, but at least we can pay tribute to him for saving the memorial from an infinitely worse fate than being consigned to the Wicker. Without Sid there would have been no GC war memorial to restore.



Sid Rimmington, ASLEF Branch Secretary, whom we have to thank for the survival of the Great Central War Memorial. Here seen with General Secretary Ray Buckton at an ASLEF function in Sheffield during April 1980, the year before he retired. Regrettably Sid died on December 27th 1992 aged 74. **Sheffield Newspapers, by courtesy of Mrs Rimmington.**

It is a sobering thought that the memorial had already languished under the Wicker for three years before the humble beginnings of our society. Over the intervening years, the Great Central Railway Society has flourished to a 500 plus membership, with regular group meetings and a flagship journal to be proud of; whilst the plight of the memorial had steadily worsened with the decline of the once fashionable 'Wicker' into the gateway to one of Sheffield's least salubrious quarters.

But to some at least, the memorial was never forgotten and over the years a number of proposals had been floated for more fitting locations. All had received a degree of support, just about anything-seemed better than the 'Wicker', but none of the proposals presented an ideal solution. Then Hermann Beck, co-owner and General Manager of the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn enthusiastically gave his backing to the February 2002 scheme for the GCRS to restore the memorial to its original position at the head of the Victoria Station Approach.

A GCRS War memorial sub-committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Kevin Curran, a now-retired insurance company executive from South Devon. Previously he'd had a long term association with (and obvious affection for) the Royal Victoria, dating back to having administered the hotel before overseeing its sale to Hermann and his partner John Conroy. *Kevin is in the final stages of completing a history of the hotel and its inextricable links with Victoria Station, which was originally commenced by Keith Gray, father of one-time Royal Victoria General Manager Nigel.* Drawing upon his professional background and expertise, Kevin quickly set about transforming the universal support for our scheme into generous pledges of cash sponsorship. This was topped off by the skilful completion of an application for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which they commended as being as good a presentation as any they had received. The remainder of the committee comprised myself as Secretary and Treasurer; former GCRS Northern Area Representative Stephen Gay who had long campaigned for a more fitting location for the memorial; Howard Turner who provided liaison with other Transport interest and ex-servicemen's associations, and Ray Flewitt for his links with local politicians. Two other people must be mentioned here: the Reverend Canon Howard Such, Precentor of Sheffield Cathedral, who planned the rededication service for us, including the composition of the programme (now a prized memento for those who were there) but who also took an immense interest in the whole project and effectively became an additional and valued member of our committee.

And finally there is Hermann. Apart from giving us his unstinting backing and always allowing us full use of the facilities of his hotel, Hermann was always at hand to give us the benefit of his considerable commercial experience. We received invaluable support from so many quarters, and it is fair to say that Kevin was primarily responsible for the memorial's restoration taking place, but Hermann is the one person without whom it simply couldn't have happened.

How time flew. There was the frustratingly prolonged unravelling of red tape to obtain Planning Permission and Listed Building consent - both the Wicker Arch, from which the memorial was being removed, and the Royal Victoria Hotel, to which it was being moved, were Grade 2* listed. Physical alterations require approval from the Secretary of State, and now, acting on our behalf, the Railway Heritage Trust had the memorial listed in its own right. And then there was the obtaining of custodianship of the memorial from Network Rail - we had only asked for a sort of permanent loan, subject to its being adequately cared for, but they decided to give it to the society, as well as volunteering to foot the cost of making good the Wicker Arch after the memorial's removal.

These were all prerequisites for the Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and of course the commencement of operations for which I know from members' feedback to our updates in *Forward*, not only Stoneguard the contractors, were champing at the bit. By July 2003 everything was in place, and all systems

were 'go' for November 11th. With the backing of Lt. Col. John May OBE, we were promised for the ceremony, not just the free of charge services of the Kings (Waterloo) Band from 15 (North East) Brigade at Imphal Barracks, York, but also a guard of honour from the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regt. at Catterick – we hadn't even requested that – but there were still to be hiccups. When Stoneguard removed the memorial plaques for restoration, to absolutely everyone's surprise they were found not to be bronze at all, as had always been supposed, but of copper treated to look like bronze. The effect? An extra £3,000 on the bill! And then there was the disappointing failure to get sponsorship for the stainless steelwork, in Sheffield of all places. In fairness, had I spoken to 'AvestaPolarit' earlier I think something might have been arranged, but November 11th was looming ever nearer and ultimately Stoneguard had to be given the go-ahead to use their own contractors.

Finally there was *Valour*. Of course we didn't actually need a locomotive to be named *Valour* as part of the ceremony, but didn't it provide the icing on the cake? Unfortunately, particularly for the enthusiasts amongst the staff of the first company invited, their management simply didn't want to know, but when GB Railfreight were approached it very quickly became apparent that with them I was pushing on an open door! With the active co-operation of Network Rail, who had the ground cleared to where the remaining line of railway up to Deepcar was still fortuitously alongside a particularly well preserved section of Victoria's Platform 5, GB-Rf were enthusiastically all for it. Safety Compliance Manager Paul Smith smoothed out the obstacles and Traction Inspector Geoff Brown learned the route.

The arrangements complete, Julie McNamara, Hermann's typically unflustered Personal Assistant, fielded over 400 RSVP acceptances from those specifically invited to the post-ceremony reception. Newly appointed manager John Mitchell was thrown in at the deep end but swam strongly and, despite a fully booked hotel, took in his stride a late request for the provision of extra changing accommodation (I had very politically incorrectly assumed that the bandmen would be all male!). But happily when the magnificent Kings (Waterloo) band struck up, immediately after observing their own private two-minute silence at 11 a.m., there was no need for the canopy he had ordered to shelter the dignitaries should the day be wet.

Just before 12 noon, the band marched down the Station Approach to meet the representatives of 15 ex-servicemen's associations, ably marshalled by Parachute Regiment veteran Bill Gilliland and proudly lined up alongside their standards. At the band's approach, the ex-servicemen straightened their backs and squared their shoulders just that little bit more proudly led, very appropriately to the tune of 'The Boys of the Old Brigade'. They marched into position on the right flank of a congregation by now numbering something like 500 people, to be greeted by the newly installed Dean of Sheffield, the Very Reverend Peter Bradley.

Following prayers and an address by the Dean, John Fay, grandson of the GC's legendary General Manager, Sir Sam Fay, unveiled a plaque commemorating the restoration of the memorial, and Jim Cornell, Executive Director of the Railway Heritage Trust unveiled a plaque acknowledging the sponsors, before the rededication and an act of remembrance.

To the haunting melody of Elgar's 'Nimrod', wreaths were laid by GCRS President Richard Hardy, then by Diane Leek, the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Jim Cornell for the Railway Heritage Trust, Richard Fenney, Network Rail Regional Director and Dennis Vessey for the Royal British Legion, followed by those of the gathering. These included tributes from representatives of the sponsors, the Armed Forces past and present, and mayors from towns served by the GC network. But perhaps most poignantly two tributes were dedicated to individuals named on the memorial. Mrs. Pam Gibson laid a wreath in honour of her grandfather, one-time Sheffield relayer Sergeant Arthur Waddingham of

the 8th East Yorks, who died on November 21st, 1917 and lies at St. Sever, near Rouen. (Coloured photograph on page 23).

Mrs. Kathleen Crowder, now in her 90th year, laid hers in honour of her father, former Chief Accountants Dept. clerk at Dukinfield.



Mrs Kathleen Crowder at the age two in 1916, with her Father Private Fell of the 20th Battalion Kings (Liverpool) Regt. Formerly a clerk in the Chief Accountants Dept., Dukinfield. He died on Thursday August 2nd 1917 at Ypres, aged 30, but has no known grave and is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial. Following Fred's death, his wife Hannah returned to New Holland to resume her teaching career, but brought Kathleen – by now eight years old – to Sheffield for the original unveiling of the Memorial in August 1922. Her memories of that day are predominantly of the huge space – and the rain! How appropriate that, now in her 90th year, Kathleen could come again and lay a wreath in honour of her father. The forecourt is today just as spacious, but thankfully this day, though grey, remained dry. **By courtesy of Kathleen Crowder.**



Albert Dean of Birkenhead, a clerk in the GC's Traffic Managers Office, Liverpool, since 1903, but latterly at Hyde Road. As 'Ship's Writer' he joined his ship, the armoured cruiser HMS *Black Prince* only a week before she was lost with all hands at the Battle of Jutland, May 31st 1916. **Great Central Journal.**

All the wreaths having been laid, a lone bugler emerged above the memorial to commence an emotion-charged two-minute silence with the plaintive notes of 'The Last Post'. The intensity of that silence was only accentuated by the distant sounds of Sheffield City centre's traffic and bustle. Each of you will have your own beliefs and hopes for what might or might not await us after our brief mortal existence – none of which I am qualified to dispute – but as we stood there, our heads bowed, I would dearly like to think those 1,304 brave men who died before their time, and we were somehow aware that we were gathered in their honour, in recognition of their sacrifice.

'Reveille' preceded the Canon's solemn intonation "They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old" (can anyone hear those words without having a lump come to their throat?) concluded by the gathering's heartfelt "We will remember them" and, as it was in August 1922, the singing of 'Oh God our Help in Ages Past' and the act of dedication. The row of 'standards' were then dipped as one, for the National Anthem and the Blessing.

That would have concluded the service, had it not been followed by the Dean's dedication of a new *Valour*. Few eschewed the walk around to the location of the old Victoria's Platform 5, where GB Railfreight's immaculate No. 66715 stood, awaiting her official naming by GB-Rf General Manager Ward Simpson and GCRS Chairman Mike Hartley. Over half a century after the loss of the Great Central's original war memorial locomotive, GB Railfreight had whole-heartedly entered into the spirit of the occasion and when unveiled, her nameplate, in the style of the original, surrounded by a wreath of poppies and with the GC Coat of Arms alongside, looked absolutely superb. And GB Railfreight are keen to revive the tradition of *Valour* visiting Sheffield on each Armistice Day!

For a fortunate few there was still to come yet one more highlight of the day, a cab ride in *Valour* to Deepcar and back. However in the meantime an excellent hot buffet was waiting in the sumptuous ballroom of the hotel, where a photographic display illustrated the history of Victoria Station, *Valour* and the Great Central memorial. GCRS Vice President Mike Fish arranged a sensitive display of relevant artefacts, including the NRM's original *Valour* nameplate (allowed out for the day on condition Ian Wright didn't let it out of his sight!), plus that of fellow 9P/B3 *Earl Haig* and those of all bar *Marne* of the D11s commemorating Great War battles – *Somme*, *Mons*, *Ypres*, *Jutland* and *Zeebrugge*. The presence of *Earl Haig*'s nameplate was particularly appropriate since, on August 9th 1922, less than 20 minutes after *Valour* had arrived at Victoria with the 12.45p.m. 'special' from Manchester, *Earl Haig* pulled in, bringing the GC's hierarchy aboard the 10.10a.m. from Marylebone.

The GC had organised travel arrangements with military precision, funnelling mourners from throughout the GC network, other than the immediate Sheffield locality, into connections with these two services and the 11.35a.m. from Cleethorpes. A copy of the GC's travel arrangements document has now been acquired for the GCRS Archives and is worthy of a *Forward* article on its own, but that will have to await another day.

The last of the addresses in the ballroom was that of our host, Hermann Beck. I am sure that Hermann is heartily sick of being asked why a German should be actively assisting a British war memorial project. In an emotional and emotive address he gave the definitive answer: remembrance is not about nationality, it is about individuals, and he is absolutely right. That gives added impetus to the final part of our project: the tracing of all the men listed on the GC's memorial, from the first to fall, Lance Corporal Ernest Head of the 1st Coldstream Guards, a former Frodingham carter who died on September 14th, 1914 at the Battle of the Aisne. The last GC casualty won't be known for certain until the completion of the research. The latest thus far known is 2nd Lieutenant Price of the fledgling RAF's 56 Squadron who died just one week before the signing of the Armistice, on November 4th,

1918, and is buried at Valenciennes. Originally from Ruddington, Oliver Price was latterly with the General Manager's Dept. at Nottingham Goods.

