Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 156 June 2008

Front cover caption

An unidentified class EM2 Co-Co electric loco with a Manchester-Sheffield passenger service at Godley Junction. The CLC line to Woodley can be seen branching off to the left. Date unknown.
Photo: E. Harrison

The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 156 ~ June 2008

Contents

Editorial by Bob Gellatly

Thank you to all members who made the journey to Northwich for our AGM. I know that for some it meant an early start. The number of members that did attend was disappointing. This has rekindled the debate about AGM venues; do we stay near the centre of gravity of membership to maximise attendance or do we travel around to give other members an opportunity to attend? Some societies hold their AGM at the same venue each year eg M&GN Society at Kings Lynn. Should we do the same? Next year's venue will be Mansfield (my birth place!), a place that so far has eluded the Society's list of venues. I hope that this will prove a popular choice.

The Society needs your support to survive. Positions vacant at the AGM were the Sales Officer and the Archivist. These are areas in which the Society needs an injection of energy and ideas, but to achieve that we need the right people to come forward. Although too late to be officially nominated at the AGM, Mark Hambly has offered himself as Archivist. He will be co-opted by the committee for this year. That still leaves the vacancy for the Sales Officer. The Society is willing to invest money into a new display stand and publicity materials if and when someone comes forward. The Sales Officer is not expected to attend all events!!! His (or her) role is to organise those who are willing to represent the Society at events near them. I know some members do this anyway in a rather ad hoc manner.

Since the last issue, Marylebone has seen a new operator running trains into the terminus. Wrexham & Shropshire Railways have taken the risk of putting on a direct service from Wrexham and Shropshire to London. I hope it is successful. Marylebone is a terminus that merits a wider range of destinations. What a wonderful station to use when arriving or leaving the capital. I certainly intend travelling on W&SR as soon as I can negotiate 'a day on the trains'.

If you have found Ken Grainger's articles re. the war memorial and Great Central war heroes of interest, you may want to visit the WW1 cemeteries for yourself. Ken is hoping to arrange a trip. Preliminary details can be found on page 41.

The inclusion of photos of GC memorabilia from auctions has generated much interest. It has been suggested that I give details of the auction house and sale price. Mentioning the auction house should have been done anyway as a matter of courtesy, but it is not always possible to find the sale price. Where I can I will give it.

Finally, about 12 GCRS members, including myself, were able to take up the invitation to attend our vice-president Adrian Shooter's Open Day at The Beeches. The weather was glorious as Adrian's original Darjeeling loco no.19 and visiting Hunslet 0-4-2T 'Trangkil', driven by owner Graham Lee, raced around the 'garden' giving both spectators and passengers an experience not to be forgotten. Thank you Adrian.

Darjeeling no.19 is prepared for the day's activity on The Beeches Railway.
photo: Bob Gellatly

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

held on Saturday 10th May 2008 at The Gladstone Club, Northwich

Present: 26 members.

The meeting was opened at 11:00 by the Chairman, who welcomed the members to the meeting. A minute's silence was observed for deceased members including David Dalton, J.R.Clark, B.L.Wilson, John Davis and G.E.Vines.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Dave Arnold, Richard Tilden-Smith, John Quick, David Bodicoat, Gillian Brooks, Martyn Chapman, Tony West, Jon Newsome, Mark Hambly, John White, Jack Turner, Carl Lardner and Brian Almond.

2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM

The minutes of the 2007 Annual General Meeting, which had been published in Forward 152 were accepted as an accurate record on a proposition by Brian Holyland and seconded by Colin Todd. They were then signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

No matters arose.

4. Officer's Reports

Chairman's Report

Mike Hartley said that the last year had been a quiet one. He apologised for the last minute notification of Valour being at Marylebone, but GBRf could not confirm until close to Remembrance Day. A small number of members attended and all went well. Similarly, a small group had held an event at Sheffield. He explained that John White had stood down as Sales Officer and a new officer is urgently needed. He apologised for there being no sales stand at the AGM. He thanked the other members of the committee for their work, especially Bob Gellatly as editor of Forward. The position of the archives is as last year, but there is now hope that the GCR at Loughborough will be able to purchase the former GC Goods Offices there and that the Society will be able to arrange a room in which to store our archives.

Secretary's Report

Brian Slater reported that four committee meetings had been held in the past year and that any Society member could attend committee meetings as an observer. Help is still required in manning the Society stand at various exhibitions throughout the country. We have not been invited to the Gauge O Guild exhibition at Telford this year as we cannot man the stand. During the year the society had commissioned two model kits from D&S Models. These had sold out within three days of their announcement in Forward and he asked for suggestions for further commissions from the D&S range. He thanked the committee for their support and the Nottingham Society of Model and Experimental Engineers for making facilities available at Ruddington for committee meetings. Finally, he thanked Alan and Doreen Ashurst for arranging the day's venue.

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

Eric Latusek reported that membership was 490, a decrease of 3 on the previous year. He had produced a handout showing details of the membership which were explained in full. Five members had died during the year. To date, 82 members had not renewed their membership compared to 84 at the same time last year and invited any present to renew. 43 members now pay their subscription by Standing Order and anyone wishing to do likewise should contact him. Copies of the accounts had been handed out which he commented upon. The adjusted balance at the end of the financial year was £7,085.70 compared to £6,491.34 in the previous year. This figure includes an amount ring-fenced for the archives. The accounts had again been audited by Martin Gray (ACMA) and Eric thanked him. Issues 1 to 63 of Forward are available in electronic format and Eric asked anyone interested to see him. Eric referred to deceased member John Davis of Far Sawry. Mr Davis had left £1,000 in his will to the Society and this has been received since the end of the financial year. This amount is to be ring-fenced and used for a purpose thought suitable by the committee. A letter of thanks and condolence had been sent.

Bob Gellatly queried the large General Printing expenditure for 2006/7, which Eric explained as due to printing of membership forms.

The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Frank Stratford, seconded by Brian Holyland and agreed by the membership.

Editor's Report

Bob Gellatly reported that he had expected his honeymoon period as editor to finish but he is still enjoying the job! He thanked others for their help in the production of Forward, especially Eric Latusek, Colin Todd, Mike Hartley and all the contributors. He has introduced new features – auction items, the crossword etc. and asked for ideas to improve the magazine further. Bob commented on the poor quality of black and white photo reproduction and said that he was going to send the magazine on a CD to the printers as this allowed a higher definition than a pdf file sent by e-mail. He hopes that this will improve the print quality. He has had few adverse comments, but many good ones about Forward, including the use of colour in the magazine. He said how much he has enjoyed his contacts with members and finished by referring to the Society's website (www.gcrsociety.co.uk) and the steadily increasing visitor totals, the highest monthly total so far being 735 for March 2008.

Model Steward's Report

John Quick's report was read out by the secretary.

Over the years he has answered numerous queries from members and many from non-members. Often they are not model related but more an archive service, providing photographs, drawings and liveries etc.. The Society has attended many exhibitions during the past year and he thanked Brian Slater, Andrew David, David Russell, Richard Butler and Mike Hartley for their help at these events. Tony Gee has been trying to produce GC related model locomotive transfers. The first batch, produced in Australia, were unsatisfactory and he is now in discussion with the Historical Model Railway Society for them to produce some. He is also working on producing a class 9P 'Lord Faringdon' kit and John wished Tony every success in this venture.

Midlands Area Rep's Report

The secretary read out David Bodicoat's report.

He said that he was pleased to stand for the committee again. If and when the archives are stored at Loughborough, he would like to play an active part in their use. He feels that the present absence of an accessible archive is something the society cannot be proud of.

Southern Area Rep's Report

Richard Butler reported that the London Area group of the Society, run jointly with Len Bunning, had had a good year.They had had a good choice of speakers, dealing mainly with the London area. The second part of the Stratford-on-Avon and Midland Junction Railway tour had been held in July last year. This year's visits would be a walk around the Docklands area in London in June and a bus tour of the Nene Valley area in July. Richard had represented the Society at the Princes Risborough model exhibition and attended the Remembrance Day ceremony at Marylebone.

Northern Area Rep's Report

Ken Grainger said that he had just completed his first year as Northern Area Rep. He had been doing talks on the GCR and other railways. Ken has been co-host of the Rotherham group of the Society with Mick Hayes, but he will be standing down at the end of this year. He has been writing articles related to the GCR War Memorial and it has had a profound effect on him. On Armistice Day he was in Ypres, Belgium and is hoping to arrange a trip to the war graves in France and Belgium, where ex-GC men are interred (see p41 - editor).

Archivist's Report

No report was received.

5. Election of Officers

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

Chairman - Mike Hartley, Secretary - Brian Slater, Treasurer/Membership Secretary - Eric Latusek, Sales Officer - Vacant, Northern Area Rep - Ken Grainger, Midlands Area Rep - David Bodicoat, Southern Area Rep - Richard Butler, Editor - Bob Gellatly, Model Steward - Tony West, Archivist - Vacant.

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

Mark Hambly had volunteered as Archivist, but too late to be proposed in accordance with the constitution. He will be co-opted by the committee for this year.

6. Any Other Business

Stephen Gay suggested putting a notice in *Forward* of all the events to which the Society had been invited to provide a publicity stand and to ask for volunteers. There was also discussion about sales.

Howard Turner said that he had been contacted by Ackroyd and Abbott, developers in Sheffield, concerning Killamarsh Station. They want to develop the site, but must find an alternative site for the station building. He will be visiting the station with Ken Grainger to assess the state of the structure. It was thought that Ruddington would be a good alternative site for this Derbyshire Lines wooden building.

Tony Miller asked if there was to be another visit by *Valour* to Marylebone on Remembrance Day. Ken said yes, but would not know until nearer the time if the engine would be available. Howard Turner said that he had walked around Marylebone and could not find the war memorial. He asked if anyone knew its whereabouts or had it vanished? Len said that it had.

Paul White said that he had two modern epidiascopes to dispose of, if anyone wanted them. It was suggested that the Society might make use of one.

Howard Turner said that the Coat of Arms and *Valour* nameplate had now been fixed to the wall near the Great Central Room in the Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. GB Railfreight are interested in attending the official unveiling. Howard asked that the support of Herman Beck in all matters relating to the GC war memorial be put on record. A new wooden cabinet is being supplied in which the open Roll of Honour can be displayed.

Stephen Gay asked who the *Forward* contributor 'Loose Grip 99' was. Bob said that this was the name he used on a photo hosting website and attempts to reveal his identity had been unsuccessful.

Mike Hartley said that Edgar Fay will be celebrating his 100th birthday in October and the Society is arranging a meal on the train at Loughborough on Sunday, 12th October. Further information will be in *Forward* nearer the date .

7. 2009 AGM

Proposals included Mansfield, Immingham, Grimsby, Banbury, Scunthorpe and Leicester. It was decided to look for a suitable venue in Mansfield for 2009. Wrexham was suggested for 2010.

The meeting was closed by the chairman at 12:20.

Brian Slater, Secretary

Welcome to the following new members

Mr T. Warner, Talsarnau, Gwynedd
Mr D. Brindley, North Anston, Sheffield
Mr P.M. Greenwood, Delph, Oldham
Mr D.G. Hanger, Lutterworth
Mr D. Watson, Whitwell, Worksop
Mr R.J. Lane, Monks Risborough, Bucks
Mr T. Peacock, Aylesbury
Mr M.L. Harford, Gomersall, Cleckheaton
Mr A.D. Graham, New Mills, High Peak
Mr J.T. Wealleans, Guisborough, N. Yorks
Mr & Mrs B. Sharp, High Hoyland, Barnsley

Journeys over Woodhead in the 1950s
by Bill Glasspoole

I decided to write these notes after attending a Stephenson Locomotive Society meeting at which Stephen Gay gave his excellent presentation on "Woodhead – The Lost Railway", which evoked many half-forgotten memories. I travelled over the Woodhead route many times in the 1950s and so hope that this account of some of my journeys may be of interest. My intention is simply just to give an impression of the locomotives encountered and a "feel" for the variations on the basic route and the lines leading onto it. First, a little background. I started working at Doncaster Locomotive Works as a premium apprentice on 7 November 1949. In 1953 I was fortunate to be awarded the Ramsbottom-Webb scholarship to Manchester University, where I stayed until 1957. After that I was still eligible for National Service but, rather than spend two years scampering around the countryside with a rifle, I sought other employment that the government had decided was of equal national importance. Thus I joined the English Electric Company at Whetstone, Leicester. Also, by that time I was engaged to Kathleen, who lived at Glossop, and whom I subsequently married.

Thus my travels over Woodhead fall into three periods:

1. From starting at Doncaster in 1949 until mid-1953, I went back to my parents' home at Driffield most weekends, but I sometimes stayed at the Sheffield home of fellow apprentice Bob Sergeant and we would use our BR privilege tickets to travel quite far afield. A few of those trips included travelling over Woodhead.

2. At Manchester University I remained a BR employee and indeed worked at Doncaster during the summer vacations of 1954 and 1955. During term time I continued going home most weekends (being a lot cheaper than staying in digs in Manchester), usually taking the 5.35pm from Manchester Central to Hull via Sheffield Victoria (4.30pm from Liverpool Central), though I almost always returned on Sunday evenings via Hull-Leeds-Manchester Exchange. Sometimes I also travelled between Doncaster and Manchester during the vacations. This period, of course, covered the transition from steam to electric haulage.

3. While working at Leicester I normally went to Glossop every other weekend, travelling north on the 'South Yorkshireman' (Marylebone-Sheffield-Penistone-Huddersfield) but always returning by the Midland route.

The numbers of journeys over Woodhead were thus:

	Westbound	Eastbound
Period 1	6	6
Period 2	14	50*
Period 3	40	2
Totals	60	58

* including at least 40 runs on the 5.35pm from Manchester Central on Friday evenings.

From a very early age I recorded the numbers of the locomotives hauling the trains on which I travelled but I didn't note departure times and so cannot be absolutely sure how many runs were on the 5.35pm from Central nor can I remember the times of trains that I used only irregularly. In many cases I cannot even remember whether the journeys were in the morning or afternoon and so it has been impossible to check their times from the timetables held at the NRM. Also I no longer have my notes of runs that I timed; in any case opportunities for timing were limited as most runs were after dark. Nevertheless I shall try to describe a few of the, hopefully, more interesting features of some of my journeys, based on my very bare notes. I have also tried to present some of the reasons for specific journeys and, without deviating too far from the basic "Woodhead" line (Guide Bridge to Penistone), I have included some notes on lines either side of that section. This includes the lines from both relevant Manchester stations, London Road and Central, and east of Penistone, to Doncaster via Barnsley and via Sheffield. Throughout these notes I shall refer to the Great Central's main Manchester terminus as "London Road" (where it is), rather than "Piccadilly" (where it isn't!).

BR class B1 4-6-0 no. 61327 at Darnall shed on 4 April 1958. photo: P.H.Groom

Period 1: 1950 to 1953

My first run over Woodhead was on Good Friday, 7 April 1950. On the Thursday night I had stayed at Sheffield with Bob. We and two others intended to spend the weekend camping adjacent to the six-track section of the West Coast Main Line at Penwortham, just south of Preston. In those days on Good Fridays ordinary trains were operated according to the normal Sunday timetable but in a location such as Penwortham there were so many extra trains heading towards Blackpool and other resorts that it was busier than on a normal weekday, though without any freight. We made an early start, on the 6.42 am from Sheffield Victoria to Manchester London Road, which involved a rather unusual working. It was, I believe, the only train from Sheffield that was scheduled to call at Glossop. The enginemen must have detested this working, involving reversal at Glossop and running tender first the rest of the way to Manchester. Our engine that morning was B1 no. 61154. I am pretty certain that this Sunday working ceased with electrification and introduction of the half-hourly service between London Road and Glossop using multiple units. Ironically "reverse" working of an electric locomotive from Glossop to Manchester would have been so much less trying for the engine crew than it had been with steam locomotives.

Unfortunately the tent we had borrowed turned out to be rotted and when a gale sprang up on Saturday night it split. We had a pretty good supply of thread and sewed the rip, but had no sooner completed repairs than the tent split again – and again. And so on Sunday morning we had no choice but to pack up and head back to Sheffield on a direct train from London Road to Victoria behind B1 no. 61158. This completed my first return journey over Woodhead.

My next journey over Woodhead was on Saturday, 6 June 1950, when I made my first visit to Manchester Central station, travelling through from Sheffield Victoria behind B1 no. 61299. We returned to Sheffield the same day, but from London Road with B1 no. 61200. I didn't cross Woodhead again until 1951 when we again travelled on the 6.42 pm from Victoria, this time on a Sunday, 17 June, with B1 no. 61314. Unfortunately this was a day when the release road at Glossop was being worked on by the p.w. gang, thus preventing our engine from running round. To release the B1 the train had to be hauled out by the p.w. gang's J11 no. 64316, then when the B1 was clear the train was pushed back into the station by the J11 and the B1 coupled on again. The object of our journey was to visit Longsight and Chester sheds, for which we had obtained permits, but the time

consuming shunting at Glossop made us so late that we didn't get any further than Crewe before we had to return. Crewe to Manchester took us back into London Road but, because of train times, we walked across to Central and returned from there to Sheffield Victoria behind B1 no. 61183.

For those not familiar with the railways around Manchester at that time, perhaps I should mention that Central and London Road stations were less than a mile apart but the distances to Guide Bridge were respectively 11¼ miles and 5 miles. From Central station, Great Central trains to Guide Bridge and Midland trains to Chinley and beyond (Sheffield Midland or London St. Pancras) started by travelling due west as though heading for Liverpool. They then turned southward at the delightfully named Throstle Nest Junction. This was actually a triangular junction where the line to Liverpool continued westward. Our line next swung eastward at Chorlton Junction (where the Midland routes continued southward). After Levenshulme we turned north-east, shortly to join the route from London Road at Fairfield. While lodging at Chorlton-cum-Hardy I often travelled to or from Central, usually on Midland trains, but occasionally on a train that started from Guide Bridge at 8.43 am, arriving at Central at 9.15 am. This was invariably hauled by an N5 tank, which seemed a bit odd as I never recorded Gorton shed using engines of that class on any other passenger services.

I didn't travel over Woodhead again until Thursday, 19 February 1953, when I went from Doncaster to Sheffield Victoria behind B1 no. 61166 and then onward to Manchester Central with no. 61156. The frequency of engine changes on this route was quite ridiculous, with through trains between Hull and Manchester almost always changing engines at both Doncaster and Sheffield. I am pretty sure that on this occasion it was a through train (though my notes don't show this), but no. 61166 was a Mexborough engine. B1s based at that shed never, in my experience, worked normal passenger trains to Hull or to Manchester. They mostly seemed to operate between Doncaster and Sheffield and Doncaster and Penistone via Barnsley – though they worked to Bridlington and Scarborough on holiday trains from Rotherham every Saturday in the summer and on Sunday excursions as well.

I returned home to Driffield on Saturday evening, 21 February, using the 5.35 pm from Liverpool Central:

section	traction	distance
Liverpool Central to Manchester Central	unidentified Black 5	34¼ miles
Manchester Central to Sheffield Victoria	B1 no. 61160	47¾ miles
Sheffield Victoria to Doncaster	B1 no. 61087	19¼ miles
Doncaster to Hull	K3 no. 61903	40¾ miles
Total		142 miles

I never recorded the numbers of the engines that brought this train into Manchester from Liverpool but it invariably arrived behind a Black 5. So on the above journey of only 142 miles the train was hauled by four different locomotives – but that was comparatively few, as we shall see later!

