

FORWARD



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GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

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Forward is the journal of the Great Central Railway Society and is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

The Society, founded in 1974, is open to all who are interested in any aspect of the Great Central Railway, its predecessors, successors and joint lines. For membership details contact the Membership Secretary or visit the website.

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Any views or opinions expressed in *Forward* are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor or Committee Members of the Great Central Railway Society. Contributions for the December 2015 issue (no. 186) must reach the Editor by 1st November 2015.

Front cover caption

LNER class D7 4-4-0 no.5691 approaches Sheffield Victoria with a down passenger service consisting of 6-wheelers on 4 May 1929. The castellated building on the right was the Ordnance Works on Bernard Road and still survives today as the Megacentre.

The MS&LR class 2 was introduced in April 1887 with the construction of no.561 by Kitson for display at the Manchester Exhibition. The remaining 24 members of the class were split between Gorton and Kitson. A third batch was built at Gorton with slight differences and they were designated class 2A. Both classes became class D7 under the LNER classification. No.5691 started life as a class 2A. Before the Grouping, Robinson had rebuilt them all with Belpaire boilers, replaced the stovepipe chimney and extended the cab roof. Initially used on the King's Cross expresses as far as Grantham, they were transferred to secondary passenger services in 1895 when Pollitt's 4-4-0s took over.

Photo: W.L.Good



The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 185 ~ September 2015

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Editorial

Like many of you with an interest in model railways, I occasionally manage to visit model railway exhibitions. As well as the layouts on view there are always society stands promoting their respective interests. I took a stand for the GCRS to the Lincoln show earlier this year. We were placed next to the GNR Society stand which created a much better impression than ours. On talking to the GNR people I learnt that they have two Exhibition Managers - one for the north and one for the south. They have the task of creating and maintaining an attractive display and ensuring that members are recruited to accompany it to shows. Although as a society we do some things well I think there is room for improvement in this area. I know that Andrew David in Buckinghamshire does an excellent job at shows but over the rest of the country it is very hit-and-miss. If anyone thinks this is something they could take on then please contact the Secretary.

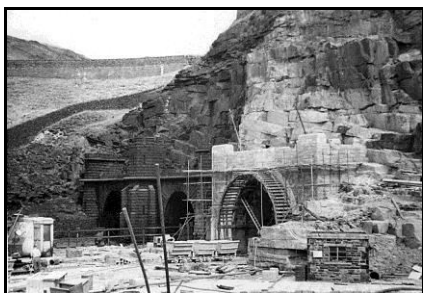
Heritage railways often include National Collection items in their stock. This benefits the heritage railway and provides a physical space in which to store stock other than at York or Shildon. Recently I discovered that the GCRS is also the custodian of an item belonging to the NRM - not a locomotive but a very large silver-plated ambulance shield produced by the GCR. This was presented each year to the winning team in an ambulance team competition between GCR locations. As few members have seen this item it will be displayed at the 'Kiveton Park Special' event in October.

Railway magazines and newspapers have been paying tribute to the late Ian Allan who died on 28th June aged 92. It is difficult to imagine our childhood years without the abc Locomotives Books. I still have mine - the first was purchased for me by my father (who had no interest in railways but realised that I had) at a bookstall on the platform of Mansfield Midland station in time to record the number of a Stanier 8F trundling through with a coal train. I guess I must have been about 8 years old at the time. It is from such acorns that today we have so many oak trees!

The Society is grateful to the relatives of the late Bernard Harding of Amersham, for contacting the Society and inviting us to take Bernard's railway books, magazines and photos, which were subsequently collected by Geoff Burton. It is a good idea, if you have not already done so, to leave instructions regarding the disposal of your railway books, photos etc, otherwise they could well finish up in a skip!

The minutes of the 2015 AGM held at Loughborough on 16th May are included in this issue. You will notice that with the exception of the Chairman there has been no change in the officers and committee members. We wish David Grainger well in his new role.

Bob Gellatly



The tunnel portals at Woodhead during construction of the new tunnel which was opened in 1953 and as they are now with the two single-bore tunnels sealed off and the 'new' tunnel in use by the National Grid.
photos: Paul White and Eric Latusek

Welcome to the following new members

Mr J.C.Marsh, Brighouse, West Yorkshire
Ms D.J.Day, Milton Keynes, Bucks

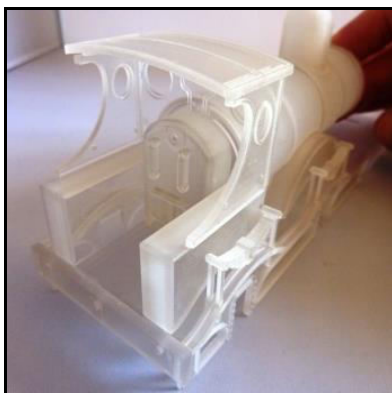
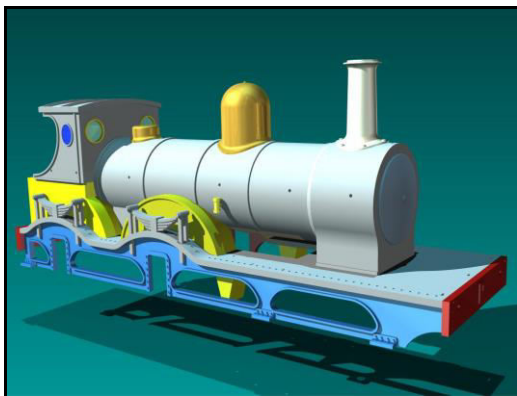
Mr I.Strachan, Gotherington, Gloucestershire

Modellers' corner by Tony West

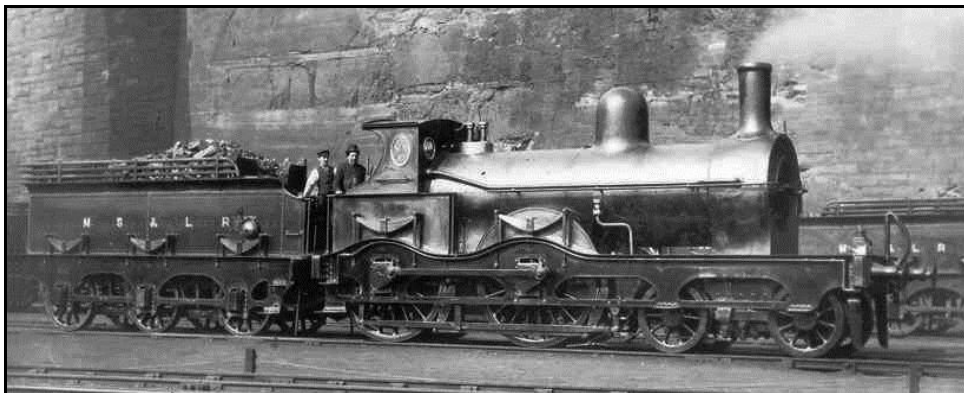
Earlier this year I was invited by Andrew David to help man the society stand at Railex, a show in Aylesbury held on the last weekend in May. Now Railex has a growing reputation as a first class show renowned for the quality of the layouts attending and I must confess to my shame that I'd yet to visit. The warm welcome extended to me by Andrew and his helpers set the tone for a day that I thoroughly enjoyed, so a huge thank you to Andrew for educating this sinner in the previous error of his ways. It was a cracking little show with a very friendly atmosphere and some very high quality of layouts on show, well worth a visit.

News from darkest Cornwall! Quanton Road Models can now supply etches for the GC large cattle van, comprising name, number and tonnage plates. Please enquire for price and availability (01566 880157).

Now for something a little different and hopefully a little special. A while ago a certain Mr Mills expressed an interest in the possibility of obtaining a Sacré 6B in 0 gauge and then it all went very quiet. Now we know why! Steve decided to approach someone regarding the possibility of producing a 'kit' using the new and emerging technology of acrylic 3D printing. So far only a couple of test pieces have been produced but if all goes well the possibilities are endless. I should point out that this is just to obtain a set of parts as a scratch aid and the necessary parts for frames, bogie and rods will still have to be sourced - a couple of lines of enquiry are currently being explored.



The computer image on the left and the result of 3D printing of parts for a Sacré 6B on the right. An example of the real thing is shown below - MS&LR class 6B 4-4-0 no.442 at Brunswick shed.



Great Central Great War heroes - Part 10: Jointly employed and jointly mourned

by Ken Grainger

'Great Central Great War Heroes - Part 9' was dedicated to the enginemens of the Cheshire Lines but, it would appear, joint line railwaymen's employment status was hardly consistent. Some joint line railwaymen were apparently jointly employed by the owning companies, others by just one of them or, it seems, on the Great Central's lines in to London, jointly owned with the Metropolitan or Great Western. Whichever, all were equally likely to be called upon to meet the Great War's insatiable demand for men.

The first fatality from the Met/GC Joint was Lance Sergeant Arthur John Westall of the 1st Royal Berkshire (6th Brigade, 2nd Division), formerly an Aylesbury porter. In the Battle of Loos, 2nd Division were on the left, attacking along the La Basse Canal and intended to provide a northern flank. They made no progress at all and suffered terrible casualties including, on September 28th 1915, Arthur Westall who has no known grave and is commemorated on Panel 93-95 of the Loos Memorial. 20 year old Willesden born Lance Corporal George Frederick Stilton was also from Aylesbury, formerly a cleaner at Aylesbury Loco., but is not listed on the Metropolitan Railway Memorial. The son of Mrs. Hannah Stilton of 23 Railway Street, he enlisted in the 6th Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (43rd Brigade, 14th (Light) Division). He died on January 13th 1916 but his was one of many battlefield burials brought in to the New Irish Farm Cemetery, northeast of Ypres, after the Armistice, Grave VI.D.13.

Two Met/GC Joint casualties might well have been friends - they would certainly have known each other. Both had been employed in the Traffic Dept. at Harrow; both served in the 17th (Poplar and Stepney Rifles) Battalion, County of London Regiment, 141st Brigade, 47th (1/2nd London) Division - and both died on the Somme. Rifleman William T. Harding died on July 18th 1916 and lies in Grave I.G.3 of the Bois-de-Noulette British Cemetery, Aix-Noulette. Corporal N.J. Hucker was the 19 year old son of William and Jane Hucker of 43 Greenford Road, Harrow. He died on September 28th 1916 in the latter stages of the Battle of Morval as 141st Brigade relieved 1st Division and, at the second attempt, pushed the Germans back beyond their Flers Switch Line. After the Armistice, Corporal Hucker's battlefield burial was brought in to Grave IX.N.1 of the Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, Mametz.



Corporal Henry Roland Wheeler.
photo: Bucks Herald

Another victim of the Somme was Corporal Henry Roland Wheeler (MM) of the 11th Royal Fusiliers, 54th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division. He was the son of George Cherry and Louisa Cherry Wheeler of Quainton and had formerly been a relief porter at Quainton Road. He had been awarded his Military Medal for bravery and devotion to duty only a fortnight before being killed in 18th Division's September 26th 1916 attack on Thiepval. The 54th Brigade's 12th Middlesex went through the village, with 11th Royal Fusiliers working along the German front system and 'mopping up' for the 12th Middx., involving hard fighting in the trenches and dugouts. By 2.30pm all but the extreme north west corner of the village had been taken. Henry Wheeler has no known grave and is commemorated on Pier and Face 8C, 9A and 16A of the Thiepval Memorial.

Former Stoke Mandeville relief porter Private Stanley George Biswell, the 21 year old son of George and Mary Jane Biswell of 6 Elmbrook

Cottages, Frederick Street, Waddesden, Aylesbury, died on July 6th 1917 serving with the 2nd Grenadier Guards. After the Armistice he was brought from the Boesinghe Chateau Grounds Cemetery to lie in Ypres' Artillery Wood Cemetery, created by the Guards Division after the Battle of Pilckem Ridge. Stanley Biswell's Grave VI.D.16 indicates its later date by describing his rank as "Guardisman" - which didn't replace "Private" within Guards regiments until 1920.

Lance Corporal Edwin Ryder, the 21 year old son of Daniel and Fanny Elizabeth Ryder of 1 Meadstone Cottages, Chorley Wood, Herts., and formerly of the Traffic Dept., Rickmansworth, served with the 1st Hertfordshire, 118th Brigade, 39th Division. He fell in the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, the July 31st 1917 opening of Third Ypres, in which 118th Brigade attacked through Kitchener's Wood, across the Steenbeek and through St.Julien. However the Hertfordshires were cut down by machine gun fire and the Brigade was forced back to the bank of the Steenbeek by heavy counter attacks. Edwin Ryder has no known grave and is commemorated on Panel 54 and 56 of the Menin Gate Memorial.

Former Stoke Mandeville porter, Private Herbert Dennis Rolfe, 20 year old son of Arthur and Mary White (nee Rolfe) of Brill died serving with the 2nd Royal Berkshire (25th Brigade 8th Division). As Third Ypres raged on, he was killed in 2nd Royal Berks' August 16th 1917 4.45am attack north of the Westhoek-Zonnebeke road. The

battalion advanced across the Hanebeek and, despite intense machine gun fire from Nonne Boschen and Polygon Wood, secured most of the Iron Cross Redoubt and repulsed a number of counter attacks. Their position, though, was untenably exposed and they had to fall back across the Hanebeek, finishing up only 200 yards in advance of their start point. After the Armistice, Herbert Rolfe's battlefield grave was brought in to Grave V.F.9 of the Hooge Crater Cemetery, Ypres.

August 16th 1917 was also the date on which Corporal Walter Arthur Horsler, 1/1st Buckinghamshire Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, 145th Brigade, 48th (South Midland) Division died. Formerly a parcels clerk at Aylesbury, Walter Horsler fell at the outset of the Battle of Langemarck, a phase of Third Ypres, in which 48th Division successfully attacked on either side of the St. Julien-Winnipeg road, capturing Border House and St.Julien in the face of heavy machine gun fire, then repulsing repeated counter attacks. He has no known grave and is commemorated on Panels 96-98 of the Tyne Cot Memorial.