With air warfare in its infancy and the RAF even more so, airmen casualties were comparatively few. Prior to the RAF coming into existence in April 1918, such as Private A.J.Honour, a former goods porter from Staveley Town who died on February 15th, 1917 and is buried at Villers-Bretonneux were still army personnel. Private Honour had transferred from the 75th Bn., Machine Gun Corps to become an Air Gunner with the 'Royal Flying Corps' 34 Squadron.

But all the services are represented on the memorial. Early Royal Naval losses cost the lives of Grimsby and Immingham sons, such as when the German submarine U9 heralded a new form of sea warfare on September 22nd, 1914 by torpedoing the Armoured Cruiser HMS *Hogue*, and by the November 1st, 1914 loss with all hands of Admiral Christopher Craddock's flagship HMS *Good Hope* at Coronel. Another GC man, ex-Gorton hand driller Stoker W. Lovett was lost when HMS *Invincible*, one of Sturdees' Battlecruisers which had avenged *Good Hope* at the Falklands, was in turn blown up at Jutland on May 31st, 1916. And as the Grand Fleet that night tried to cut off 'Scheer's' line of flight, the Armoured Cruiser HMS *Black Prince* blundered right into the High Seas fleet. She was lost with all hands, including Leading Seaman George Barker, a GC Marine Dept. Fireman from Grimsby, and Albert Dean from Birkenhead, a clerk in the GC Traffic Manager's Office at Liverpool since 1903 but latterly transferred to Hyde Road. He had only joined his ship just the week before Jutland.

The Merchant Navy should not be forgotten. A black day for the Great Central was February 16th, 1916, when the steamer SS *Leicester*, commandeered by the Admiralty as a stores carrier, struck a mine and sank in the Channel with heavy loss of life. A couple of her unfortunate crewmen were brought home to lie in Grimsby's Scartho Road cemetery, but for most of their shipmates the sea is their grave. They include both the oldest and youngest on the memorial: Able Seaman George Edmonds was 58, Mess Room Boy Charles Larson just 15. Another notable name amongst the *Leicester's* complement is that of Ships Cook Gerhard Brumund – whose name sounds as if it would have been more at home on a German memorial, but who died in the service of his adopted country. No doubt he is a reminder that the *Leicester* plied the route to and from Hamburg before the war.

As is to be expected though, the vast majority of the men listed on the memorial are from the army. Men of the Great Central fought and died in every theatre of the war: in East Africa and the Balkans; in the Middle East where in light of more recent events it seems ironic to find the graves of British soldiers at Basra and Baghdad – nowadays we call it Iraq, they knew it as Mesopotamia and the enemy were the Turks, as in bloody Gallipoli where so many Gorton lads in the Manchesters and the Lancashire Fusiliers didn't even make it ashore and the 'W' beach burial ground was poignantly named the "Lancashire Landing Cemetery".

Sapper Sidney Crossland of the 1st (West Riding) Field Co., Royal Engineers, formerly a Sheffield Fireman, would have been forgiven for thinking he had a charmed life when he waded ashore at Gallipoli without a scratch but with three bullets lodged in his rucksack. His luck ran out on July 23rd, 1915 but like the large majority of his comrades who fell at Gallipoli, many of whom had to await burial until after the Armistice over three years later, and others who wait still, he has no known grave and is commemorated on the Helles memorial.

But of course the bloodiest killing fields of all were the devastated landscapes of Picardy and Flanders: the Western Front. Anyone completely ignorant of the Great Central could draw a map of the system from the former stations and workplaces of the fallen, and could identify its major centres from their concentrations, with just the odd name from its outposts, such as the Lad Porter from Neston, Private

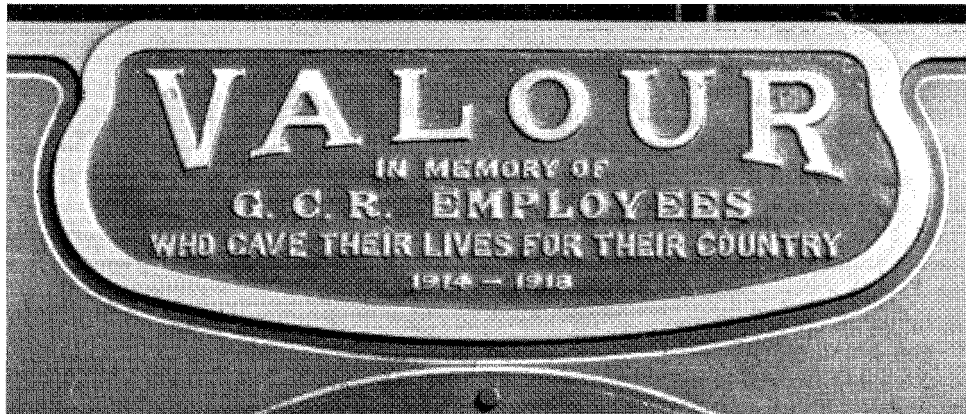
Anyon of the 10th Cheshires, still only 19 when he fell on August 17th, 1917. By reference to the dates and places at which they fell, that same amnesiac could likewise plot the carnage in Northern France and Belgium, from the first arrival of Britain's citizen-soldiers in the Autumn of 1914 right through to November 1918.

The first and last named on the memorial, Lance Corporal Charles Abey of the 10th York and Lancaster Regt., and Sergeant Thomas Young of 'B' Co., 7th Northants, fell on successive days, September 26th and 27th of 1915 at Loos. Charles Abey was a Mexborough Platelayer, Thomas Young an 'old sweat' veteran of the Sudan and South Africa who had finally left the army to join the GC as a Brakesman at Ardwick but hurried back to rejoin his old regiment at the outbreak of the war. Both are commemorated on the Loos memorial, like so many others they have no known grave, perhaps lying beneath a headstone engraved "Known Unto God" or perhaps still lying where they fell, awaiting chance discovery such as still frequently happens, or perhaps never to be found at all. It matters little – the ground in which they lie is anyway consecrated by their own blood.

In the following years 'Somme', 'Ypres' and 'Passchendaele' became indelibly engraved in British lore, and one by one the men of the Great Central who fell in those and other dreadful battles are coming to light to each take his place on the Roll of Honour which will, hopefully before too very much longer, be on display in the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn's foyer, beneath the replica *Valour* nameplate presented by GBRf. As the numbers of those to be traced dwindle, we can feel increasingly optimistic that they will all be traced.

The GC's fallen will no longer be just a list of names but real people, a few of whom, with the Editor's permission, might perhaps from time to time be introduced in an occasional "Great Central Heroes" series in *Forward*, sometimes maybe in groups according to where they worked, or perhaps where they fell. At the first unveiling of the memorial on August 9th, 1922, speaking to a congregation largely comprising bereaved mothers and fathers, grieving widows and fatherless children, Field Marshall Earl Haig looked forward to when the time for grieving would pass, to be replaced by pride and gratitude for the sacrifice of these brave men whose memorial would stand as an example and inspiration to future generations. Through those long years that the memorial stood in that dreary passageway those words must at times have sounded hollow indeed, but at long last that time has now come.

For the men of the Great Central, we can resoundingly say – and mean –
"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"



'Valour' nameplate on No. 6165 dated 22nd August 1937. L. Hanson. Courtesy of A. Green.



The splendid frontage of Sheffield's Royal Victoria Holiday Inn. If you didn't make it on November 11th (or even if you did), be sure to be there for the AGM on May 23rd. **Ken Grainger.**



Last minute arrangements (1). Canon Howard Such in discussion with Kevin Curran (centre) and Hermann Beck, Colin White.



Last minute arrangements (2). Ken Grainger agreeing a couple of changes to the programme with Band master WO1 Ian Johnson. The playing of 'Nimrod' during the laying of wreaths was my idea, his was the excellent suggestion that the band should march down the Station Approach to lead the ex servicemen's associations into their places. Ian Wright (of Sheffield Railwayana Auctions fame) looks on – it was thanks to him that we had the loan of the NRM's original *Valour* nameplate for the day. **Mike Eggenton.**



The magnificence of the Kings (Waterloo) band perfectly complements that of the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn. **Mike Eggenton.**



John Fay, GCRS Vice President and grandson of the legendary Sir Sam, resplendent with the medals he was awarded for his service with the Fleet Air Arm, unveils the plaque commemorating the restoration of the Great Central War Memorial. **Sheffield Newspapers.**

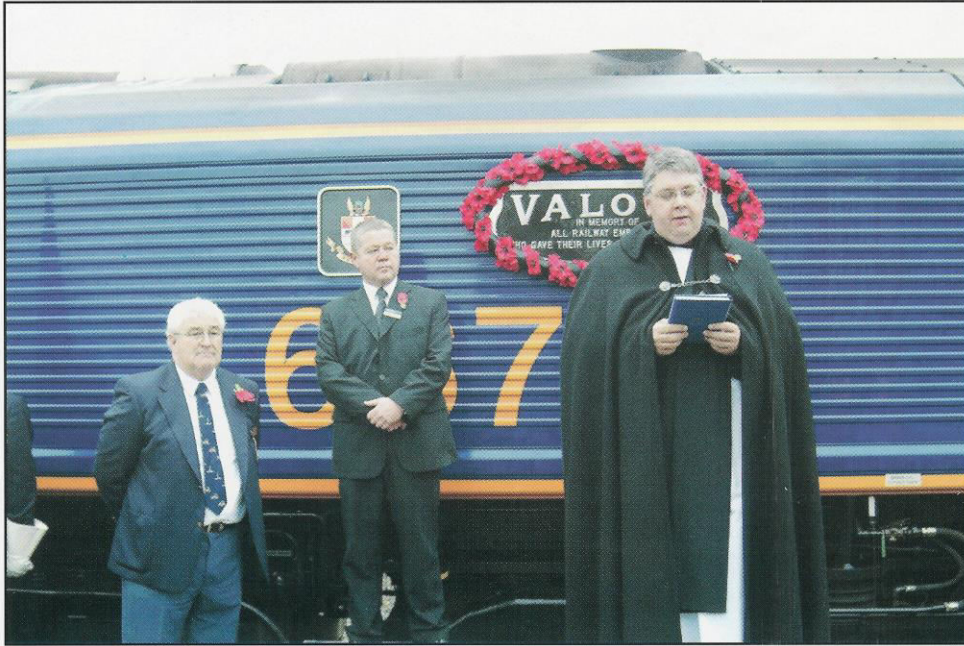


Sergeant Arthur Waddingham's granddaughter, Mrs Pam Gibson, proudly displays her grandfathers medals, including his Military medal and 1914/1915 Star, and the medallion commemorating his death 'For Freedom and Honour'. **Ken Grainger.**

Above. Sergeant Arthur Waddingham MM of the 8th Bn., East Yorkshire Regt. A 28year old platelayer who died November 21st 1916 and is buried in the St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen. **Courtesy Mrs Pam Gibson**



Photograph: Mike Egerton.