On my next trip over Woodhead we approached it, not from Sheffield but by the alternative route from Doncaster, namely via Barnsley, on 2 April 1953, the Thursday evening of Easter weekend, at the start of an overnight journey to the Lake District. The first stages were:

section	traction	distance
Doncaster to Penistone via Barnsley	J11 no. 64366	23¾ miles
Penistone to Manchester London Rd	B1 no. 61326	28½ miles
Total		52¼ miles

Thus the distance from Doncaster to Penistone was 9 miles shorter than the 32¼ miles via Sheffield. I shudder to think how far it would be today. I used this route twice in the opposite direction, the second time being after electrification but included in this section for completeness. The dates were 11 May 1953 and 26 July 1954; the locomotives were respectively

section	traction on 11 May 1953	traction on 26 July 1954
Manchester London Rd to Penistone	B1 no. 61195	EM1 no. 26050
Penistone to Doncaster	J11 no. 64425	B1 no. 61194

The J11 on the first of these runs was a disappointment. I had hoped to be hauled by a C13, which was the regular motive power supplied by Barnsley shed for this particular train (the 6.02pm from Penistone) and a class behind which I had not previously travelled. This working was the only one that I ever saw bring a C13 into Doncaster. The B1 used on the second trip (not on the 6.02pm from Penistone) was a Mexborough engine and therefore on home ground, as mentioned above. The J11 was a Barnsley engine, obviously substituting for the C13.

Our return from the Lake District, on 6 April 1953, was unusual in my experience in that the motive power right through from London Road to Doncaster (via Victoria) was Doncaster B1 no. 61247. Not only was it uncommon for engines not to be changed at Sheffield but this was the only time I ever knew a Doncaster engine to appear in Manchester, though I suspect that they may have got there regularly on the nightly fish trains from Hull.

Period 2: 1953 to 1957
As stated in the introduction, the majority of my journeys over Woodhead were on the 5.35pm from Manchester Central to Hull. These runs naturally fall into two sections, namely before and after electrification.

After becoming based in Manchester my first journey home on the 5.35pm was not until 6 November 1953 when the locomotives were:

section	traction
Manchester Central to Sheffield Victoria	B1 no. 61312
Sheffield Victoria to Doncaster	B1 no. 61125
piloted to Mexborough	B1 no. 61167
Doncaster to Hull	K3 no. 61883

The pilot from Sheffield to Mexborough was an engine based at the latter shed, presumably going home for the night. This was a regular practice on this train (except on Saturdays) that I had first recorded as far back as 1951, when I made evening visits to Sheffield on 26 April and 2 May. This piloting continued after electrification, certainly up to 7 March 1956 (a Wednesday). My first journey on this train after full electrification and with piloting to Mexborough was on 5 November 1954 and my last on 7 March 1956 (as just stated), when the engines were, respectively:

section	traction on 5 Nov. 1954	traction on 7 March 1956	distance
Manchester Cen. to Guide Bridge	B1 no. 61161	*	11¼ miles
Guide Bridge to Sheffield Victoria	EM1 no. 26056	EM2 no. 27000	36½ miles
Sheffield Victoria to Doncaster	B1 no. 61137	B1 no. 61129	19¼ miles
piloted to Mexborough	B1 no. 61326	B1 no. 61165	12 miles
Doncaster to Hull	B1 no. 61365	B1 no. 61074	40¾ miles

* On this occasion I took an EMU from London Road and then caught the 5.35pm from Central at Guide Bridge.

It will be seen that from Liverpool to Hull the through "express" was regularly powered by no fewer than five train engines plus a pilot.

I have now got rather ahead of myself and must return to steam trains over Woodhead, which were very nearly always powered by B1s. The only exceptions that I observed were; eastbound on 3 February 1954 from London Road to Sheffield with V2 no. 60863 (of Leicester shed and presumably on a train to Marylebone) and on 21 May 1954 with K3 no. 61910 (a Gorton engine) from Manchester Central to Sheffield, and in the opposite direction, on 23 May 1954 with K3 no. 61910 (again) right through from Doncaster to Manchester Central. I did not normally check what sheds the locomotives were allocated to and so usually tended only to notice specific engines with which I was most familiar. I assume from my notes that over Woodhead the duties were generally shared between Sheffield Darnall and Manchester Gorton, though Leicester was also involved on London trains.

My last runs over Woodhead behind steam locomotives were: westbound on 23 May 1954, as mentioned above, and eastbound on 4 June 1954, on the 5.35pm from Manchester Central with that

train's usual collection of engines; Central to Victoria B1 no. 61223, then B1 no. 61125 from Victoria to Doncaster (with B1 no. 61165 to Mexborough) and finally K3 no. 61965 to Hull.

The transition from steam to electric operation took place in stages. Freight working commenced from Wath to Dunford Bridge on 4 February 1954 with thirty locomotives. The new Woodhead tunnel was officially opened on 3 June 1954 and full operation of both freight and passenger services between Manchester and Penistone commenced on 14 June. Electric operation of passenger services from Penistone to Sheffield started on 14 September 1954, but full freight working through Victoria station from Rotherwood sidings did not start until 5 January 1955. The final development in June 1965 permitted freight operation to and from Tinsley Yard.

I was sorry that the ex-North Eastern Railway's Shildon-Newport locomotives never saw service over Woodhead, as had originally been proposed. Also it was originally intended to construct twenty-seven of the Co-Co Class EM2, but later reduced to only seven. This I feel was unfortunate; twenty-seven would have been far too many but if we assume that the seven was made up of six available at all times, with one on standby or undergoing maintenance, my experiences suggest that at least twelve should have been built.

BR class EM2 electric no. 27005 'Minerva' waits at the end of platform 5 at Sheffield Victoria after arrival from Manchester. When the seven EM2s were exported to Holland in Sept. 1969, a year after withdrawal, no. 27005 suffered the fate of being dismantled for spares.

Although the Bo-Bo EM1s lasted until the line closed in 1976, and indeed gave very satisfactory service on freight trains, they were really an outmoded design from the start, too closely based on that of the NER locomotives. They had a "modern" body, with control equipment newly designed by Metropolitan-Vickers, who supplied all the electrical equipment. The mechanical equipment was manufactured at Gorton, where the locomotives were erected. The basic fault lay in the coupling of the bogies. The tractive force comes from the wheel-to-rail contact and it seems like a good idea to transmit that force directly from the bogies to the train, with couplings and buffers on the ends of the bogies. Thus the body simply sits on the bogies and does not have to carry traction and buffing loads. Unfortunately this means that the bogies cannot follow a "natural" path around curves, being pulled out of true by the centre coupling. This did not matter between Shildon and Newport, where the NER engines satisfactorily hauled 1000 ton trains at average speeds of 16 mph on descending and relatively straight track. But on passenger trains over Woodhead the EM1s were so hard on the much more sharply curved track from Penistone down to Sheffield that shortly after their introduction

the speed limit on that section had to be reduced from 70 to 60mph. On the other hand the Co-Cos were said to ride very smoothly, on bogies that were not coupled and of a design based very closely on those of the LMS diesels 10000 and 10001.

Incidentally I have stuck to the more common notation of Bo-Bo rather than the arguably more correct Bo+Bo (because the bogies were coupled), which was used by Metro-Vick in a booklet they published about the locomotives. And I have persisted in calling them EM1, which is what they were in the 1950s rather than the later TOPS Class 76.

During the transition period before electrification was extended to Sheffield and engines had to be changed at Penistone, I made one journey on the morning Liverpool Central to Hull, on Tuesday 21 June 1954. A full list of the engines involved may be of interest:

section	traction	distance
Liverpool Central to Manchester Central	unidentified Black 5	34¼ miles
Manchester Central to Guide Bridge	A5 no. 69805	11¼ miles
Guide Bridge to Penistone	EM1 no. 26029	23½ miles
Penistone to Sheffield Victoria	B1 no. 61036	13 miles
Sheffield Victoria to Doncaster	B1 no. 61137	19¼ miles
Doncaster to Hull	B1 no. 61145	40¾ miles
Total		142 miles

One train hauled by six different locomotives in 142 miles, with no double-heading and averaging less than 24 miles per locomotive. It is difficult to think of anywhere else in the world where this could have been daily practice, even if for only a short period.

My first westward run with electric power was unique, at least to my knowledge. On Friday, 23 July 1954, the engines were:

section	traction
Doncaster to Sheffield Victoria	B1 no. 61107
Sheffield Victoria to Penistone	B1 no. 61163 (a Gorton engine)
Penistone to Manchester London Road	EM2 no. 27002 leading EM1 no. 26009

This was the only time I ever saw or even heard of an EM2 working in combination with any other locomotive.

I made only two other journeys during the interim period, the first being when I went from Penistone to Doncaster via Barnsley as already mentioned. The other was on 3 September 1954 when the locomotives were:

section	traction
Doncaster to Sheffield Victoria	B1 no. 61157
Sheffield Victoria to Penistone	B1 no. 61028
Penistone to Manchester London Road	EM2 no. 27003

Both before and after full electrification came into operation, for the short run from Manchester Central to Guide Bridge, Gorton shed supplied an A5, B1 or K3 apparently indiscriminately – and whichever class was used, time was almost always lost. Once full electric operation was underway, the locomotive used between London Road (or Guide Bridge) and Sheffield, in either direction during this period, was often an EM2, though the EM1s frequently deputised (on roughly one journey in three) without any noticeable reduction in performance towards Sheffield. But in the opposite direction I gained the impression that, with a normal eight coach load, a Co-Co could climb at 60mph though a Bo-Bo seemed unable to achieve more than about 56mph. It was a pity that there were not enough Co-Cos for them to be used on all passenger trains.

After the completion of electrification my first journey was eastward on the 5.35pm from Manchester Central on 5 November 1954, as detailed earlier. My first journey towards Manchester was not until 13 December that year, from Hull to Manchester Central with engines nos. 62754, 61941, 27000 and 61161. After that, services followed the established pattern, although it may be worth mentioning a

couple of journeys that I made on the Liverpool-Harwich 'North Country Continental', as it had been commonly though unofficially known before the war. In 1955-56 it ran to Harwich Town, departing from Liverpool Central at 12.50pm powered by a Black 5 as usual, and departing from Manchester Central at 1.45pm and due into Sheffield Victoria, according to memory at 2.44pm. This would have given an easy connection with the only train of the day that ran from Sheffield Midland to Hull, departing at 3.10pm. This gave me a slightly different route from Manchester to Driffield. However when I checked the timetable at the NRM it showed the Harwich train arriving at Victoria at 2.56pm. Certainly the first time I travelled on the train it arrived at 2.44pm and I had an easy stroll to Midland. But the second time it arrived at 2.56pm and I had to make a fast run between the stations. I clearly had not checked for a change of timetable between the two dates, which were 28 January 1955 and 18 April 1956. The locomotives were, respectively:

section	traction on 28 Jan 1955	traction on 18 April 1956
Manchester Central to Guide Bridge	A5 no. 69823	K3 no. 61832
Guide Bridge to Sheffield Victoria	EM2 no. 27004	EM2 no. 27003
Sheffield Midland to Hull	D49/1 no. 62703	D49/2 no. 62757

No. 62757 was from Hull Botanic Gardens shed, which normally supplied power for this train, but 62703 was a Bridlington engine, a very rare visitor to Sheffield and obviously commandeered by Botanic Gardens, a reversal of normal practice, which was for the latter shed to supply engines to Bridlington in time of need. The distance from Sheffield Midland to Doncaster (and Hull, of course) was a quarter of a mile shorter than from Victoria. It is interesting to note that the non-stop services today between Sheffield and Doncaster take the ex-Midland route through the closed Rotherham Masborough station while stopping services deviate via the Holmes Chord onto the ex-GC to serve the reopened Rotherham Central (as it used to be called). I hope I have not diverged too far from the theme of trains over Woodhead.

On 11 April 1967 I had to attend an interview at Leicester. I travelled there by the Midland route but returned on the Great Central behind Gresley Pacific 60111 Enterprise. I looked forward to being able to travel regularly behind these engines but that was not to be; it was just about then that the GC line passed from Eastern Region control to the London Midland Region and the A3s returned to the East Coast Main Line.

My last eastward journey over Woodhead before starting work at Leicester was on Saturday 21 August 1957 en route from Caernarvon (as it was then spelt) to Driffield. I had stopped briefly in Manchester and then continued on the 5.35pm from Manchester Central to Hull with that train's usual succession of locomotives: 61121, 27005, 61387 and 61874. My final westward journey during this period, on Saturday, 24 August, was unusual in that I started in the "wrong" direction, from Driffield to Bridlington, in order to take advantage of a holiday train from the coast to Doncaster which ran via the Anlaby cut-off avoiding Hull. From Doncaster I had to go to Sheffield by bus (in those days trains between those places were very few indeed). I then proceeded from Sheffield Victoria to Dinting, to visit Kathleen. From Glossop onward to Manchester produced an aberration; the EMU went to Dinting as normal but then, for no obvious reason, returned to Glossop before reversing again to Dinting and continuing to London Road as usual.

Period 3: 1957 to 1960

By the time I started working at Leicester, the Great Central line's Gresley Pacifics had been replaced by Black 5s and B1s. On my first northbound journey on 'The South Yorkshireman', on Friday 20 September 1957, it was headed by a Black 5 and I quickly gained the impression that these engines would always be the motive power for this train, as indeed they were on all of my first twelve journeys. But on 21 March 1958 a B1 was provided, then a Black 5 two weeks later, after which there was a B1 for every one of the following eleven journeys, until 24 October 1958. After that the train was headed by either a B1 or a Black 5, apparently quite randomly.

I had the choice of changing at Sheffield or Penistone, with about half an hour to wait at either station. 'The South Yorkshireman', of course, ran from Marylebone to serve Sheffield, Huddersfield and Halifax. I cannot recall engines being changed at Leicester though it seems probable that they

were. On the first journey I changed at Penistone but ever after that it had to be Victoria, the buffet there was so much brighter and more comfortable than at Penistone. I won't detail all the engines used on the steam part of the journeys, except to mention that, between 29 November 1957 and 11 April 1958, no. 45208 appeared on seven runs out of nine.

West of Sheffield and hence over Woodhead, on all my journeys during this last period I travelled only as far as Dinting using a train that started from Victoria destined for London Road. On the first and second trips haulage was by EM1s nos. 26054 and 26053, respectively. Thereafter four EM2s were provided after which, from 21 February 1958 to 10 April 1959, of twenty-six runs all but one were with EM1s, the exception being on 16 January 1959 when EM2 no. 27005 turned up. I think this rather indicates that EM2s were normally allocated to the more important trains, those between Manchester Central and Hull or Harwich, and surely those between Manchester London Road and Marylebone (though I never noted whether I travelled on any of those). Certainly 'The South Yorkshireman' took the place of a Marylebone-Manchester working, so the connection from Sheffield to Manchester London Road possibly warranted a Co-Co but only rarely got one.

Kathleen and I were married in March 1959 and my regular travels to Glossop ceased. We visited her mother occasionally but more often used the Midland route to Manchester and so the only occasion when we travelled over Woodhead was between 2 and 5 July 1959, travelling from Sheffield to Dinting and back with EM2s in both directions. Sadly Kathleen's mother died at the end of January 1960 and so, except for the funeral, we never visited Glossop again until after I acquired a car.

BR class C14 4-4-2T no. 67445 waits in the bay at the south end of Doncaster station with its 2-coach train on the last day of the Penistone-Barnsley-Doncaster service in 1959. Someone has chalked GCR 1125 on the tank side. The condition of the loco is a bit different from those far off GC days. photo: John Law

Some General Comments

Initially all the electric locomotives were finished in lined black and without names, except for the LNER prototype, which was called Tommy by the Dutch enginemen during the period when it was loaned to Netherlands Railways to help with their post war reconstruction. This certainly enabled BR to find out in what respects the design might be improved. I would have loved to see Tommy in LNER apple green. Later the EM2s and those EM1s fitted with boilers for train heating received

names and were painted in lined "mud green" (as it was called at Doncaster). The new livery was certainly an improvement on the original black but I cannot now remember whether green was extended to all the EM1s. What I am sure about was that the later BR corporate blue was about the most awful colour ever inflicted on any locomotives – but that is just my opinion.

Mention of Tommy reminds me that on all my travels over the Woodhead line, though I saw no. 26000 on freight trains several times, I never once saw it on a passenger train. I came to the conclusion that for some reason it was not allowed on passenger trains, but this has since been disproved by photographs. Absence of a boiler would only exclude it in the winter, of course.

Modern locomotive enthusiasts may be interested in another aspect of travel on the Woodhead route that I have never seen mentioned; travelling out of Manchester London Road, in a distance of only three and a half miles, the line passed two locomotive running sheds, two major locomotive works and a smaller works. Immediately after Ashburys station, on the south side of the line, rather surprisingly but clearly visible, was the ex-Midland Railway's Belle Vue stabling point, with a few locomotives visible from the GC line. The line from Ashburys to Reddish, now Reddish North, had been a Midland and Great Central joint line. At Gorton, on the north side was Gorton Works and shed, and immediately opposite was Beyer Peacock's works. Lastly, just beyond Guide Bridge station and on the south side, was the former LNER Duckinfield wagon works, used in the mid-1950s by Metropolitan-Vickers as an erecting shop. If you kept a sharp lookout it was possible to catch a glimpse of aluminium bodied diesel locomotives for Coras Iompair Eireann. Even more interesting was the Metro-Vick gas turbine locomotive, BR no.18100. It stood outside for a while and was visible from passing trains, later it was moved inside and I was privileged to be able to view it both externally and internally during a visit with a party from the Institution of Locomotive Engineers, prior to the loco's conversion to become the experimental 25 kV electric E2000.

I hope the foregoing has given a reasonably correct impression of passenger trains over Woodhead and the lines connecting to it, and of the locomotives to be seen working them. Because my travels were somewhat limited in the variety of services used, particularly in that I did not travel often enough on trains to or from Marylebone, it may well be that V2s visited Manchester more often than I observed. As for the Pacifics, I have tried to ascertain whether any ever worked over Woodhead and am pretty sure that they never did. I am sorry that I did not take any photographs in the 1950s, though many are available from other sources.

Rare photo of Marylebone under construction?

This photo appeared for sale on ebay in Feb. 2007. Enquiry was made of the vendor who said that the photo was taken in 1897 by A.B.Hughes. Has any reader seen this photo before?

Day trip on the South Yorkshire Joint

by G. Freeman Allen

This article was originally published in 'Trains Annual 1959' and is reprinted by kind permission of Ian Allan Ltd. The author's compass bearings seem to be a little disorientated - he thinks that the ECML runs N-S and the SYJnt runs E-W. Reference to a map of the Potteric Carr area will show that the ECML is closer to E-W and the SYJnt is closer to N-S. Hence the editor's corrections.