2nd Lieutenant Albert Edward Hamilton of the 26th Royal Fusiliers (124th Brigade, 41st Division) had enlisted in the Middlesex Regiment as a Private, his commission was gazetted on March 1st 1917. His division was out of the line after being relieved on

HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT	
LIEUT. COLONEL	CORPORAL
PAGE F. D. S. O. & BAR	BILBY J. E.
CAPTAIN	
HEAD B. W.	BOARDMAN A. I.
LQWRY S. H. M. C.	BREEZE F. W.
MILNE A. R.	GOLDEN F.
LIEUTENANT	
KING S.	IZZARD E. W.
LAKE F. G.	SEWELL J. H.
MACINTOSH E.	TAYLOR J. E. M. M.
LANCE CORPORAL	
SECOND LIEUT.	BROOKS J. J.
SECRETAN R. H.	CLARKE H. B.
SERJEANT	
CALLOW G. M. M.	COE J. J.
GARROD H. G.	COOPER W. J.
GLADDING J. W. D. C. M.	DRAPER S. E.
HAMMOND H. J.	HALL J.
PAYNE W. J.	HUGHES T. A.
RAND S.	LINGE R. E. M. M.
REYNOLDS G. A. M. M.	MAYER W. H.
LANCE SERJEANT	
WHITMAN A.	RYDER E.
PRIVATE	
	SAUNDERS A.
	SKINNER J. A.
	SMITH A. W.
	SOMERVILLE U. L. F.
	ALLWOOD J. R.

The name of Lance Corporal Edwin Ryder on panel 54 of the Menin Gate memorial.

photo: International War Graves Photography Project.

August 15th but Albert Hamilton was killed in an air raid on August 18th 1917. After initially being buried in the Royal West Surrey Cemetery, after the Armistice he was reburied in Grave II.D.1 of the Bertenacre Military Cemetery, Fletre (near Hazebrouk). Formerly a clerk at Wendover, Albert Hamilton was the 23 year old son of Mary Morgan (formerly Hamilton) and the late Guy Hamilton, and the husband of Selina May Hamilton of 27 Priory Park Road, Kilburn, London. He had joined the Great Central in June 1910 and was for several years in the Station Superintendent's Office, Marylebone, before transferring to Wendover.

Company Quarter Master Sergeant Clifford Baldwin, the 23 year old son of Albert and Mary M. Baldwin of 113 West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe, had been a Traffic Dept. clerk at Aylesbury before joining 16th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, part of 117th Brigade, 39th Division, which was continually engaged throughout Third Ypres. Clifford Baldwin died on August 29th 1917 and lies in the La Clytte Military Cemetery (Ypres), Grave II.C.3.

Private Thomas Craft of the 7th Northamptonshire (73rd Brigade, 24th Division) had formerly been a porter at Harrow. The 24th Division suffered heavy losses during the August 1917 Battle of Langemarck but exactly when Thomas Craft became a casualty is not known. At least tended by caring hands, he died of his wounds on September 2nd 1917 and is buried in the Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Grave VIII.I.24.

'Operation Michael' launched Germany's 1918 Spring offensive, the *kaiserschlacht*, on March 21st 1918. Amongst the British dead, even by Great War standards, the proportion with no known grave was extremely high, as the fallen were consigned to mass graves by the advancing enemy. The dead of that catastrophic day included Private Stanley George Norton, serving with 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (5th Brigade, 2nd Division). He is commemorated on Panel 50 and 51 of the Pozieres Memorial. Formerly of the Traffic Dept. at Aylesbury on the Met/GC Joint, but of course also connected to the GW/GC Joint by the branch wandering up from Princes Risborough, Stanley Norton is unique in being commemorated on each of the Great Central, the Metropolitan and the Great Western memorials. By June 1st 1918 the German offensive was all but exhausted, failing with enormous casualties but still exacting a high price, including Corporal Cyril Montague Hodgkison of the 1st Royal Berkshire. The 22 year old son of William and Elizabeth M. Hodgkison of 9 Kirtle Road, Chesham, and formerly with the Traffic Dept. at Chesham, Cyril Hodgkison ('Hodgkinson' on the Metropolitan Memorial) lies in the Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery, Saulty, Grave XI.C.8.

Private Reuben Samuel Newth, who had also been with the Traffic Dept. at Chesham, was the 19 year old son of Adrian and Emma Newth of 'The Firs', Bisley, Surrey, and brother of Lewis E. Newth. He was in the strength of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent but posted to 1/20th (Blackheath and Woolwich) Battalion, London Regiment, part of 141st Brigade, 47th (2nd London) Division, fighting alongside the Australian Corps in Rawlinson's Fourth Army. Reuben Newth fell on August 23rd 1918 in the capture of Chuignes culmination of the Second Battle of Albert which presaged the final advance to victory. He lies in Beacon Cemetery, Sailly-Laurette (near Albert) Grave III. J.16.

Formerly with the Traffic Dept. at Rickmansworth, signaller Frank William Chapman was the stepson of Mrs Clara A. Chapman of 5 Station Road, Rickmansworth. Nominally on the muster of the Hertfordshire Regiment he had been posted to the 4th Bedfordshire, 190th Brigade, 63rd (Royal Naval) Division, another heavily engaged in the final advance. He died on August 26th 1918 and is commemorated on Panel 10 of the Vis-en-Artois Memorial to over 9,000 British soldiers who died in Picardy and Artois after August 8th and have no known grave.

30 year Corporal Charles Swansbury (MM), formerly with the Traffic Dept. at Harrow, appears on the GC Memorial with the initial 'F', possibly confused with his brother, Frank, who died only three weeks before him on August 11th serving with the 7th Queen's

Own Royal West Kents. Goodness knows how their parents, James and Eliza Swansbury of 38 West Street, Harrow-on-the Hill, were able to cope when they heard that Charles too had died, serving with the 1/2nd London (Royal Fusiliers) on September 4th 1918. The husband of Rose Howarth (formerly Swansbury) of 27 Wordsworth Road, Wealdstone, Harrow and yet another with no known grave, he is commemorated on Panel 3 of the Ploegsteert Memorial.

18 year old Private John William Dawson was the Grimsby born son of John William and Barbara Clark Dawson of 59 Bicester Road, Aylesbury. Formerly with the Traffic Dept. at Stoke Mandeville, he served with the 2nd Hampshire (88th Brigade, 29th Division), which was continuously engaged in the final advance in Flanders. He died of wounds on October 17th 1918 but his burial in Grave IV.G.19 of the Duhallow ADS Cemetery (north of Ypres), which was used by local Casualty Clearing Stations, implies his wounds had only just been inflicted – probably in 29th Division's involvement in the Battle of Courtrai which commenced on October 14th.

One final Met/GC Joint casualty was 30 year old Gunner Arthur Thomas Spittles, of the 3rd Reserve Brigade, Royal Field Artillery and formerly with the Engineering Dept. at Aylesbury. He didn't die until after the Armistice, which could be the reason he does not appear on the Metropolitan Memorial, or it might be that, serving with a Reserve Brigade, he possibly never saw active service and may have been omitted by the Metropolitan for that reason. He died at home on November 29th 1918, though whether from illness or injury has not been established. He lies in the south-eastern part of St. Mary the Virgin's churchyard in Stoke Mandeville, where at least his grave could be tended by his parents, Edwin and Betsy Spittles of Stoke Mandeville.

Apart from Arthur Spittles, who the Metropolitan might possibly have not considered to be a war casualty, and George Stilton who, as a cleaner at Aylesbury Loco., could have been solely a Great Central employee, all those named are honoured on the Metropolitan Memorial as well as on the Great Central. As already noted, Stanley Norton appears on that of the Great Western as well, but the commemoration of the fallen from the Great Western and Great Central Joint is something of a conundrum.

2nd Lieutenant Herbert Coles, the 19 year old son of Frank and Gertrude Edith Coles of 22 Roberts Road, High Wycombe, had been a Goods Dept. clerk at High Wycombe before joining the Artists Rifles – at the time effectively an officer training corps - on attaining the age of 18. He was commissioned in 'A' Co. of the 2nd Battalion., the Rifle Brigade (25th Brigade, 8th Division) serving with whom, in the consolidation of the gains from the Battle of Passchendaele, he was killed on November 18th 1917. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial's Panel 145-147.

Also from High Wycombe, where he had formerly been a porter, Sergeant Edwin Pocock was the 22 year old son of Edwin and Amelia Pocock of White Waltham, Berks. and



*2nd Lieutenant Herbert Coles.
photo: Peter Underwood*

the husband of Louisa S. Pocock of 259 Desborough Road, High Wycombe. He served in 'A' Co., 2/4th Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, 184th Brigade, 61st (2nd South Midland) Division. At the launch of the German Spring offensive on March 21st 1918, 61st Division was holding the forward zone of defences north west of St. Quentin around Ham, where it withstood the attacks of three German divisions, not retiring until ordered to do so to maintain contact with neighbouring units, then over the next ten days fighting a successful withdrawal across the Somme. Edwin Pocock died on March 21st 1918 but had to wait until the creation, after the Armistice, of the Chapelle British Cemetery, Holnon (west of St. Quentin) to find his final resting place in Grave III.E.7.

Herbert Coles and Edwin Pocock are honoured on both the Great Central and Great Western memorials, but for whatever reason Private Frederick George Wright, a Signalling Dept. lineman from High Wycombe, is not listed on the Great Central memorial, just the Great Western's. The 23 year old son of George and Mary Ann Wright of Widmer End, High Wycombe, died serving with the 5th Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire on June 22nd 1915 and is commemorated on Panel 37 and 39 of the Menin Gate Memorial.

Both the Great Central and the Great Western memorials commemorate Private James Humphrey ('Humphreys' on the Great Western memorial), the 19 year old son of the late James and Annie Humphrey of 'The Star', Church Street, Princes Risborough and formerly a porter at Princes Risborough. Serving in the 3rd Grenadier Guards (2nd Guards Brigade, Guards Division), James Humphrey was another victim of the *kaiserschlacht* Spring offensive, on March 30th 1918, though by then, with massive losses amongst their elite storm troopers, the German offensive was rapidly losing its strength. He is commemorated on Bay 1 of the Arras Memorial.

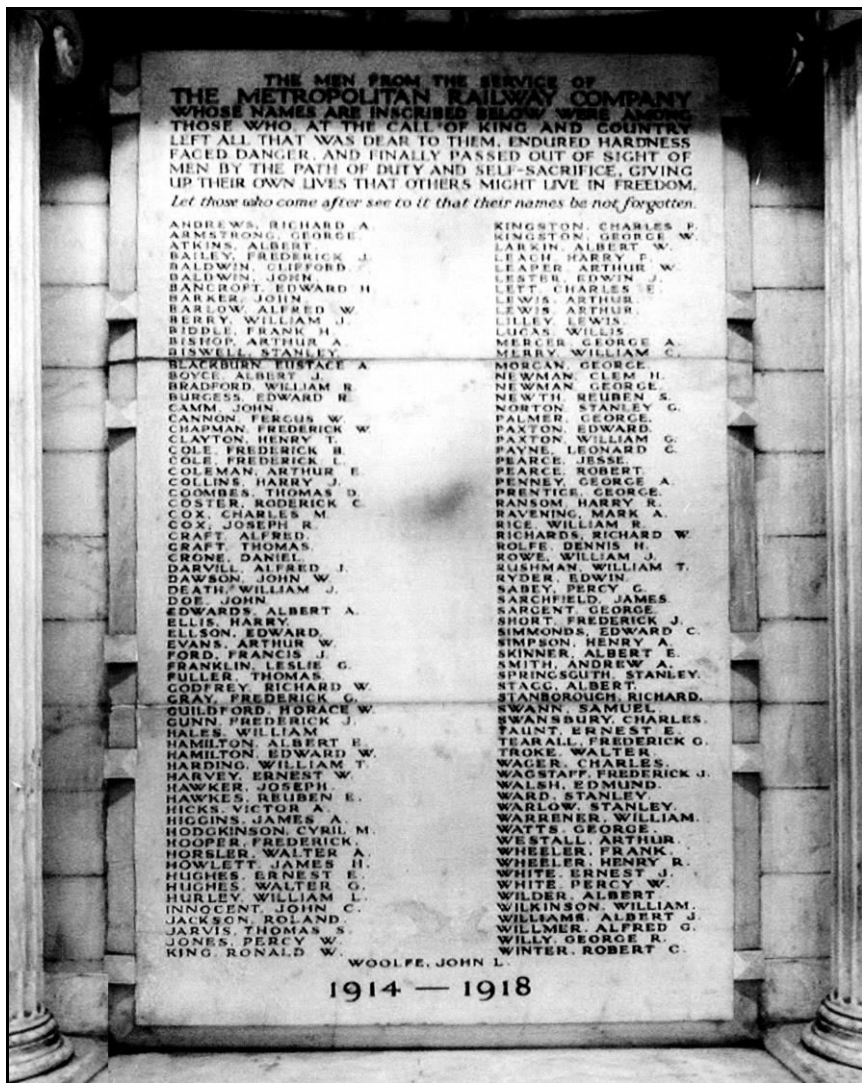
James Humphrey is the only casualty from Princes Risborough commemorated on the Great Central memorial, but the Great Western memorial includes three others. Firstly, 32 year old former carriage examiner, Private Charles John Jennings of the 4th Royal Fusiliers who died on June 6th 1916 and lies in the Dickebusch New Military Cemetery, Ypres. He was the son of George and Eleanor Jennings of 50 Wood Street, Heath, Wolverhampton and the husband of Gertrude Lily Hutt (formerly Jennings, nee Sherman) of 8 Field Road, Forest Gate, London. And then there is 22 year old Private Frank Keen of the 6th Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, formerly a bricklayer at Princes Risborough, who died on October 9th 1916 and is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial. Finally there is 33 year old Gunner George Dormer, formerly of the Traffic Dept. at Princes Risborough, who died of wounds on September 6th 1918 serving with 'D' Battery, 78th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. The son of Joseph and Emma Dormer of Loosley Row, and the husband of Ethel Leah Dormer of Parkfield, Princes Risborough, he lies in the Lebucquiere Communal Cemetery Extension, Bapaume.