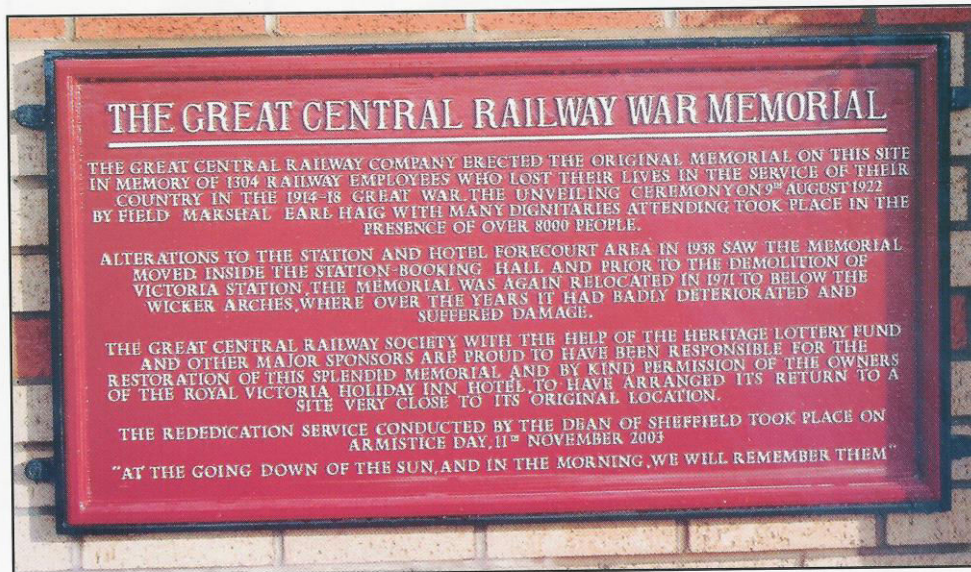
Following the naming of class 66 locomotive No. 66715 *Valour* by GCRS Chairman Mike Hartley and GB Railfreight Chairman Ward Simpson, the locomotive was dedicated as a War Memorial in its own right by Peter Bradley, The Very Reverend Dean of Sheffield. **Mike Eggenton.**



The replica *Valour* nameplate and plaque presented to the GCRS by Paul Smith on behalf of GBRf. (The wording differs slightly to the original *Valour* nameplate). It is hoped they will adorn the foyer of the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn, above the roll of Honour in its display cabinet, once completed. **Ken Grainger.**



The Hon. Edgar Fay, Sir Sam's surviving son, takes centre stage in front of *Valour*, with GCRS President Richard Hardy, the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, the Mayor of Grimsby and Cleethorpes, and the Deputy Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Leicester. **Mike Eggenton**.



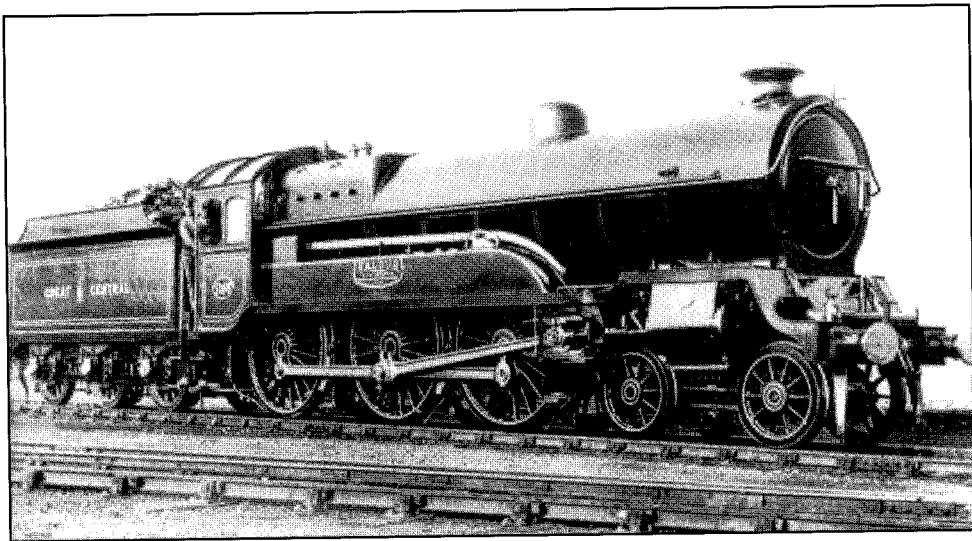
The Morning After - 1. The commemorative plaque. Forgive the alien Midland red – it was necessary to blend with other signage, but it does look rather good, doesn't it. **Andrea Palmer**.



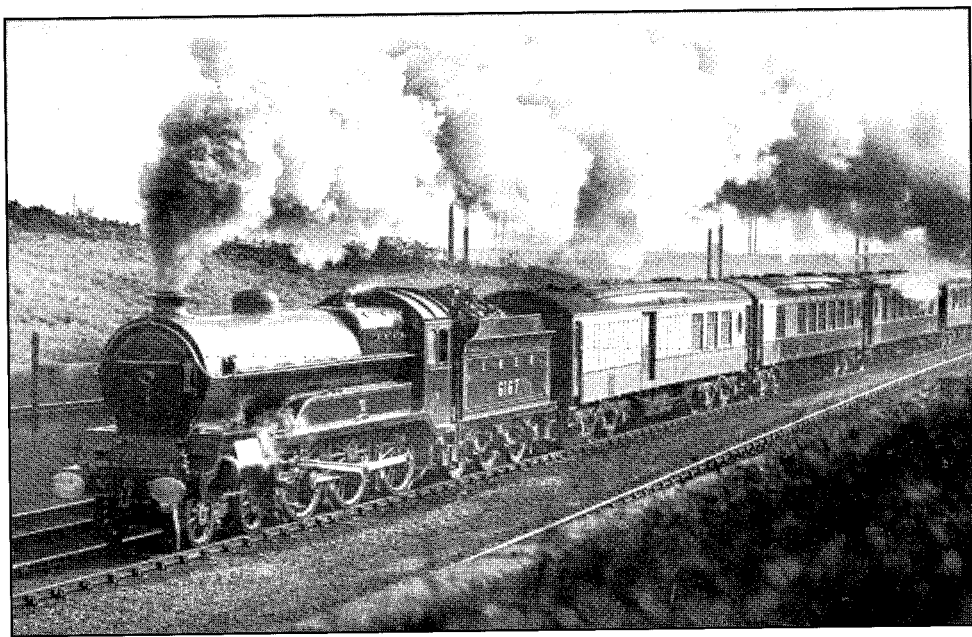
The morning after – 2. The sponsors – thank you all. 1304 times thank you. **Andrea Palmer.**



The morning after – 3. At rest at last. As in so many photographs of Sheffield Victoria from the past, the gasometer of the Effingham Street gas works dominates the background. **Andrea Palmer.**



No. 1165 *Valour*, the Great Central's War Memorial locomotive, built at Gorton as the third of six class 9P 4-cylinder 4-6-0's in July 1920. She was withdrawn from Lincoln shed as LNER No. 1496 in December 1947. **L&GRP 9936.**



'Faringdon' class B3 4-6-0 No. 6167, 'Lloyd George', formerly GC No. 1498 on a 'down' Pullman passing Wood Green. The name plate for some regrettable reason was removed in 1923. In general these engines were similar to the 'Sir Sam Fay' class, but the firebox was not large enough in comparison, consequently they were sluggish and heavy coal consumers on the class of work for which they were originally intended, namely first class express passenger duties. **GCRS collection.**

No. 1165 'VALOUR'

Allan Brown

The resiting of the GCR War Memorial from its location at the Wicker Arches is a memorable achievement by the GCRS, and all concerned are to be congratulated. The Memorial originally dedicated in 1922 was also complemented by the naming of the four cylinder express locomotive No. 1165 'Valour' two years earlier. 1165 was the second loco of the five members of GC class 9P built in 1920 at Gorton (GC numbers 1164 – 68) and were the production batch of the class, the first of which 1169 'Lord Faringdon' had appeared three years earlier in 1917. 1169 was something of an experimental loco built during the First World War with the designers no doubt looking forward to the end of that war. The use of a four cylinder design was undoubtedly an attempt to produce an engine comparable with the earlier 'Sam Fay' inside cylinder design of 1912, but with better axlebox performance. The new loco had a similar 5'6" dia. boiler to that used on 'Sam Fay' with the same grate area of 26sq ft., the latter figure is one which Gorton never seemed able or willing to improve upon.

Returning to 1165: the loco emerged from Gorton Works in July 1920 and was fitted with large shield shaped nameplates bearing the name 'Valour' and inscribed "*in memory of GCR employees who gave their lives for their country in 1914-1918*". Several months later on Armistice Day November 11th the engine worked the 8.20am Marylebone express from Manchester London Road carrying wreaths around each nameplate and on the smokebox door, paid for by GC employees at Gorton. Arriving at Leicester at 10.54, 'two minutes' silence was observed while the train stood in the station platform before departing for London. This act was to be repeated until the last occasion in November 1938; in 1939, the Second World War had started and no official Act of Remembrance involving 'Valour' took place.

The GC War Memorial was dedicated in August 1922 at Sheffield Victoria and was attended by nearly all the GCR Directors and Officers including the British Commander in Chief Field Marshal Earl Haig. A special train ran from Manchester hauled by 1165 'Valour' whilst Lord Faringdon and Earl Haig travelled from Marylebone in the 'Directors' saloon attached to the 10am 'down' express appropriately hauled by 1166 'Earl Haig'. In the following November, 1165 'Valour' again worked the 8.20am ex Manchester conveying railwaymen to the service now to be held each year at the War Memorial at Sheffield Victoria. The smokebox wreath was removed from 1165 on arrival at Sheffield and laid on the Memorial, whilst the nameplate wreaths remained on the engine on its return journey to Manchester. As far as is known 1165 was always rostered to return to Gorton for its Armistice Day duty until 1938.

The late Cedric Owen who started an apprenticeship at Gorton before the Second World War graphically recalled taking his camera to work on Armistice Day 1938 and joined his workmates who lined the 'works' boundary wall. Then as 'Valour' passed by on the 8.20am from London Road, complete with wreaths, they stood with 'caps off in order to pay their respects. 1938 was the last time this event took place and although Cedric's photograph is blurred it is clearly seen that 'Valour' was carrying nameplate wreaths.

'Valour' as LNER 6165 survived the war and eventually became 1496 under the 1946-renumbering scheme. The engine was eventually withdrawn from service on the last day of LNER's existence, 31st December 1947, when nationalisation took place. In 1948, 1496 was among the withdrawn locos, which were held at the old Carriage Works at Dukinfield prior to being 'cut up'. The nameplates had disappeared by 18th Feb. 1948 and although seen later that year in June at Dukinfield the loco was finally 'cut up', according to Gorton records, on the 7th January 1950.

The slight air of mystery about the gap between withdrawal and scrapping is compounded by the fact that no one seems to have recorded seeing 1496 between June 1948 and January 1950. (If anyone can report or recall any sightings during this period can they please inform the Editor?) One possibility is that the loco was moved into the 'old shops'; there is no doubt that 'Valour' created a lot of sentiment amongst GC men and it is maybe that thoughts had turned towards preservation. The nameplates however were kept and one was mounted on the wall of the old iron foundry at Gorton Works, near to the works main entrance. When the works closed in 1963 this plate was relocated at St Barnabas Church in nearby Openshaw. The plate subsequently disappeared and has still not been found and returned to its rightful owners. The second plate went to the National Railway Museum and happily is on display for everyone to see as a reminder of the best known Robinson express locomotive 1165 'Valour'.

'Valour' History

Built Gorton July 1920 as 1165.

Renumbered January 1925 to 6165, then again in September 1946 to 1496.

Shed Allocation:

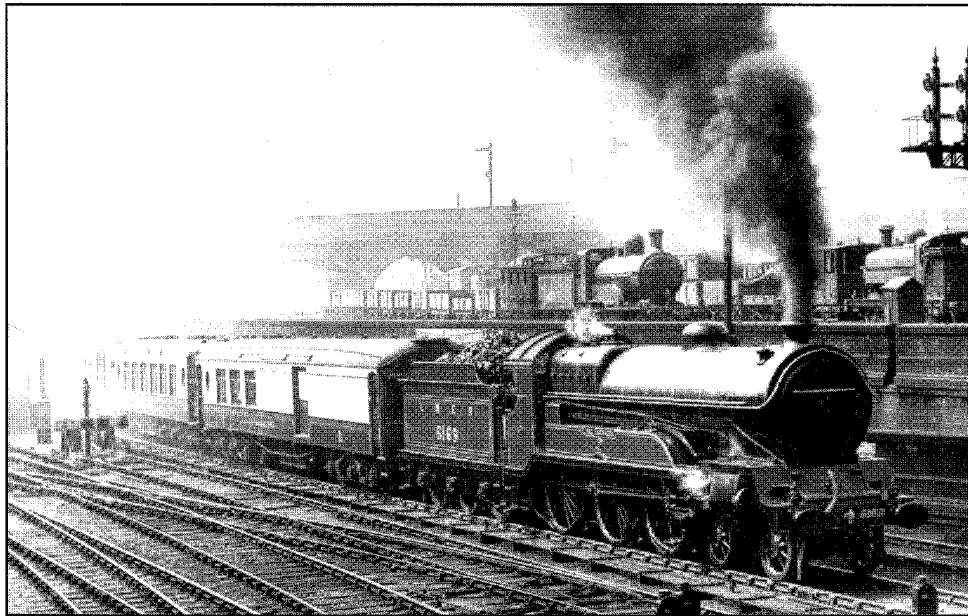
Gorton 31.8.20: Kings Cross 11.8.23: Ardsley 6.10.25: Kings Cross 27.11.25: Gorton 28.3.27:
Immingham 15.11.28: Neasden 14.11.31: Immingham 3.6.32: Neasden 21.4.33: Gorton 6.12.34:
Immingham 21.2.35: Neasden 7.12.35: Immingham 28.11.38: Woodford 25.7.39:
Copley Hill (Leeds GN) 25.3.42: Gorton 21.11.42: Neasden 13.2.43: Immingham 28.6.47:
Withdrawn 31.12.47.