A really engrossing book might make me overlook Peterborough and Grantham on an East Coast Route journey. But even if there was just a page to go to the unravelling of a particularly gripping whodunit as Black Carr Junction came into sight, I'm quite sure we would be the other side of Doncaster before I bothered about the solution.

It isn't just that to the southerner a glimpse of a "B16" 4-6-0 in the yards or a "D49" 4-4-0 in the station, apart from the physical boundary between the regions at Shaftholme Junction, gives Doncaster the air of a frontier town. It isn't only that Doncaster is the Eastern Region's most complex traffic centre, receiving traffic from and despatching it to almost all points of the compass. Nor am I, for one, only on the qui vive for what is new or refurbished out of the locomotive and carriage works. A lot of Doncaster's fascination is in those vaguely identified lines that criss-cross the district, and on which 2-8-0s bustle to and fro in a freight world of their own. One of my best-remembered railway experiences of recent months is a brake-van trip on one of these lines, when I found just how different that railway world is to the smooth proceedings on the East Coast main line from which I had had my only view of it before.

I was in Doncaster in the course of some researches into the Control system of the Eastern Region, the fruits of which were to appear in Trains Illustrated, and since the regulation of coal traffic from the South Yorkshire coalfield looms large in the affairs of the Doncaster Control Office the authorities had included in my programme a "field exercise" to see how the paperwork and telephone activity of the Controllers was translated into everyday action. That is how, one chilly morning of a pre-Christmas "bull week" in the pits, I found myself among the lively company of goods guards and shunters in a little shack hard by Carr signalbox, where the up Mineral Yard and Doncaster motive depot debouch into the main line south of Doncaster station.

The engine of my train, the 10.10 a.m. from Doncaster Up Mineral to Firbeck and Markham Main Collieries, was sluggish in coming off shed, but I at least wasn't unduly concerned. From a seat by the window I was enjoying a fine worm's-eye view of the down "Fair Maid" and "A3s" Nos. 60088 Book Law and 60069 Sceptre thundering up respectively on the 8.0 a.m. from Newcastle and the 7.53 a.m. from Sunderland, apart from the continual movements in Belmont Down yard on the other side of the main line, and comings and goings to and from the shed. In the unlikely event of traffic observation palling, the boisterous discussion between the guards as to the respective merits of Geordie and New England tea-mashing made entertaining eavesdropping.

At length the inspector who was to accompany me appeared from the yard with the news that our "02" 2-8-0 was just leaving the shed, and also with word that we weren't going to Firbeck after all: the guard had been on the telephone to Control and found that there was little to collect there, so we were to head for the neighbouring Harworth colliery instead. We weren't leaving the Mineral Yard empty-handed, for ahead of the 10.10's brake were half-a-dozen wagons of pit props for our second port of call, Markham Colliery.

The 10.10's brake-van was an antiquated Great Eastern six-wheeler for whose austere interior the guard was most apologetic. He needn't have been, for this relic was snug compared to the igloo of a standard B.R. brake in which I rode from Edge Hill to Stafford a year or two back and through which the draughts fairly whistled, despite our efforts to wall in the cracks with newspaper. That earlier experience had hardened me to this sort of travel, and I was well braced for the jerk when No. 63959 spoke up and set us in motion.

We ambled along the Coal Departure line alongside the Up Fast as far as Potteric Carr Junction and the exit from Decoy Up yard, then struck off to the left on a single line that sweeps round in a semi-circle, gaining height to join another single track coming up from the east (north - ed.) and with it to

bridge the East Coast main line north (west - ed.) of Black Carr Junction and close to Childer's Drain signalbox. Incidentally, have you ever wondered about the origin of these exotic junction and signalbox names in the area south of Doncaster? I have, and on this trip I found the answer. "Carr," I learned, is a technical term for reclaimed land, which described the whole territory hereabouts, for it was once marshland that was salvaged largely for the use of the railway - hence the various "Carr" signalbox names and, of course, Childer's "Drain". As for the "Decoys," that is simply explained by the fact that duck-shooting was a popular pastime in the marshes before the coming of the railway.

The junction we were now making with the other single line was named Low Ellers and marked our arrival on the South Yorkshire Joint Railway proper. The S.Y.J.R. was one of the latest and least known of the pre-nationalisation joint concerns. It began as a project of the Great Central and Midland Railways, who in 1901 drew up a scheme for a line from Brancliffe Junction, Shireoaks, on the G.C. Sheffield-Retford line, northward to the collieries at Dinnington and Maltby. A 3-mile section of the project was opened from Brancliffe East Junction to Dinnington in 1905, but by that time three other companies with a stake in the area had become interested in the scheme. A South Yorkshire Joint Railway was formed by the Great Central, Great Northern, Lancashire & Yorkshire, Midland and North Eastern Railways and authorised to carry the line on through the coalfield from Dinnington to a junction with the erstwhile South Yorkshire Railway proper, later the M.S. & L. and G.C.R., at Kirk Sandall, on the Doncaster side of Stainforth. This extension, which completed a line of 20⅝ miles from Brancliffe East to Kirk Sandall, was opened for freight traffic on January 1, 1909. In 1926 a branch was added from a point south of Tickhill & Wadsworth (Wadworth - ed.) to Firbeck Colliery, and another was led off this line in 1929 to Harworth Colliery and later carried beyond it into the East Coast main line at Scrooby (these 1926 and 1929 additions, incidentally, are not shown on the R.C.H. Sectional Maps of British Railways published in book form by Ian Allan in 1948). The South Yorkshire Joint had its own office in Doncaster until nationalisation, though in the latter part of the grouping years it was under the general control of the L.M.S. and L.N.E. Joint Committee No. 2, which administered also the Axholme Joint, the Swinton & Knottingley Joint, the Tottenham & Hampstead Junction, the Mid-Notts and the Otley & Ilkley as well as some joint stations, notably Normanton and Tebay.

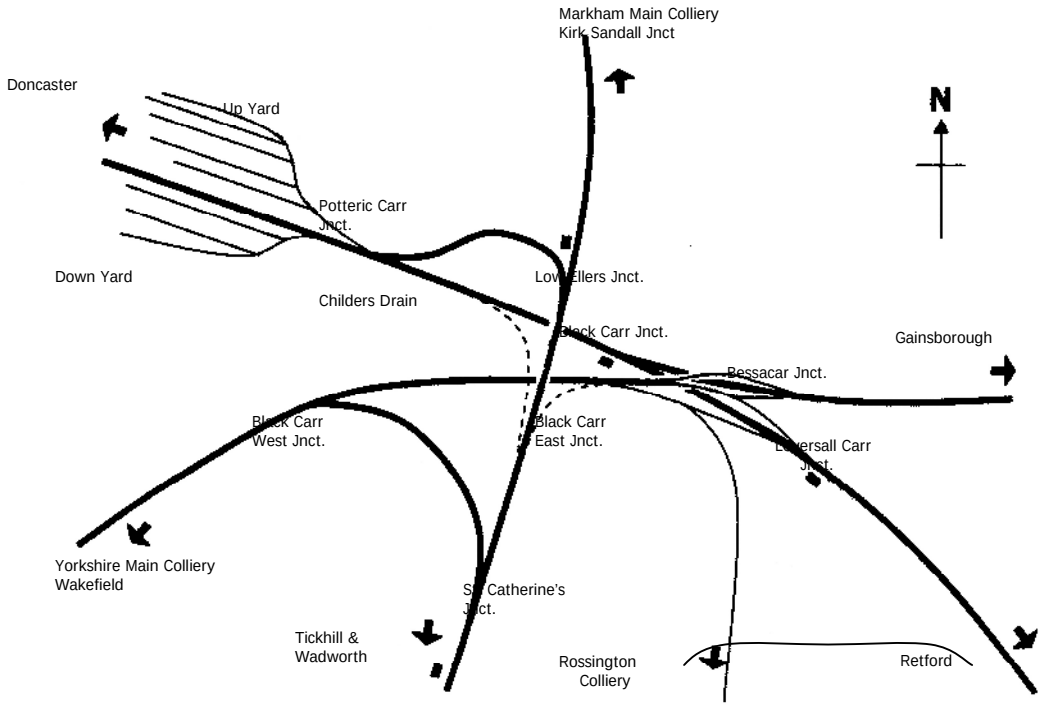
At Low Ellers Junction the single lines from Potteric Carr and the Kirk Sandall direction sort themselves into a ¾-mile long double-track section and our driver surrendered a token at the signalbox. The double track extends to St. Catherine's Junction and from this length of the South Yorkshire Joint there is an intriguing prospect of a maze of railways. The Joint Line bridges first the East Coast Route, and just to the south (east - ed.) you can see the Gainsborough-Lincoln route diverging from it at Black Carr Junction. Then we crossed over the ex-L.&Y. Dearne Valley line coming up from the Wakefield area to trail into both East Coast and Gainsborough lines, the connection to the latter bridging the Kings Cross route on a fine skew girder bridge. At St. Catherine's Junction a double-track link from the Dearne Valley line trails into the South Yorkshire from the right, and earthworks on the other side indicate that there was once a similar connection to the Dearne Valley line in the other direction, towards Black Carr; in fact, the tracks were removed from this south-to-east link in 1940 for wartime scrap and never replaced. Another line of earthworks in this area with a substantial bridge over the Dearne Valley line has never seen any railway; it was erected for a connection from the South Yorkshire Joint to Down Decoy yard, on the west (south - ed.) side of the East Coast main line, but there were second thoughts about this link and it was never put down.

The result of this curtailment of connections with the Joint line is that St. Catherine's box is rather larger than life requires of it these days, and many of the levers in its frame are spare. It also means that complicated movements are involved with some workings on the Joint line. My inspector companion pointed back to an "04" treading warily in the rear of us past Low Ellers, under the permissive working in force, and identified its train as a haul of empties from Hull to Rossington Colliery, near the station of that name south of Black Carr on the East Coast main line, which was taking the South Yorkshire Joint to avoid cluttering up the Doncaster station area. At St. Catherine's the "04" would have to back its train carefully down to the Dearne Valley line and then switch into forward gear. Manoeuvres of this kind are not the only purpose of this connection between the Joint line and the Dearne Valley, of course; a great deal of the S.Y.J. traffic is in empties and full loads

between the five collieries it serves and the L.M.R. via the Dearne Valley line and Crofton Hall yard in the Wakefield area.

At St. Catherine's we picked up the electric tablet for the dead straight 2¾-mile single track section to Tickhill & Wadsworth and ambled away through farmland that would have made a pleasant landscape on a fine day. But chilling rain was now beating down and the scenery looked very grey; you could barely see the pithead of Rossington Colliery to the south, though you could hear the shunting going on in the yard there. The station at Tickhill & Wadsworth looked well preserved, although it was 28 years since a regular passenger service last ran on the S.Y.J.R. This was put on by the G.C.R. between Doncaster and Shireoaks in December, 1910, and ran until December 2, 1929, by which time an L.M.S. and L.N.E.R.-owned bus company, the East Midland Road Car, was coping much more economically with the needs of the district, for the S.Y.J. stations were decidedly remote from the communities they served. The passenger service consisted of some four trains each way daily, calling at the three stations of Tickhill & Wadsworth, Maltby and Dinnington & Laughton, (and Anston! - ed.) and my friend Dr. Ransome-Wallis, who lived in the area before the grouping, remembers that it used to be furnished by G.C. 4-4-2 tanks with three or four M.S.& L. six-wheelers in tow. After the grouping the L.N.E.R. used on occasion to turn out ex-works tanks of other types, such as the "N1" 0-6-2s and G.N. 4-4-2s, on the S.Y.J. trains.

We were halted in Tickhill station as we had orders to pick up two more wagons of pit props from the yard there. These were for Markham Colliery, to which we were to retrace our steps later, and the inspector surmised that they had been dropped off a freight from the Dearne Valley at Tickhill to save passing them through the yards at Doncaster. Once more the S.Y.J.R. singled beyond Tickhill, so a token had to he collected from the box for the next 1¼ miles to Firbeck Junction "A" box.



The signalling arrangements over the next part of the trip were extremely interesting. The junction of the Firbeck branch with the Kirk Sandall-Shireoaks "main line" is triangular, and although all the approaches to the triangle are single, there is a double track on all three sides of the triangle. Firbeck Junction "A" box controls the two "main line" junctions and Firbeck "B" the branch junction, but the token instruments of the two cabins are interlocked so that freights off the main line, from either direction, hand in their tokens for the single line section they have just completed to the branch box, Firbeck "B", although the tracks they have just left are controlled by Firbeck "A". The purpose of this arrangement, of course, is to save the Firbeck "A" signalman a good deal of footwork from one junction to the other to make token exchanges.

I said signalman - but the occupant of Firbeck "B" cabin was a woman, and so was that of Harworth box. I gathered from the inspector that they were not the only two in the district: and heard, too, that many of the signalmen I have met, who keep their boxes in apple pie order and look daggers at any excess of ash on my cigarette, would not hold a candle to the immaculate condition in which these house-proud ladies maintain their cabins. The lady at Firbeck "B", having had word from Doncaster Control, checked that we knew we were to head for Harworth and not Firbeck, then sent us on our way.

Soon we were jolting to a stand again, at Harworth Junction, where the Harworth Colliery branch leaves the Firbeck line. The small signal cabin here is unmanned and the route is normally set for the Firbeck line, so that train crews heading for Harworth have to signal themselves. We clambered down on to the permanent way and into the little ground frame box, the guard having picked up our Firbeck branch token from the engine crew on the way; this token he inserted into the instrument, thereby unlocking the levers and enabling him both to move the points, and to extract a token for the Harworth branch. The "O2" and its short, train rumbled on to the Harworth line and the guard reset the points; his final signalling chore was to ring the Firbeck signalwoman and advise her that the Firbeck line was clear again, and then we thankfully climbed out of the rain back into the now snug brake-van.

Approaching Firbeck Junction from Doncaster behind a WD 2-8-0 in 1963. photo: John Law

Harworth Colliery is only 3⅜ miles from Firbeck "B" so it wasn't long before we were bracing ourselves for the jolts of another stop, this time at Harworth Colliery box, which controls the junction of the Scrooby line with the pithead sidings. Here the engine-crew handed over the token and we learned from the signalwoman that we had 22 loads to pick up, most of them in one of the four sidings. At some of the larger pits B.R. maintain their own shunters, who keep Control accurately

posted on their pits' loading and the destinations of the wagons - a great help to Control in the day-to-day shuffling of its freight workings to meet the varying demands of the yards and traders in the area - but at pits like this one, where the signalwoman was dependent on advice from the colliery staff for any information she could transmit to Control, it is quite common for the train crew to have no inkling of what awaits them until they arrive.

Harworth Colliery signal box in 1970. Photo: M.A.King

Safely stored in one of the three reception roads at the approach to the sidings, we had to wait for the Scrooby pilot, "O4" 2-8-0 No. 63736, to drag a string of wagons out of the colliery before we could get down to work. He ran round his rake alongside us, then set off, fighting for adhesion on the stiff grade in the Scrooby direction and leaving the field free for us. Servicing Harworth colliery, which produces some loads for the London area via New England, but mostly house coal for Northern Ireland via Garston and fuel for industry in the Hull and F'rodingham areas, is part of the Scrooby pilot's daily stint.

A word about the layout of the colliery sidings might be of use before I describe our mid-day comedy of errors. They are quite steeply inclined up to the screens beneath which the wagons are loaded, to make the marshalling work of the colliery staff easier; and they are maintained by the colliery - in the case of Harworth, from a point just beyond the switches from which the sidings fan. The combination of these two facts mean that shunting them is not the most trouble-free of tasks, particularly on a streaming wet day like the one of my trip. I heard from the inspector of how easily, and dangerously, one can be fooled by the behaviour of a rake of loaded wagons on the slope.Starting from the top you can lift brake after brake, almost to the end of the line, and nothing will move - then suddenly the last but one or two will be critical. Once the wagons start rolling the shunter will never regain control on his own. As for the standards of colliery maintenance, there is no need to retell some of the grim tales of the "six-foot" like a quagmire that I heard - what happened before we left the pit that day is adequate commentary.

The "O2's" first job was to run round our train, park the wagons it contained and then store our brake van at the front of a siding in which we had nothing to pick up, so that when the train had been assembled and drawn out into a reception road all the guard would have to do would be to release the brakes of his van and allow the slope of the sidings to get us on to the tail of the train by gravity. As the thick-set front end of the "O2" buffered up to our van and began to propel us into the sidings my inspector companion delivered himself of some caustic comment about a succession of C.M.E.s who had been assured by the men on the job that the old original Great Central "O4" 2-8-0s were unequalled for the rough and tumble of freight work in the coalfield - easy to maintain, easy to work and full of punch; but, he grumbled, jerking a scornful finger at the innocent smokebox door of No. 63959, they were all convinced they could produce something better.

Before we got down to the job there was a quick break for "snap", lunch to the uninitiated, for the engine crew, who climbed into the brake with their lunch boxes. Meanwhile the guard trudged away through the rain and mud to verify that our wagons were really in the sidings the colliery claimed they were (some of them, he discovered, were not). Your reporter, who had overlooked the fact that on a jaunt of this kind there isn't likely to be a restaurant within reach, manfully resisted warm

invitations to deprive his companions of some of their appetising-looking sandwiches, and made do with very entertaining conversation instead.

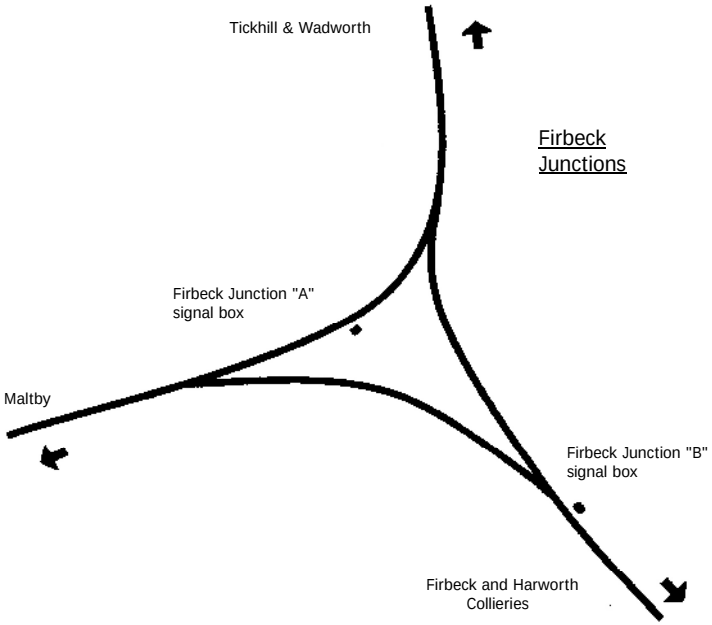
After that the inspector and I were left in the van while the "O2" began marshalling. It clanked past us up the slope into one of the sidings, propelling the wagons we had brought with us for Markham and slipping wildly on the greasy rails came to a stand about 40 yards away. We went on talking; the "O2" remained where it was, it blew off, and blew off again. We looked out and noticed that engine crew and guard appeared to be grouped in council down on the "six-foot", whereupon the inspector decided he had better discover what was wrong. I stood on the van verandah for a time, contemplating the gloomy outline of the colliery and the huge stacks of coke which (I gathered) it is becoming increasingly difficult to sell, then decided to venture into the wet and find out what was going on.