Both the Great Central and the Great Western memorials commemorate Bombardier Frank Arthur Richardson, formerly of the Traffic Dept. at Gerrards Cross, who served with 'D' Battery, 175th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. The 32 year old son of James and Susan Richardson of Back Street, Tingewick and the husband of Emma Agnes Richardson of 59 Central Road, Fosse Road North, Leicester, he died of wounds on June 7th 1917 and lies in Estaires Communal Cemetery Extension, Grave IV.C.4.

The mystery of by which company the fallen of the GW/GC Joint were to be commemorated is compounded by there being two names, both from Haddenham, who are commemorated on the Great Central memorial but not the Great Western. Even more mystifying, both were from the Engineering Dept. and, whilst it is quite feasible that staff from some departments – such as Locomotive, Carriage & Wagon - might be employed by just one of the owning companies, it would seem logical that track maintenance should be a joint responsibility. 35 year old Private William John Rush, the son of David and Caroline Rush of Back Way, Haddenham and husband of Mary Ann Rush of 8 Rydes Hill, Stoughton, Guildford, Surrey had been a sub-ganger at

Haddenham. He died serving with the 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (5th Brigade, 2nd Division) on September 25th 1915. He was one of the very many casualties suffered by 5th Brigade in their failed attack along the north bank of the La Bassee Canal in the Battle of Loos. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial Panels 83-85. The other Haddenham Engineering Dept. casualty was 40 year old Corporal Joseph White of the 1st Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. He was the son of Charlotte Saw and stepson of Nathan Saw of Flint Street, Haddenham. The 1st Ox. and Bucks. were part of the force besieged in Kut al Amara in Mesopotamia, as Iraq was then known. Joseph White died of wounds on 7th April 1916 and lies far from home in the Amara War Cemetery, Iraq, Grave XXII.F.11.

Whether on the Great Central, the Metropolitan or the Great Western memorial, or whatever combination of them, their names liveth for evermore.



The Metropolitan Railway memorial at Baker Street.

The restoration of the GCR 6-wheel carriage no.946 by Clyde Pennington of the GCR Rolling Stock Trust

After a 15-year painstaking rebuild, the Victorian 6-wheel railway carriage no.946 has re-emerged in the workshops of the GCR (Nottingham) at Ruddington. Having been ripped apart by British Railways at their Stratford Works to become a tube store, then involved in a very damaging shunt by over-enthusiastic Territorial Army reservists on exercise, and then standing outside on a farm in Cambridgeshire, the GCR Rolling Stock Trust's restoration team faced a massive challenge.

Today, the 50-seat carriage, built 127 years ago at Gorton by the MS&LR, has been meticulously rebuilt, under-coated, sanded down and ready for its final transformation – the application of the striking but short lived French Grey and Dark Oak livery that launched the rebranded Great Central Railway in 1897, prior to the opening of the London Extension from Nottingham to London in 1899.

This is a staggering achievement considering the state of the vehicle when first taken in hand by the GCR Rolling Stock Trust in 1998. It was very hard to know where to start, with so much rotten woodwork and rust-eaten metalwork. Our team, led by Anthony Keeble and Pat Sumner, both with long careers with British Railways, stripped the body to the basics to quantify the repairs and reconstruction needed. It is their utter tenacity, and determination that has brought together the skills needed to transform this one-time wreck into a highly attractive vintage railway carriage.

Major works included new bracing of the side panels, replacing the massive but broken transverse leaf spring that give spring to the buffers, rebuilding ten doors, a splicing of new timber chassis members, replacement of all the internal and external panelling and a careful removal of rust, rot and detritus. Then the detailed fitting out commenced with new brass castings and machined parts, and a host of other vital details followed to restore or accurately replicate the originals. Every effort has been made to preserve and retain original material where possible.

Already the coach has been filmed at Ruddington by a television crew as part of a BBC2 Scotland documentary on the Quintinshill disaster of 22nd May 1915. It is hoped that no.946 will be able to visit other heritage centres around the country where appropriate use can be made of it.

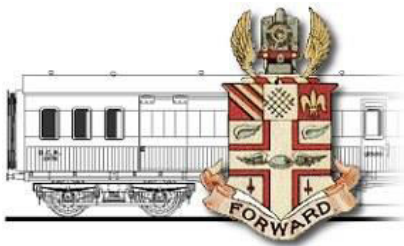
The Trust is currently applying to the Arts Council PRISM fund for financial assistance in delivering the top coats and museum-quality finish, enabling the classic vehicle to compete for space in the proposed National Railway Museum outstation on the Great Central Railway at Leicester North, the subject of a Heritage lottery bid by NRM, City of Leicester and the GCR PLC for the £15 million project.

The Trust aims to mark the entry of no.946 into passenger carrying service at Ruddington in September this year, assuming the final touches and fitness to run exams are completed to everyone's satisfaction.

The carriage is available for inspection during normal operating times of the GCR (Nottingham) at Ruddington, Nottingham NG11 6NX.

We are now looking to the future for our next project. It could be the abandoned GCR Suburban 1905 carriage now residing at Swithland sidings!

For more information about the **GCR Rolling Stock Trust** please visit the website at www.gcr-rollingstocktrust.co.uk or contact Clyde Pennington (tel: 0115 9816726, e-mail: clyde.pennington@live.co.uk.)





*above: In the early days of restoration the work was carried out on no.946 in the open at Ruddington
photo: Richard Tilden-Smith*

*below: Today, new lighting has been installed (left) and Clyde Pennington tests the cushions in
appropriate period costume (right).
photos: Clyde Pennington*





No.946 in grey primer (above) and receiving its first coats of brown and grey (below).
photos: Clyde Pennington



Nottingham Express Transit (NET) and the Great Central by David Pearce

Hindsight is a fickle creature – a blessing and a curse. A blessing, perhaps, for lessons learnt from the mistakes of the past, but the curse of lost opportunities and lack of foresight. Railway history is bedevilled with it and everyone who has any remote interest will have a view on what constitutes the blessing or the curse. Some views will be well informed, others simply armchair wisdom based on circumstantial hearsay or, more likely, an emotional response to 'mending something that ain't broke'!

In common with many cities across the land, Nottingham has seen vast changes to its fabric and layout over the last fifty years. In many respects it has always been a city in transition reflecting the changing faces of its industrial heritage. This, in turn, has been echoed in the way transport has been organised for its populace. Who would have thought that when the electric trams that ran along Wilford Road were replaced by trolleybuses under the auspices of Nottingham Corporation, subsequently withdrawn in favour of motorised omnibuses, that trams would, once again, reach out to Wilford from the city centre? OK, it's a fairly thinly veiled analogy as Wilford Road, in its original form, hardly exists anymore, and the tram route now runs along Queen's Drive. But then in those days the trams terminated at the river and never actually reached Wilford! Anyone returning from a significant period away from Nottingham will search in vain for any familiar landmarks, particularly in the Meadows, that tract of land 'twixt city and river populated by the back-to-backs of Dickens and Lawrence – from cul-de-sac to dual carriageway, with little boxes ensnared, in the space of a generation. Such is progress!

When the city fathers decided to tear down Nottingham Victoria station in 1967 in favour of the inevitable shopping mall and concrete tower blocks there was a flicker of foresight. That it was blown out as quickly as it was lit is probably as much down to the prevailing winds of a pruned and rationalised rail network as it was to an attitude problem with any form of integrated transport system. What am I talking about? Well, anyone viewing the hole that was left by the demolition contractors from the safety of Parliament Street or Glasshouse Street in 1968 could not have failed to notice a couple of tracks meandering round the east side of the site. If you were lucky you might even get to see the odd goods train sneaking through; the last shout of a former freight artery. And the flicker of foresight? Simply that the plans for the new Victoria Centre allowed for space to be left for these tracks to maintain the 'permanent' way, at least, on a temporary basis.



After the demolition of Nottingham Victoria in April 1968.

photo: Author's collection

Ironically, even after the flicker had been snuffed out and the tracks removed, the tunnel to the south of the old station, sometimes known as Thurland Street or Victoria Street tunnel, continued to serve a dual purpose. The pipes that supplied heating and services to the new development shared space with a single track that served as a headshunt. It linked the remaining stub of the former Great Central main line at this end with the rest of the rail network. True, there was another link at Leicester, installed in 1965, and another constructed at Loughborough in 1974, but what could have been an opportunity for an integral north-south city rail link, local and convenient to the city centre, was seen as not worth pandering to. Perhaps it wasn't the fashion in those dark days.

Anyway, it didn't stop there. The Loughborough link was put in to serve the remaining freight generated by gypsum in and around Rushcliffe and East Leake together with the Ordnance Depot at Ruddington. Thus, the line north of Ruddington to Nottingham, hitherto utilised by one or two trains a day on weekdays from the middle of 1969, could be dispensed with – all part of the plan! But it's the infrastructure that was left behind in 1974 that irks and feeds the insatiable appetite of hindsight.

Why? The answer lies in the developments that took place over the next forty years. Seen through chronological eyes some of the decisions seem puzzling, maybe even nonsensical, particularly when any attempt is made to reconcile the logic behind the relationship between demolition and construction. The section of trackbed from Nottingham to Ruddington is a classic example of this sad and perplexing conundrum.

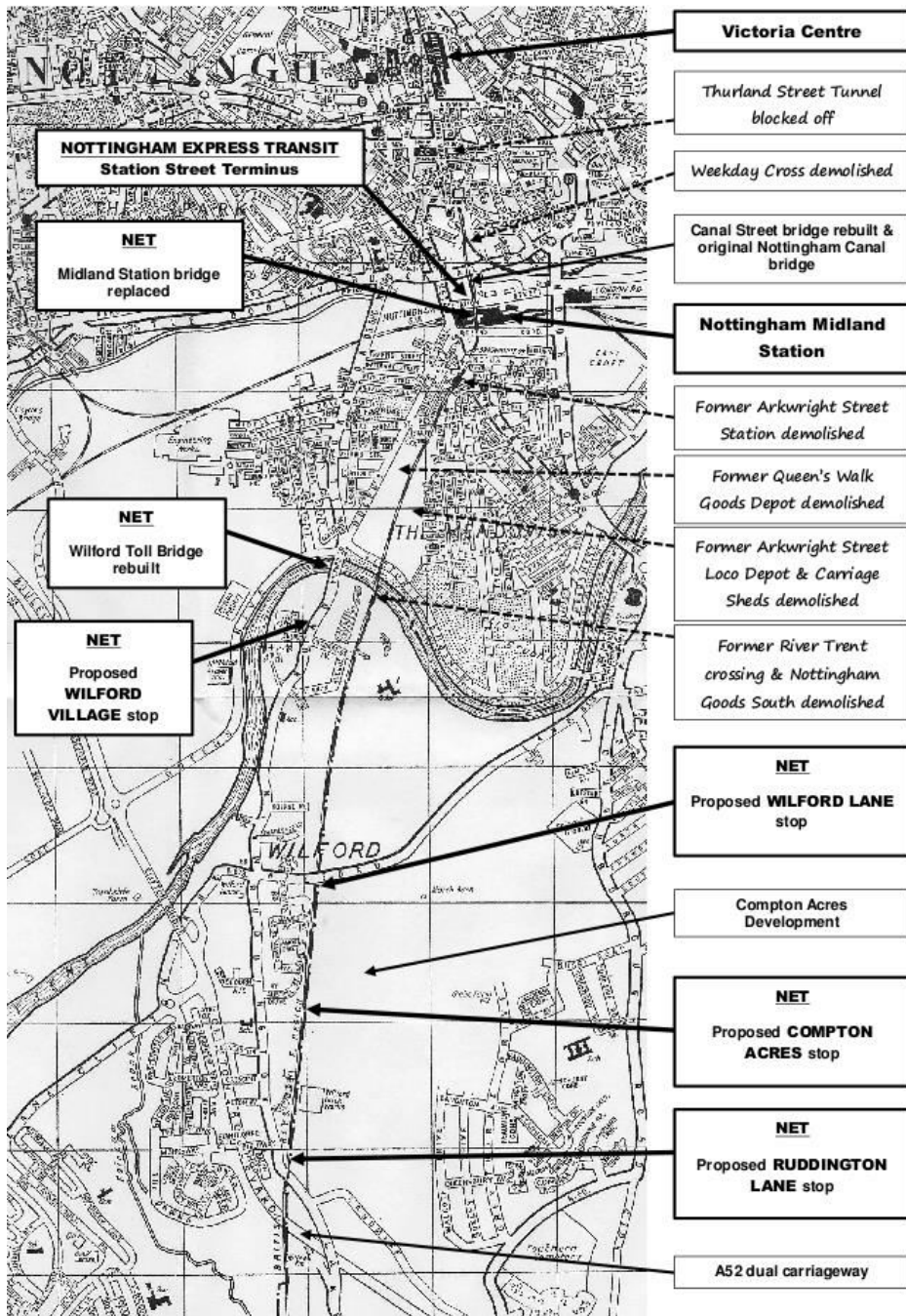
Back at Thurland Street tunnel in 1975 the heating pipes continued to take the edge off the chill so redolent of tunnels since time immemorial. Out on the blue brick viaduct above Broad Marsh the weeds were taking hold and rust was eating its way through the flaking grey paintwork on the mighty girder bridge that spanned Midland Station. As if dragged down by the 'hell for leather' desire to redevelop the Meadows area the viaduct over Arkwright Street, the station, and the remaining 20 odd arches, were all in the process of demolition in common with those back-to-backs that so offended the city fathers. The incongruity of the boxes that now form the housing development on the site of Queen's Walk Goods Depot would contrast markedly with the twin girders that carried the line over the Trent, onwards on embankments to a less cluttered prospect, less trammelled by developers, give or take the odd bridge.

By the end of 1980 the girder bridge at Midland Station was no more, and five years later the bridges over the Trent also disappeared. Is it too much to speculate that Nottingham had become ashamed of its legacy of remaining vestiges that constituted the last great main line to London? The developments of the next thirty years are as perplexing as they are whimsical, fuelling speculation that, somewhere along the line, thinking was not as joined up as perhaps it ought to have been.