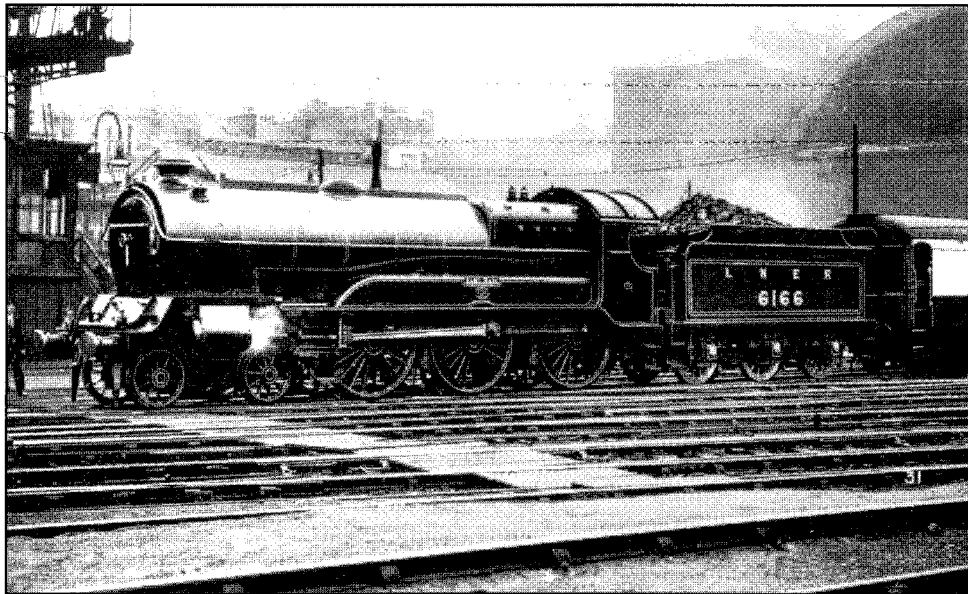
'Valour' in Great Central livery at Guide Bridge, the driver believed to be W. Chapman.
Photograph F. Cooke courtesy of A. Brown.

Photographs on the Following Pages

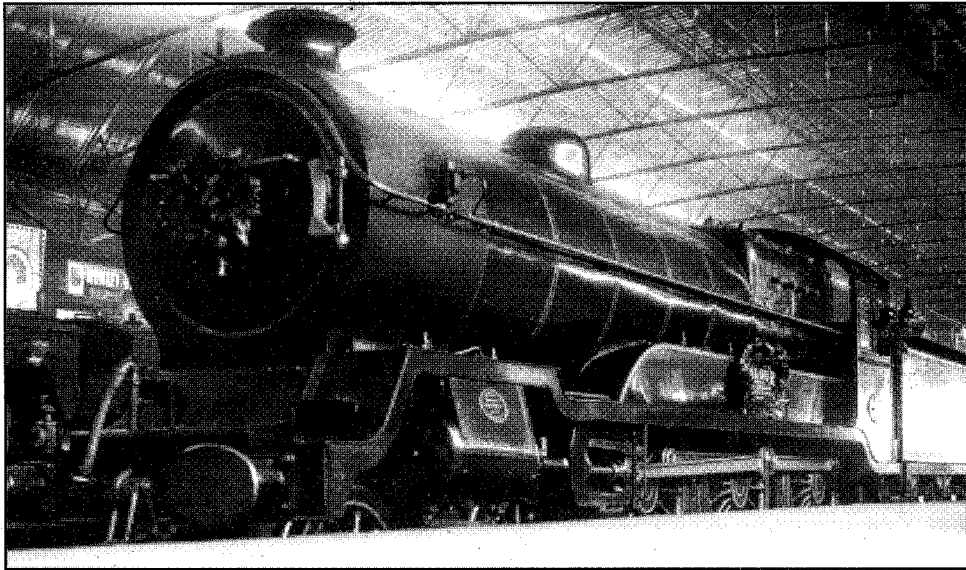
The following series of photographs illustrate locomotives connected to the previous article, including the class D 11's which commemorate the battlefields of the Great War. Several of these photographs, I am sure, have been published many times before but illustrate the magnificence of the Robinson designed locomotives and the pride of railway working during the early 1920's. (Ed).



A well known 'Hebron' photograph of 6169 'Lord Faringdon' thundering out of Kings Cross with a 'down' Pullman, climbing the steep 1 in 70 gradient past Belle Isle signal box. Over in the marshalling yard are several GN locomotives. **Hebron.**



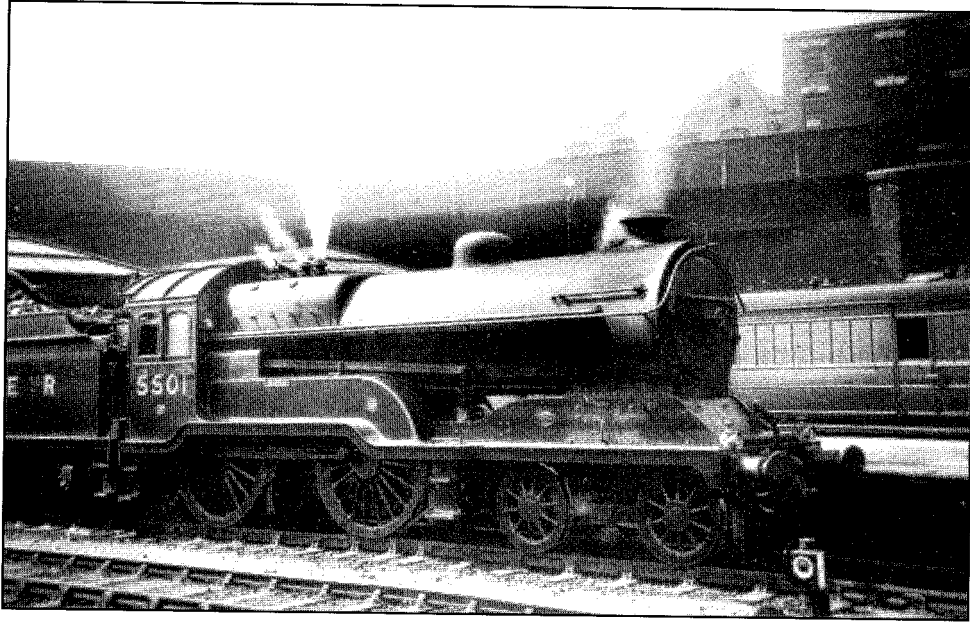
6166 'Earl Haig' awaiting the 'right away' on another 'down' Pullman at Kings Cross. **GCRS collection.**



'Valour' at Manchester London Road on Armistice Day 11th November 1920 adorned with wreaths on smokebox door and nameplates. **W.H. Whitworth, courtesy of A. Brown.**



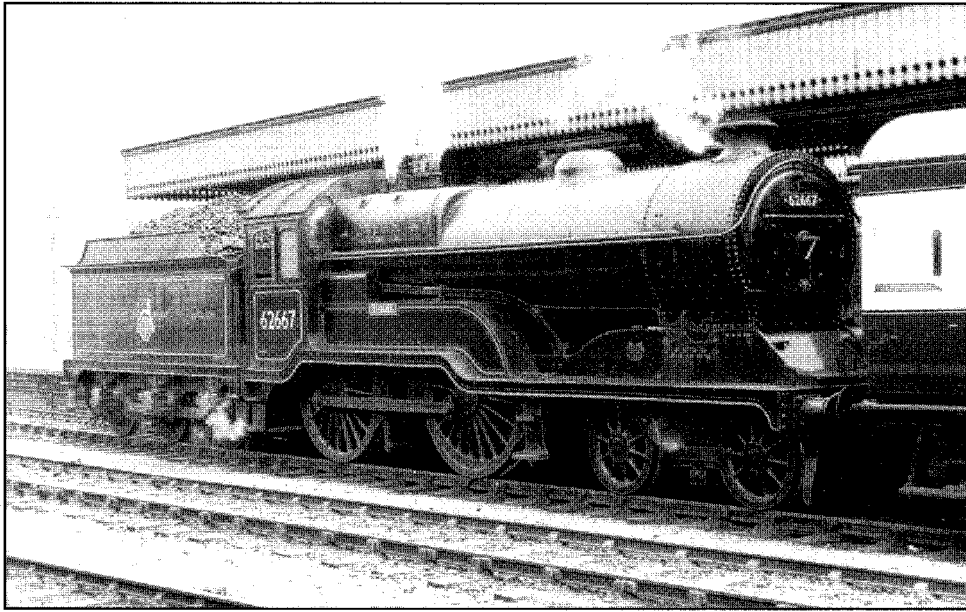
A slightly faded photograph of 'Valour' arriving at Leicester Central on the same Armistice Day November 11th 1920. **A. Brown collection.**



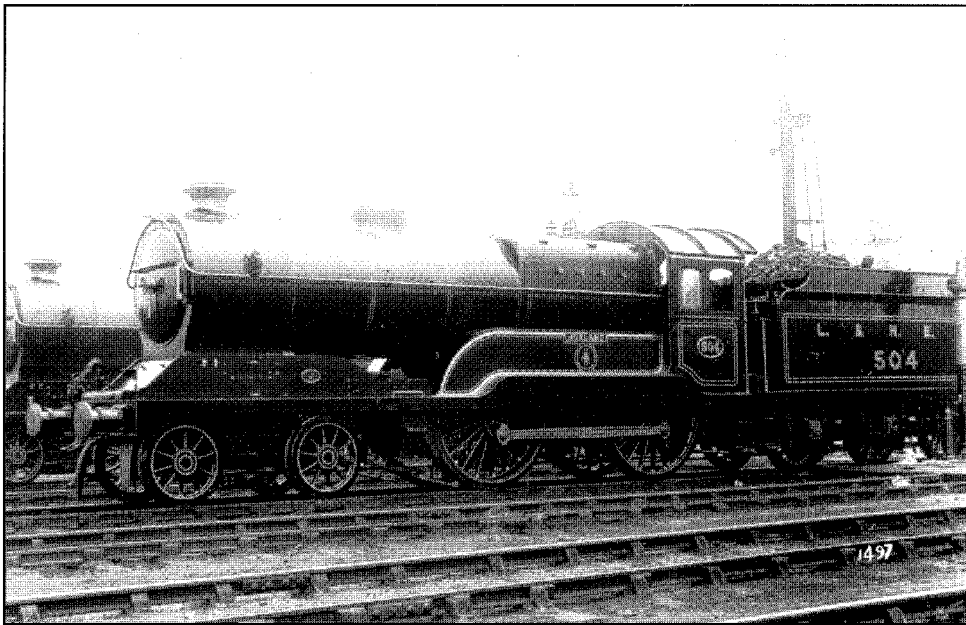
Class D11 5501 'Mons', at Nottingham Victoria. Originally GC class 11F No. 501. **Len Redshaw.**