It appeared that the fireman had heard an ominous crack and sure enough, a rail of patently venerable age had broken after the engine had rumbled over it. There was no way out for the engine of an "O2's" bulk at the other end of the sidings and the driver wasn't prepared on his own responsibility to try backing over the break. The inspector, however, had undertaken to "carry the can". The driver had just begun to reverse very carefully when "crack", the rail broke in a second place, and 75 tons of 2-8-0 were nicely balanced on one side of a see-saw. Now, under the inspector's direction, a careful job of packing the damaged rail was in progress and very, very gingerly, while I in particular scanned the bare and sodden countryside in vain for any sign of alternative transport and crossed my fingers firmly, the driver was easing the engine back over the damaged rail. We held our breaths after the driving wheels had negotiated the see-saw, the pony truck nearly came adrift, but she made it. Our only losses in the end were a few chewed fingernails, three-quarters of an hour of operating time and the Markham wagons, which it was agreed were best not chanced over the broken rail; the colliery staff could easily switch them into another road via the screens end of the siding. It was just as well for our peace of mind that the inspector waited until it was all over before he recalled a similar instance where a driver, anxious to get home for a New Year's Eve party, hadn't been so diffident about chancing his arm, and had landed his engine squarely in the ballast. That had been a breakdown train job that had lasted well into the afternoon.

After that it didn't take long for the "O2" to assemble the rest of its load and for us to release the brake of our van and roll gently on to the rear of the train in the reception road. We left word with the Harworth signalwoman that no engine should be let into the siding with the broken rail, collected our token for the section to Firbeck Junction and soon got the road for the next stage of the trip, to Markham where we were going to detach the pit props and some loads for the Frodingham and Hull areas we had picked up from Harworth (which would be taken on by a following working travelling through Kirk Sandall and beyond), then retrace our steps to Doncaster.

At Firbeck Junction we were halted to allow a "WD" 2-8-0 with a haul of empties from Kirkby to the east (south - ed.) to take the single track in front of us. Kirkby Sidings, L.M.R., south-west of Mansfield, is one of the chief destinations and originating points of traffic on the South Yorkshire Joint. The route from Kirkby comes up via Langwith and Elmton & Cresswell into the Retford-Sheffield main line at Shireoaks West Junction, and there the Kirkby flow for the S.Y.J.R. merges with that from Worksop Sidings.

Before we resume my trip eastward (northward - ed.) from Firbeck Junction, a brief survey of the other arm of the S.Y.J.R. coming up from Shireoaks to meet us there might be interposed. Beyond Shireoaks, the route to the S.Y.J.R. is double track from Brancliffe East Junction to Dinnington Colliery Junction, 3¼ miles out, where it parts company with the former Great Central, Hull & Barnsley and Midland Joint branch to Braithwell Junction. At Braithwell Junction this latter joint line makes an end-on meet with a former G.C. and H.&B. Joint freight branch, 21⅜ miles long, that serves more pits on its way round the west of Doncaster to Aire Junction, on the H.&B. proper, and also with a former G.C.-Midland joint branch to Silverwood Colliery, which ultimately debouches both into the ex-GC Sheffield-Mexborough line at Thrybergh Junction and into the ex-Midland main line at Roundwood Junction.



The double-track from Brancliffe East, which was a G.C. & Midland Joint affair as far as the commencement of the S.Y.J.R. at Dinnington Junction, is reduced to a single line about ¾ mile north of Dinnington & Laughton station and the 4½ miles from Dinnington North to Maltby are operated with electric train tablets. Double track is resumed from Maltby station (where there is a connection to the nearby Royal Ordnance Factory) to Maltby Colliery South, a distance of just over ⅝ mile, and here another electric train tablet must be collected for the ¼ mile section to Maltby Colliery North; in addition to the single line proper, however, there are loop sidings between the two Maltby Colliery boxes. From Maltby Colliery North to Firbeck Junction "A" the 1⅝ mile section is operated with key tokens.

Our ramble back to the Doncaster area was uneventful, and as the rain was easing off I spent most of it on the brake van verandah. From this vantage point I noticed that there were still a good many vintage G.C. signals on the S.Y.J.R., although modern upper quadrants are infiltrating. I also had a suspicion, from some of the earthworks, that the line may have been planned with rather more double track than was actually laid down.

At St. Catherine's Junction a Stanier 2-8-0, No. 48351, was waiting on the connection from the Dearne Valley for us to pass, so that it could make its way to Firbeck and pick up a load for Crofton Hall. It kicked its heels for quite a while, for our boards were on and, crawl as we might in the hope of avoiding a dead stand, they refused to relent. So far as I was concerned, we couldn't have been checked in a better spot, for it poised me midway between the Dearne Valley and the East Coast main line with a grandstand view of both, just as an "A1" went galloping southwards with the London-bound "Northumbrian."

It was a down "V2"-hauled train coming off the Lincoln line at Black Carr Junction that particularly intrigued me during our long wait in the St. Catherine's-Low Ellers double-track section. While I had sat in the hut at Doncaster Up Mineral Yard earlier that morning I had particularly noticed an up train comprised of gleaming kitchen cars, restaurant cars (including an ex-streamliner articulated twin) and Pullmans; now here was the very same rake and 2-6-2 No. 60956 returning to Doncaster. This, the inspector told me, was the "Trial Stock," a regular routine with kitchen vehicles outshopped from

Doncaster works. They were assembled into a train and, with electricians and other works staff plus representatives of the restaurant car department, were run to Lincoln and back to test their kitchen equipment in "active service" before the cars were returned to work.

We were waiting patiently for westbound (southbound - ed.) traffic off the single line section to the east (north - ed.). It extends for just over 4 miles, apart from a loop midway at Markham Colliery, from Low Ellers to about half a mile from the convergence with the Doncaster-Stainforth line at Kirk Sandall Junction where double track recommences at a pair of points now spring-operated, but once controlled by a signalbox named Grange. We scanned the skyline, but for a long time could see only steam from the Markham pithead some two miles away, and the inspector hazarded a guess that the driver of the Frodingham-Firbeck empties we were waiting to cross might be one of the "dog-in-reverse" type, for whom water stand-pipes have a fatal fascination; he could well be stopping at Bawtry Road to top up his tender.

At length "O4" 2-8-0 No. 63696 hove in sight with a string of about 50 empties, its characteristically throaty "woof" sounding remarkably effortless in view of the load and the fairly severe gradient up to the bridges over the East Coast and Dearne Valley lines. This was the cue, of course, for another "plug" for the Robinson design by my companion. Certainly there was a great deal more labour in the gait of the following westbound (southbound) locomotive, "WD" 2-8-0 No. 90089, for whom we also had to wait. Racked to the frames by a rasping bark, she thumped past us on a drag of coal from Markham that consisted mainly of high grade fuel for Edge Hill locomotive depot in new all-steel hoppers branded with the shed's name. At St.Catherine's Junction she would reverse and propel her load down to the Dearne Valley.

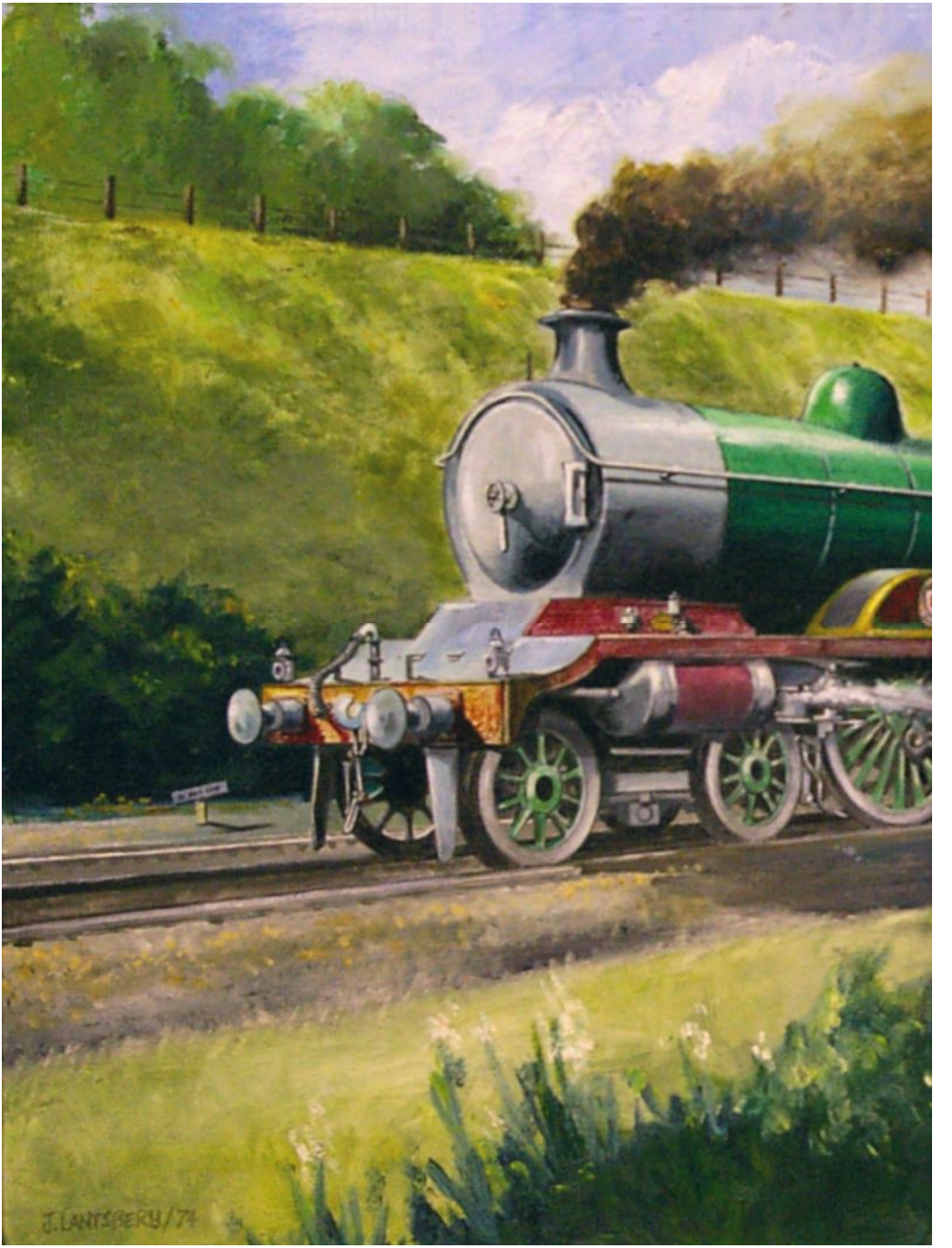
The incident at Harworth and the delay here had taken more time than there was to spare in my itinerary for the day, and before we restarted I managed to get word to the engine crew that I wouldn't be able to go through to Markham. Obligingly, they made an out-of-course stop at Bawtry Road, from which it was only a step or two up the cutting wall to the Great North Road and a bus into Doncaster for the "White Rose" back to London. But what I had had time to see now makes that network of lines in the Doncaster area even more worth dropping a book for when I am riding the East Coast main line.

St.Catherine's Junction looking north in 1969. Today the photographer would be stood under the M18 motorway.
photo: John Law

Firbeck Junction signal boxes on 3 Feb. 1985. Both out of use.
Photos by Bob Gellatly.

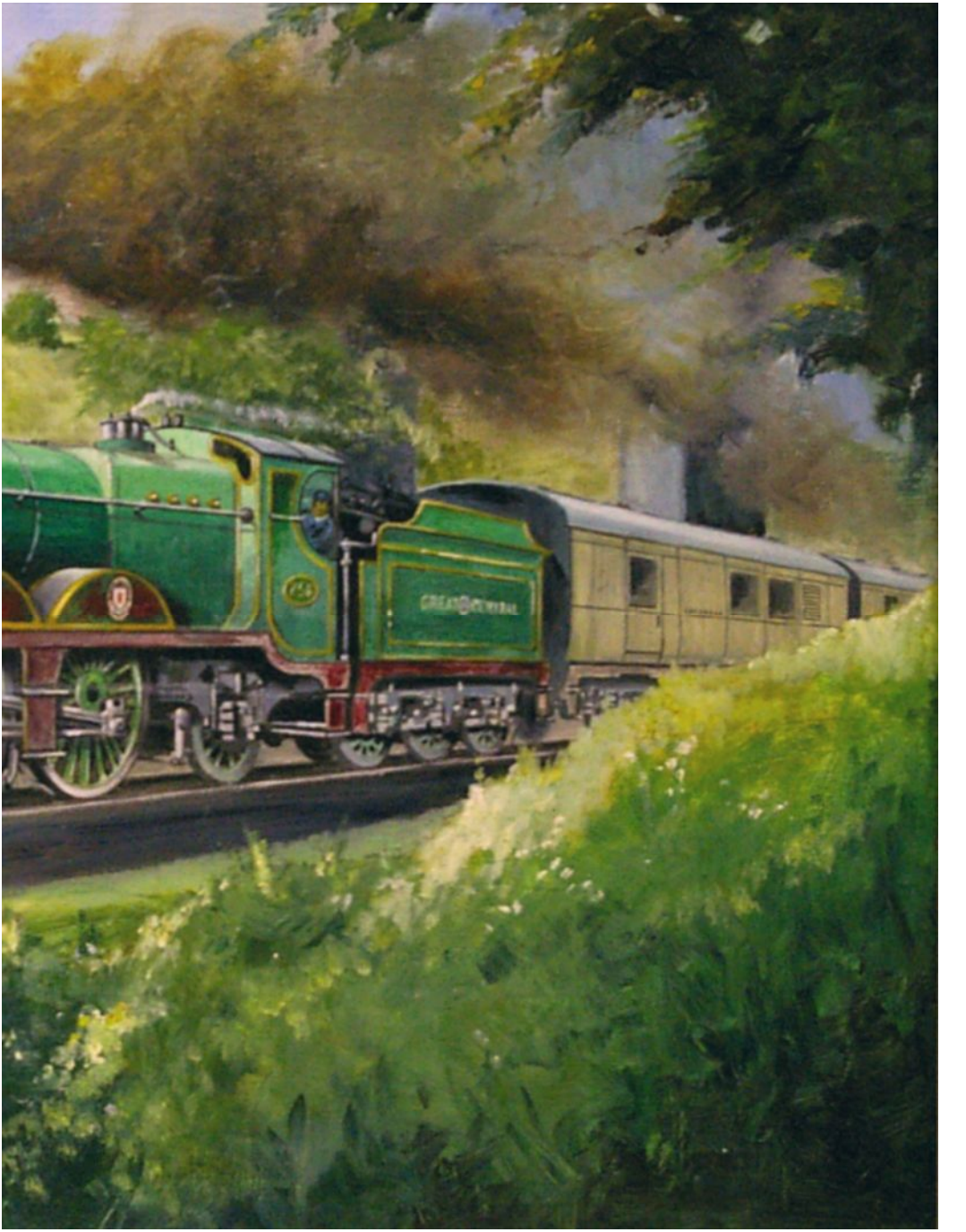
Firbeck "A" signal box viewed from the Doncaster direction. Colour light signal is controlled by Doncaster power box. Evidence of double track formation on the north-west curve is still visible.

Firbeck "B" signal box with disused north-east curve track in the foreground. Tickhill visible in the background.

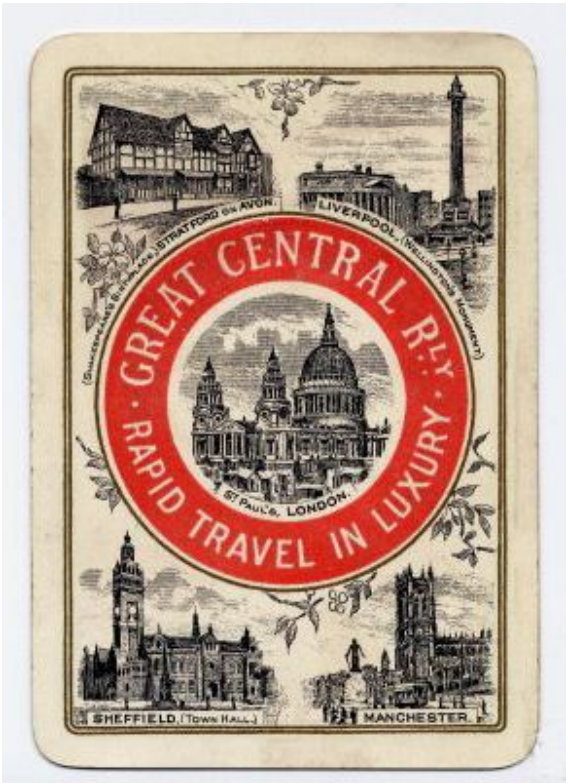


A GCR 'Atlantic' by J. Lantsbery

Reproduced by kind permission of the Nottingham Society Of Model and Experimental Engineers.



Finmere station sign. Auctioned by Railwayana.net for £5,100 in Sept, 2005.



GCR playing card (only one!). Auctioned on ebay. Sale price unknown.

GCR 1d parcel stamp. Auctioned on ebay. Sale price unknown.

GCR 6d parcel stamp. Auctioned on ebay. Sale price unknown.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY.

UNVEILING OF WAR MEMORIAL

— AT —

SHEFFIELD (Victoria Station)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9th, 1922.

TRAIN ARRANGEMENTS.

Passengers are requested to travel by the undermentioned Services.