Nineteen years after the twin girder bridges over the river had been removed the trams returned to Nottingham. What goes around comes around – the culmination in March 2004 of something like sixteen years of planning and building but, nonetheless, a very welcome return. Nottingham Express Transit (NET) is clearly going places, a deserved success from the outset and clearly embraced by the people of Nottingham. What were we saying about an integral north-south city rail-link? Maybe the city fathers had some vision after all! So what's all this got to do with hindsight and the GC? Well, my dear Watson (or should that be Watkin?), 'tis back to infrastructure again!

The clarity of the NET route map owes much to Harry Beck, not to mention those elegant pocket Underground maps so ephemeral from their inception. Familiar names like Hucknall, Bulwell and Basford feature – didn't several ancient railway companies serve these communities in their time, ousted by the omnibus? The wholesale and, some would say, unseemly haste with which two of the three original companies were erased from the Leen Valley, namely the Great Central and Great Northern, obliterated their mortal remains in pursuit of an insatiable lust for land for housing and road

developments. Thankfully, by a quirk of fate and freight, the Robin Hood Line survived the holocaust and complements the NET to the north of the city. But, sadly, there's not much GC infrastructure evident there – landscaped into oblivion!



OK, so what of the tunnels – Thurland Street, Mansfield Road, Sherwood Rise and the hole that was Carrington? Blocked off but still extant and the hole filled in, putting paid to any notion of providing the Victoria Centre with a place on the NET map or, for that matter, a direct link to Midland Station, which makes the scene at Weekday Cross and the viaduct above Broad Marsh really rather fascinating if a little surprising. Where once there was one viaduct there is now another. It's at this point that the northbound trams veer away from the original GC alignment to climb up to Middle Pavement and over the hill to drop down towards Old Market Square. Why not under Thurland Street to the Victoria Centre? It would not have been unreasonable to expect the NET to utilise the old blue brick viaduct but this was replaced by a more open concrete design leading to a new bridge across Canal Street – less elegant, more utilitarian - graceful brick arches giving way to austere concrete columns. However, a small section of the old viaduct, and the last remaining, was retained across the Nottingham Canal almost to Station Street and the present temporary Station Street terminus.

So, having established and consolidated north-south tracks through the centre of the city, NET Phase 2 has even greater ambitions – to link the city to centres of population to the south and west, both across the river to Clifton, and west to Beeston. You can almost smell the ravenous breath of hindsight as the first challenge hoves into view. Once upon a time wasn't there a bridge across the Midland Station just here? Oh, I was forgetting – it was taken down as surplus to requirements – doh! So they put up another one, just like the first one – another incredible span. The Great Central engineers would have been most impressed.



The view from Broadmarsh car park on 4th October 2013 showing a NET tram making its way from Middle Hill onto the new viaduct that has replaced the GC structure.

But being a tram the NET drops down to street level beyond the station for a trundle through the Meadows along Queen's Drive as far as the Trent. Now there was much talk in the 1970s about utilising the Great Central's river crossing for road improvements, particularly as the neighbouring toll bridge at Wilford, privately owned until 1969, was no longer considered fit for purpose – the years and traffic having taken their own toll,

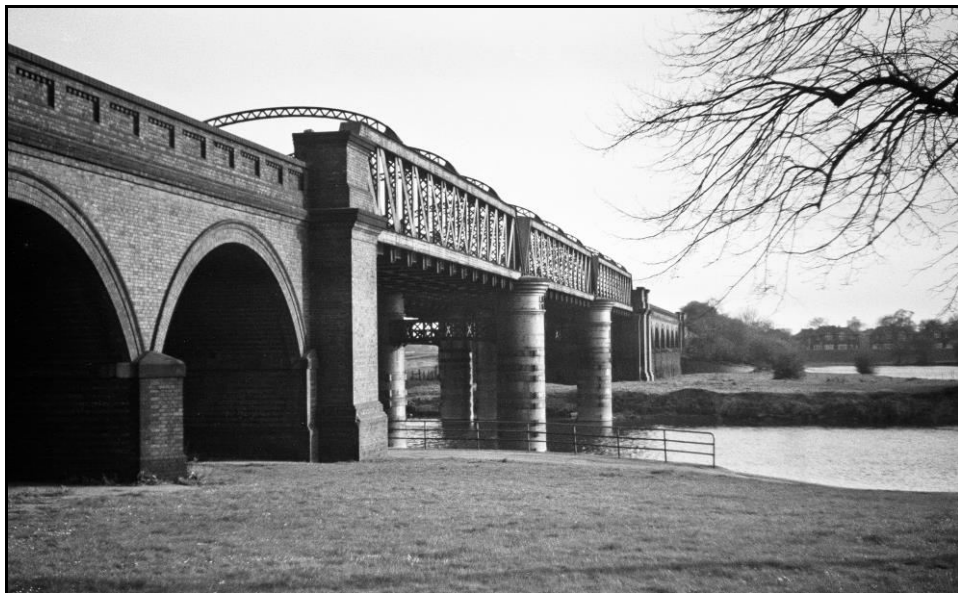


above: The 1973 view of the GC line crossing Canal Street as a Type 2 heads north with its train of vans. The platform canopies of Midland station are visible in the right background.

below: The 2013 view of the new Canal Street bridge. The surrounding landscape is almost unrecognizable from 1973 - even the one remaining building has undergone a metamorphosis.



so to speak! In only a matter of a few years during the 1960s the weight limit was gradually reduced to the point where, in 1974, it was only safe to carry pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised perambulators. Indeed they even replaced parts of it with a footbridge such was the decrepit state of the structure. So what on earth was the idea of dismantling the former GC railway bridge than ran alongside in 1985? Oh, of course – it was surplus to requirements – doh! Well, guess what – in 2014 the NET tracks began to creep towards the river, a time honoured major barrier to progress southwards. Enter a reconstructed toll bridge in the absence of a neighbouring purpose built railway bridge that disappeared nearly thirty years earlier.



above: The Great Central's crossing of the Trent looking south. The NET extension will be using a rebuilt Wilford toll bridge which is to the right of this view.

However, that's not quite the end of the infrastructure story as it happens. Once the NET crosses the river and serves Wilford Village it utilises none other than bits of the old GC's trackbed as far as the top of Ruddington Lane near, what was, the old Wilford brickworks, now an industrial estate. Should the tram offend the eyes and ears of the good people of the old part of Wilford, the GC embankment forms a 'natural' barrier, the tram route swinging round the east side of the former line as far as Wilford Lane.

Inevitably, where once there were fields and allotments to the east of the line, houses have sprung up at Compton Acres. Indeed, what is perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that on this section of former GC main line no fewer than three station/tramstops have been constructed, namely Wilford Lane, Compton Acres and Ruddington Lane. With daytime testing almost complete one wonders how many will spare a thought, as they bowl along in their smart new trams, that they are following in the tracks of the 'Master Cutler'! As the tram ducks under the A52 dual carriageway before swinging away towards Clifton, one might even speculate on whether their curiosity could be sufficiently aroused by the overgrown trackbed branching away toward Ruddington. Isn't there a transport heritage centre there? What if...?

Well, hindsight remains a fickle creature that has not served the Great Central well. It may even be that these reflections are just ramblings from an armchair. However, without being privy to the minutes of planning meetings, it is easy to see how an outside observer could be left with an impression of oversight and a lack of awareness of the



above: The view from the former Wilford toll bridge, now rebuilt with tram tracks. The remains of the brick abutment of the GC railway bridge can be seen on the steps of the river bank.

below: Looking north from Ruddington Lane tram stop along the GC alignment now followed by NET. Some locals are already making use of the tram stop shelter even though there are no trams.



assets under the noses of the planners. Is it, perhaps, wishful thinking that there might have been another visionary like Watkin sitting at the table? But then maybe the armchair ruminators of the past reflected on similar observations in 1898 – who knows?

Model railway exhibition diary

Some events that may interest our readers

Sat 5th & Sun 6th Sept: Soar Valley MRC at Loughborough Grammar School, Leicester Road, Loughborough LE11 2DU. www.svmrc.co.uk

Sat 5th & Sun 6th Sept: The Gauge 0 Guild at The International Centre, St. Quentin's Gate, Telford TF3 4JH. www.gauge0guild.com

Sat 19th & Sun 20th Sept: Scalefour Society at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury.

Sat 10th & Sun 11th Oct: Caistorail at Caistor Town Hall, High Street, Caistor, Lincs.

Sat 10th & Sun 11th Oct: The Elizabethan Railway Society at The Summit Centre, Pavilion Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 7LL. www.elizabethanrailwaysociety.co.uk

Sat 17th & Sun 18th Oct: Warrington MRC at Warrington Collegiate, Winwick Road, Warrington, Cheshire WA2 8QA. www.warringtonmodelrail.co.uk

Sat. 24th Oct: Hinckley Carnival Committee at St Peter's RC Church Hall, Hinckley.

Sat 24th & Sun 25th Oct: Hazel Grove & District MRC at Hazel Grove Leisure Centre, Jacksons Lane, Hazel Grove, Cheshire SK7 5JX. www.hgdmrs.org.uk

Sat 31st Oct: Woodthorpe MRC at Sherwood Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG5 3FN. www.woodthorpemodelrailwayclub.co.uk

Sat 7th Nov: High Wycombe & District MRC at Cressex Community School, Cressex Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 4UD. www.hwdmrs.org.uk

Sat 7th Nov: St Peter's Church at Woodshawe Rise, Leicester LE3 1RH.

Sat 14th & Sun 15th Nov: Bassetlaw Railway Society at Retford Town Hall, Market Square, Retford, Notts DN22 6DQ. www.bnnrs.net

Sat 21st & Sun 22nd Nov: Scunthorpe & District MRC at Sunshine Hall, Ashby High Street, Scunthorpe, Lincs DN16 2ND.

Sat 28th & Sun 29th Nov: Warley MRC at the NEC, Birmingham B40 1NT. www.thewarleyshow.co.uk

Sat 5th & Sun 6th Dec: Manchester MRC at The Barnes Wallis Building, Altrincham Street, Manchester M1 7JR. www.mmrs.co.uk

The Gainsborough Model Railway, at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough DN21 1BE, is open to the public (1.30pm-6.00pm) on Sun 4th Oct and Sun 6th Dec.

Loose coupled

● From *The Sheffield Star* 'Down Memory Lane' page on 16th May 2015.

"Extensions to the Barnsley Tramway (1902 - 1930) were proposed and some powers obtained but were never carried out, for example, the extension from Worsborough Bridge to Hoyland was thwarted by the Great Central Railway not allowing the tramway to extend over a level crossing."

● The July 2015 issue of *British Railways Illustrated* has an interesting photo feature on the 1931 rebuilding of the Sheffield Road bridge over the GC at Tinsley.

● There was some confusion caused when obituaries appeared in the newspapers for John Bennett, who among other things, had worked on the restaurant cars out of Marylebone in the immediate post-war years. This was not the GCRS member who contributes regularly to *Forward*. I am pleased to say that our John Bennett is still alive (although perhaps not kicking!).

● In preparation for the opening of NET Phase 2 in Nottingham, the Station St terminus was closed on 26th July with services being extended to the new Nottingham Station stop on 27th July. Full opening is thought to be imminent but no date has yet been announced.

Some recent items from Great Central Railwayana Auctions

The next auctions will take place at Stoneleigh Park on 5th Sept. and 5th Dec. 2015.
See www.gcrauctions.com for further details.

		
<p>A Cheshire Lines silver pass No.27 in favour of H.A. Walker, Southern Railway. 1" diameter. Sold for £320.</p>	<p>A GCR Macclesfield silver plated, one pint gravy boat, by Walker and Hall. 9¼" across. Sold for £360.</p>	
		
<p>A ZEEBRUGGE nameplate from GCR class 11F 'Improved Director' 4-4-0 No 502 (LNER D11 5502 and BR D11 62666). Cast brass, 43" long. Sold for £9,000.</p>		
		
<p>A cap band worn by staff on GCR ships. 36" long. Sold for £110.</p>	<p>A pair of MS&LR silver plated cake tongs in a decorative style. 9" long. Sold for £240.</p>	
		
<p>A worksplate from the Yorkshire Engine Co. at Meadow Hall, Sheffield. Works no.823, built in 1905, was GCR class 9J 0-6-0 no.1081. Sold for £700.</p>	<p>A worksplate from the GCR Gorton Works, Manchester, 1923. Sold for £500. <i>(See letter from Dave Cousins on p40.)</i></p>	<p>A worksplate from Beyer Peacock, Manchester, 1908. The back is marked 69902, the BR number for a class S1 0-8-4T built in 1908 as GCR class 8H no.1172. Sold for £660.</p>