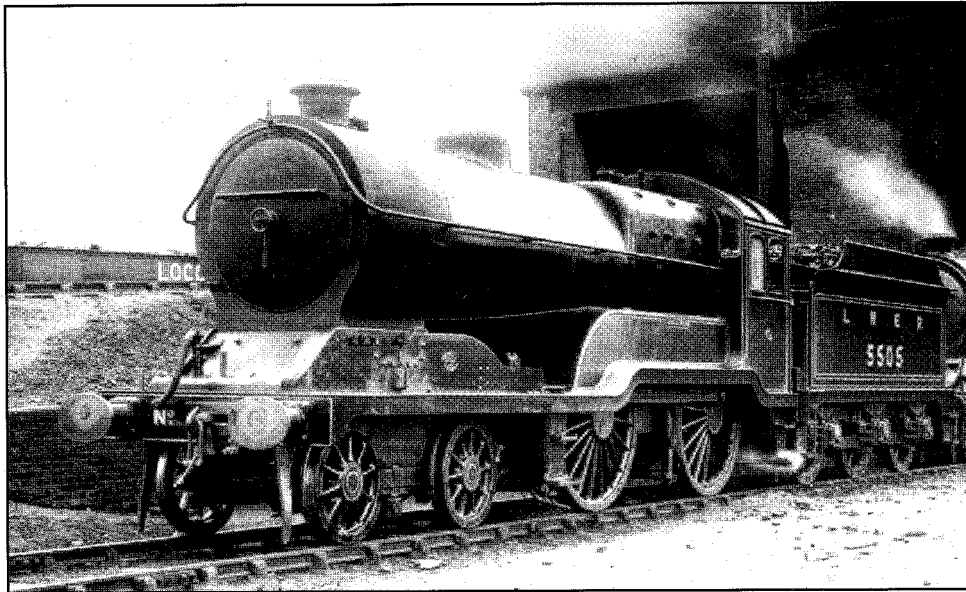
5502 'Zeebrugge', originally 502, at Neasden. **GCRS collection.**



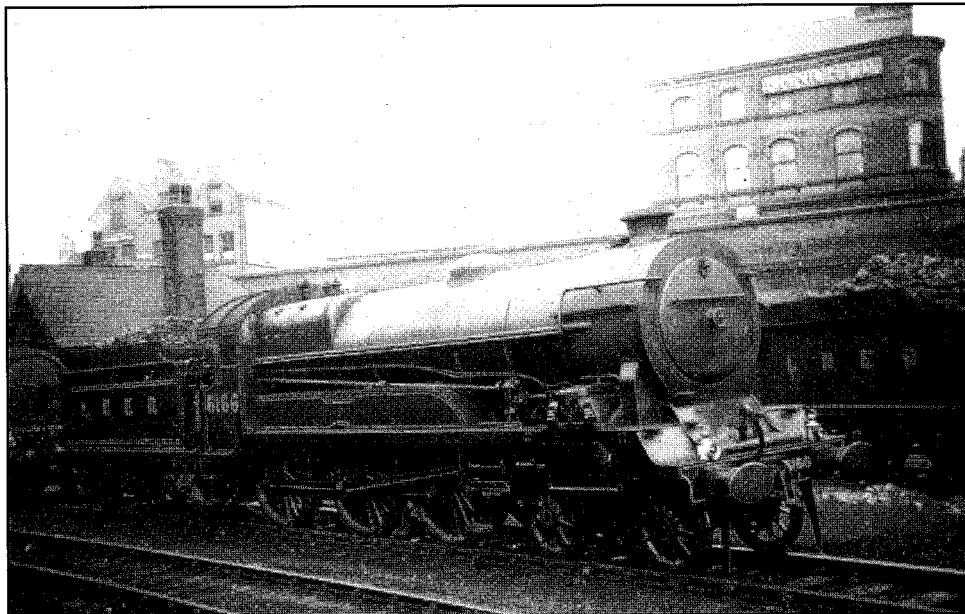
62667 'Somme' in BR days at Sheffield. Formerly GC No. 503. **GCRS collection.**



504 'Jutland' still carrying brass GC number plate following grouping in 1923, seen at Gorton. **GCRS collection.**



5505 'Ypres' seen at Neasden 1925. Formerly GC No.505. **GCRS collection.**



4-6-0 class B3 No. 6166 'Earl Haig' fitted with Caprotti valves at Nottingham Victoria. **Len Redshaw.**

GREAT CENTRAL LOCOS on THE MIDLAND & GREAT NORTHERN JOINT

David Bodicoat.

When the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway was formally created by an Act of Parliament in 1893, arrangements were soon made to rationalise the management and control of the railway by the joint owners, the Midland and Great Northern Railway companies. The line was run by a Committee comprised of representatives of the owning companies, who owned the rolling stock and operated the trains. The Midland supervised the locomotive department and the Great Northern the permanent way and signalling of the line. These arrangements continued through the 1923 Grouping, when the ownership passed to the LMS and LNER respectively. By agreement between the two companies the LNER took over the operation of the M&GN from 1st October 1936 and an immediate consequence was that responsibility for the entire M&GN locomotive stock of 86 locomotives was transferred to the LNER. Although the assets and accounts of the Joint were still divided financially between the LNER and LMS, to all intents and purposes the locomotives became LNER property and the majority were to be maintained at Stratford. After the take-over, the LNER officers would undoubtedly have taken a critical look at the Joint's locomotive stock to assess their new charges.

When the Joint Committee was first created in the 1890's a large fleet of brand new locomotives had been provided to replace most of the previous assorted collection used by the constituent companies. But following this injection of power very little had been done to update the stock to meet modern requirements. Very few of the passenger locomotives were less than 40 years old, none were superheated and several had been rebuilt more than once, although most were of Midland Railway design their ongoing repairs would not have been a problem at Stratford, with the resources available there. This combination of elderly and non-standard locomotives which had often to work at the limit of their capacity, made it unsurprising that the LNER viewed these locomotives as life-expired and immediately considered what should be provided as replacements.

Due to the LNER's financial position however, it is certain that no consideration would remotely have been given to begin designing and building new locomotives for the Joint, especially as the line was viewed to be of a secondary nature. Costing of individual sections of the railway had not yet come into sharp focus and this would not occur until the 1960's, therefore the LNER soon came to the conclusion that it had amongst its existing stock locomotives which would serve the 'Joint' well enough. The day of providing new locomotives for secondary services, as was the case of the post-war Ivatt 2-6-0's of both classes on the LMS, had not yet arrived in the 1930's. Many of the existing types would have been ruled out on grounds of size and weight, in any case.

One of the more obvious choices might have been thought to be the ex-Great Eastern 4-4-0 class D15 and D16's which were common enough in most areas of East Anglia adjacent to the 'Joint', but this did not come about until some time later. What did happen is that in 1936/37, twelve ex-Great Northern

4-4-0's of class D2 and ten of class D3 were allocated to the 'Joint', although some were not actually based at M&GN sheds as they worked from New England. Those locomotives whose withdrawal had already commenced, which were almost as elderly as and of a similar size to the withdrawn M&GN locos, were set to work on the ordinary passenger trains on the Joint. The March 1937 'Railway Magazine' reported that the return working of the 'Leicester' on a day early in February left Leicester behind a combination of class 4F 0-6-0 No. 4032 piloting ex GN Class D2 No 4375, but unfortunately no comment was made as to whether this was an isolated working by the D2.

At or around the same time authority also must have come to the conclusion that something with greater power was needed for the heavier trains on the Joint. This is the point at which the Great

Central interest starts as the choice fell upon the ex-Great Central 4-4-0's of Class D9. These had been first introduced in 1901, being a passenger variant of John G Robinson's 'Pom-Pom' J11 0-6-0 and the class of 40 were the designer's first passenger locomotives for the Great Central. Unsurprisingly they were known as 'Bogie Pom-Poms' on their native territory. Whilst they had been deployed on the Great Central's showpiece London Extension expresses when new, they had been fated to exist in the shadow of more glamorous products of Gorton, starting with the Atlantics and continuing with a succession of 4-6-0 and 4-4-0 types. Nevertheless they had been popular and reliable performers on Great Central metals for over 30 years. Originally constructed as saturated engines with slide valves, the whole class had been rebuilt with larger superheated boilers and had also acquired piston valves during the period between 1913 and 1927. There had been other cosmetic changes, notably the fitting of 'flowerpot' chimneys and dome covers of a different shape to the Gorton original.

By the early 1930's the class was concentrated in the northern part of the former Great Central system and was rarely seen on the London Extension. Soon afterwards major transfers had begun to take place, initially to the Cheshire Lines commencing in 1933, and then to East Anglian sheds, though not to the Joint, a year later. The RCTS 'History of Locomotives of the LNER' records that by 1936 eleven of the class were working from King's Lynn and Peterborough East sheds, although transfers of odd engines had previously taken place to Norwich and March for short periods. The arrival of a batch of new B17 'Footballer' 4-6-0's on the Great Central in 1936 would have had a 'cascading' effect on the locomotives which were employed there. This, in conjunction with the fact that the D9's were able to comply with the weight restrictions and could be turned on the turntables in use on the 'Joint' made them suitable candidates for transfer.

What of the locomotives themselves? They had 6' 9" driving wheels, a maximum axleload of 18½ tons, and two inside cylinders 19" bore x 26" stroke, with piston valves operated by Stephenson link motion. All were superheated by this date and the working pressure was 180 lbs/sq.in. At 55 tons 14 cwt they were some five tons heavier than the heaviest M&GN 4-4-0, the rebuilt C's with the G7 boiler (LNER Class D54), and their tenders turned the scales at a massive 48tons 6cwt, compared with the 33tons 11cwt of the C's tender. The carrying capacity of the GC tenders, with six tons of coal and 4000 gallons of water, was considerably greater than the three tons and 2950 gallons of the tenders fitted to the C class. Like the M&GN locomotives, they were driven from the right hand side of the cab, which was of a commodious size, incorporating a large 'D' cut-out in the sides. This feature was not to the liking of all enginemen as it was deemed to make for excessive draughtiness and photographs exist of some of the East Anglian contingent with a wooden insert fitted in the cut-out to reduce its size.

One feature of the D9's which would immediately have been noticed by firemen was the deep firebox. Added to this was the height of the firehole door above the footplate, which meant that coal had to be lifted into the box, and firemen would soon have realised that some change in firing technique would be necessary. As for livery, the glory of the Great Central livery and even the apple green with which the LNER had first decked the D9's had long since become a memory and they were painted in the secondary passenger livery of black, lined out in red. However, most still had the sweeping brass beading over both splashers and retained most of their elegance, despite their coating of grime. There was one detail of No. 6021, one of the locomotives transferred, which would have been noticed by many casual observers and this was the nameplates carried by the engine. Named 'Queen Mary' in 1913 and one of only four of the class to be named, this was the only one of the quartet to work on the 'Joint' and so achieved a degree of notability as being one of the very few named engines to do so.

Early in 1937, the first moves were made by increasing the allocation of the D9's at Peterborough. Before the LNER take-over, M&GN motive power requirements at Peterborough had been based at

the ex-Midland Spital Bridge shed, but afterwards the locomotives had been moved to Peterborough East shed, which was itself to be closed in 1939 and the allocation transferred to New England. It is likely that at least one or two trial forays on to the 'Joint' to assess suitability would have been made by the locomotives of the class already based at Peterborough before further transfers were made. The 'RCTS History' states that the number was increased from seven to eleven but other sources state that the number was nine. Very soon afterwards, D9's (including No. 6021) were transferred to South Lynn. A list of allocations shows that the first transfer there was No. 6013, on 28th February 1937, although the stay of this locomotive was short as it was moved back to Peterborough in June. By the beginning of July, four of the class were based there; Nos. 5112, 6021, 6040, and 6041. The 'RCTS History' states that this quartet, plus No 6013, were fitted with 'Whitaker' type tablet catchers, but makes no reference to any other of the transferees being so equipped.

