

# FORWARD



## The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 161 ~ September 2009

### Front cover caption

LNER class B3/1 4-6-0 no. 6165 *Valour* east of Dunford Bridge with a Manchester-Marylebone express. It was *Valour* hauled the 'Sheffield Special' from Manchester on the occasion of the unveiling of the war memorial at Sheffield Victoria on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1922.

*photo: Real Photographs*



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This year continues to be a busy one for the Society and its members. Our stand at Railex 2009 at Aylesbury at the end of May generated a lot of interest, thanks to the hard work of the London group. Four new member were recruited. We also had a display stand and an exhibition of members' models, belonging to John Quick and Colin Garton, at the GC Event at Ruddington on 11<sup>th</sup> July. There was a good crowd of invited guests present to witness the formal opening of 'Platform 1'. Following speeches from the Mayor of Rushcliffe, Cllr Peter McGowan, and local MP, The Rt. Hon Kenneth Clarke QC, a commemorative plaque was unveiled by His Honour Edgar Fay QC. The guests were then invited aboard a special train hauled by the preserved Robinson 2-8-0 no.63601, looking as impressive as ever and the centre of much attention. (*See the colour centrefold for 63601 in action.*) On the following Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> July, the London branch had a very enjoyable day exploring the Stratford-on-Avon and Midland Junction. Richard Butler has written a report (see p.6). Despite such a poor July, the weather was kind to us for both of these events.

Now for future events. The Royal Victoria Hotel will again be opening its doors to the GCRS on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September. This event that will mark the final culmination of all the hard work put in by Ken Grainger and other members of the War Memorial Committee. Details of the "Sheffield Special" can be found on the page opposite. This promises to be a great day.

Details of the Society's Autumn Meeting have not yet been finalised. Because of the Sheffield event it was decided by the committee to ask Richard Butler if he could rearrange the Autumn Meeting (provisionally 24<sup>th</sup> Oct. at Nuneaton) to a later date. This also gives us the opportunity to change the venue and Lutterworth is being proposed. Please be patient. The information will be put on the website as soon as possible. If you don't have access to the web please phone Richard or any committee member. Those who attended last year's event at a very wet Aylesbury will be expecting another well-organised event with excellent speakers!

Our Archivist, Geoff Burton, with the help of local members, has completed the inventory check of the GCRS archive. As expected, some items have gone astray since the last inventory was made some years ago by Mike Fish. Geoff has provided a list of missing items and this can be found on page 20. If you have borrowed any of these or know of their whereabouts, please contact Geoff. It is important that we can be trusted to look after our archives otherwise we could miss out on potential donations.

Those of you who regularly dip into the Society's web page may have noticed a new section. There are now several pages of photos, the purpose of which is to gather caption information. If you are able to correct or add to the listings then please let me have the information.

### Correction to AGM Minutes

Under 'Any Other Business' the reference to the on-line magazine *Forgotten Railways* should have been *Forgotten Relics*. It can be found at [www.forgottenrelics.co.uk](http://www.forgottenrelics.co.uk). The article referred to can be found at [www.forgottenrelics.co.uk/bridges/brackley.html](http://www.forgottenrelics.co.uk/bridges/brackley.html). My apologies to John Quick.

Brian Slater



*Brackley viaduct under construction.*

## **The Sheffield Special**

On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield.

At 12noon in the foyer

John Smith, m.d. of First GBRf, will unveil the mounted 'Valour' nameplate  
and

John Lee, brother of the artist, will present Graham Lee's painting of 'Valour'  
and

Dave Scargill will present the cabinet for the GC Roll of Honour.

After lunch (provided by the hotel)  
there will be a talk at 2pm

'Cravens of Sheffield'  
by Howard Turner.

Preceedings expected to be concluded at 4pm.

All members and friends of the Great Central Railway Society are welcome.



*LNER class B3 4-6-0 no.6165 'Valour' at Peterborough with a Harrogate-King's Cross express in 1925.  
photo: Real Photographs*

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### **Welcome to the following new members**

Mr E. Bland, Fleet, Hampshire  
Mr A.D. Fraulo, Crick, Northamptonshire  
Mr M. Williams, Denton, Manchester  
Mr R.W. Carroll, Worcester Park, Surrey  
Mr T.R. Collison, Pinner, Middlesex  
Mr R.C.J. Willcox, Stonehouse,  
Gloucestershire  
Mr.D.C. Clay, Mansfield, Notts

Mr & Mrs D. Grainger, Chesterfield, Derbyshire  
Mr P. MacCarthy, Aylesbury, Bucks  
Mr A. Cooper, Alton, Hampshire  
Mr P.M. Jay, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire  
Mr A.W. Donaldson, Banbury, Oxfordshire  
Mr P. Wood, Enfield, Middlesex  
Mr R.J. Bodily, Milton Keynes, Bucks  
Mr & Mrs R.C.T. Shaw, Sheffield