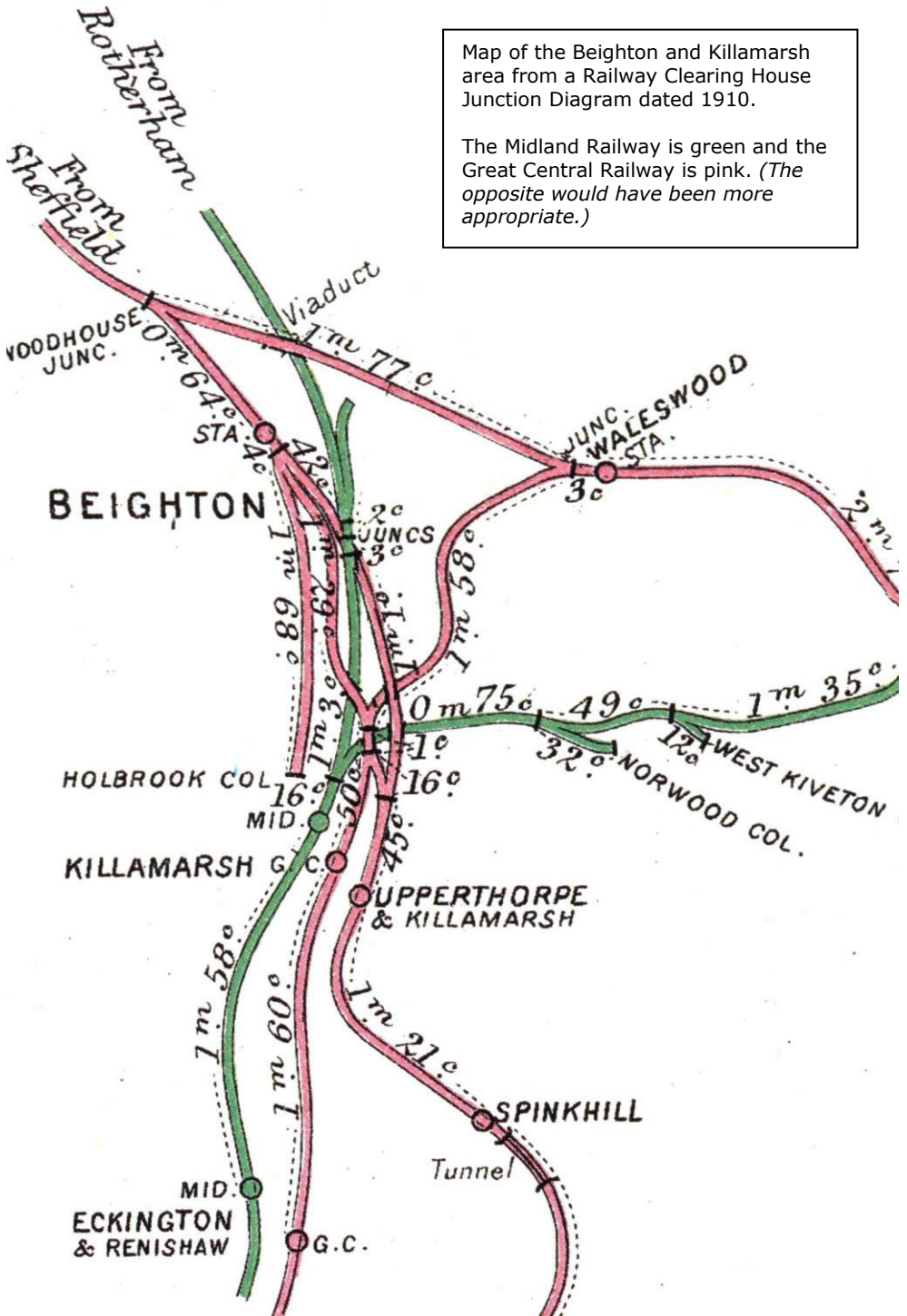


"Rother Valley Renaissance." The valley of the River Rother to the east of Sheffield was once a train watcher's paradise. This view was taken between Beighton and Killamarsh, close to the girder bridge (*still in situ!*) that took the Great Central line (left) over the Midland line (centre). The embankment on the right carried the Beighton Branch of the Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Railway. Class O1 2-8-0 no.63646 heads south along the GC line with a van train and is about to cross the Midland. The train is passing under Meadow Lane bridge. This narrow country lane also crossed the Midland and then passed under the LD&ECR. The bridge over the GC has now gone but the other two bridges remain with this fragment of Meadow Lane now serving as a popular access point into Rother Valley Country Park. The Orgreave/Treeton complex of coal mines and associated industries is visible in the distance.

The photo is taken from a slide in Keith Partlow's collection. The photographer is unknown.

Map of the Beighton and Killamarsh area from a Railway Clearing House Junction Diagram dated 1910.

The Midland Railway is green and the Great Central Railway is pink. (The opposite would have been more appropriate.)



The Killamarsh tangle

by Ron Gee

The village of Killamarsh lies next to the River Rother in the northeast corner of Derbyshire. The Rother occasionally overflows its banks, hence much of the village is built on the surrounding hills, which enables most housing to escape the floods. The district is rich in seams of coal. Thus the mining and transportation of coal is the *raison d'être* for six of the seven lines which form a tangle in the flood plain of the Rother between Killamarsh and Beighton, the next village to the north. To the west of the tangle lies the city of Sheffield, famous for the manufacture of steel. Northwards along the Rother Valley lies Rotherham, a smaller town, but equally proficient in the manufacture of steel.

The railways in the Rother Valley were preceded by the Chesterfield Canal, which ran northwards from Chesterfield mainly on the east side of the Rother Valley. Once Killamarsh was reached, the Canal turned 90 degrees to the east and continued eastwards until the River Trent was reached at West Stockwith. The canal was surveyed by Brindley, who commenced its construction but died before completion. It opened in 1777. A major engineering feature was the 2,880 yard long Norwood Tunnel above Killamarsh. When built it was the second longest tunnel in Britain. The width of the tunnel was only 9¼ ft, which meant that the "cuckoo boats" provided for this canal were much narrower than that of boats described elsewhere as "narrow boats". In 1907, part of Norwood Tunnel collapsed. By this date competing railways had been built, so thereafter only the eastern arm continued to carry any significant traffic. Previously, in 1842, the Chesterfield Canal had been purchased by the MS&LR. Initially the two systems were run in tandem. Later in the 19th Century the MS&LR expanded, so the use of the canal waned, although some traffic on the eastern arm continued up until nationalisation in 1948 and even afterwards.

Prior to 1842, the North Midland Railway, later to be part of the Midland Railway, had constructed a line from Derby to Rotherham, which opened on the 9th May 1840. A station at Killamarsh (later to be rebuilt and later still to be renamed in British Railway days as Killamarsh West) was opened on 6th April 1841. The course of the line between Chesterfield and Rotherham lay along the west side of the River Rother. In Rotherham, a new station was constructed at Masborough which was situated on the western outskirts of the 1840s town. The route of the North Midland continued northwards to Leeds, the line opening fully on July 4th 1840. In order to reach Sheffield, a junction was provided with the Sheffield and Rotherham Railway. However this was a trailing junction, for which reversal was necessary for trains from the south. The line from Chesterfield to Rotherham is now referred to as the "Old Road" as a new line was built from Chesterfield to Sheffield which connected with the Sheffield & Rotherham at Attercliffe Jn. These days the Old Road carries freight traffic, empty stock movements and the occasional railtour.

As the course of the line lay to the west of the River Rother, most of the NMR lay outside the civic boundary of Killamarsh itself. However the 1897 OS map shows that the village boundary diverted westwards from the course of the Rother, so as to locate the NMR station within Killamarsh itself. To the west of the boundary lay the village of Holbrook and, immediately adjoining the station, Holbrook Colliery itself. Naturally the NMR had access to the colliery, its branch to the colliery coming from the south. For passengers, the entrance to the station was down a slope to the Rotherham-bound platform from the Sheffield Road bridge. Passengers wishing to travel southwards to Chesterfield had to cross the tracks to the opposite platform, which was rather daunting if a train was already waiting in the southbound platform, or worse still hurtling northwards on the northbound line.

The North Midland did not have a monopoly of the Rother Valley for long. In 1847, the MS&LR commenced building a line eastwards to Lincolnshire from its Bridgehouses terminus in Sheffield. Its role as the MS&LR station in Sheffield was taken over in 1851



above: LMS class 8F 2-8-0 no.8060 heads south with a train of mineral wagons through Killamarsh (Midland) station. The main station buildings were on the down platform (left) and were accessed from the Sheffield Road bridge at the north end of the station. Renamed Killamarsh West by BR and closed on 1st Feb. 1954. photo: unknown

below: BR class O1 2-8-0 no.63795 heads south with a train of mineral wagons through Killamarsh Central station on the 'Cheshire Lines'. The main station buildings were on the up platform (right) and accessed from Station Road. Glover's flour mill is directly behind the train. Closed to regular passenger services on 4th March 1965 and to excursion traffic on 12th June 1965. photo: unknown



by the new station at Victoria. On the 12th February 1849, construction of the new line to Lincolnshire had advanced to the western side of the Rother Valley and a spur was laid to make a junction with the Midland Railway (of which the NMR became a constituent member in 1844) at a location termed Beighton Junction. MS&LR train services immediately commenced from Sheffield to Eckington, where passengers could change for a Midland train to Chesterfield. Later that year, on July 17th, the thirty-six arch viaduct across the Rother Valley was completed. This new line became part of the through MS&LR route from Manchester to Grimsby via Gainsborough.

The next development, this time under the aegis of the Midland Railway, was a short branch line from a junction about 20 chains north of Killamarsh station, eastwards to collieries at Norwood, opening on 1st October 1869 and was one and a half miles in length. One of the two collieries was on the west side of a highway named Rotherham Road, and the other one on the east. Later a third branch was created to the Ellison and Mitchell's Tar Works, which was on the west side of the Rotherham Road. The sidings to all three locations were on the south side of the branch line. Finally, nine years later, the line was extended a further mile and a half to Kiveton Park colliery alongside the MS&L main line. This section included a short tunnel which would now be crossed by the M1 if the line was still open. The journey for loaded wagons from the Kiveton Park colliery westwards to the junction with the Old Road was downhill, requiring special care by train crews to prevent runaways.

In the mid-20th century the line lost the custom of the two Norwood collieries, and then that of the tar distillery, so first the eastern part of the line closed between the tar distillery and Kiveton Park Colliery on 19th May 1961 and then the remainder was officially withdrawn on 15th November 1972. Ironically in the early 1960s a new siding was constructed to a scrap metal yard owned by Messrs Thomas Ward and opened for the purposes of scrapping steam locomotives rendered obsolete by British Railway's modernisation programme. The new siding lay in the Rother Valley immediately to the east of the LD&EC line. It was the swan-song of the Kiveton branch.

On 11th July 1889, the MS&LR obtained Parliamentary consent for its "Derbyshire Lines" as a southwards extension from Beighton Junction to Annesley (with running powers over the Midland to Nottingham). Two weeks later, construction commenced and a junket was held in a field at Beighton, attended by Sir Edward Watkin, Lord Manvers and other captains of industry. By 1892, contractors to the MS&LR had constructed the new line along the Rother Valley as far as Chesterfield with new stations at Killamarsh and Renishaw. The line opened on 1st June 1892, and with immediate effect, the service from Sheffield to Chesterfield via Beighton Junction and the Midland's Old Road was terminated in favour of the new line.

A new MS&LR station was created in Killamarsh located about 200 yards east of the Midland Station and therefore closer to the village. Whereas the Midland line ran almost at flood plain level, the MS&LR line ran at a height of about 15 feet above the valley floor. Such an advantageous height enabled the line north of Killamarsh to thread its way first over the Midland branch to Kiveton and then over the Old Road. The line then descended to flood plain level at Beighton, where the propensity of the Rother to flood was a perennial problem, but had the bonus of providing cheap land for rows of sidings to the south of Beighton station. With respect to the further expansion of the MS&LR, before the end of 1892, its "Derbyshire Lines" opened fully from Staveley to Annesley, and later still with the "big push" extended to London in 1899. In 1897 the MS&LR changed its name to the Great Central Railway (GCR) in preparation for the line to London opening.

Sadly the extension to London was one of the first victims of the Beeching cuts, and most passenger services closed in 1963, although the cross-country York to Bournemouth expresses continued to use the Great Central line until 3rd September 1966. The GC line through Killamarsh stayed open to serve Arkwright Colliery at

Staveley until 1981. Track-lifting finally took place in February 1983. Today the GC track bed along the Rother Valley is used as a cycleway and footpath.

The MS&LR's "Derbyshire Lines" Act included one additional minor line along the Rother Valley. The Act permitted a line southward from Beighton to Holbrook colliery. It branched from the MS&LR line just after Meadow Lane footbridge south of Beighton station and before the MS&LR line crossed over the Midland Railway. It then ran southwards to Holbrook Colliery and actually ran alongside the MR line for much of the route until it passed under the Sheffield Road at Killamarsh and entered the Holbrook Colliery. During the 1940s, I would look at this line from the upstairs of a bus as it crossed the bridge over the Midland line and wonder why such a seldom used, duplicate line existed. The reason was that the Midland's line to Sheffield entailed a circuitous route via Rotherham, which made the Holbrook coal uncompetitive compared to other collieries nearer to the Steel City. So such was the reward from transporting coal, that a 1 mile 9 chain line was constructed by the MS&LR to save 5 or 6 miles compared to the rival Midland route to Sheffield. Holbrook Colliery closed in 1944, and probably the single-track line to the Colliery closed soon after.

The fifth line in the tangle was the Waleswood Curve. This enabled an east-to-south connection between the MS&LR's Sheffield-Lincoln line and the "Derbyshire Lines". The double-track line was 1¾ miles in length between Staveley Jn at Waleswood on the Sheffield-Lincoln line and Killamarsh North Jn on the "Derbyshire Lines", and opened for freight on 17th July 1893 and to passengers in January 1894. The Midland's Kiveton Park branch passed under the "Derbyshire Lines" immediately south of Killamarsh North Jn. A decade later, another junction, Killamarsh South, was formed at this point to provide a connection to the LD&ECR, a line described later. For over half a century, the Waleswood Curve provided a valuable link between the Humber and the south. However during the 1950s, freight traffic declined and the link lost its utility. The end of services along the link took place on 8th January 1967. One daily service that lasted until the closure of the Great Central in 1966 was the "Whitland Fish", a vacuum-fitted freight providing a fast service between New Clee (Grimsby) and Banbury.



A pair of class K3 2-6-0s with no.61975 leading come off the Waleswood Curve at Killamarsh North Jn with the 1.03pm New Clee-Banbury fish. A signal post on the LD&ECR line can be seen behind 61975. Note the brick wall bomb protection provided for the signal box. photo: B.R.Goodlad

The sixth line on the scene was the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway (LD&ECR) which, as its name implied, was a grandiose scheme to link Lancashire with the Humber estuary. The scheme was submitted to Parliament in 1892 and consent was granted in the same session as the MS&LR's Derbyshire Lines Act. The LD&ECR scheme was at the time the largest railway scheme ever approved by Parliament. Naturally such a line would compete with existing railways, which by 1892 had already become established and therefore had money to protect the profits that they were already making. So the LD&ECR had not only much opposition to contend with, but also little finance to implement its scheme. Thus in the end all that resulted was a line from Chesterfield (Market Place) to Pyewipe Jn near Lincoln and an 11 mile long branch north from Langwith Jn to Beighton Jn on the Midland's Old Road.