STATION.	OUTWARD JOURNEY.					RETURN JOURNEY.				
	Departure Time.	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Sheffield arrive	Sheffield depart	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Destination arrive.
					p.m.	p.m.				p.m.
Althorpe	11 2 a.m.	Barnetby	11 26	12*16	1*37	4*20	Barnetby	5 37	6 43	7 19
Altrincham	11 45 ,,	Manchester (L.R.)	12 17	12*45	1*59	4*20	Manchester (L.R.)	5*32	5 42	6 5
Appleby	11 17 ,,	Barnetby	11 26	12*16	1*37	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 43	6 58
Arkwright Street	12 9 p.m.	Nottingham	12 12	12*51	1*41	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 25	5 28
Ashburys	12 18 ,,	Guide Bridge	12 29	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 25	5 38
Ashton-in-Makerfield	10 12 a.m.	Manchester (Cen.)	11 0	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (Cen.)	6 15	7 33	8 21
Ashton (P. P.)	12 18 p.m.	Guide Bridge	12 22	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 59	6 6
Ashton (O. Rd.)	12 19 ,,	,, ,,	12 24	12*59	1*59	4*20	,, ,,	5*18	5 40	5 45
Aylesbury	9 41 a.m	—	—	—	12 32	4 52	—	—	—	7 54
Baguley	9 15 a.m.	Godley	9 48	10 30	12 9	4 43	Godley	5 36	5 40	6 11
Banbury	11 25 ,,	—	—	—	1 51	4 17	—	—	—	7 24
BARNETBY	12*16 p.m.	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	5*37
Barnsley (C.H.)	12 20 ,,	—	—	—	1 13	5 25	—	—	—	6 21
Barton-on-Humber	10 35 a.m.	New Holland / Brocklesby	10 45 / 11 5	10 47 / 12*6	— / 1*37	4*20	Brocklesby / New Holland	5*48 / 7 5	6 46 / 7 35	— / 7 45
Beighton	12 37 p.m.	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	5 22
Belgrave & B.	11 28 a.m.	Nottingham	12 12	12*51	1*41	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 25	6 12
Bickershaw	10 0 ,,	Lowton St. Mary / Manchester (C.)	10 8 / 11 0	10 21 / 11 25	— / 12 42	4 43	Godley / Glazebrook	5 36 / 6 27	5 40 / 6 35	— / 6 55
Birch Vale	10 33 ,,	Guide Bridge	11 13	11 46	12 42	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 23	6 11
Birdwell	12 39 p.m.	—	—	—	1 13	5 25	—	—	—	6 1
Birkenhead	Via Liverpool (C.) §		—	11 5	1 16	4 43	Liverpool	6 33	§	—
Blyton	12 18 p.m.	—	—	—	2 10	4 26	Retford	5 0	5 10	5 43
Bollington	10 42 a.m.	Manchstr. (L.Rd.)	11 31	12*45	1*59	4*20	Manchstr. (L.Rd.)	5*32	5 45	6 32
Brackley	10 9 ,,	—	—	—	12 32	4 52	Woodford	7 21	7 40	7 54
Bradford	11 30 ,,	Penistone	12 51	1 25	1 48	4 6	Penistone	4 29	4 45	6 26
BRIGG	12*24 p.m.	—	—	—	1*37	4 26	—	—	—	5 44
BROCKLESBY	12*6 ,,	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	5*48
Broughton Lane	1 5 ,,	—	—	—	1 13	5 25	—	—	—	5 33
Buckley Junc.	8 12 a.m.	Connahs Quay / Chester / Manchester (C.)	8 25 / 8 48 / 10 48	8 30 / 9 25 / 11 25	— / — / 12 42	4 43	Liverpool / Seacombe	6 33 / —	¶ / 7 20	— / 8 17
Bulwell Common	11 12 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	6 49

* Special Train.

¶ Passengers to make their own arrangements for crossing between Liverpool (Central) and Seacombe.

§ Passengers to make their own arrangements for crossing between Birkenhead and Liverpool (C.)

Passengers are requested to travel by the undermentioned Services.

STATION	OUTWARD JOURNEY. Departure Time.	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	dep.	Sheffield arrive	RETURN JOURNEY. Sheffield depart	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	dep.	Destination arrive
					p.m.	p.m.				p.m.
Caergwrle Castle	7 49 a.m	Connahs Quay	8 25	8 30	—					
		Chester	8 48	9 25	—	4 43	Liverpool (C.)	6 33	¶	—
		Manchester (C)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Seacombe	—	7 20	8 29
Calvert	8 28 ,,	Leicester	10 19	11 7	12 32	4 52	Woodford	7 21	7 40	8 12
Charwelton	9 20 ,,	Leicester	10 19	11 7	12 32	4 52	Leicester	6 30	6 41	7 45
		Chalfont & L.	8 26	8 49	—	4 52	Aylesbury	7 53	8 10	—
Chesham	8 17 ,,	Aylesbury	9 20	9 41	12 32		Chalfont & L.	8 50	8 56	9 5
Chester (Northgate)	9 25 ,,	Manchester (C.)	10 48	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (C.)	6 15	6 40	8 35
Chesterfield (C.)	12 7 p.m.	—	—	—	12 53	4 52	—	—	—	5 20
Chorley Wood	8 42 a.m.	Aylesbury	9 20	9 41	12 32	4 52	Aylesbury	7 53	8 10	8 54
Claxby & Usselby	11 15 ,,	Lincoln	12 1	12 6	1 10	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 40	7 7
CLEETHORPES	11*35 ,,	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	6*19
Conisboro'	11 33 ,,	—	—	—	12 18	5 6	—	—	—	5 41
		Chester	9 14	9 25	—	4 43	Liverpool (C.)	6 33	¶	—
Connahs Quay & S.	9 0 ,,	Manchester (C)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Seacombe	—	7 20	8 3
Cottam	12 49 p.m.	Retford	1 5	1 15	2 10	6 12	Retford	6 48	7 35	7 52
Crowden	11 8 a.m.	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	5 48
Crowle	10 54 ,,	Barnetby	11 26	12*16	1*37	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 43	7 27
Culworth	9 5 ,,	Leicester	10 19	11 7	12 32	4 52	Leicester	6 30	6 41	8 2
Darnall	2 5 p.m.	—	—	—	2 10	5 2	—	—	—	5 9
Deepcar	1 34 ,,	—	—	—	1 48	4 23	—	—	—	4 44
Doncaster	11 52 a.m.	—	—	—	12 26	5 6	—	—	—	5 50
Dovecliffe	12 32 p.m.	—	—	—	1 13	5 25	—	—	—	6 7
Dukinfield	12 20 ,,	Guide Bridge	12 22	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 59	6 3
Dunford Bridge	11 24 a.m.	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	5 36
East Leake	11 53 a.m.	Nottingham	12 12	12*51	1*41	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 25	5 46
Eckington	12 27 p.m.	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	5 39
Edwinstowe	10 27 a.m.	Langwith Jc.	10 40	10 50	11‡46	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 49	6 40
Elsham	9 51 ,,	Doncaster	11 6	11 23	12 18	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 43	6 49
Fairfield	12 30 p.m.	Guide Bridge	12 34	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 25	5 30
Fallowfield	12 17 ,,	,, ,,	12 34	12*59	1*59	4*20	,, ,,	5*18	5 30	5 45
Fledboro'	11 24 a.m.	Lincoln	11 50	12 6	1 10	4 42	Lincoln	5 45	6 10	6 34
Finmere	10 1 ,,	—	—	—	12 32	4 52	Woodford	7 21	7 40	8 2
Frodingham	11 11 ,,	Barnetby	11 26	12*16	1*37	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 43	7 10
Garston	9 52 a.m.	Warrington	10 32	10 55	—	4 43	Godley	5 36	5 40	7 23
		Manchester (C.)	11 15	11 25	12 42					
Glossop & Dinting	12 52 p.m.	—	—	—	1 48	4 23	—	—	—	6 0
Glossop (Central)	12 40 ,,	Glossop and D.	12 44	12 52	1 48	4 23	Glossop and D.	6 0	6 2	6 5
GODLEY	1*7 ,,	—	—	—	1*59	4*20	—	—	—	5*12
Golborne	10 16 a.m.	Manchester (C.)	11 0	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (C.)	6 15	7 33	8 17
Goole	11 22 ,,	—	—	—	12 26	6 37	—	—	—	7 38
GORTON	12*51 p.m.	—	—	—	1*59	4*20	—	—	—	5*26
Goxhill	10 52 a.m.	Brocklesby	11 5	12*6	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 46	6 59
Grandboro' Road	9 0 ,,	Aylesbury	9 24	9 41	12 32	4 52	Quainton Road	7§45	8 6	8 15
Grassmoor	11 59 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	6 2
GRIMSBY Docks	11*45 ,,	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	6*11
Town	11*50 ,,	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	6*4
GUIDE BRIDGE	12*59 p.m	—	—	—	1*59	4*20	—	—	—	5*18
		Connahs Quay	8 25	8 30	—					
Gwersyllt	7 39 a.m.	Chester	8 48	9 25	—	4 43	Liverpool (C.)	6 33	¶	—
		Manchester (C.)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Seacombe	—	7 20	8 37
Habrough	11 17 a.m.	Barnetby	11 40	12*16	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 40	6 44
Haddenham	8 49 ,,	Princes Risboro'	9 0	9 15	—	4 52	Woodford	7 21	7 40	8 34
		Aylesbury	9 30	9 41	12 32					
Hadfield	10 56 ,,	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	5 56
Harrow-on-the-Hill	9 0 ,,	—	—	—	12 32	4 52	—	—	—	8 33

* Special Train. ‡ Sheffield Midland. Return from Sheffield Victoria.

¶ Passengers to make their own arrangements for crossing between Liverpool (Central) and Seacombe.

§ 4.52 p.m. from Sheffield will call at Quainton Road to set down passengers.

Passengers are requested to travel by the undermentioned Services.

STATION.	OUTWARD JOURNEY.					RETURN JOURNEY.				
	Departure Time.	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Sheffield arrive	Sheffield depart	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Destination arrive
					p.m.	p.m.				p.m.
Hawarden	8 20 a.m.	Connahs Quay	8 25	8 30	—					
		Chester	8 48	9 25	—	4 43	Liverpool (C.)	6 33	¶	—
		Manchester (C.)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Seacombe	—	7 20	8 11
Hazlehead Bridge	11 30 ,,	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	5 30
Healing	11 6 ,,	Barnetby	11 40	12*16	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 40	6 55
High Wycombe	8 57 ,,	Aylesbury	9 30	9 41	12 32	4*13	—	—	—	7*16
		Connahs Quay	8 25	8 30	—					
Hope Village	7 57 ,,	Chester	8 48	9 25	—	4 43	Liverpool (C.)	6 33	¶	—
		Manchester (C.)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Seacombe	—	7 20	8 26
Hucknall Tn.	11 19 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	6 43
Huddersfield	12 14 p.m.	Penistone	12 51	1 25	1 48	4 6	Penistone	4 29	4 45	5 25
Hull (Par.)	10 50 a.m.	—	—	—	12 26	6 37	—	—	—	8 11
Hyde	11 6 ,,	Guide Bridge	11 13	11 46	12 42	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 23	5 31
Hyde Junc.	11 10 ,,	Guide Bridge	11 13	11 46	12 42	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 23	5 27
Hyde Road	12 27 p.m.	Guide Bridge	12 34	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 30	5 37
Immingham	10 12 a.m.	Goxhill	10 35	10 52	—					
		Brocklesby	11 5	12 * 6	1*37	4*20	Grimsby Town	6 *4	†	—
Kilnhurst	11 48 a.m.	—	—	—	12 18	6 15	—	—	—	6 38
Kirton Lindsey	12 4 p.m.	—	—	—	2 10	4 26	Retford	5 0	5 10	5 56
Langwith Junc.	10 50 a.m.	—	—	—	11‡46	6‡20	—	—	—	7 22
Langworth	11 42 ,,	Lincoln	12 1	12 6	1 10	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 40	7 34
LEICESTER	12*18 p.m.	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	5*37
Lincoln	12 6 ,,	—	—	—	1 10	4 42	—	—	—	5 45
Liverpool	11 5 a.m.	—	—	—	1 16	4 43	—	—	—	6 33
LONDON (M'rybone)	10*10 ,,	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	7*51
Lostock Gralam	10 15 ,,	Manchester (C.)	11 7	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (C.)	6 15	6 40	7 30
LOUGHBORO'	12*32 p.m.	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	5*24
Lutterworth	10 34 a.m.	Leicester	10 50	11 7	12 32	4 52	Leicester	6 30	6 41	7 10
Macclesfield	10 35 a.m.	Manchester L.R.	11 31	12*45	1*59	4*20	Manchester (L.R.)	5*32	5 45	6 38
MANCHESTER (L.R.)	12*45 p.m.	—	—	—	1*59	4*20	—	—	—	5*32
Market Rasen	11 23 a.m.	Lincoln	12 1	12 6	1 10	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 40	7 15
Marple	10 52 a.m.	Guide Bridge	11 13	11 46	12 42	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 23	5 43
Medge Hall	10 35 ,,	Doncaster	11 6	11 23	12 18	6 37	Doncaster	7 12	8 0	8 29
Mexboro'	11 41 a.m.	—	—	—	12 18	5 6	—	—	—	5 34
Mobberley	10 35 a.m.	Manchester (Cen.)	11 7	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (Cen.)	6 15	6 40	7 11
Moortown	11 4 a.m.	Lincoln	12 1	12 6	1 10	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 40	6 56
Mottram & B.	11 44 a.m.	Glossop and D.	11 50	12 52	1 48	4 23	—	—	—	6 5
Neepsend	12 5 p.m.	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	4 26
Neston & Parkgate	9 7 a.m.	Seacombe	9 30	¶	—	4 43	Liverpool	6 33	¶	—
		Liverpool (Cen.)	—	11 5	1 16		Seacombe	—	7 20	7 52
New Basford	11 7 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	6 53
New Clee	11*40 ,,	—	—	—	1*37	4*20	—	—	—	6*15
New Holland	10 47 ,,	Brocklesby	11 5	12 * 6	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 46	7 5
New Mills	10 39 ,,	Guide Bridge	11 13	11 46	12 42	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 23	6 4
Newton	11 34 ,,	Glossop & D.	11 50	12 52	1 48	4*20	Godley	5*12	5 22	5 25
North Kelsey	11 0 ,,	Lincoln	12 1	12 6	1 10	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 40	6 52
Northorpe	12 10 p.m.	—	—	—	2 10	4 26	Retford	5 0	5 10	5 49
Northwich	10 10 a.m.	Manchester (Cen.)	11 7	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (Cen.)	6 15	6 40	7 38
NOTTINGHAM	12*51 p.m.	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	5*4
Oldham (Clegg St.)	12 9 p.m.	Guide Bridge	12 24	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 40	5 56
Penistone	1*42 ,,	—	—	—	1*59	4*20	—	—	—	4*43
Pinner	8 23 a.m.	Aylesbury	9 20	9 41	12 32	4 52	Northwood	8 26	8 47	8 51
Princes Risboro'	9 15 ,,	,,	9 30	9 41	12 32	4 52	Woodford	7 21	7 40	8 44
Quainton Road	9 11 ,,	,,	9 24	9 41	12 32	4 52	—	—	—	7§45
Quorn	11 40 ,,	Nottingham	12 12	12*51	1*41	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 25	6 0

* Special Train. ‡ Sheffield Midland Station.

¶ Passengers to make their own arrangements for crossing between Liverpool (C.) and Seacombe.

† Passengers to make their own arrangements between Grimsby Town and Immingham.

§ 4.52 p.m. from Sheffield will call at Quainton Road to set down passengers.

Passengers are requested to travel by the undermentioned Services.

STATION.	OUTWARD JOURNEY.					RETURN JOURNEY.				
	Departure Time.	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Sheffield arrive	Sheffield depart	Change at	Connection times at Junction. arr.	Connection times at Junction. dep.	Destination arrive
					p.m.	p.m.				p.m.
Retford	11 41 a.m.	—	—	—	12 20	4 26	—	—	—	5 0
Rickmansworth	8 36 ,,	Aylesbury	9 20	9 41	12 32	4 52	Aylesbury	7 53	8 10	8 59
Rotherham & M.	12 2 p.m	—	—	—	12 18	5 6	—	—	—	5 20
Rotherham Road	11 56 a.m.	—	—	—	12 18	8 50	—	—	—	9 14
Ruddington	12 2 p.m.	Nottingham	12 12	12*51	1*41	4*13	Nottingham	5*4	5 25	5 35
RUGBY	11*52 a.m.	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	6*6
Ryhill	9.59 a.m.	Barnsley	10 20	10 45	—					
		Penistone	11 10	11 40	12 9	5 25	Barnsley	6 21	6 50	7 12
St. Helens	10 0 ..	Manchester (Cen.)	11 0	11 25	12 42	4 50	Manchester (Cen.)	6 15	7 33	8 32
Sale	11 55 ,,	,, (L.R.)	12 17	12*45	1*59	4*20	,, (L.R.)	5*32	5 42	5 57
Sheepbridge	12 11 p.m.	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	5*49
Silkstone	12 22 ,,	Penistone	12 30	12 59	1 16	4 23	Penistone	4 58	5 20	5 27
South Elmsall	9 34 a.m.	Doncaster	9 50	9 57	10 33	5 6	Doncaster	5 50	6 0	6 17
				noon						
Southport	10 10 ,,	Manchester (Cen.)	11 44	12 0	1 16	4 50	Warrington	6 49	7 10	—
							Hunts Cross	7 37	7 45	8 43
Stainforth	10 49 ,,	Doncaster	11 6	11 23	12 18	6 37	Doncaster	7 12	8 0	8 15
Stallingboro'	11 8 ,,	Barnetby	11 40	12*16	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 40	6 52
Stalybridge	12 15 p.m.	Guide Bridge	12 22	12*59	1*59	4*20	Guide Bridge	5*18	5 59	6 10
Staveley Town	12 22 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	5 39
,, Works	12 16 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	5 44
Stockport	9 32 a.m.	Godley	9 48	10 30	12 9	4 43	Godley	5 36	5 40	5 56
Stoke Mandeville	9 16 ,,	Aylesbury	9 20	9 41	12 32	4 52	Aylesbury	7 53	8 10	8 16
Swinton	11 44 ,,	—	—	—	12 18	6 15	—	—	—	6 41
Thorne	10 42 a.m.	Doncaster	11 6	11 23	12 18	6 37	Doncaster	7 12	8 0	8 22
Thornton Abbey	10 56 ,,	Brocklesby	11 5	12*6	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 46	6 54
Tibshelf Town	11 44 ,,	—	—	—	12 53	5 2	—	—	—	6 20
Tickhill	9 22 ,,	Worksop	10 0	10 22	10 45	5 6	Doncaster	5 50	5 52	6 7
Torksey	12 45 p.m.	Retford	1 5	1 15	2 10	6 12	Retford	6 48	7 35	7 56
Tuxford	11 14 a.m.	Lincoln	11 50	12 6	1 10	4 42	Lincoln	5 45	6 10	6 48
Ulceby	11 2 a.m.	Brocklesby	11 5	12*16	1*37	4*20	Brocklesby	5*48	6 46	6 49
Upton	8 57 ,,	Seacombe	9 8	¶	—	4 43	Liverpool	6 33	¶	—
		Liverpool	—	11 5	1 16		Seacombe	—	7 20	7 34
Wadsley Bridge	12 1 p.m.	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	4 31
Wakefield (Westgate)	10 23 a.m.	Doncaster	10 47	11 52	12 26	5 6	Doncaster	5 50	6 0	6 46
Warsop	10 35 ,,	Langwith Junc.	10 40	10 50	11‡46	6‡20	Langwith Junc.	7 22	7 30	7 35
Widnes	10 13 a.m.	Warrington	10 32	10 55	—	4 43	Godley	5 36	5 40	7 2
		Manchester (C.)	11 15	11 25	12 42					
Wigan	9 50 ,,	Lowton St. M.	10 8	10 21	—	4 43	Godley	5 36	5 40	—
		Manchester (C.)	11 0	11 25	12 42		Glazebrook	6 27	6 35	7 5
Winsford & Over	9 25 ,,	Cuddington	9 42	9 52	—	4 50	Manchester (C.)	6 15	6 40	—
		Manchester (C.)	10 48	11 25	12 42		Cuddington	7 49	9 32	9 49
Winteringham	8 25 ,,	Scunthorpe	8 50	—	—					
		Frodingham	—	9 1	—	4*20	Barnetby	5*37	6 43	§
		Doncaster	9 41	9 57	10 33					
Wombwell	11 44 ,,	Stairfoot	11 54	12 25	1 13	5 25	Stairfoot	6 14	6 47	6 52
Woodford & Hinton	11*35 ,,	—	—	—	1*41	4*13	—	—	—	6*26
Woodhouse	1 58 p.m.	—	—	—	2 10	5 2	—	—	—	5 15
Worksop	12 46 ,,	—	—	—	1 10	4 26	—	—	—	4 49
Wortley	11 47 a.m.	—	—	—	12 9	4 23	—	—	—	4 48
York	11 45 a.m.	—	—	—	12 50	6 30	—	—	—	7 45

* Special Train. ‡ Sheffield Midland Station.