All locomotives on the 'Joint' were expected to be versatile and the D9's were no exception, working both passenger and goods traffic although some effort would have been made to ensure that they were available for the heaviest passenger trains. They were immediately put on the Joint's most prestigious service, referred to by all as the 'Leicester', working to and from the east coast to that city and Mr H N James' details of his personal observations in July 1937 have been recorded in print. On several occasions the D9 was seen between Saxby and Bourne double-heading with an LMS 3F or 4F. The additional locomotive being required in the spring and summer at Spalding to work a train comprising flowers or fruit, both heavy traffics on the western section of the 'Joint' at that time. A photograph of No 6040 on the eastbound 'Leicester' climbing from Saxby taken by Mr James also appeared in the March 1938 'Railway Magazine' and whilst no date was given, as was the 'RM' practice at that time, it was almost certainly taken the previous July. The locomotive appears to be working very hard up the 1 in 100 gradient with a substantial load.

The accompanying notes also mention that the working was a regular D9 duty that took a Great Central locomotive into Leicester Midland station for the first time, occasioning some surprise. This was most probably the first regular working, but nothing can be taken as certain. There may well have been a visit of a GC locomotive into Leicester prior to that date, albeit not on a revenue earning train. A photograph exists of Atlantic No 5360 standing in Blaby station, on the Leicester – Birmingham line, in connection with Bridge Testing Committee work in 1925. Be that as it may, it is certain that the visits of the D9's would have been looked upon with keen interest by the local railwaymen and comparisons made with the native Midland 4-4-0's, which by then were also becoming very much a secondary part of the LMS locomotive fleet.

So the D9's became a part of the 'Joint' scene. The derailment of No. 6013 at speed on plain track at Hindolvestone in August 1937 must have caused one or two concerns, but the locomotive as a type was totally exonerated. The Inspecting Officer considered that elements of the maintenance of the locomotive itself, especially the drawbar, could have been better. In September 1938 No. 6041 was sent to Yarmouth Beach, to be followed in January and March 1939 by Nos. 5112 and 6038 respectively, although No 5112 stayed only until August. The other two stayed at Yarmouth until mid-1943 and South Lynn also had a basic allocation of two during the war years. Although there were frequent changes for short periods, March being one of the sheds involved in these transfers.

By the end of 1945 nine of the class had been withdrawn and two more followed in January 1946. At around this time there was a general move to transfer all the remaining D9's to the Cheshire Lines to work out their last few years. The last to leave the 'Joint' in July and August of 1946 were the quintet which had gathered at South Lynn, Nos. 6013/5/8/38 and the former 5112, by then bearing No. 2333, a result of the 1946 re-numbering scheme. Immediately prior to this last move 2333 had been noted on goods train workings on the Cambridge-Hitchin line. Thus the D9's left East Anglia, but their

contribution to the 'Joint' scene over almost ten years was one of the features that made the line so interesting. A visible reminder of the sojourn on the 'Joint' remained on some of the locomotives after they had been transferred to the Cheshire Lines, namely the Whitaker tablet catchers with which they had been equipped, No. 6013 retaining this fitment for over two years.

After the LNER assumed responsibility for operational purposes, the D9's were not the only locomotives of Great Central origin to be transferred to the 'Joint'. As mentioned above, the D9's had a 0-6-0 goods counterpart, the class J11 ('Pom-Pom') introduced in 1901, of which 174 examples had been built. If anything, these were even more popular in Great Central territory than were the D9's. Although there had been a large influx of eight-coupled goods locomotives on to the Great Central since their introduction, the J11's could be, and were regularly employed on passenger duties, for which the eight-coupled locomotives were of course unsuitable. Built as saturated locomotives, superheating had proceeded much more slowly than had been the case with the D9's and was not in fact completed until 1946. The J11's retained their original boilers when superheated, and in consequence the firehole door was much lower than on the D9's, making the work of the fireman that much easier.

In 1937, six of the class had been allocated to the 'Joint', being shared between South Lynn, Melton Constable and Yarmouth Beach sheds, but most stayed only for a few months. The 'RCTS History' relates that Nos. 5222 and 5323 were not transferred away until 1942 and 1943 respectively and for most of their time on the Joint they were based at Melton Constable. However, in 1941 Nos. 5235 and 5990 were transferred to South Lynn, where they stayed until the following year. Alan Wells, an ex-M&GN driver, recorded that when the large turntable at Leicester was out of order the J11's were used on workings from the M&GN Joint to that city. It is a pity that he did not elaborate further on the reason for this in his recollections; at the time there were not one, but three turntables at Leicester as there were two roundhouses, each with its own turntable as well as an outside turntable. The wheelbase of a J11 was 39ft 6ins, whilst that of a D9 was 44ft 6ins, both considerably less than the 47ft 2ins of a Midland compound, which, it must be assumed, would have fitted on any of the three turntables at Leicester. It is possible that the reason is that it was deemed too disruptive to use the turntables in the roundhouses for turning locomotives for traffic purposes as well as for stabling.

There was a triangle at Knighton, some two miles south, which could have been used for turning purposes if necessary and photographs exist to show that that particular manoeuvre was carried out there with double-headed locomotives which had worked from the 'Joint' into Leicester. In any case, if a 'tender first' working was to be involved, there would seem to be minimal difference between a 4-4-0 or 0-6-0; either would have been equally unpleasant over such a lengthy distance as Leicester to South Lynn. Perhaps other members may have some information on this point.

A surprising development involving another ex-GC class took place in 1943, when according to the October 'Railway Observer' six 0-8-0's of class Q4 were transferred to New England shed, which, as already noted, provided power for the M&GN by that date. The locomotives concerned 5057, 5163, 6134/6/76/79 were recorded as being transferred to M&GN stock in August of that year. No. 6179 was subsequently one of the class which was rebuilt as a class Q1 0-8-0T and replaced at New England by No. 6140. These locomotives, the first eight-coupled locomotives to work regularly on the 'Joint', were employed on the heavy goods traffic on the Western Section between Peterborough, Spalding and Sutton Bridge. No definite record appears to exist of their working on the line to Bourne and Saxby, and they would have been barred on grounds of weight from the section between Sutton Bridge and South Lynn. Rumours exist however, of several being sighted there including some minor structural alterations being made to West Lynn Bridge to accommodate them. In any event, the locomotives were all returned from New England to the GC section in October 1945, so their stay was

very brief. A further incursion by an ex-GC locomotive is illustrated in 'Britain's Joint Lines', by H C Casserley, where there is a photograph of Class O4 2-8-0 No 3739 at Moulton, between Spalding and Sutton Bridge. This may have been an isolated instance as none of the class was based on the 'Joint'.

Thus the Great Central influence in 'Joint' locomotive affairs ended. It is one of the interesting aspects of the railway scene in the age of steam, that locomotives could be moved to and from 'foreign' depots without any guidance to the men who were expected to maintain and run them. Also not forgetting engine crews who required the special attention and techniques that might be needed to extract the best, or even an acceptable performance from them?

GC TODAY Kim Collinson

During November major engineering work took place at Keadby Bridge as well as trackwork at several sites along the Doncaster to Barnetby Route, this resulted in the Brigg branch being reopened on a daily basis for diverted freight services.

As one route saw increased activity the stub of the LDEC beyond Thoresby Colliery sidings to High Marnham Power Station closed at the end of October when the last of the stockpiled coal was removed to Ratcliffe. This just leaves the collieries at Welbeck and Thoresby providing traffic over the remaining section of this route. On Thursday 27th November a new traffic flow commenced between West Burton Power Station and Tunstead via Woodburn conveying empty limestone hoppers, bringing a return to regular freight workings through Darnall. 60071 worked the first train passing Woodburn at 13.40 hrs.

During November a couple of derailments caused chaos as follows. On the 19th twelve wagons, on a Freightliner 'heavy haul' consisting of 17 wagons became derailed due to rotten sleepers when leaving Harworth colliery enroute to Ratcliffe. This stopped all workings from the colliery for over 24 hours. Then on the 24th a shunt move at the North end of Sheffield station resulted in an empty DMU becoming derailed causing major disruption to all GC services from and to Sheffield until early evening. A serious accident was narrowly avoided on the 2nd Dec. on the Roxby branch when the 10.33 Roxby to Pendleton 'waste train' worked by 66135, hit a car being pushed by three people across the disused 'weigh office' crossing. Fortunately no one was injured.

The final Sandite working of the season over the Penistone Branch was on the 29th November with the train passing through Penistone at 00.08 hrs worked by 37709/37516 The other class 37's used on the branch during the season were 37047/114/503/517/688/710 and 37712. Apart from the Sandite workings mentioned above there have been very few locomotive workings over the branch this year. However a noteworthy sight during December was during the early hours of the 23rd when a five vehicle test train from Neville Hill to Derby passed Penistone at 03.40 hrs, top and tailed by 31190 and 31601, the first visit of class 31's for at least six years!

The leaf fall period saw a couple of problems on the Deepcar Branch, on the 12th Dec. 66023 could not get beyond Wadsley Bridge and had to split the train into two portions to get to Deepcar, then on the 25th 66181 hauling 1319 tons, ground to a halt near Oughtibridge and had to be assisted in the rear by 56069.

Since the War memorial and naming ceremony at Victoria on the 11th Nov. the Deepcar Branch has

seen an increase in workings due to increased tonnages to and from Stocksbridge and the need to provide a sanding engine each weekday before the evening trip runs. This has brought a return of class 56 locos with the following being observed since the 1st Dec. 56032/56/60/71/88/95.

In addition to increased freight services the branch saw a Railtour on Saturday 15th Nov. from Kings Cross, top and tailed by 37174/37372 and 56099, this was then followed by the Railtest Track Recording Unit, class 150 unit 999600/01 on the 27th. The branch has enjoyed its greatest variety of workings and different traction for almost 10 years.

After several reprieves the remaining class 101 DMU's were finally withdrawn on the 24th December so bringing to an end conventional DMU operations on Manchester suburban services, the last workings were over the GC/Joint lines to Rose Hill and Marple. The Rose Hill branch was worked mainly by class 101 units and the final passenger working was served by Longsight 101 sets 678 and 685 numbered 51210/53746 and 53160/53164, the latter in BR green livery and named Daisy. Vehicle 53160 was the oldest passenger unit still in operational use being 47 years old! The final working was 2H59 the 21.12 Rose Hill to Piccadilly which departed Guide Bridge at 21.30 arriving into Manchester at 21.41 hrs. Throughout the final day the services over both routes and lineside locations were well populated by enthusiasts paying their last respects to these units which have been such a part of the local railway scene for almost 50 years. The last remaining conventional DMU still in passenger use is the Class 121 single car unit 55020 which is used on the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough shuttle over the GW/GC joint line.

Due to signalling work between Manchester and Stockport the week after Christmas, Freightliner services to and from Trafford Park were diverted from Stockport to Guide Bridge to run round in 'Brookside and Avenue' sidings thence via Ashburys. This resulted in up to 15 additional trains daily and also brought class 57s which are rare visitors to this area. 57004 was observed at Ashburys at 14.41 hrs on the 30th working a Trafford Park to Southampton service. Imported coal from Liverpool Bulk Terminal to Ratcliffe has also resulted in additional freight services via Guide Bridge as on the 22nd when 66090 passed through at 13.49hrs.

The Fallowfield branch, which closed in 1988, is the latest branch to be proposed for conversion into a walking and cycle trail. However the former station buildings at Fallowfield now form part of the entrance to Sainsburys Supermarket, which must be one of the more unusual uses for a former Railway station.

National Rail Museum - York

RAILFEST

Celebrating Rail's Bicentenary

29th May – 6th June

A unique 200th anniversary festival of rail, from the first steam locomotive to the latest tilting train. The NRM is bringing together a once in a lifetime collection of record breaking locos along with a carnival of classic funfair attractions, historic train rides and a great Railway Bazaar.

2004 is a milestone year. It marks the 200th anniversary of the world's first steam locomotive – Richard Trevithick's 'Penydarren', and the 100th anniversary of City of Truro breaking the 100 mph barrier. To celebrate, the NRM presents RAILFEST – a rail theme extravaganza to be staged on an extended site next to the National Railway Museum.