The line was completed and opened in May 1900 with a station at Killamarsh named Upperthorpe and Killamarsh. Concurrently, a subsidiary company of the LD&ECR, the Sheffield District Railway, opened a connection from Treeton to Brightside. This short line (length 3 miles 4 chains) enabled both the LD&EC and the Midland to reach Sheffield from the Old Road without having to travel via Rotherham. The reduction in mileage occasioned by the new line enabled stronger competition with the GCR for both passenger and coal traffic. The GCR met the competition by purchasing the LD&ECR in 1907, much to the annoyance of the Midland (and the GNR who were poised to purchase the LD&ECR themselves), and constructing a steep connection with the LD&ECR, which was at a higher level, at Killamarsh South Jn.

The next station on the LD&ECR south towards Langwith Jn was at Spinkhill. This was adjacent to Mount St Mary's College, a large Catholic boarding school for boys. Even after the line's closure to passengers shortly after the outbreak of World War 2, Spinkhill station reopened occasionally to ferry boarding students to and from the college at the beginning and end of term times. So Spinkhill station was maintained in pristine condition long after regular passenger services had finished.



Class B1 4-6-0 no.61041 at Spinkhill station on the LD&ECR with the Mount St Mary College train on 21st April 1959. The string of loaded coal wagons on the left will be from Westthorpe Colliery.

photo: Howard Turner

Descending from Spinkhill to Killamarsh the line passed Westthorpe Colliery on the east side of the line. The use of steam locomotives for shunting by the colliery lingered almost until 1980. Coal trains of maximum length 30 wagons departed from a siding beside the colliery, although not until the guard had pinned down the brakes on the first five wagons. The line then ran in a deep cutting (once used the stable the Royal Train) as far as Upperthorpe and Killamarsh station, which was situated in open countryside alongside the Chesterfield Canal. The station's location was on the opposite side to the canal's towpath, and offered no easy pedestrian access for intending railway passengers. Passengers arriving by road (Sheffield Road and Station Road) faced an extra 200 yard walk along a narrow winding lane to reach the station. Not surprisingly Upperthorpe and Killamarsh station closed to regular services on 7th July 1930. Continuing northwards the line bridged the canal (a barge would have to duck as his barge moved under it), then it paralleled the GCR line at a height of about 30 feet above the Rother Valley floor, partly on viaduct. It crossed over both the Midland branch to Kiveton and the Waleswood Curve before it made a junction with the Midland at Beighton.



A fine postcard view of Killamarsh (GC) station as originally built for the 'Derbyshire Lines'. The platform edges are still in place today with a footpath/cycleway occupying the trackbed.

photo: John Alsop Collection

After purchase of the LD&ECR in 1907, the GCR constructed a link from the LD&ECR at Upperthorpe Jn to join its own line at Killamarsh South Jn. The difference in height between the two lines necessitated a steep drop towards Killamarsh South Jn. Despite the new connection, trains to Sheffield from Langwith Jn continued to run via Beighton Junction, Treeton and Brightside to the Midland Station, and not to Sheffield Victoria.

Whilst most trains using the LD&ECR line would have been goods trains, the line was occasionally used by diverted expresses such as the boat trains from Harwich to Manchester and in later years the Starlight Specials. Local passenger services ceased on 11th September 1939 with closure of the intermediate stations. On 9th January 1967 the line was closed and furthermore, abandoned between Spinkhill station and Langwith Jn.. Westthorpe Colliery provided traffic until the colliery closed on 31st March 1984. However, the LD&ECR's subsidiary, the Sheffield District, remained open as a convenient link between the Old Road and Sheffield. In 1963 it became the location of the new Tinsley marshalling yard, itself now history.

The last and perhaps the least line to appear on the scene was the Glover's Flour Mill line. In 1898 Glover's Flour Mill in Beighton burnt down, so the company built a new mill at Killamarsh in 1902, which was situated on the north side of Sheffield Road and between the GCR and the LD&ECR lines. Some 72 years later, the mill at Killamarsh also burnt down. Furthermore, as far as disaster was concerned, in the intermediate years the mill was flooded several times as it was built at almost the same level as the River Rother. (*Ed.- see photo on p44 of Forward 179.*) A siding was constructed to the Mill, approaching from the north. For some reason, the siding was connected to the LD&ECR line despite this being at double the height of the adjacent GCR line, whereas in the vicinity of the mill, the siding was at Sheffield Road level. The Flour Mill siding closely paralleled both lines, as it threaded its way northwards over the River Rother and then

under the 1907 built connection between the LD&ECR and GCR lines, after which it then rose steeply to join the LD&ECR line just before the latter crossed the Midland's Kiveton Branch.

The dates of opening and closure of Glover's Mill Siding are not known to the writer. The mode of operation of trains to the Mill was as follows. Loaded wagons of corn from the fields of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire would arrive at the "Up" Siding at Woodhouse. Once a train load of about 8 to 10 wagons was assembled, the Woodhouse Pilot, usually a Thompson O1 running tender-first, would haul the train on to and along the single-track branch. A short loop in the branch, enabled the locomotive to uncouple from the train and then run forward to pick up the return wagons from the stub end at the Mill, which ended almost next to the Sheffield Road. It would then shunt the two sets of wagons and return to Woodhouse.

In the post-war period a great variety of locomotive types could be seen hauling trains through the Rother Valley, making it a trainspotters' paradise. On the former LMS line, freight was in the hands of 4F 0-6-0s or Stanier 2-8-0s with the occasional Garratt. Express passenger trains were usually hauled by Black Fives or Jubilee 4-6-0 types and locals by 4-4-0s. In earlier days, in the event of an exceptionally hard-worked express train, one solution was to resort to double-heading, the pilot engine usually being a 4-4-0. Pacifics did not seem to figure in the past but in today's preservation scene, Stanier Pacifics can occasionally be seen hauling railtours along the Old Road.



BR 5MT 4-6-0 no.44912 passing Killamarsh In signal box on the GC line with the Bournemouth-Newcastle service in August 1954. This area, once so open, is now woodland. The base of the signal box can still be found among the undergrowth alongside the present day footpath/cycleway.

photo: D.M.Sutcliffe

The former LNER line had a little more variety. Goods trains were often hauled by O4 2-8-0s and J11 0-6-0s, both dating back to WW1, but still clanking through the Rother Valley until the mid 1960s. Also ex WD 2-10-0s and BR 9Fs were used. V2 2-6-2s and K3 2-6-0s were used on van trains. Passenger services were in the hands of A3 Pacifics (in the 1950s), B1 4-6-0s, V2 2-6-2s and D11 4-4-0s. The transfer of the former GCR route to the Midland Region of BR in the late 1950s led to the allocation for passenger services of Black Five locomotives and later the Royal Scots, which were not in the first flush of youth, and which were doubtless cursed by the crews.

To conclude, at the present time the route of the former GCR line is a candidate for forming part of the proposed HS2 line. Quite how the proposed High Speed line will cope with subsidence and flooding does not appear to be currently under consideration. The construction of the new line will also affect the future of the Old Road, which at the present time is the sole survivor of the lines through the Rother Valley. It is hardly taxed by the passage of such freight and diversionary trains which use it today, but it still fulfils an important need.

Acknowledgements

The writer would like to thank Tony Ward (ex-footplateman at Darnall Shed) and other members of the Killamarsh Heritage Society, who assisted the writer in assembling this account of the "Killamarsh Tangle".

On Great Central lines today

by Kim Collinson

The doubling of the coal carbon tax from the 1st April to £24 per ton has had a devastating effect on coal traffic movements, especially as the power generators have stockpiled huge quantities of coal before the tax was increased. Coal was of course the lifeblood of GC freight traffic but at present it is at an all time low with very little chance of improvement. On the 10th June there were only seven loaded coal trains through Worksop of which half the workings originated from the doomed Thoresby Colliery. On the same day it was even worse at Barnetby which only saw four loaded coal services, which included the 12:34 (TO) Onllwyn Washery to Immingham anthracite working, which is the only export coal train still running, for which traffic Immingham Dock was originally built.

On the South Yorkshire Joint the signalmen at Maltby only dealt with eight trains all day which included the period from 05:17 to 14:17 with no traffic at all. The drastic reduction in railborne coal movements has resulted in a grim announcement from DB Schenker on Monday 22nd June that they propose to make 234 staff redundant and close the Worksop depot. The yard at Worksop is now mostly used as a wagon storage facility.

On the 13th June a railtour from Crewe to Skegness and return was worked by Class 20 locos 20305/09 which passed through Guide Bridge around 06:00 returning around 23:00.

On Saturday 6th June 'The Don and Went' railtour from Bristol to various freight only destinations in South and West Yorkshire traversed the Deepcar branch before traversing the SW spur into Tinsley Yard before reversing to continue its journey via Rotherham Central. It was top and tailed by 60079 and 66177.

On Tuesday 30th June around 14:30 the 10:39 Kingsbury to Humber empty tanks hauled by 60054 derailed at Langworth between Market Rasen and Barnetby with eight empty tank wagons off out of a consist of twenty two. Extensive damage resulted to the track and signalling with buses replacing trains from Lincoln to Barnetby while freight services were diverted either through Stainforth or Brigg. It was not until the 10th July that the route reopened.

Six of the derailed wagons had to be removed from the site by road crane, with the cause suspected as a result of track distortion due to the very hot weather at the time.

Another serious disruption to GC services occurred on the 1st July at Manchester Piccadilly as a result of a failed train and damage to the OLE during the afternoon. Services to Glossop were particularly affected with at least eight services cancelled and many others delayed.

The 6th/7th July saw an engineers train from Doncaster pass through Penistone at 23:38 en route to Clayton West, returning at 04:45 top and tailed by 66536 and 66546. Also on the 6th July, 37175/37219 traversed the Barton branch on a working from Doncaster. Then on the 11th July another railtour from Chesterfield to Carlisle was routed via Woodley, Guide Bridge and Ashburys, worked by 37606/37612 and on its return over the same sections of the GC it had 57301 attached on the rear due to a generator failure on one of the 37s.

This year sees the end of UK deep coal mining. On Friday 26th June the final train from Hatfield Colliery departed at 17:50 worked by 66069 running as 6H14 to Drax. The mine actually closed on the 4th July. This was then followed on the 10th July with the closure of Thoresby Colliery but trains continued to run from the mine conveying stockpiled coal. Only Kellingley still remains in operation but at present generates no rail traffic over GC routes. Trains of recycled coal from reclaimed tips still operate from Rossington Colliery. The dramatic decline in coal movements over the GC routes has reached a point where on some days barely 12 workings operate in 24 hours, in stark contrast to only a couple of years ago. It is an incredible decline, as coal has been the major commodity over the GC since its inception.



above: DBS 60079 leads 'The Don and Went' railtour on 6th June as it approaches Broughton Lane Jn where it will take the spur up to the remnant of Tinsley Yard. The Sheffield Supertram is approaching the Valley Centertainment tram stop on its way to Meadowhall.

photo: Graham Bland

below: GBRF 66737 'Lesia' with West Burton PS - Thoresby Colliery empties at Thoresby Colliery Jn on 16th June 2015. The loco has to run round the train before setting off along the colliery branch.

photo: Alan Burkwood



With the decline in coal traffic the long term future of several sections of railway, signal boxes and sidings must be in doubt, these being the South Yorkshire Joint, LD&EC (apart from test trains), Clipstone signal box, Worksop Yard and Woodhouse run round sidings.

During July there have been a couple of Network Rail test trains along the Deepcar

branch, both worked by pairs of Class 37 locos. On the 17th 37605/08 were at Deepcar at 11:00 before returning to Derby. Then on the 28th 37601/11 were observed at Woodburn Jn at 11:50 on a working that had originated at Tees Yard.

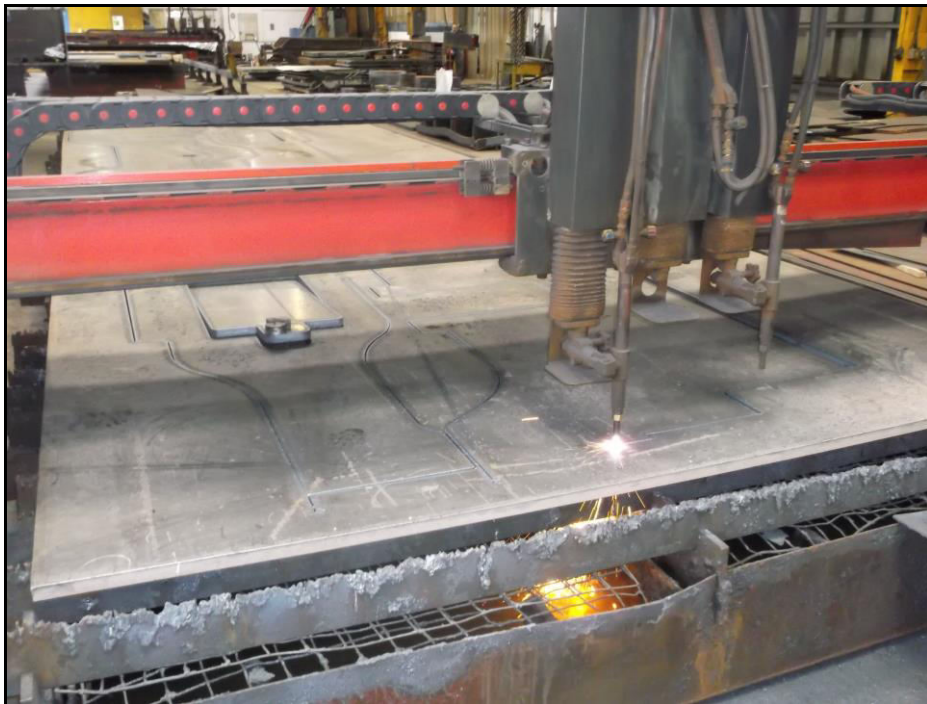
If you have any news of current activity on ex-GC lines please let me know - Kim Collinson, 18 Close Hill Lane, Newsome, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD4 6LE or by e-mail : kimcollinson1949@gmail.com (note change of e-mail address)

The GCR No 567 Locomotive Project update by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor

The project to build a brand new GCR Class 2 locomotive No 567 took a huge step forward with the cutting of the locomotive's main frames as well as other frame components. The engineering work to extract the details from the old Victorian Kitson drawings and generate accurate and verified frame drawings suitable for today's supply chain has taken considerable effort by all those involved in the project so this marks a major milestone

On the afternoon of 21st July, under the supervision of main contractor Ian Howitt, the frames of No 567 were cut by PP Profiles based at St Helens, Merseyside. The components generated are the two side plates, the buffer beam, the trailing headstock and the two doubler plates (which reinforce the cylinder apertures). This gives the group the components for the basic frame assembly.