¶ Passengers to make their own arrangements for crossing between Liverpool (C.) and Seacombe.

§ Arrive Frodingham 7.10 p.m. No service forward from Scunthorpe.

Marylebone Station,
London, N.W. 1.
July 31st, 1922.

SAM FAY,
General Manager.

(1,500).

Knapp, Drewett & Sons Ltd., 30, Victoria Street, S.W. and Kingston-on-Thames—2478 G.C.

All roads led to Sheffield on 9th August 1922

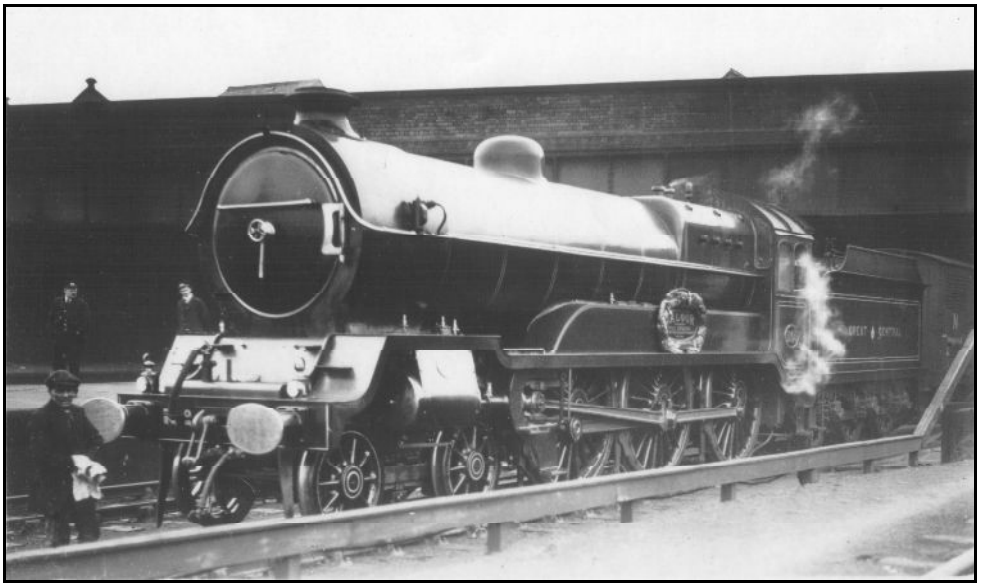
by Ken Grainger

August 9th, 1922 was of course the date of the unveiling of the Great Central Railway's memorial to its 1,304 Great War dead. The estimate of 8,000 people having congregated in Sheffield Victoria's forecourt to witness the event has often been repeated, but in this age of mass car ownership probably very few have paused to wonder just how did they all get there? The answer, for the vast majority of those other than locals, would have been by Great Central Railway train.

Sheffield had been selected for the siting of the memorial because of its central position within the Great Central network but even so, for this unique occasion, the Great Central had augmented its normal passenger train timetable by 'Specials' converging on Sheffield from the extremities of the system to bring the friends and families of the fallen to pay their respects and then to convey them back home again.

With appropriate military precision, the Great Central published the appended 'Train Arrangements', asking intending passengers to travel to and from the event by specific trains, including where and into what other service they should change, if necessary. It is fascinating to retrace the journeys made by mourners from their various corners of the system from these Train Arrangements. On what was obviously a very sombre occasion (with the weather making its own dreary contribution to the mood), the comings and goings at Sheffield Victoria must nevertheless have presented a glorious sight that day.

Very appropriately, the Great Central's war memorial locomotive, class 9P 4-6-0 no.1165 (soon to become LNER class B3 no.6165) Valour headed the 12.45 pm 'Special' from Manchester London Road, whilst Field Marshall Earl Haig, who was to perform the unveiling, travelled with the Great Central hierarchy in the Directors' Saloon coupled at the rear of the 10.00 am Luncheon Car Express from Marylebone, equally appropriately behind another class 9P 4-6-0 no.1166 Earl Haig. That would have had them in Sheffield for about 1.30 pm, in ample time for the 3 o'clock unveiling, even with such preliminaries as the Field Marshall's inspection of the Guard of Honour of GC ex-servicemen, each of



The Great Central war memorial locomotive, class 9P 4-6-0 no.1165 'Valour', worked the 12.45pm 'Special' from Manchester London Road on 9th August 1922. She is seen here at Guide Bridge on her way back to Manchester after the 1923 Armistice Day ceremony.

whom had been decorated for gallantry. However, the general public would have been congregating well before then. Travelling by the specified trains, amongst the earlier arrivals, would have been those travelling by the 'stopper' due into Sheffield Victoria at 12.09 pm, bringing passengers from the Woodhead line's wayside stations which Valour would later hurry through without stopping. They would include a contingent from the CLC line through Stockport Tiviot Dale, joining at Godley, and others from around Barnsley joining at Penistone, though interestingly those from Barnsley itself were steered towards the 12.20 pm from Court House station, due into Victoria at 1.13 pm.

Arriving at about the same time but coming on foot up the station approach would have been those from the former Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast territory, directed to connect into the 10.50 am from Langwith Junction which would travel over the 'Clog and Knocker' to Beighton, thence via the Sheffield District through Catcliffe and Attercliffe to get them into Sheffield's Midland station at 11.46 am. This is a reminder of the Mansfield–Sheffield joint service inherited by the Great Central along with the LD&EC in 1907, worked by Midland engines and LD&EC carriages. Whilst those from Warsop were to return by the same route, those for Tuxford were directed to travel by way of Lincoln and those for Edwinstowe via Nottingham, doubling back over the Mansfield Railway! I wonder if everyone did as they were told?

Regardless, it was inevitably a long, wearisome day for some. Pity those travelling from far-flung Gwersyllt or Caergwrle Castle, on the GC's former Wrexham, Mold & Connah's Quay outpost, travelling by no less than four trains with successive changes at Connah's Quay, Chester Northgate and Manchester Central, then returning via Liverpool Central from where they must make their own arrangements for crossing the Mersey to Seacombe from where they would complete their journey.

Worse off still was anyone travelling from Winteringham on the remote North Lindsey Light Railway, who had at best ten minutes to get from the NLL's Scunthorpe station to the GC proper at Frodingham, before changing again at Doncaster to be kicking their heels in Sheffield as early as 10.33 am. For their return, a change at Barnetby would get them to Frodingham at 7.10 pm but, it will be noted, with "No service forward from Scunthorpe"! Whether anyone made the trek from the North Lindsey Light we don't know. Mercifully, there was only one NLL fatality, Sapper Arthur Gravill (appropriately of the 98th Light Railway Operating Co., Royal Engineers) formerly employed at Normanby Park, whose parents Herbert and Jenny Gravill lived at Bottesford Moor, Ashby, Scunthorpe. I wonder if they made the journey ?

If they did, they would have travelled homeward as far as Barnetby on the returning Grimsby and Cleethorpes 'Special', aboard which would also have been Hannah Fell and her eight year old daughter, Kathleen, from Peploe Lane, New Holland, where Hannah had gone back to teaching after the August 2nd, 1917 death at Ypres of her husband, Fred, late of the 20th Kings (Liverpool) Regiment. In her ninetieth year, Kathleen made the journey once again for the rededication of the GC memorial in November 2003, to lay a wreath in honour of her father and in memory of her mother, Fred's widow for sixty years – she had never remarried.

Surprisingly, passengers from even such major stations on the GW & GC Joint as High Wycombe and Princes Risborough were requested to dawdle along the sleepy single-track branch through Little Kimble, to catch the 9.41 am from Aylesbury. They would there have been joined by those from the Met & GC Joint line's lesser stations, including the Chesham branch via a change at Chalfont & Latimer. The return journey was by the same route, so if William and Elizabeth Hodgkison had made the journey from Kirtle Road, Chesham to honour their son, Cyril, late of the 1st Royal Berkshire and killed in June, 1918 at Saulty, they wouldn't have been back in Chesham until turned 9 o'clock.

Among other slight eyebrow-raisers is that passengers from Wigan had to change into a train from St. Helens at Lowton St. Mary, when the other way round would have seemed more likely, but you can plot the train times and connections for yourself. By all means, remember the sombreness of the day and why all these people were making their journeys. For the vast majority of them this was the nearest they were going to get to a funeral for their lost sons, husbands, brothers, or whatever. But nevertheless, plan your own journeys to mourn the Great Central's war dead at Sheffield Victoria that day. Imagine standing on Sheffield Victoria's platforms as successive trains pulled in behind representatives of the GC's full range of passenger locomotives, with perhaps the odd goods engine

pressed into service for good measure. Envisage each one disgorging its complement of soberly attired mourners, then retiring to the sidings to make way for the next arrival and to be serviced, before the business of getting everyone back home again got under way from round about 4 o'clock. It must have been absolutely fascinating.

Mourners travelling from former Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast stations were requested to connect into the Mansfield – Sheffield Midland joint service worked by a Midland locomotive and ex-LD&EC carriages. This is an undated view of Midland class 2P 4-4-0 no.351, carrying a Sheffield (25) shed code plate, with a rake of LD&EC six-wheelers at Langwith Junction on a Sheffield-Mansfield joint service. photo: Vic Forster Collection

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GC War Memorial Rededication, November 11th, 2003 - DVD

Members will be delighted to know that a DVD is now available of that momentous 2003 Armistice Day, when the Great Central Railway War Memorial was rededicated in the forecourt of the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn, Sheffield.

The 55-minute DVD has been very professionally produced by Mark Palmer, the son-in-law of the War Memorial Sub-Committee Chairman, Kevin Curran. It includes atmospheric 'stills' from the initial unveiling of the memorial in 1922 and covers all aspects of the rededication: from the gathering of the throng and the proud marching into place behind their splendid standards of the ex-servicemen's associations; the magnificence of the Kings (Waterloo) Band and the poignant reverence of the memorial's rededication; the naming of GB Railfreight's new Valour locomotive and the addresses in the hotel ballroom. Those who were at Sheffield's Royal Victoria Holiday Inn in November 2003 will enjoy reliving the experience through Mark's DVD, while those who could not be there will wonder at what our President pronounced as "a day of days".

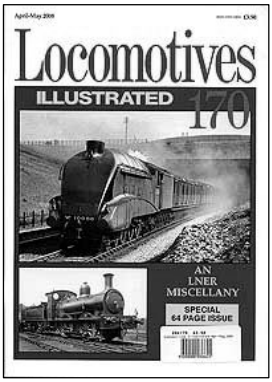
Copies of the DVD in an attractively jacketed case may be obtained for £12.50 each from:

Mark Palmer
27B Brixington Lane
Exmouth
EX8 4HW

Ken Grainger

Book Review

"Locomotives Illustrated no. 170: An LNER Miscellany".
A special 64 page issue, A4, soft covers, 108 monochrome illustrations. Edited by Brian Stephenson. RAS Publishing, Double Houses, Charing Heath Road, Charing, Ashford, Kent, TN27 0AT. Price £3.50, (£4.40 including UK postage).



This is a memorable edition of a favourite source of railway history. After 170 issues, Locomotives Illustrated has come to the end of its 33 years of publication under the editorship of Brian Stephenson, and for students of the LNER, the contents of this issue contain a good deal of interest, dealing with locomotives not so far covered. Many of these are getting on for a hundred years since their introduction (some even older) but, in contrast to these veterans, we have Gresley's unique no. 10000, and his final design, and in my view one of his most useful, the V4 2-6-2s. The bulk of this issue, however, covers the older 4-4-0s of the Great Central, Great Eastern and North British Railways, together with the GCR's larger goods tank engines and the GER class F3 2-4-2Ts.

The photographs are of the high standard which has been a feature of Locomotives Illustrated, but some may be picked out for special mention. These include a full page close-up of no. 10000 in 1931 heading the 'Junior Scotsman' at Grantham with a K3 in the background on standby duty, and another, in its rebuilt form, at Waverley. There are nice action photos of Bantam Cock climbing Cowlairs bank, and piloting a 'Black 5' out of Aberdeen. The majority of the illustrations are of the older pre-Great War locos, and to me one of the attractions is a study of the various chimney outlines! If it came to a contest, what about awarding the prize to Robinson for his elegant tapered version? But there is plenty to be seen to satisfy students of the three pre-grouping lines, such as GC locos no. 431 on a CLC local, no. 440 outside Manchester Central, and no. 872 puffing away from Knutsford, and not to be overlooked are three LD&ECR 0-6-4Ts lined up outside Tuxford shed. From the GER, we see large tender numerals, single window cabs, Holden tanks with stovepipe chimneys, and a nice shot of no. 745 crossing the Trowse swing bridge hauling a five coach train, every carriage being different. North British locos include no. 320 leaving the Mound tunnel at Edinburgh with a northbound express and an almost majestic front view of no. 9695 at Kinross Junction, although my favourite is of no. 10387 at Inverkeithing, set off by an advertisement for Scott's Porage Oats in the background.

The text is provided by Bill Aves in his usual descriptive way, supplemented by a summary of the locomotives concerned, with principal dimensions. For this special issue we have an index of the subjects of each of the 170 issues of Locomotives Illustrated and a promise that the title will be continued as Modern Locomotives Illustrated under the editorship of Colin Marsden. A number of past issues of Locomotives Illustrated are still available from the publishers, and from booksellers Robert Humm of Stamford and Henry Wilson of Sedbergh.

Geoffrey Hughes

A Station Master's Memories of Finmere : Part 2

by Gerald Summerfield

My next door station master in the northerly direction was at Brackley (Central) and he was quite a local celebrity, in as much that he belonged to the local Chamber of Commerce and Lions etc. He was therefore quite often out on the town after office hours and being a man who liked his drink his return home was not always in the most soberly fashion. If he was "On Call", which occurred every other week, at a time that clashed with one of his engagements, he would ask me to look out for him from close of work until 23:00 hours. This I readily did, but on one occasion, after a particularly heavy session, he failed to turn up for work the next morning and that being a Friday when he was responsible for getting the cash to pay out the staff of four stations besides his own. The alarm bells were ringing in my office at 09:00 with the station staff at Brackley asking how they were to get the men's wages. His duty was to go to the bank and obtain from them the cash for the wages at his station, Brackley (Central) and also for Culworth, Helmdon, Finmere and Calvert. In those days every one was paid in cash and although the small stations had only six or seven station staff they were responsible for paying the local Permanent Way gangs and these consisted of the ganger, sub-ganger and at least two or three platelayers as well. In view of the length of the sections between stations I was, for example, responsible for paying out three such gangs in addition to my own staff of three porters, three signalmen and myself, giving me a total of twenty one staff to pay, so the amount involved was quite considerable for those days.

The cash was obtained in bulk from the bank and then split into the various station totals and placed into a sealed cash bag and despatched to the station concerned on the next suitable train, the bags being signed for both by the guard and by the porter who received it at the other end. The cash for Culworth and Helmdon was sent on the 10.15 train from Brackley, which was my 09.57 departure, which was the first train I could get to Brackley on, let alone go to the bank and get the money and make it up for the same train! After some discussion on the telephone it was found that the day's takings at Brackley plus my own could just cover the wages for those two stations, therefore all this official "Traffic" cash was used to overcome the first problem. The next problem was how to get the money from the bank as my signature was not recognised by the bank. Luckily the cash for the remaining stations was not due to leave Brackley until 12.55, so we had a little time to think things out. I decided that if the station master at Brackley was in a fit state to sign the demand note and with a telephone call from him to the bank manager perhaps he could coax the bank to let me have the money instead of him. This eventually we arranged and I went to the bank and obtained the money by signing his name. The bank clerk looked a bit quizzical when I signed the regular station master's name when he knew that he was short and fat and I was tall and thin, but the bank manager had done his part very well. So everyone got their wages as usual and only about four people knew of the devious means that had been employed to get it to them on time!

At one point in time I had a vacancy for a porter's position and in line with the practice at that time I was allowed to "hire and fire" as necessary in the lower grades. A person was set on and duly trained in the various duties, one of which included the trimming and servicing of all the oil signal lamps. The lamps were serviced on various days of the week either by the early or late turn porter and all were designed to last a week of continuous burning. This person had been shown how to do this and had been to the signals to see how the lamps were placed into the signal lamp casing and how not to interfere with the light repeater equipment which told the signalman if the lamp should at any time fail. This person very soon took over duties on his own but during his first week come midnight, luckily on a fine night, the signalman came to my door and informed me that the up distant light was out. That signal was situated about a mile from the station in the northerly direction. So out of bed I was raked and after getting dressed and getting a re-trimmed lamp from the station I set out along the track. On arrival at the signal some thirty minutes later I was surprised to find a signal lamp burning away merrily at the base of the signal post and another lamp in the lamp casing about forty feet up in the air completely out! I put the new lamp in the signal lamp casing and returned to the station with the other two lamps. When the trainee porter took duty later that day I asked what had happened about changing the signal lamp and he replied that he was afraid of heights and no way was he ever going up a signal post to change lamps! Needless to say he was sacked within a week.

When interviewing for his replacement I asked if they had any fear of heights as I did not want any more midnight strolls on that account.

It is often said that old customs die hard and that was proved to me by one of my signalmen, who had worked on the Great Central Railway and then on the LNER. As was always the case each railway had its own book of rules and regulations. Finmere had been part of the GCR/LNER but by the time I arrived it had become part of the London Midland Region of British Railways, but was still working to the LNER rules as the first British Railways Rule Book had not been issued. In the GCR rules, if a signalman exhibited a green hand signal waved slowly from side to side from the signalbox it indicated to the driver of a freight train that he was to be shunted from one line to another for a passenger train to pass. In the LNER rules the same hand signal meant to a driver that his train was divided and that he should proceed into the next section with a view of reducing the impact if the rear portion of his train should catch up with him. Imagine my surprise when I first saw him using this signal and the train coming to a stand almost immediately and then start to come backwards to the other line. Even after my seven years at Finmere he still continued to use this signal and no amount of talking to by myself or the district inspector would change his mind. Incidentally the LNER version was adapted by BR as it was in use in that form by the other three railway companies. In all other respects he was a first class signalman although at times a little awkward with his colleagues over such trifles as to cleaning the signalbox windows and getting the coal in at the change of shift.

Finmere Station House on 2 April 2006. The station house was on the down side of the line. The station entrance was between the two bridges carrying the up and down lines. photo: Roger Marks

Part of my duties was to work every other Sunday on the early turn, otherwise the porters would never get a day off. Needless to say it also came in handy from a financial point of view as all Sunday time was paid at standard rate plus three quarters which meant that for an eight hour turn I was paid for fourteen, a very useful contribution to the housekeeping! These duties meant that you were on duty alone and you had to deal with anything that came along. It was on one of these days that I received a message that there was a pig in a crate in the front guards van of the 09:57 down train.