GCRS will have stand No. S3 in 'The Great Railway Bazaar'

NEW MEMBERS

Mr K.A. De-Groome. Newton, Wisbech, Cambs: Mr J. Longden. Eckington, Sheffield: Mr L. White. Scunthorpe: Mr S.J.Fay. High Wycombe, Bucks: Mr I. Jewell. New Malden, Surrey: Mr G. Evison. Berwick on Tweed: Dr. P.A. Olver. Canon Pyon, Hereford: Mr J. Page. Horton, Devizes, Wilts: Mr J.R. Suter. Middlewich, Cheshire: Mr A.J. Goldthorpe. Cawthorne, Barnsley: Mr T. K. Jones. Smethwick, W. Midlands: Mr D. Woodward. Sandal, Wakefield: Mr S. Sanders. Earl Shilton, Leics: Mr A. Ward. Killamarsh, Sheffield: Mr T. Sherratt. Lowton, Warrington: Mr A.R. Holloway. Chalfont St Peter, Bucks: Mr L. Middleton. West Butterwick, Scunthorpe: Mr L.M. Saccomando. Beighton, Sheffield: Mr K.W. Turton. Ashby de la Zouch, Leics:

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mr F Marsland, Camberley, Surrey.

I have noted with interest the article by Mr J.F.Harrison OBE concerning Gorton Works in 'Forward' number 136 and would like to offer some comments which may be of interest based on my experiences at Gorton Works as a Premium Apprentice. This covered the period June 1949 to January 1957 (except for two years National Service in between). As background I also refer to my previous letter which appeared in 'Forward' number 123 and made mention of Gorton Works.

Mr Harrison mentions a reduction in the 'days in shops' to 18/19 days. This is not borne out by my experiences, when in fact a month was the nominal time from the loco arriving in the erecting shop to that of leaving. This incidentally is borne out by referring to Yeadons various Registers where they refer to those classes of those locomotives dealt with at Gorton viz B1's, J39's etc wherein longer repair dates are also listed.

The erecting shop at Gorton comprised five main bays. Bay 1 was that on the right hand side running parallel to the main line whilst the remainder were numbered consecutively from right to left. Each bay consisted of the usual three sets of tracks, each with pits, the left hand being used for loco stripping, the centre for re-wheeling and axle box/wheel fitting etc. and the right hand for locomotive erection. Bays 1 to 3 were divided into four sections thus 12 in total with section 1 in Bay 1 being the furthest away from the doors. It was in this section that new locomotive build occurred and at the time I started at Gorton the last two of the ten new B1's (61348/9) were being completed here. Later the total area of Bay 1 was given over to new EM1 and EM2 electric loco manufacture.

Bay 4 comprised two sections only (No's 13 and 14) as the other area within this bay comprised part of the of the boiler mounting shop and also the erecting shop main stores plus an extension of the machine shop fitting area dealing with connecting rods. Bay 5 was concerned with major boiler repairs only, in fact boiler activity at Gorton was dispersed over three distinct and separate sites within the works.

Loco stripping was the responsibility of a stripping gang and the sections concerned with the later assembly normally consisted of 10 fitters - working in pairs, a charge-hand, labourer and driller. Riveters and burners were supplied on demand under the control of the boiler shop.

The nominal four weekly sequences of repair events comprised one week for stripping with the loco then being allocated to a specific section for subsequent work. It would then be inspected by the relevant charge-hand to establish whether additional work might be necessary on for example, bent buffer beams, loose homblocks/dragboxes, frames etc. During this second week work would be being carried out elsewhere within the works on processing the various detail parts removed during the stripping process. At the end of the second week the loco 'skeleton' would be transferred to that section concerned with subsequent re-assembly and onto the right hand pit. This whole process occupied the nominal four weeks, the final movement of a repaired loco often taking place at the last

minute on a Saturday morning in the days of the 5½ day week.

During my time at Gorton no paint shop activity (stopping etc) was actually carried out in the erecting shop. Many locos which were entitled to full lining out were not so treated in later years, these included the Directors and C13/C14 s. In fact only the B1's and B17's received the 'full treatment'. This was due to the relatively small size of the paint shop and of course the later need to fully paint and line out the new electric 57 EM1's and 7 EM2's as they were completed.

By the time I commenced at Gorton all the individuals mentioned by Mr Harrison were no longer there. I was interviewed by the then Gorton CME, Mr George Caster who retired very shortly afterwards and the CME position disappeared. The Works Manager was then Mr J Finlayson and whom was later superseded by Mr Bill Scott, a Scotsman who was always accompanied by an entourage when visiting within the works and was immediately recognisable by his bowler hat which had become something of a rarity by then.

One major incident happened during the early 1940's, which I believe resulted in seven deaths in the erecting shop. This I understand resulted from the explosion of an acetylene bottle lying on its side which accordingly assumed the role of a projectile causing the casualties. Maybe other members may have more detail regarding this accident which never appeared to come up in general conversation whilst I was at Gorton. I can remember being very apprehensive when hot rivets were being thrown around the erecting shop floor in the vicinity of oxy/acetylene burning equipment!!

One anachronism relating to Gorton was that one was entitled to quarter fare privilege travel only and not any free travel of any sort. This was because we were all members of the engineering AEU union and not the railway NUR union. I never learnt why we were in the AEU as other railway workshop engineering staff were NUR members and as such were entitled to enjoy the free travel concession.

Finally, in connection with the updating of machine tools in the machine shop I must mention that certain areas remained 'belt driven' during my time at Gorton and no doubt remained so for the next six years until closure of the works during May 1963.

From John Bennett, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex.

While perusing the 1929 Carriage Working Book for the Great Central section of the LNER in the Public Record Office at Kew recently, I was surprised to discover that it was possible then to travel to Barnsley from Marylebone without changing trains on Mondays to Saturdays. The through working was accomplished by a single carriage which in the 'Up' direction left Barnsley at 2.38pm arriving at Sheffield at 3.15pm where it was attached to the front of the 2.15pm ex Manchester London Road leaving Sheffield at 3.26pm and arriving in Marylebone at 6.38pm. The corresponding 'Down' working was by the 6.20pm Bradford express from Marylebone arriving at Sheffield at 9.33pm and going forward at 9.45pm to give an arrival in Barnsley at 10.24pm.

The time of 37 and 39 minutes for the 'Up' and 'Down' trains respectively between Sheffield and Barnsley for the branch trains concerned, was considerably faster than that of the mostly all-stations branch service; the 'Up' train called only at Stairfoot and Birdwell to pick up for stations beyond Sheffield while the 'Down' train stopped at Meadowhall, Chapelton, Birdwell and Stairfoot for through passengers and those giving notice at Sheffield.

The Working Book specified that the through carriage was to be a bogie Corridor Composite Brake with 12 first and 32 third class seats - presumably with two first and four third class compartments and

guard's area. Several vehicles of the later matchboarded Robinson design were constructed with this configuration. It is significant that the book specifies which sets were to consist of bogie carriages as even at this date the great majority of sets were composed of six wheelers. Indeed, over the branch the through carriage was attached in the 'Up' direction each day and in the 'Down' direction on 'Saturdays only' to a six coach set of six wheelers in the course of a three day trundle around Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire from its base at New Holland. On the other days the through carriage was attached to a Leeds based GN articulated set which probably provided even less comfortable accommodation than the venerable six wheelers. I would be very interested to hear if any members can confirm the years during which this through service ran and any other details.

From W. Taylor, 51 High Tor, Skegby, Notts.

Society member Bill Taylor is working to produce a book depicting the GCR as shown on old picture postcards. A publisher has already produced similar good quality and modestly priced books dealing with the L&Y and Midland companies and would be approached when a suitable selection of GCR material has been identified. It is stressed that real published postcards usually from pre-1914 whether postally used or not are the only material accepted by the publisher, so that straight forward photographs even from that era, cannot be considered.

It will be necessary to depict all aspects of the Great Central (including its predecessors, joint and absorbed lines) therefore illustrations of staff, shipping, road and horse drawn vehicles, permanent way, signalling, war memorials, all manner of advertising material, as well as the more common station, locomotive and accident views. Bill asks that any member who has postcards depicting any aspect of the GCR/MS&L/CLC &c. please contact him either by phone 01623 441527 or by sending him a Photostat (no originals at this stage please) of cards to:-
51 High Tor, Skegby, Notts. NG17 3EX. Any postage and copying costs will be reimbursed.

MODEL NOTES

Andrew Emmett, Australia.

I wondered if any of you can help me with advice on the location of the two end timbers (posts) on the long wheelbase GC 15 ton vans (Dia. 15) that were turned into 12 ton fish vans. I am currently building two of these vans from D&S kits but the instructions and diagrams give no clue as to the position of these timbers and I don't have a drawing. There are 13 vertical end planks inside the corner timbers. The only photo I have which shows any of the end (in Tatlow) is mostly side on and does not show sufficient of the end to determine where the end posts are located. All I can deduce is that they may be on the 4th and 10th planks but this would make them quite wide. However placing them on the 5th and 9th planks makes them quite narrow in spacing. This is quite a dilemma. Bill Bedford has suggested that "They would almost certainly use the same spacing as other GC vans i.e. 2'8" centres." However this would mean that they do not line up directly with the vertical end planks. I am hopeful some modelling member may be able to clarify this matter.

'Memories of the MET & GC Joint Line'

A5 format, profusely illustrated in b & w and colour, 140pp,
price £12.95 (**note: post free to GCRS members**)

A few copies are still available of the **final** printing.

Good reviews in *Forward* (spring/03), *Back Track* (5/03) etc.

From: Clive Foxell, 4 Meades Lane, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1ND

'LNER'

A glossy, words – and – pictures magazine devoted to the above railway in all its phases.

Containing original articles and illustrations.

Main Themes: Locomotives and Trains including some G.C. content.

Available by post, £7 for four quarterly issues, no other charge. Sent by return post.

Back copies of **G.C. LINK** (up to issue No.1) available @ £1.75 each post free.

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

Cheques/Postal Orders payable to the same.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place on

Sunday 23rd May at the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn, Sheffield.

Doors open at 10.30am.

AGM

11.00am. – 12noon.

The afternoon speaker at 1pm. Will be

GCRS President Richard Hardy

Who will be holding a 'Question and Answer Session'

followed at 2.30pm by

Ken Grainger

presenting an illustrated talk on Sheffield Victoria and the War Memorial

Members are also reminded that;

Under Section 9 of the constitution, proposals for changes to the constitution properly signed by the proposer and seconder should be sent to the Secretary to reach him no later than

9th April 2004.

Under Section 5(c) nominations for the committee, signed by the proposer and seconder and made with the agreement of the nominee, should be sent to the Secretary to reach him no later than

30th April 2004.

Proposers and seconders must be paid up members of the Society.

Only proposals made in accordance with the constitution will be accepted for the A.G. M.

Peter Cowan

135 Woodlands Avenue, Eastcote, Ruislip HA4 9QX

Tel. No. 020 8866 8153.

Will be attending the above AGM with a large selection of Books (including LNER interest) LNER loco photographs and back copies of LNER Magazine

AGM MINUTES.

The minutes of the 2003 AGM are published on the following two pages of Forward as a result of a decision by the committee two years ago. This was due to the increased costs of photocopying a large number of Minutes for issue to members at the following AGM. By using this format all members now have the opportunity to read, study and comment on them. Editor.

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 10th May 2003
at the Labour Club, Stalybridge.**

Present: 42 members.

The meeting was opened at 11.00 by the Chairman, who welcomed the members to the meeting.

He reported the death of T J Artindale, A Long, J A Peden, B D Jones, H K Boulter and M Pemberton for which a minute's silence was held.

1 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from: Gillian Brooks, Tony West, Geoffrey Hughes, David Crossley, John Musselwhite, Richard Morton, Martin Burr, David Bodicoat, Graham King, Richard Tilden-Smith, Alan Rowles and Chris Youett.

2 Minutes of the 2002 AGM:

The minutes of the 2002 Annual General Meeting were accepted as an accurate record on a proposition by David Russell and seconded by John Quick. They were then signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters Arising:

For reasons explained later in the meeting, the 2003 AGM could not be held in Sheffield.