At the time of writing the parts were being inspected before being dressed and primed at Ian Howitt's workshop. The side plates are then to be dispatched for the first machining operation when the rear of the frames, including the horn-guides, will be machined. The side plates and doublers are then to be bent before the final machining of the front of the side plates.



The frames for No 567 being cut by PP Profiles at St Helens.

The whole component set weighs 4 tons with the longest side-plates just over 28ft long. All items were cut from 43A 30mm thick constructional steel, a close match to the original.

The Management Group couldn't be more delighted and we can't wait to see the frame components delivered to our construction base at the GCRN's Ruddington workshops in the Autumn in time for our supporters' day. The next funding target will be the front bogie. Seeing the frames should give our funds and our 140 supporters a real boost. The reality of our 'brand new' Victorian engine hauling restored Victorian MS&LR coaches from the GCR Rolling Stock Trust and other owning groups is now a step nearer.

The locomotive frames will join a significant collection of components being amassed for the project at the GCRN. A donor unused spare cylinder block from a Corby Industrial has been verified fit for use, connector rods from a Austerity Tank are also suitable, brake rigging gear plus an original GCR 23 ton tender all await restoration and fitment, but will effectively be in 'as new' condition when utilised for the locomotive's build. A huge amount of concept work has verified what will work to ensure the locomotive will look and sound like the original, but will comply with a preserved line safety case without exceeding the total £400,000 budget.

Chief Engineer Mike Fairburn said: "Fortunately many of the mechanical components of the late Victorian Express locomotives ended up serving a new life in the industrial locomotives that followed. There is a rich source of reference for the project and even spares available which we intend to utilise. The physical construction will use the GCRN Steam Locomotive Group's volunteers as we look forward to a swelling of the ranks in our Saturday crew."

Design Manager and Metallurgist Alan Bullock said: "Extracting the frame details and verifying we can tie all this together has been a big job as we had to take the time to get this right. What we have learned as part of this process has really unlocked some of the secrets of Victorian locomotive design. It shows us how good they were and not a computer in sight! I'm sure you will agree the end result will be well worth the effort."

It is interesting to contrast the GCR 567 project with other new build locomotive projects. The majority are being built for mainline operation where reliability of operation is absolute plus the power to haul 10 coach trains over lines like Shap to support the mainline charter business. The engineering and budget to build locomotives of this power and reliability are significant. The GCR 567 project by contrast looks to recreate the Victorian mainline express and so requires a preserved line with preserved line running speeds. When originally in service, the maximum loads over the Woodhead line for No 567 were five 6-wheeler wooden coaches. The mechanical design with saturated boiler, 18" dia x 26" stroke cylinders with Stephenson valve gear linked to four 6'9" driving wheels being almost identical to a certain record breaking *City of Truro*, built some 13 years later. GCR 567 will be eminently suitable for historic preserved line operation where the old original 4-4-0s are being permanently retired from service at an alarming rate.

The project is one of the few opportunities for people to be involved with a 'new build' that looks to recreate a locomotive class from history rather than peoples' memory. The prospect of running a classic GCR Victorian express locomotive with original GCR carriages on the only preserved main line, a GCR main line, is a vision we can now look forward to. A vision that is rapidly becoming a reality.

Forthcoming Events

3th & 4th Oct:- Outdoor Event Tent display at the Autumn Steam Gala, Quorn Station Yard, GC Railway.

10th Oct:- Men's Breakfast Talk at Ashby-de-la-Zouch by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor.

24th Oct:- GCR 567 Locomotive Group AGM at Ruddington.(Postponed from July so our supporters can view the latest components.)

For more details on upcoming events please visit our website at www.gcr567loco.co.uk.

The Readers' forum

from Graham Jelly, Mapperley, Nottingham

Forward 183 p42: letter from Fred Hartley and *Forward 184 p41*: letter from John Hitchens on the GCR viaduct at Nottingham.

The comments made by Fred Hartley were correct in every respect, but in the light of the erroneous comments made by John Hitchens it is necessary to set the matter straight.

The tram line north of Station Street follows the exact alignment of the GCR to the site of Weekday Cross Junction where the GNR line from Trent Lane Junction joined. The viaduct north of Canal Street was however deemed unsuitable for the tram and thus the GCR arches were demolished in 2000, to be replaced by a concrete structure. Four arches of the ex GNR route remained in isolation, just to east. It was these that were demolished in 2014.

Mr Hitchens makes mention of the Philips Street Atlas. Unfortunately, this shows two roads close to the tram line in slightly incorrect positions, causing the cartographer to draw the tram line on the wrong alignment north of Canal Street, thus causing some understandable confusion.

I attach a photo taken from my office on 2nd Sept. 2004 looking south, showing a northbound tram moving from the new viaduct on the former GCR alignment onto the road. Another tram can just be seen approaching the Station Street terminus of Line One, which is constructed on ex GCR arches.

The bridge abutment on the left was on the GNR alignment which still retained four of the arches, by then isolated due to the removal of road bridges. The signal box for the junction would have been in the bottom left of the photo.

I hope this clarifies the situation regarding the Nottingham viaducts!

from John Greaves, Bucknall, Shropshire

Forward 184 p3: 'In appreciation of Allan Brown'.

It was with great sadness that I heard of the death of Allan Brown. I had known him for fifty years - we were of a similar age. We corresponded regularly, especially during the time when he was involved in the preparation of Part 6B of the RCTS series *Locomotives of the LNER* when I was able to share my knowledge of the 8K and 9M 2-8-0 classes (LNER O4 and O5) for which I had comprehensive records. He was gracious enough to accept my term 'Battle Axe' for the shape of the counterweights on the wheels of five of the class 8M.

It was during that exchange of information that he noticed that I had written on the back of some music paper. It turned out that we were both bass trombonists, though he was far more accomplished than I was.

With the loss of friends such as Allan Brown life is becoming more impoverished.



The view from Graham Jelly's office.

from David Anderson, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire

Forward 183 p16: 'The Woodford Accident of 1935' by David Reidy.

David Reidy's account of the Woodford accident acknowledges the assistance of the British Library Newspaper Collection. My wife has recently been searching for information on my family in the *Northern Daily Mail* from West Hartlepool. Given the distance between Woodford and the Hartlepoons, we were surprised to see a brief account of the Woodford accident in the *NDM* for Friday 20th December 1935. This was in the column next to an account of the tragic death of two sisters related to me through one of my great grandmothers!

The report of the accident was under "Stop Press News" and is headed "M.P.'s Children in Accident". The location is described as 'near Rugby'. Most of the report describes the injuries to the children and those to the butler of another M.P. and the main train's guard. In the report of the actual accident, it was stated that "After the slip coach had been detached, it overtook the train and slightly bumped the rear of it".

David Reidy concludes by pointing out that the accident hardly constituted good publicity for the LNER. Reading the account in the *NDM*, I sense a contrast between the inclusion of the report as "Stop Press News" and the low-key account of the injuries and the accident itself. I wonder just how widespread was the reporting by newspapers of railway accidents.

I was able to access the *NDM* report through subscription to the website www.findmypast.co.uk.

from Ron Gee, Sidcup, Kent

Forward 184 p25: 'An overview of developments in AC electric traction technology - Part 2' by Ron Gee.

Since I wrote the articles I have located some interesting facts about Mr W.J.A. Sykes, who wrote a report about the presentation given at the IEE Proceedings about the SNCF pioneering AC electrification.

Although Sykes worked for BR and was a Chartered Mechanical Engineer, his main contribution to electric traction was as project leader for the DC Kent Coast Electrification of 1961 and the Bournemouth electrification of 1967. Both these projects had plenty of pioneering techniques, which are recounted in the professional and popular press. As far as the Woodhead line is concerned, in the 60s the remit of BR's DC engineers included not only the Southern Region with its 750V DC third rail system, but also the DC electrifications in Manchester, Liverpool, etc. Most of these were re-electrified to draw AC current for traction. One exception would appear to be the Woodhead line, which was electrified at the agreed MOT approved overhead wire at a voltage of 1500V DC, but was unfortunately run down after 1970 and then closed.

Would it be worthwhile to investigate and recount BR thinking about the Woodhead line with special reference to what might be available from BR records? In the 1970s, I was able to borrow Sykes's contributions to an IEE Proceedings about electrification progress in Britain, thus I know that chapters are there about DC electrification in the North. Unfortunately, I am no longer well enough to visit the IEE and British Libraries in London. Is any reader interested in following this up who might have copies of the IEE Proceedings, or who might be willing to visit the British Library in London or Boston Spa to consult these?

Forward 184 p4: 'The Calow and Bond's Main Joint Railway'

I found the article about the Calow and Bond's Main Railway quite interesting, in particular that both the GC and Midland provided trains of empties. Presumably each company's wagons had to be dealt with separately and could not be mixed. What procedures were used to monitor and record the progress and whereabouts of such collections of wagons? Who made up the records? Was there a record for each wagon, recording the weight and type of coal, that left the colliery?

from Lawson Little, Newark, Notts

Forward 184 p44: Rear cover caption.

A passing comment in the caption to the rear cover photo referring to the class Q4 0-8-0 tanks - "they were not a success" - caught my eye. In fact they were perfectly satisfactory for the work they were designed to do, ie heavy shunting.



BR Q1 0-8-0T no.69928 in the station yard at Langwith Jn on 31 May 1951.

photo: unknown

At a time of national emergency during WW2, when new construction would have been out of the question, they provided a quick source of additional shunting power and also made effective use of obsolescent class Q4 0-8-0s. We had a pair of them at Langwith Junction for many years (nos.9928/29), and when not rostered for shunting they were used on short trip workings, mainly from Langwith Colliery to Warsop Sidings. It was on such duties as these that their limited water capacity and relative lack of braking power (compared to say an O4) made them unpopular engines. For their designed duties they did a good job, and (in my opinion) looked quite handsome too!

from Michael J. Reade, Pinner, Middlesex

Forward 184 p25: 'An overview of developments in AC electric traction technology - Part 2' by Ron Gee.

I would like to make a point to clarify the statement in Ron Gee's interesting article concerning voltage changeovers being effected whilst stationary at a station. This is impossible on the West London Line as there is no third rail at Willesden Junction High Level or a catenary at Shepherds Bush. Hence changeovers were made 'on the fly' at North Pole. This was until one driver forgot to lower her pantograph, after which stops were introduced to effect changeovers. I remember seeing the damaged pantograph on the 313 unit involved stabled at Clapham Junction.

After London Overground took over they introduced a message on the 378 units explaining the stop at North Pole on the internal display screens but shortly after that the practice of changing over 'on the fly' resumed and that is the current situation (no pun intended!). Richmond trains change over at Acton Central Station. By contrast Southern trains still stop at North Pole but several years ago I was on a 319 unit running late and the driver changed over at slow speed to presumably regain a couple of minutes.

from Robert Carroll, Worcester Park, Surrey

Forward 182 p8: 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll.

I was pleased that my article stimulated such interest and I am grateful to contributors for the corrections and additional information.

from Reg Instone, Shirley, West Midlands

Request for information: Grimsby fish traffic.

Does any Society member have details of fish trucks which would have been used for traffic from Grimsby, in addition to what has been published in *Dow vol.3*? I am after data on quantities of vehicles, dates built and whether fitted with automatic brake. For example, how many fish vehicles of what types were on the Company's stock in 1896? Fish was normally carried in specialist vehicles due to the problems of contamination (aromas). I do not need dimensions or drawings. Is there a published work on GCR wagons or on GCR non-passenger coaching stock? - I confess I have not seen one.

The reason is that I am currently researching and writing an article for the *L&NWR Society Journal* on fish traffic, and specifically that from the east coast ports to the west of England via Manchester - focusing particularly on the period 1896 to 1914. A colossal amount of fish went this way from Grimsby, ending up at places as far apart as Bristol and Preston. It was exchanged from GCR to LNWR at Guide Bridge (for Crewe and south thereof) and at London Road (for Liverpool and the north west).

I have the schedules from GCR WTTs for May 1900 and Oct 1905. There were two fish trains nightly from Grimsby to Manchester London Road, plus (curiously) one from Lincoln. Timings for earlier or later years would be helpful, as well.

The article is mainly about how the L&NWR handled things, but there is a certain amount of GC interest in it which may appear in *Forward* at a later date.

from Nigel Munday, Loughborough, Leicestershire

Forward 184 p38: letter from John Hicks re. 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll.

John Hicks' letter brought back many memories of the Met & GC Joint line. I lived in Amersham until 1962 and well remember all the A3s mentioned - except *Sansovino* and *Grand Parade* - many of them in BR blue livery. I also remember the V2s, but surely these were for the most part shedded at Woodford (38E)? They had a working from Woodford around midday, returning on the 5.00pm from Marylebone (non-stop to Amersham in 43 minutes!) which was always worth looking out for as borrowed locos, mainly York V2s and B16s ('Bloodspitters') were frequently used.