On arrival of the train, and me expecting a small pig in a small crate found on opening the guards van doors a very large pig in a very large crate. The whole lot must have weighed at least five hundredweight. With the assistance of the guard, driver, fireman and myself we managed to get it onto a four wheeled platform barrow, but in so doing delayed the train ten minutes which would have to be explained later to the District Office. My next problem was to get rid of the pig to the farm that was expecting it. There was no reply on the telephone so a taxi was called, not to deliver the pig, but to leave a message to the effect that a pig in a crate was waiting to be collected from the station. Which it duly was in the mid-afternoon.

During my time at Finmere there were only two regular named expresses which passed through the station, once in each direction each week day. They were "The Master Cutler" and "The South Yorkshireman", although for a time I had "Starlight Specials" on Friday and Saturday evenings only. The latter ran between London (Marylebone) and Edinburgh. Each one of the regular named trains came to a grinding halt on one occasion during my stay and the circumstances are as follows. Taking "The South Yorkshireman" first, which was the 10:00 from Bradford (Exchange) to London (Marylebone), which was due to pass through Finmere about 14:00, the signalman rang me to say that he had been told by Brackley that there was a hot axle box on one of the coaches in the middle of the train. The standard procedure of bringing the train to a stand outside the signal box was carried out and I went along the train to find the offending vehicle which turned out to be the restaurant car. The axle box was very hot and there was no way that I was going to let the train proceed with that vehicle still attached. The guard was told and then came the problem of moving all the passengers from that coach into another as the dining car conductor was adamant that as all the passengers were still enjoying the second sitting of lunch and the main course had only just been served there would be a long delay! Additionally he was not going to leave the wines, spirits, and cigarettes behind at Finmere as he was responsible for the cash value of the stock. After some discussion it was agreed that the passengers would forgo their sweet and coffee and be charged less and the Conductor would transfer all his stock into the guards van. Then came the problem of uncoupling the affected vehicle. It was at that time usual for the same formation of vehicles to be kept together for quite long periods and changes were only made at the home depot, which in this case was Bradford, as the turn round time in London before the train returned to Bradford was just under two hours and the service was maintained by one complete set of vehicles. The coaches were fitted with standard LNER buck-eye couplings and these had not been uncoupled for several months and no matter how the guard or myself struggled we could not get them apart. Eventually with the aid of the fireman, driver and various crowbars and tools from the locomotive we managed to get the offending buck-eye coupling apart and the defective vehicle shunted into the sidings. The latter movement also entailed hand clipping the points as the connections were not fitted with the necessary safeguards (facing point locks) for shunting loaded passenger trains over them. Fortunately the second coupling was not so difficult to undo and the train departed some seventy minutes late. The return working that evening had no dining facilities to offer to the tired business men returning to the Midlands and the North. As a result of this incident instructions were issued that all fixed formation trains had to be split, coach by coach, at least once a month and I can remember seeing the "Master Cutler" vehicles all lined up in Neasden sidings with about a six foot gap between every coach! It was possible to do this at the London end of its journey, although the coaches were maintained in Sheffield because the turn round time was from approximately 11:00 to 18:15.

The second incident affecting the second named train was to "The Master Cutler" and this taught me two very important lessons; firstly never to be swayed by people senior to yourself when you feel that safety is involved and secondly never to recommend any awards until you have looked at the circumstances surrounding the incident from every possible viewpoint. The incident in question was started off by the fireman of the 07:45 down train from Marylebone to Leicester, due at Finmere at 09:57, who came to me on the platform saying that he thought there was a broken rail on the up line about two miles from the station just beyond the first overbridge. With this he departed on his way leaving me to think things over. I did not have a lot of time to think as the next train in the up direction was "The Master Cutler" due past Finmere at 10:12, so I went straight to the signal box and told the signalman not to pull the signals off for this train as I had reason to believe that there was a broken rail about two miles south of the station. Again the train was brought to a stand outside the

signal box and the driver informed of the circumstances which entailed the line being examined by an engine on its own as it was forbidden to use a loaded passenger train for this purpose. At this point, and on requesting the fireman to uncouple the engine, I became aware of another person on the footplate besides the driver and fireman and this turned out to be the chief motive power inspector for the line who proceeded to say that if everything was found to be normal I should be reported for unnecessary delay to an important train and that he personally would see that I got the necessary reprimand and possible loss of position. His whole attitude was not very friendly to say the least. I had armed myself with the necessary written authority from the signalman for me and the engine to return to Finmere in the wrong direction on the up line should it be necessary and with this in my pocket we proceeded to examine the line. We passed the first overbridge without finding anything and went on slowly to the second, but still drew a blank, and I was beginning to think that the Fireman must have been mistaken, and with the inspector getting hotter under the collar every minute, I was about to tell the driver to stop and return to Finmere when after passing under the second overbridge there appeared in front of the train what appeared to be a black mark on the inside rail. We came to a stand just short of this object and on alighting from the footplate and walking forward I found the top running surface of the rail was missing for a distance of two or so feet! The driver and inspector had by this time joined me and I asked the driver if he would be prepared to take his train over the defect at slow speed to which he replied in no uncertain terms "not on your life" or words to that effect. He said, and I agreed, that he would probably make it with the engines larger driving wheels but not with the small bogies or for that matter the wheels of the carriages.

The inspector became more subdued and asked how we were going to get back to Finmere, whereupon I produced the signalman's written authority to do just that, to which he replied that I had thought of everything. We made our way slowly back to the station and during this move the driver thanked me for possibly saving his and other people's lives for if the train had gone over that rail at a speed in excess of 60mph, there could have been a major derailment with the train finishing up anywhere.

On arrival at the signal box I had then to arrange for Single Line Working to be put into operation by my next door station master as it was easier for him as he could travel over the line remaining open in the right direction. He did this with the 10:00 Marylebone to Manchester express and "The Master Cutler" left me at 11:30, an hour and fifteen minutes after it had arrived. The rail was replaced later that day by the local ganger and his men. I, of course, made a full report to the District Office in which I recommended that the fireman of the down train be given an award for his keen observation and initial reporting to me of the possible broken rail. Some months later I saw the same fireman on the same train and I asked him if he had received any award for his reporting of the broken rail, to which I received a very curt reply saying that he had been given a day off without pay for failing to stop his train and protect the defect before proceeding to Finmere to report it to me! So ended my second lesson from that one incident.

The only other incidents I had affecting express trains was the need for some of the special trains returning from Wembley from various Cup Finals having to stop at Finmere due to them being short of steam as the line was uphill from Calvert and any locomotive that was not 100% fit was soon found out. This was quite common when up to twenty such trains were run on a Saturday and the choice of engines meant that some of the lesser well maintained specimens were brought into passenger service. The "Starlight Specials" on Fridays and Saturdays suffered the same problem. I often wondered how late some of them were by the time they arrived at Edinburgh if they were in trouble before they had gone the first 100 miles with another 300 miles in front of them. Admittedly most of the locomotives were scheduled to be changed at least twice en-route but I doubt if the schedule would allow them to make up all the lost time as usually they were late before stopping at Finmere due to the engines steaming badly all the way from London.

One could say that there is never a dull moment in the life of a station master but that would be far from the truth for in fact there were periods when everything went along smoothly for several weeks on end but then all of a sudden circumstances would change dramatically as illustrated by the incidents related. The uncertainty of not knowing when and what may happen next was one of

reasons why so many railwaymen craved to become station masters and it certainly kept one on ones toes so far as the safety rules and regulations were concerned. To illustrate this I will mention one or two "problems" that arose during my time at Finmere.

As was the usual practice on the railways at that time every station was visited by the auditors at least twice a year and no previous notice was given to the station master of their intended visits. On one such occasion when it came to the auditing of the books relating to the hire and return of grain sacks (which I had the misfortune to hire out somewhere in the region of five thousand a year to the local farming community) it was found that I was one sack short. At the time the charge to the hirer was 1¾d per sack for the first week of hire and then 1d per sack per week thereafter, so we were loosing revenue at the rate of 1d per week until this sack could be found. After much fruitless searching of the goods shed for the missing sack it transpired that the error was in the number hired to a particular farmer of which he had returned them all but one. I set off to the farm to see the farmer concerned and on arrival he naturally denied all knowledge of the missing sack and as the meeting took place as he walked from cowshed to cowshed and across the farmyard, he saying that he could not spare the time to stop and talk about one miserly sack when he had other more important things to do. On entering one of the sheds I noticed that as we went in we walked over what looked to me like a folded sack being used as a door mat and on being asked if I could look at the object he realised that it was a railway sack and he let me take it back to the station and thereby satisfy the Auditor that all was not lost. A suitable account was sent to the farmer for the period that he had used the sack as a door mat.

Another incident involving a sack came about later when a down freight train pulled into the station with both the driver and fireman riding on the outside of the cab and clouds of steam enveloping the footplate. It transpired that there was a burst steam pipe on the footplate and that the train would have to be terminated as quickly as possible and the engine fire thrown out before the boiler blew up! The only way to protect the fireman from the scolding steam whilst he threw the fire out, after the train was in the siding, was to wrap several wet sacks round his body and this we did. Unfortunately during this operation one of the sacks got badly burnt and therefore had to be sent away for repairs, together with a full report as to how it had become so damaged. The ensuing correspondence of why it had been necessary to use sacks in the first place and how one had become damaged had to be seen to be believed before I was credited with a reduction in my allocation of one sack to satisfy the auditors on their next visit. Incidentally the engine was later towed away dead to Woodford Halse motive power depot for repairs.

Saturday 19th July 2008 :"The Nene Valley Wanderer"

Proposed itinerary for the GCRS (London Group) trip to the Nene Valley area

Watford Junction station	Main start point / Pick up at 09:00
Wellingborough London Road	Site visit
Wellingborough Midland Road	Pick up if required at 10:15
Rushden old station	Site visit
Irthlingborough old station	Site visit
Thrapston Bridge Street old station	Site visit
Thrapston Midland Road old station	Site visit (including Nene Viaduct)
Raunds old station	Site visit depending on time available
Kimbolton old station	Site visit depending on time available

Wellingborough passengers may need to return by train from Bedford Midland.

There will be a stop for a pub lunch en route.

Please contact Richard Butler (01525 372487)
to book a place on the coach.

On Great Central lines today
by Kim Collinson

The derailment reported in the last issue as being at Barnetby actually occurred at the Foreign Ore Junction at Scunthorpe and the train involved was 6M49 08:00 Immingham to Rugeley PS worked by 66507 hauling 18 MGR wagons and operated by Freightliner Heavy Haul. Although only one wagon was derailed there was considerable track and point damage as the train continued quite a distance further on from the point of the derailment. This resulted in the route being closed between Scunthorpe and Barnetby from the 25 January to 2 February.

On Friday 21 March a route-learning trip from Derby and return brought a class 47 loco 47812 to the Deepcar branch. It was observed on its return journey passing Wadsley Bridge at 10:16. Also on the same day the evening steel train from Aldwarke passed Wadsley at 18:15 worked by 60082. Steel traffic to Stocksbridge has now increased considerably with trains running 7 days a week.

It has been announced that, from 2010, £25 million is going to be invested in five new tram style lightweight trains to operate all services over the Penistone route for a two-year trial.

The continuing saga of Woodhead Tunnel continues with an announcement from the Department of Transport that the tunnel should be maintained for future rail use, yet at the same time Network Rail and the National Grid are still at odds with each other over the ownership issue and the Grid have already started doing work in the New Tunnel at the Dunford Bridge end.

The new freight terminal at Tinsley on part of the site of the former main yard is now complete but at present no firm is using any of the facilities and no rail traffic is operating. The sidings for the steelworks have been relocated at the yard's western end and a daily train from and to Immingham as well as occasional workings to Liverpool still use these sidings.

On Saturday 5 April a railtour from Wolverhampton to York passed through Guide Bridge worked by class 37 locos 37401/37405.

The new railway company, Wrexham & Shropshire Trains, have begun running tests and route-learning services to and from Marylebone since the last week in February. Trains have consisted of three Mk 3 coaches top-and-tailed by class 67 locos. Over the Easter period a sleeping car was also included in the formation. The locos involved have included 67002 / 003 / 016 / 017 / 020 / 021 / 024.

Since the beginning of April the contract for the movement of household waste from the Greater Manchester area to Scunthorpe has passed from EWS to Freightliner and on 2 April the 09:39 from Bredbury to Roxby passed through Guide Bridge unusually worked by DRS 66427 on hire to Freightliner.

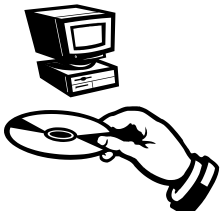
An electric loco passed through Guide Bridge on the afternoon of 15 April when DRS 37038 hauled 86902, in yellow livery, from York to Crewe. The class 86 is now used as a Network Rail engineering vehicle.

Since the beginning of the year around a quarter of all the weekday services through Penistone have been worked by class 158 units.

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 : kim.collinson@btinternet.com.

Backnumbers of Forward on CD

Eric Latusek has offered to provide backnumbers of Forward on CD to GCRS members. Initially this will consist of issues 1 to 63. The cost will be £20. If interested please contact Eric (see front cover for contact details).



Proposed Great War Cemeteries Tour

I am hoping, if there is sufficient interest, to organise in conjunction with Leger Holidays of Rotherham a coach tour to Northern France and Belgium, either later this year or perhaps in Spring 2009, specifically to visit Great War cemeteries in which ex-Great Central Railwaymen lie.

Leger Holidays are renowned and very experienced organisers of battlefield tours, and would be very happy to collaborate in planning a tour to meet our specific requirements. The cost per person would be in the region of £240 or £300, depending on whether a three or a four night stay is involved. This will cover local coach pick-up, travel and daily excursions with a dedicated guide, plus accommodation with breakfast at a three-star hotel which would be centrally situated so that individuals may, if they wish, miss an excursion in favour of exploring the locality (who mentioned shopping?). The cost is for two sharing a room – there would be a supplement for single room occupancy.

I have in mind visits to the Somme and Ypres Salient areas for a three-night stay, plus Arras/Loos if an extra day is decided upon, but in either case, subject to accessibility, we would include some of the ex-GC fallen's less frequented final resting places.

If you are interested, with absolutely no obligation whatsoever, please contact me (address inside front cover) stating any preferences regarding date and length of stay or specific places you would like to visit. An SAE would be appreciated.

Ken Grainger

The Great Central Railway on the Internet

www.annersleyfireman.com

By Chris Ward. A site for photos and memories of Annesley Loco. An interesting feature is the link lists of locomen who worked at Annesley in 1958 as posted by the Link Clerk. If you have any first-hand experience of working at Annesley then Chris Ward would like you to contact him. If you view the site with sound on you will hear hear the sounds of steam on the GC main line, including the classic recording of a class V2 roaring through Princes Risborough on an August night in 1958.

www.metroland.org

A site for memories of Amersham station on the Metropolitan Railway. As well as archive material there is also coverage of more recent events. There are also mileage charts and timetables. Since the line was also used by the GCR/LNER there is much of interest to Forward readers. Matthew Jones is the webmaster.

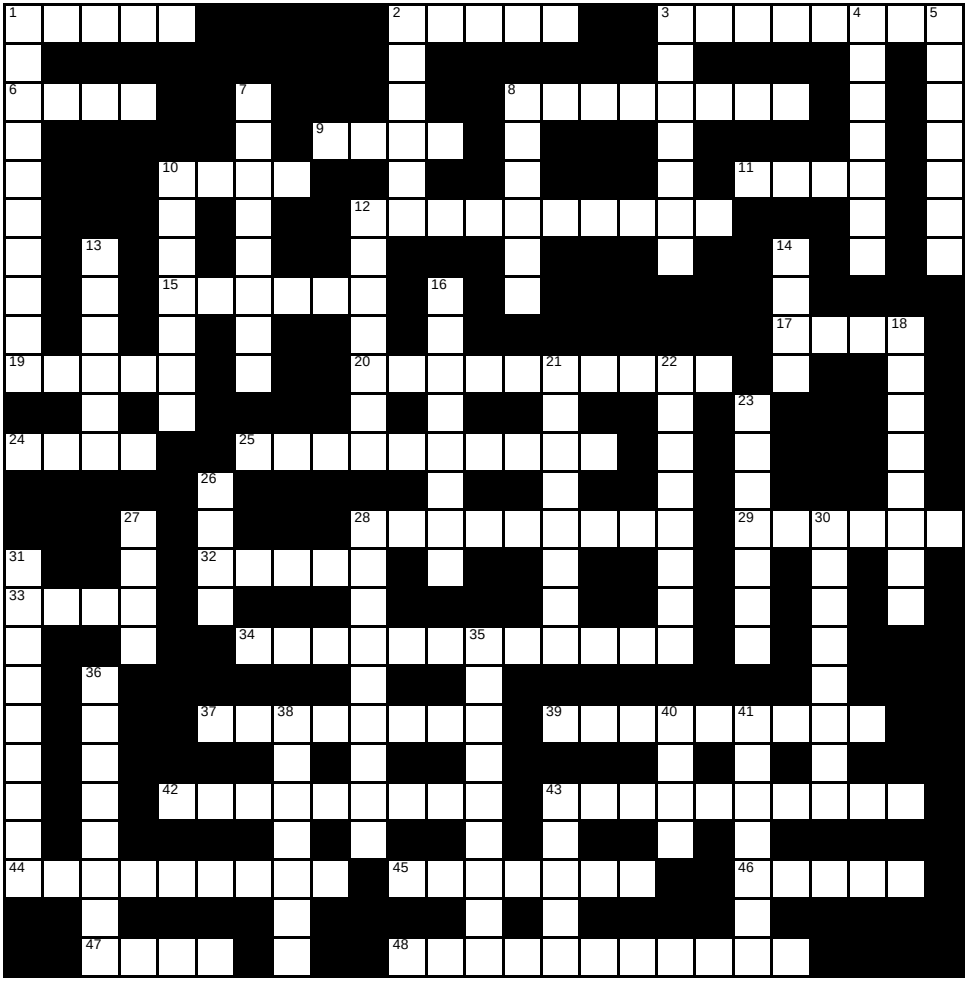
www.eb-prints.co.uk

Most readers will be familiar with the Eric Bottomley painting of The Wicker in Sheffield; a small facsimile appeared on p27 of Forward 153. This website displays all the prints currently available for sale. Other locations of GC interest such as Leicester and Nottingham are represented. Eric likes to include trams and other forms of transport in his paintings giving them a wider appeal among transport enthusiasts.

www.greatcentralduckinfield.co.uk

Peter Birchill, the author of this site, is writing a history of the Duckinfield Carriage & Wagon Works. He hopes that visitors to the site will be able to help him with photos and information. He can be contacted at peter@greatcentralduckinfield.co.uk.