4 Officer's Reports:

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on the formation of the War Memorial Committee consisting of Kevin Curran, Ken Grainger, Howard Turner and Stephen Gay.

He also reported briefly on the GC Gala held at Ruddington in June and the Autumn Meeting in Loughborough in October 2002. Both had been very enjoyable although poorly attended.

Mike paid tribute to Brian Tilley who had resigned as Sales Officer at the end of 2002 and welcomed John White to the position.

A major problem occurred at the end of 2002 with the printers of Forward almost doubling their charges. A new printer had been found who printed Forward No 135. Mike finished his report by thanking Colin Todd who packed and posted each issue of Forward.

Secretary's Report

During the last year, there had been four committee meetings, all well attended with various subjects being discussed. Ordinary members are welcome as observers. Any subjects that the members wished the committee to consider should be sent to him in writing.

Brian finished by thanking Richard Tilden-Smith for making facilities available at Ruddington for committee meetings: Paul White for arranging the venue and Geoff Burton for providing e.mail directions issued to members.

Treasurer's Report (including Membership Secretary's Report)

The Treasurer said that as at 31 March 2003 there were 495 members compared with 480 at the same time the previous year. 54 new members were gained but 39 were lost including the 6 deceased members.

Membership can be renewed by Standing Order and anyone interested should contact the Treasurer for the necessary form.

Our web site address, - www.simpasture.com/gcra has proved a successful recruiting tool gaining 13 new members.

Overall, income has increased and expenditure decreased. An overall adjusted surplus of funds of £1562.59 at the year-end was achieved, (£840.93 at the previous year-end).

The Treasurer then reviewed the accounts giving explanations where requested.

He thanked our Honorary Auditor who was once again Mr Martin Gray (ACMA).

The committee do not propose any increase in subscriptions, which will remain at £12.

Eric was questioned about the £11/£12 subscriptions this year and referred the questioner to last year's AGM minutes.

David Russell proposed that the accounts be accepted, this was seconded by Ken Grainger and accepted unanimously by the members present.

Editor's Report

The Editor reported that 4 Forwards, Nos. 132, 133, 134 and 135 had been issued during the year.

He went on to describe the contents and commented upon his own contributions as a former footplate man. He felt that this would help attract younger people in to the Society.

He thanked all the authors who had contributed to Forward, Ken Grainger and Lawson Little in particular, also Peter Cowan who proof reads the journal.

Finally Brian asked for any comments, criticism or suggestions on the contents of Forward. Non forthcoming.

Model Steward's Report

The Model Steward reported that although he had not contacted Bachmann about a 'Tiny' model, it had come very high in a poll on desired Ready to Run models.

During the year John had assisted in the publication of a book and a new model kit. He is hoping to persuade the manufacturer to provide more GC kits. 'Bridgehouses' had again been on the exhibition circuit and John thanked a number of members for their help. John is still providing members with information for models and he finished by inviting members to Oughtibridge for his annual 'Open Day'.

Southern Area Rep's. Report

The Southern Area Rep. Reported that the London Area Group had left 'Crockers' because of the cost, moving to 'The Duke of York' but again because of cost had left there. They had returned to 'Crockers' where the new management had made them very welcome. A full programme of events had been arranged through the winter, mainly GC related but with other subjects as well. Summer events have been arranged and Len is hoping to be able to arrange a full winter programme again.

Midlands Area Rep's. Report

Unfortunately the Midlands Area Rep. was taken ill on the day of the AGM and no report was received.

Sales Officer

John White introduced himself to the membership and reported on his activities since taking office. He appealed for items to be donated for sale and said that he will sell items on behalf of members with 10% of the proceeds going to the Society.

Archivist's Report

The Archivist reported that all the archives had been transferred to her control.

She has received a number of requests for information and is sending a cheque to the Treasurer for receipts from photocopying. Gillian said that she now had an e-mail address - gcsocietyarchives@tiscali.co.uk, for correspondence and inquiries.

5 Election of Officers:

The following nominations had been received by the Secretary for committee posts for the coming year:

Chairman - Mike Hartley: Secretary - Brian Slater: Treasurer/Membership Secretary - Eric Latusek:

Sales Officer - John White: Midlands Area Rep - Tony West: Southern Area Rep - Len Bunning: Editor - Brian

Bell: Model Steward - John Quick: Archivist - Gillian Brooks: Northern Area Rep and Publicity Officer no nominations. In the absence of any other nominations, their appointment was proposed by Ken Grainger, seconded by Martyn Chapman and agreed by all present.

6 Constitution Change:

The proposed change had been sent to every member with Forward. Its purpose was to enable the Society to act as a vehicle for Lottery funding for the GC War Memorial at Sheffield. This was proposed by Eric Latusek and seconded by Brian Slater. On being put to the floor, it received the unanimous vote of the membership.

Ken Grainger then gave an update on the War Memorial - a heritage lottery grant had been awarded of £26,000 subject to three conditions - 1 that the Society constitution be amended to ensure that there would be no distribution of funds to members, other than legitimate running expenses, 2 that the Society must have custodianship of the memorial, it remaining the property of Network Rail and 3 that planning and listed building status be granted.

The memorial should be in position by Armistice Day 2003. A general vote of thanks were given to Ken and the rest of the War Memorial Committee. It was proposed by Ken and seconded by Brian Woodward that a donation of £100 be made to the memorial fund by the Society, which was agreed by all members present.

Ken thanked Kevin Curran for preparing the Lottery grant application.

7 Any Other Business:

Brian Woodward proposed a vote of thanks to the committee, seconded by Martyn Chapman and agreed by the membership. Brian Slater appealed for 'speakers' for a list he is compiling on behalf of the committee. He also brought the GC Forum on the Internet to the attention of the members present.

An appeal from Chris Youett for colour slides of the London Extension was read out.

The Autumn Meeting will be held at Rugby on November 15th. The Chairman requested the help of the membership in manning the Society stand at the increasing number of exhibitions we are being invited to.

David Franklin wondered how the committee decides the venues for meetings, which was explained.

8 2003 AGM:

The 2004 AGM will be held at The Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield on Sunday 23rd of May. Owing to previous bookings it could not be held there in 2003 and the cost for a Saturday in 2004 was prohibitive, hence the Sunday date. The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 12.30.

NOTICES

Grimsby/Cleethorpes Branch.

RAFA Club. Alexandra Road, Cleethorpes. 7.45pm.

April 7th Trains and Ferries (the local scene) Brian Peeps.

May 12th South African Snippets Mike Eggenton.

Rotherham Branch

'The Atlas', Bawtry Road, Brinsworth. First Thursday of each Month at 7.30.

April 1st. Surveying the Preservation Scene - Peter Howard.

May 6th. The Great Central in Sheffield, and the Isle of Wight, on DVD - Brian Wilson

June 3rd. Something Old, Something New (Something Borrowed, Something Blue!!).-

Keith Glossop

Sheffield and Chesterfield Branch (Spinkhill).

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

March 15th Stanier Pacifics of the LMS. Mick Hayes.

April 19th Isle of Man steam. Ken Grainger.

May 17th 0 Winston Link and the Norfolk and Western Railway. Bob Gellatly.

June 21st Main line steam, 1968 to today. Ken Horan.

Southern Area Branch

Mon 29th Mar. SHANGRI-LA IN THE SUBURBS.

Slide presentation including G.C. by Bill Piggott at Crockers Folly,
Aberdeen Place, London NW8 7.30 p.m

Mon. 26th Apr. DAYS AT STEWARTS LANE.

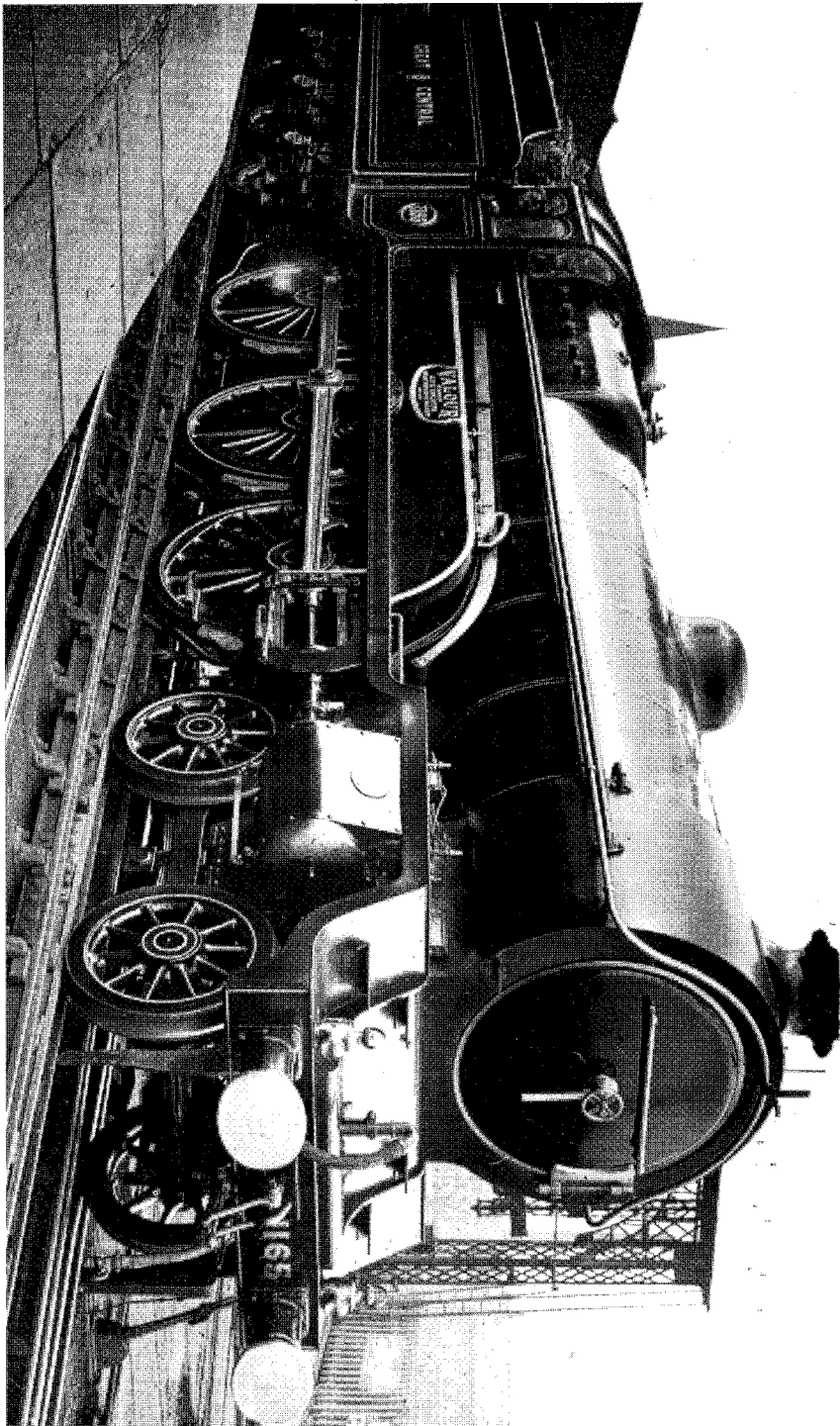
Talk with Question and Answer session by our President Richard Hardy.
Crockers Folly, Aberdeen Place, London NW8.

Sat. 19th June. RAILS OF SHEPHERDS BUSH & HAMMERSMITH.

Walk and study tour of disused lines in West London beginning at
Shepherds Bush and finishing at South Acton. Lunch stop provided.
Please bring suitable footwear. Meet : Shepherds Bush (Central line)
11.00 a.m.

Sat. 17th July. ANNUAL MINI BUS TRIP.

A combined bus and optional train ride this year. A look at Great
Central remains in the Leicester area and a chance to ride by steam from
Leicester North to Loughborough Central. Bus fare £13.00 per head.
Train fare extra.



GC class 9P 4-6-0 (LNER B3) 1165 'Valour' immaculate as ever during Great Central Days.
Ken Grainger collection