One of my first real footplate trips was on this train with B16/2 no.61455 on 12th Feb. 1955. There was also a very unusual incident on 18th Feb. 1956 - about a year after I had started work, by then in the District Office at Stratford in the days when we worked every other Saturday morning. Returning home on the early afternoon Marylebone-Woodford train with V2 no.60831, the train was wrongly routed onto the Watford branch! After a slight delay we continued to the intermediate station at Croxley where the passengers were detrained. The train then continued to Watford, from where the V2 duly re-appeared, tender first, and picked up the passengers.

It was a very cold day with sleet showers and the crew were not keen to continue beyond Aylesbury tender-first, but I am not aware of what actually happened as I alighted at Amersham. I was happy as I had carried a lady's bags between platforms at Croxley and she had insisted on giving me a half crown tip - very welcome, as weekly pay for a junior clerk at the time was little over £4.

Another unusual occurrence was the appearance of an A3, no.60111 *Enterprise*, on the up afternoon pick-up freight, which duly shunted in the yard at Amersham without incident, but certainly not the ideal motive power for such a job. I suspect there had been a problem with the A3 earlier in the day and the booked freight loco had taken its place on a passenger working.

On the subject of the local freights, when I first started taking an interest in locomotive types, these were worked by L3s and J11s from Neasden and the very occasional WD from Woodford. Then all of a sudden these vanished and Ivatt 2-6-0s (43065/066/067/068/089/107/127/144 and 161) had taken over - all noted between August 1953 and March 1954. Their reign was brief however as BR Standard 2-6-0s (76035-44) took charge between July 1954 and September 1954.

Similarly A5s were still to be seen occasionally on the suburban services, although L1s predominated - the latter always seemed to have great trouble leaving Rickmansworth on a tight curve and at the start of the climb to Amersham. On one occasion there were no less than seventeen violent slips before we eventually departed! Again their reign was fairly brief as LMS 2-6-4Ts from the Tilbury section (displaced by the BR standard version) started to appear - first Fowler 42328/74, which did not last long, then Fairburn 42222/5 and later many more. Almost the last L1, 67778, must have been sub-shedded at Aylesbury and tended to work the Met trains I used in both directions with the result that I recorded some 150 trips between Amersham and Rickmansworth with that one loco in 1956 - so they can't have been all bad!

I hope these ramblings - many from memory - may be of some interest.

from Dave Cousins, Swinton, Manchester

Forward 183 p24: 1923 worksplate auction item.

Regarding the matter of the LNER 1923 Gorton worksplate in the GCR style illustrated on p24 of *Forward 183*, I have been doing some research. From all the photographic evidence I can find, all the A5 (9N) tanks built in 1923 appear to have been fitted with them. They can be identified by having only one line of script in the centre rather than three found on a real GCR plate. (*Ed. - a 1923 built A5 is featured on the back cover.*)

A number of GCR worksplates were on offer at the Great Central Railwayana Auction on 6th June. I obtained one for 1923 (*Ed. - see illustration on p21 of this issue*), which should not really exist! The catalogue simply stated which engines were built at Gorton in 1923 - eight B7s and ten A5s as described above. This is true, but irrelevant as none of the B7s seem to have GC plates either, only 9"x5" LNER ones. So it couldn't belong to either of those two classes.

On examining the 1923 plate prior to bidding, the rear had been stamped "62667 D11 503 11F", but this was not referred to in the catalogue description. This stamp may not have been done officially by any railway works but could have been applied when removed from the loco to identify it. But according to records 62667 *Somme* was built in Nov.1922 not 1923.

On examining the plate more closely at home, interesting discoveries were made. Small remnants of green paint were found. On consulting *Yeadon* and other reference works, I found that the last four 'Improved Directors' (503, 504, 505 and 511) did not enter revenue service until 1923. It seems that Gorton ran them in first before calling them back in for a full paint job - GCR livery but with LNER insignia - in early 1923.

I believe the plate is indeed off *Somme* as indicated on its reverse. The evidence which clinched it being the discovery that the '3' in 1923 was fixed to the plate by two small copper rivets, so it could have replaced a '2'. Having said that, an acquaintance who has a nameplate off 511 *Marne* also acquired, what he was told, a matching 1922 worksplate at the same time, so not all four of these final 'Improved Directors' may have had identical worksplates.



Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 16th May 2015 at Lovatt House, Loughborough.

Present: 33 members. The meeting was opened at 11:05 by the Chairman.

David Grainger made a presentation on behalf of the members to retiring Chairman, Mike Hartley, of a crystal glass block containing an image of 'Director' *The Earl of Kerry* (Mike's favourite loco) inside it. This was in recognition of his service to the Society as Chairman.

A minute's silence was observed for deceased members – Richard Graham, Brian Almond, Michael Hayes, Andrew Dow, J.V. Clarke, K.C. Mathews, B.L. Wesley, W.A. Brown and R.A. Sired.

1 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Brian Holyland, Tony West, Alan Woodward, Martyn Chapman, Robert Fielding, David Arnold, Robert Withers, Ralph Coulson, Alan Munday, Robert Llewellyn, Jack Turner, David Hanger, Reg Instone, Arthur Lee, William Adams, Michael Reade, Paul Greenwood, Ian Jewell, Richard Kirk, Andrew West, Jayne Edwards, Alan Ashurst, David Bell, John Tindall, John Trevitt, Len Bunning and Denise Herring.

2 Minutes of the 2014 AGM:

The minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting, which had been published in *Forward 181*, were accepted as an accurate record on a proposition by Ken Grainger and seconded by Dave Smith. They were then signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

4 Officers' Reports:

Chairman's Report – David Grainger said that he had been co-opted as Chairman at the September committee meeting and was now able to introduce himself to the members. His initial interest in the Society was sparked by the War Memorial restoration project. He has no railway background but railways are a strong interest.

Secretary's Report – Brian Slater reported that four committee meetings had been held during the year. Anyone wishing to see the minutes should send Brian an e-mail and copies will be sent as a PDF.

He appealed for members to put themselves forward for the committee as without new committee members the Society will cease to exist.

Some of the Pickering Long Open wagon kits are available at the meeting. A new mould is being made to enable more kits to be made available.

He had represented the Society at the Warley exhibition at the NEC and he thanked Dave Smith, Mike Hartley and John Quick for their help at the exhibition, which was successful in recruiting new members and raising a considerable amount of income. He appealed for members to put themselves forward to help at future exhibitions.

Brian finished by thanking David Bodicoat for arranging today's venue.

Treasurer's Report (including Membership Secretary's Report) - Eric Latusek reported that at the end of March there were 481 members compared to 475 the previous year. He had produced a hand-out showing the years that members joined the Society since 1974. There are still some of the founding members with us.

We gained 33 new members this year, although 27 left the society (of which 9 were deceased). He then commented on reasons for leaving and the payment of subscriptions by Standing Order.

Eric then reported on the accounts. The net balance at 31st March 2015 was £8,814.47, compared to £9,252.69 last year.

He thanked our new auditor, Amelia Ford, for auditing the accounts and she has agreed to do so again next year.

He commented on the balance sheet. Subscriptions are the largest source of income. Sales are similar to previous years, although these fall and rise from year to year. The largest expense is printing *Forward*, followed by postage.

Several smaller items were commented upon. No further increase in the subscription is proposed at this time.

Richard Tilden-Smith congratulated the treasurer for his report and thanked him for his work.

Bryan Longbone asked if Eric knew the age profile of new members. Eric said that age is not requested on the membership forms.

Stephen Gay asked what the number of female members was. Off the top of his head Eric said that there were less than 10 individual female members but about another 15 who were joint members with their partners.

David Bodicoat asked if the number of members still to renew at 91 was higher than usual. Eric said yes, although he has had similar numbers in the past. He has no particular worries at this time. He is sending out an e-mail to them reminding them that they will not receive the next *Forward* unless renewal is received.

Bryan Longbone made some comments on the total number of members and suggested that the website should be more targeted at attracting new members. Graham Cloxon and Geoff Burton also made comments about the website.

Stephen Gay referred back to the late renewals and do they attend meetings etc.

Richard Wilson asked if Eric knew which parts of the country they were from. Eric did not know without referring back to his records at home.

David Anderson said that when his wife resigned from the Tramway Society she had received a letter asking why. This was discussed further and Eric thought that it was a good idea. David Bodicoat said that the M&GN Circle had tried this and only received about a 30% response.

It was proposed by Mike Hartley, seconded by Graham Cloxon and agreed by all that the accounts be accepted.

Sales Officer's Report – Dave Smith said he had very little to report. He has attended a number of local exhibitions and asked for members to donate books for sale.

Editor's Report – Bob Gellatly reported that the June 2014 issue of *Forward* had been a double issue to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Society. It contained members' reminiscences and reprinted articles suggested by readers.

Martyn Ashworth's article 'Life Below Decks' about the Humber ferries in the September issue generated much correspondence.

Robert Carroll's article on 'The Master Cutler' in the December issue again generated a good response.

The March issue was the first to contain eight colour pages instead of four and Ken Grainger's 'Great Central Great War Heroes' made a welcome return.

There is now so much material submitted for publication that articles often have to be held over to later issues.

Bob thanked TSW Printers and Frank Grippo for the excellent production of *Forward*, Mike Hartley for liaising with the printers, Eric Latusek for providing the address labels and Colin Todd for sending them out. Finally to all who respond by contributing to the Readers' Forum, sometimes even before he has received his own copy!

The website continues to provide information about the Society with members being able to access past issues of *Forward* and the growing archive section.

Model Steward's Report – No report was received from Tony West.

Northern Area Rep's Report – Ken Grainger reported that he had had a number of requests about the Great Central, some saying they are researching but Ken feels that many are wanting him to research on their behalf! Google often quickly provides the answers!

Researching the names on the War Memorial has become almost an obsession. He still has a number of articles to produce and it was suggested that they all be put together in one book in 2018 to commemorate the ending of the Great War.

At last year's AGM he had said that the replica Marylebone memorials were to be funded by Chiltern Rail, but they were in fact funded by the Railways Heritage Trust. The unveiling was funded by Chiltern Rail. Ken had provided photographs to enable the replicas to be made. David Anderson said that he had seen the memorials recently - they looked very good and they still had the banners at the side of them.

A enquiry had been received about the GC railway policemen who had died in the war. There were four of them.

The name of LCpl Jackson VC is still not on the Sheffield Memorial - hopefully it will be by November.

Bryan Longbone said that he had seen *Valour* at Doncaster. Were any extra nameplates made? Ken outlined where they are. He also asked about those who had been injured. Ken said that they outnumbered those killed by about 2:1.

Stephen Gay asked about the War Memorial book where the numbers of deaths mentioned is less than those on the Sheffield memorial. Ken explained the reasons, mentioning Private Charles Kirman who had been shot for desertion, despite having been wounded twice and sent back to the front.

Midlands Area Rep's Report – David Bodicoat said that he had attended committee meetings and there seems to be more emphasis on modelling – if this is the way to engender interest in the GCR and the Society, then it is a good thing.

He thanked Richard Butler for arranging the visit to Woodford Halse, and for finding the ex-railwayman who gave such a good talk. David found Woodford somewhat depressing now. It is 50 years since Annesley and Woodford sheds were closed and there is a special event on June 14th locally.

He has been scanning archive items.

Southern Area Rep's Report – Richard Butler thanked David Bodicoat for his comments regarding the Woodford visit. If anyone has any ideas for further visits, please let him know.

He looks after the London Area Group who meet in King's Cross every month and some autumn meetings have been arranged.

He attended the Princes Risborough exhibition and Dick Hardy sat at the stand and had a good talk with him. He is attending Railex at Stoke Mandeville over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Things are happening on former GC territory, such as the reinstatement of the memorials at Marylebone.

Stephen Gay asked about funding for the London group and who attended, which Richard answered.

Archivist's Report – Geoff Burton reported that the Society's archives are still at Immingham Museum. Access had been arranged for members to use the archives, but there had been no take up. Access will only be available by personal arrangement from now on.

A new computer and scanner had been obtained and installed at Immingham enabling A3 digitisation to be done.

He asked members to make use of the archives. Bryan Longbone asked if there was room for more donations of items? Geoff said that there will be a limit but when things are scanned it will not be such a problem. Geoff asked for items to be scanned and sent digitally to him.

5 Election of Officers:

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

Chairman – David Grainger
Secretary – Brian Slater
Treasurer/Membership Secretary - Eric Latusek
Sales Officer – Dave Smith
Northern Area Rep - Ken Grainger
Midlands Area Rep - David Bodicoat
Southern Area Rep - Richard Butler
Editor - Bob Gellatly
Model Steward – Tony West
Archivist – Geoff Burton.

In the absence of any other nominations, their appointment was proposed by Paul White, seconded by John Quick and agreed by all present.

6 Any Other Business:

Ken Grainger proposed that Mike Hartley be made a vice president in recognition of his work for the Society. This was seconded by Brian Slater and unanimously agreed.

John Quick read out a tribute to Mike Hartley. John Quick said that he had Graham Lee's films and they are deteriorating. Geoff offered to convert them onto a DVD.

Richard Tilden-Smith gave a brief report on the activities on the present day GCR at Loughborough.

Stephen Gay asked how the branches of the Society are doing. Ken said that the Sheffield and Killamarsh branches are attracting 15 to 20 each meeting.

John Quick said that there is a programme on BBC2 Scotland on 20th May and on BBS4 on 21st May about the Quintinshill accident where 227 soldiers were killed, many in old GC wooden bodied coaches.

7 Next AGM:

Several suggestions were made for a venue for the 2016 AGM.

Geoff Burton suggested using Loughborough again and Richard Butler suggested London.

This will be left to the committee to arrange.

The meeting was closed at 13:00.

Rear cover caption

BR class A5/1 4-6-2T no. 69825 simmers quietly between duties at Basford carriage sidings, north of Nottingham, in Nov. 1958. This loco was built by the LNER in 1923 to Robinson's class 9N design, appearing as LNER no. 5046. Another batch was built by Hawthorn Leslie in 1925-6 to a slightly modified design and they were classified as A5/2. They did excellent work on the heavy suburban services out of Marylebone and on other local services throughout the LNER system. They looked the part and they did not disappoint. No.69825 had just a year left, being withdrawn in Nov. 1959

photo: Don Beecroft