Crossword (Forward 156) : Answers in the back of this issue



Across

1 Shed (also station in US). (5)
2 Colour of Stanier's class 5MT. (5)
3 Fan shaped window over a door. (8)
6 You don't want to go over a broken one! (4)
8 Without them you get dirty locos. (8)
9 Regulator valve cover. (4)
10 Reason for building the SYJnt. (4)
11 Computerised system introduced in 1973 to monitor and control stock movement. (4)
12 Junction for ore terminal at Scunthorpe steelworks. (7,3)
15 Name carried by 66715. (6)
17 To lose adhesion. (4)
19 Still carried on the footplate over some single-line sections. (5)

20 60111. (10)
24 To push at the rear of a train on a gradient. (4)
25 Town served by Finmere station. (10)
28 Main works of the GER. (9)
29 Brake system requiring the use of a steam ejector. (6)
32 Leather bag for carrying a token. (5)
33 Lamp at the end of a train. (4)
34 Coal falls forward in this type of tender. (4,8)
37 Looking for a home, possibly at Loughborough. (8)
39 Junction of the GN&GE Joint with the GN east of Doncaster. (5,4)
42 Cab floor. (9)
43 LNER built loco shed at Scunthorpe. (10)
44 Sheet to cover wagons (and sometimes loco cabs). (9)
45 GC yard near Dinting. (7)
46 The 'Birdcage' has flown from this location. (5)
47 Town served by Newton station. (4)
48 Junction at northern end of the SYJnt. (4,7)

Down

1 Frequent event on poor track. (10)
2 Served by a branch of the WM&CQ. (6)
3 Gerald Summerfield's station. (7)
4 A terminus for the electric trains running on the GC out off Manchester Piccadilly. (7)
5 Once a show piece hump yard - now a freight terminal that nobody wants to use. (7)
7 Viaduct on the GC London Extension over the infant Great Ouse. (8)
8 Stones used for platform edging. (6)
10 Famous railway manufacturer once based in Darnall, Sheffield, (7)
12 A now-closed LNER-built colliery branch off the SYJnt. (7)
13 He dreamt of invading Wales. (6)
14 Goes with 'pull'. (4)
16 Type of supporting structure for overhead electric wires. (8)
18 Exerted by steam. (8)
21 Boarding stage for passengers. (8)
22 Effect of steam on human flesh. (8)
23 The big wheels on a locomotive. (7)
26 Junction station that was renamed Pen-y-fford in 1877. (4)
27 Goes with 'push'. (4)
28 Sir Berkeley --------- , promoter of the NLLR. (9)
30 Junction for Banbury. (8)
31 '--------- Specials' ran overnight from Marylebone to Scotland in the 1960s. (9)
35 Unwelcome guest on the footplate! (9)
36 Colliery branch on the SYJnt visited by G. Freeman Allen. (8)
38 Formation needed when track is below ground level. (7)
40 Each shed had one. (4)
41 Manchester terminus used by the CLC and now an exhibition centre. (7)
43 They keep going up! (5)

MCC cannot be accused of tunnel vision over Lord's

by Ivo Tennant

Taken from TimesOnline 10 April 2008 and submitted by John Hayward

A railway station at Lord's, enabling spectators to walk straight to newly designed stands, is one of a number of projects under consideration as part of the £200million redevelopment of the ground. An indoor school, a real tennis court, banqueting facilities or a car park could also be built in the disused railway tunnel that runs beneath the Nursery End.

The tunnel, which was part of the Marylebone to Aylesbury train line, was constructed in 1897 and bears testimony to the expertise of Victorian architects and builders. This runs 200 metres from beneath Wellington Hospital to St John's Wood Road and extends 38 metres under the Nursery Ground. The original station at Lord's was demolished in 1939.

Keith Hague, the chief executive of Wellington Hospital, is keen to enter into negotiations with MCC with a view to opening a sports injuries clinic or gym at one end of the tunnel. The endless possibilities for utilising 40,000 square feet will be discussed by the Lord's Masterplan architect, soon to be appointed by the club.

A brief has been sent to five architects, including Herzog & de Meuron, which designed the Olympic Stadium in Beijing, giving them six weeks to outline detailed plans for the redevelopment of Lord's, which will take in five new stands. The committee to decide upon the final choice will be chaired by Sir John Egan, a former chief executive of BAA and of Jaguar.

Wrexham-Marylebone service gets under way

The new service from Wrexham to Marylebone operated by Wrexham & Shropshire Railways (WSR) had an inauspicious start on 28th April 2008. The first train departed Wrexham General on time at 5.42am but assistance in the form of an additional loco had to be requested at Telford due to braking problems.

WSR is operating a service of 5 trains each way on Mon-Fri, 4 on Saturdays and 3 on Sundays. The motive power is provided by class 67 locos (top-and-tail) and Cargo D Mk 3 coaching stock. Trains stop at Ruabon, Chirk, Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford Central, Cosford, Wolverhampton, Tame Bridge Parkway and Banbury en route to London Marylebone Station. The journey time is 4hr 12mins. Advanced tickets are £25 per single journey.

Trains call at Tame Bridge Parkway by utilising the former freight-only link at Darlaston Jnct-Bescot Jnct. Sources suggest the route avoids Birmingham New Street by passing through Birmingham Int. and Coventry but photographic evidence (see below) seems to suggest otherwise. Maybe the day-to-day routing is in the hands of local Control.

Perversely, Virgin Trains have also announced that they will introduce a direct Wrexham-London service with a journey time of 2½ hours.

W&S branded 67013 leads the 12:55 Wrexham-Marylebone at Hatton North Jnct. on 5 May 2008. photo: Peter Tandy

Readers' forum

from David Wrottesley, Sheffield

Re. Forward 154 p43/44: letter from Reg Instone.

Reg Instone asks whether a GCR train timing office ever existed in a "Superintendent of Line" office at its Railway headquarters? He states that the LNWR had a Central Timing Office at Crewe after 1900, under the control of a "Superintendent of Line", and believes that the GWR had a similar central timing organisation under a Superintendent at Paddington.

Dow (Great Central Vol.1 p352 and Vol.2 p356) states that the MS&L had Superintendents W. Bradley 1864-1887 and R.Haig Brown 1887-1899 and that the GCR had Superintendents R.Haig Brown 1900-1910 and W.Clow 1910-1922. It will be noted that they were not "Superintendents of Line"! I am quite sure that any train timing office that the MS&L and GCR had was in the Superintendent's office in Manchester. It is my belief that neither the MS&L nor the GCR had any satellite timing organisations in any Division or District. It would therefore not have described its timing office as being "Central".

In Forward 150 I stated that I believed both W.Pollitt (later General Manager of the GCR) and J.Bell (later General Manager of the Metropolitan Railway) had worked in the timing organisation of the MS&L at Manchester. The headquarters staff of the GCR, including the timing staff, moved from Manchester to Marylebone in 1905 and the amalgamation of the LDEC staff took place in 1907. At the Grouping, the timing of the majority of GCR services were transferred from Marylebone to the southern area headquarters of the LNER in the old GER offices at Liverpool Street. CLC services were transferred to the LMSR.

I am of the opinion that the MS&L/GCR timing organisation at Manchester was not similar to the LNWR or the GWR. This was because the GCR, unlike the LNWR and GWR, did not have a large number of Divisions or even Districts where timing and pathing trains and maintaining Diagram Boards/Graphs was carried out in addition to the routine signalling, safety of the line, punctuality and other operational matters. This was because of the much smaller size of the GCR.

I note what Reg Instone says about the LNWR and GWR timing organisations, following analysis of Burtt, Findlay, and Williamson. I also have extracts of these books, and others, on the subject, including Ackworth. In addition I have two Railway Magazine articles about the LNWR and its timetable compilation, both public and working, in 1901/2, by J.Mallinson of the LNWR Timetable Department at Euston.

I have my doubts about the vast numbers of master LNWR/GWR diagram boards or graphs being held for their entire areas, huge and complex as they were, at Crewe, Euston or Paddington HQs. This despite the fact that the actual compilation and publishing of the WTT and public timetables may have been done at Euston and Paddington. The LNWR had 13 Divisions and the GWR had 12 Divisions, timing and pathing trains, and compiling timetables. The GWR then producing 15 Service or Working timetables based on their operating districts. In later years, and even after 1948, the GWR and then the WR continued to have a strong timetabling activity in its much reduced Divisions.

The mention of Newton-le-Willows as a possible LNWR train timing agreement location, so close to the ex-GCR branches to Wigan and St Helens, is also most interesting from a timetable compilation/printing aspect. The town was the location of the print works of Messrs McCorquodale and Co. Eleven of the LNWR Divisions Working timetables were printed here. The remaining two, Southern and Northampton, being printed at the McCorquodale works at Cardington Street, near Euston in London

Mallinson says that H.Turnbull, the "Superintendent of the Line" for the entire LNWR and located at Euston, held initial timetable meetings for the Summer timetable with his Divisional Superintendents at Euston at the start of the year. He then states "A more general meeting is held, normally at Crewe as being the most central station. This is where knotty points are settled, difficulties arising from alterations which affect various districts, but which do not suit all alike, are discussed and smoothed over." Apparently, after this meeting, there were further meetings, where LNWR Divisions agreed hand-over timings with those companies that adjoined it. It was not until May that LNWR clerks from all Divisions went to the relevant print works to finalise their public and working books.

Timetable Graphs, although similar to Train Diagram Boards, were very different despite the fact that they performed the same purpose. The LNWR Boards were arranged in pairs, and normally related to the section of line in the Working Timetable. They were 4 feet in length and 2 feet wide. Different types of coloured threads or strings, representing timed train movements, were attached to pins and stretched across the board. One board was for the up line and one for the down. This process was known as stringing the trains. Timetable Graphs were normally large sheets of squared paper. Lead pencils or even different coloured ink pens were used by the timetablers to plot trains on the graphs.

I have no doubt that originally the MS&L and GCR timetable staff used Train Diagram Boards and Timetable Graphs in the timetable office to supplement their Working Timetables. This, as train services developed, became more frequent and complex. D.L. Franks in his Great Central Remembered states that the author visited the Central Timing Office in the 1930s at the time when the old coloured thread method had been discarded in favour of the graph system. He was surprised to see the timing of a special from Grimsby being worked out entirely from the clerks' comprehensive knowledge of routes and trains. The "Central Timing Office" that Franks visited was in fact the LNER Southern Division Headquarters at Liverpool Street, mentioned earlier when the GCR, GNR and GER timing offices at Marylebone, King's Cross and Liverpool street were "centralised" as a "Central Timing and Diagram Office". The word "Diagram" now relating to locomotive, carriage and train crew working. The word "Central" was used again in 1957 when "Central Timing and Diagram Offices" were introduced by the Eastern Region at the relevant Line Traffic Managers Offices; GN at King's Cross, GE at Liverpool Street and LT&S at Fenchurch Street. GC services west of Woodhead and south of Pilsley were timed for two years at King's Cross before being transferred to the London Midland Region.

from S.Custance, 56 Crossways, Peterchurch, Hereford HR2 0TQ

Information requested re. Mottram Yard track plans.

I was born and bred in Charlesworth, Derbyshire, and lived in a two-up-two-down stone terrace, behind which was Mottram Yard on the Woodhead route between Mottram and Dinting viaducts. I spent most of my youth watching the comings and goings of the enormous amount of traffic this yard produced, hauled by steam and electric locomotives. There were also the passenger services on the main line; express (class EM2) and local (emu). I even managed a ride on an EM1 up and down the yard. Now in my 50s and a grandad I have a project to model Mottram Yard in N gauge. I have researched the yard from my own memories and my family's memories. I have purchased books and photographs but what I cannot find are the track plans of the yard from about 1935 onwards. A letter to Railway Modeller has been unsuccessful. Can any reader of Forward help me locate suitable track plans?

from George Huxley, Church Enstone, Oxfordshire

Information requested re. Charles George Pilkington

Is anything known about the signalling career of Charles George Pilkington on the MS&L? According to www.signalbox.org/overseas/australia (I thank S.R.Batts for the reference), Pilkington was Signal & Telegraph Engineer of the South Australian Railway 1892-1924. The source calls him 'Ex-Great Central Railway, UK', but it seems that he went to Australia before the GCR came into existence. Pilkington may well have been responsible for the final abandonment in 1911 of Winter's block (block instruments but no train staff) on single lines in South Australia, and in 1910, for the installation of the first "wig-wag" signals at level crossings. It would be interesting to learn more about his life and work.

from Bill Gee, Felixstowe

Re. Forward 155 p43: letter from Alan Turner.

With reference to Alan Turner's letter regarding Private Partridge; my late father was also a native of Barnetby and served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers in Greece during WW1. He retired from British Rail after 45 years of service. It would be interesting to know what other Barnetby railway men served in the forces.

There were six members of the Gee family who, at one time or another, were employed by the MS&LR, GCR, LNER and finally BR.

from Steven C. Corbett, Holt, Wiltshire

Information requested re. Trent bridge construction.

In one of Newton's pictures of the River Trent bridge under construction, there appear several Midland Railway open trucks full of bricks. I have often wondered how the contractors brought the railway to the river bank in this way. But now, having looked at old maps of Nottingham, I realise it wasn't so difficult after all. It must have been no more than a purpose-built extension of the Clifton Colliery branch. I wonder where the link commenced - to the West or to the East of Wilford Road. Also, I should be very interested to hear if the connection was severed just as soon as this length of the GCR line was complete or if perhaps it was maintained for some years afterwards.

from Frank Stratford, Huncote, Leics.

Re. Forward 155 p46: letter from Bill Gee.

The picture of the loco coaling stage that accompanied the letter from Bill Gee immediately caught my eye as it is exactly the same as the one at Marylebone, which stood adjacent to the turntable near Rosmore Road. However, I don't think the one illustrated can be at Marylebone as the bridge would be prominent in the background.

from J. Richard Morton, Sheffield

Re. Forward 155 p46: letter from Bill Gee.

With reference to the query from Bill Gee regarding the identification of the locomotive coaling plant, this unit was erected at Frodingham shed. W. J. Jenkins' tender of £602 6s 6d was accepted by the LNER on 21st February 1931, the coaling plant being ready for the shed's opening in June of the following year. When considering the size of the new engine shed and its allocation of various goods engines, it is quite surprising that a bigger coaling plant wasn't installed. After all, the half ton tub hoist was hardly high capacity! Good sense prevailed in 1938 when the concrete "cenotaph" type replaced it.

Hawkins, Hooper and Reeve in British Railways Engine Sheds: An LNER Inheritance (Irwell Press, 1988) suggest that the original tub hoist coaler was ordered as an economy measure to reduce the overall cost of the Frodingham project. They also suggest that it was probably used elsewhere, still being relatively new, although they make no suggestion as to where that might be. A similar coaler was to be found at Barnsley shed for instance. The Q4 0-8-0 no. 5160 that appears in Bill's picture was an Ardsley engine although earlier it had been at Mexborough and Keadby, the shed that Frodingham was built to replace.

Re. Forward 155 p10: editor's footnote to 'Watkin and the South Wales Dream' by Michael Minter-Taylor.

The note at the end of the article states that the Wrexham-Ellesmere line was closed as part of the Beeching cuts. This is not quite accurate. The line's passenger services were withdrawn in September 1962, whereas the Beeching Report was not published until March 1963. Curiously the Report noted the line as a candidate for closure! Contemporary writers expressed some surprise that the line had lasted as long as it did considering how poorly used it was.

from Carl Lardner, Herne Bay, Kent

Re. Forward 155 p30: book review - "Edward Thompson of the LNER".

I read the review of "Edward Thompson of the LNER" with interest, particularly the comment - "the ladies seemed to take to him more". On the only occasion when he was mentioned in our home, my mother's comment was,"He was an absolute b------- of a man." My father remarked that if Thompson ever addressed you by your Christian name, then you knew you were in deep trouble.

Re. Forward 155 p26: photo of GCR newspaper parcel stamps.

My attention was drawn by the newspaper stamps, more usually referred to in the PTT Notices as 'labels'. These followed the style of the MS&L labels which had 'Manchester Sheffield' on two lines in the 'Great Central' field, '&' where the dot is, and 'Lincolnshire Railway' on two lines in the 'Railway' field. The MS&L labels were also blue. Both the MS&L and GCR issued 4d and 6d values as well as

those illustrated. A variation, that was probably short-lived, is where 'Great Central (MS&L)' appeared on two lines in the upper field.

This style of label was also printed in green for the 'METN AND G.C. Joint Committee' and in brown for the 'CHESHIRE LINES Committee'. Are there examples extant for other joint committees eg Macclesfield and GC & Midland?

The LD&ECR and MSJ&AR labels were of quite a different style. Of course these labels were undated so perhaps the styles all merged over time. The wording in all the aforementioned refers to 'Newspaper Parcels', but according to the PTT Notices they could be used for other defined printed matter.

The Notices also refer to sheets of stamps to be used to convey individual packets of 1, 2, 3 or 4 newspapers. The sheets were of ½d, 1d, 1½d and 2d stamps with 60 on each sheet. The Met & GC issued a ½d stamp worded 'Single Newspaper at Owner's Risk' in the general style of the newspaper labels illustrated. Presumably there were similar sheets for the other joint line committees as well. However, there is one example of the MS&L single newspaper label of a completely different style; perhaps the date is again relevant here.

Newspaper and newspaper parcel labels are not to be confused with stamps denoting the 'Fee for conveyance of single postal letters by railway', nor with Parcel labels.

Were these stamps/labels printed in-house? The 'postal letter' stamps are of a higher quality, so perhaps these were printed elsewhere. Was there a separate series of stamps (2d, 3d, 4d) for envelopes carrying 'News Intelligence'? My own examples of stamps/labels show that this is an enormous subject for investigation and description.

from Tony Johnson, e-mail : zen104080@zen.co.uk

Information requested re. diesel 10000 at Rothley.

I am a member of the Shipley Model Railway Society, in a group who are building a model of Leicester South Yard. One of our number has purchased a model of the prototype diesel 10000 and wants to run it but has been told it is not prototypical. I am sure I have seen somewhere a report or photograph of 10000 on trials at Rothley in its early days. Is this likely, or am I imagining it?

Crossword Solution (Forward 156)

Across

1. Depot, 2. Black, 3. Fanlight, 6. Rail, 8. Cleaners, 9. Dome, 10. Coal, 11. TOPS, 12. Foreign Ore, 15. Valour, 17. Slip, 19. Token, 20. Enterprise, 24. Bank, 25. Buckingham, 28. Stratford, 29. Vacuum, 32. Pouch, 33. Tail, 34. Self trimming, 37. Archives, 39. Black Carr, 42. Footplate, 43. Frodingham, 44. Tarpaulin, 45. Mottram, 46. Rugby, 47. Hyde, 48. Kirk Sandall.

Down

1. Derailment, 2. Brymbo, 3. Finmere, 4. Glossop, 5. Tinsley, 7. Brackley, 8. Coping, 10. Cravens, 12. Firbeck, 13. Watkin, 14. Push, 16. Catenary, 18. Pressure, 21. Platform, 22. Scolding, 23. Drivers, 26. Hope, 27. Pull, 28. Sheffield, 30. Culworth, 31. Starlight, 35. Inspector, 36. Harworth, 38. Cutting, 40. Code, 41. Central, 43. Fares.

Rear cover caption

GCR class 8F 'Immingham' 4-6-0 no.1095 at Neasden on 19 April 1913. The 'Immingham' class was a development of the class 8C (only two of which were built). No. 1095 was built by Beyer Peacock in 1906 and was the first to be withdrawn in 1944.

photo: © Locomotive and General

GREAT CENTRAL