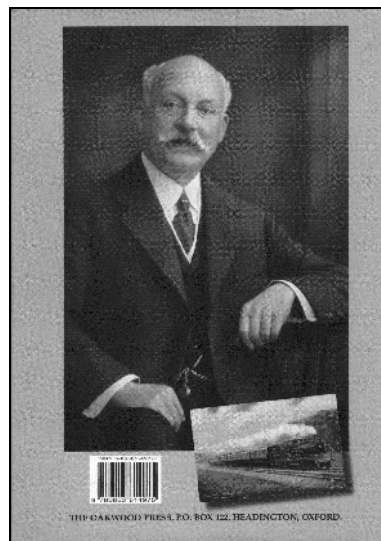
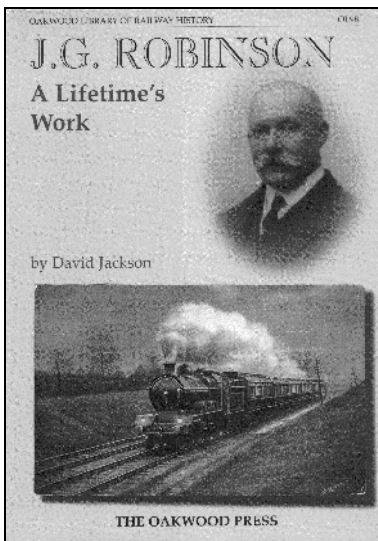
## Notes on J.G. Robinson's Official Residence at Limerick 1889-1900 by George L. Huxley

Robinson moved from the Great Western to the Waterford and Limerick Railway in 1884. At the Works in Limerick he became Assistant to Henry Appleby, the Locomotive Superintendent. When Appleby retired early owing to ill health, he was succeeded by Robinson. The date of Robinson's appointment was 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1889. His salary was £250 per annum, and he also received a house at a nominal rent, including coal, gas, and water. Previously he had lived with his family at Charles Street (now Gerard Street) in Limerick, but as Locomotive Superintendent his official residence was Hamilton House in the Roxborough Road near to the railway and to the Works.

Hamilton House, said to have been named after the mathematician Sir William Rowan Hamilton, still exists. It continued to be the Locomotive Superintendent's House after Robinson left for Gorton and the Great Central in 1900 at the time of the amalgamation of the Waterford, Limerick and Western Railway (as it had become) with the Great Southern and Western. By 1960 the house was used for the Offices of the Area Engineer (Civil) of CIE, who was responsible for much of the south and west of Ireland. The building is no longer in railway ownership; it is the property of a consortium of bridge-playing societies.

The garden of Robinson's time no longer exists. Gone are the flowerbeds, lawns, greenhouse and sundial. Instead within the original walls is an expanse of tarmac for the parking of cars. The gate in the garden wall, through which the Superintendent could walk to the railway, is now blocked up. His office building still stands beside the Works yard.

The photograph of Hamilton House accompanying these notes was taken in 2008 by Mr Michael Donnellan, to whom I am obliged for much help. He worked as an Assistant Engineer in the house from 1960 to 1963. I thank also Mr Joseph O'Shaughnessy for kindly arranging a visit to the interior of the house. There is a fine account of Robinson's time at Limerick in chapter 2 of David Jackson's "J.G. Robinson. A Lifetime's Work" (The Oakwood Press, Oxford 1996).



*Editor's note: New copies of 'A Lifetime's Work' by David Jackson are still available. The cover price is £18.95, but it can be obtained from Amazon for £16.11.*



*Hamilton House at the time of J.G. Robinson.*

*photo: Paul Dalton Collection*



*Monument Bridge Centre, Limerick, in 2008.*

*photo: Michael Donnellan*

## **Minibus trip to the Stratford upon Avon and Midland Junction Railway - Part 3**

**by Richard Butler**

15 members gathered at Watford Junction for the annual London Group bus trip, this year being Part 3 of exploring the remains of the SMJR in Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Moving quickly onto the M25 and M40 we reached Stratford on Avon station to pick up friends from the north.

Our next point of call was Milcote on the former GWR route southwards from Stratford. Here the railway is part of a cycle way and while the station buildings are no longer there, a Mark 2 carriage has been suitably placed in the goods siding area, and serves light refreshments to passing walkers and cyclists. A short drive back took us westwards to Binton station on the SMJR. Here the station site has been well preserved by a small industrial user and is a delight to see. Taking a quick look at a line side road bridge near Bidford we pressed on to Broom Village for a short stroll along the SMJ track bed to a point near Broom East Junction. The junction was actually across the river from our vantage point, the bridge having long gone. Broom East Junction was the end of a short wartime spur to Broom West Junction. We rejoined the bus for our now rather late pub lunch stop at the Stag Inn, Redhill.



*Binton station buildings on the SMJR.*

*photo: Paul White*

After an enjoyable meal we ventured onto Wilmcote station, a nice survivor on the Stratford - Birmingham Snow Hill line, which, although unstaffed, is in very good condition. A short ride then took us to nearby Bearley station, with its solitary totem sign on the station house wall, before reaching the longest canal aqueduct in England namely Edstone Aqueduct. This is a superbly restored structure on the Stratford Canal and passes over the North Warwickshire line at its former junction with the GWR Alcester branch. We then continued on to pass the privately owned Great Alne station on the latter branch line to reach Broom Junction station, western end of the SMJR line. Here the station site is now derelict, having been a highways depot until recently,

nonetheless it is still accessible and the island platform easily located. The nearby roadbridge has been landscaped as part of the adjacent flood prevention works.

Our final location was Broom West Junction signal box, which miraculously still stands on the old track bed alongside the busy A46 dual carriageway. The box is one of the many standard wartime structures built at that time and, although derelict and windowless, the stairs are just climbable and it's possible to look out from the operating floor. Its was now time to head back to Stratford and eventually Watford, which was reached just after 21:00. A full day out. As one member put it afterwards "I certainly enjoyed the annual event, something I look forward to the whole year round! Many thanks." Thanks indeed to Len Bunning for recceing the route beforehand and overseeing the day's events.

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## **Wanderings around the Internet with Bob Gellatly**

### **"Great Central Rolling Stock Trust" at [www.gcr-rollingstocktrust.co.uk](http://www.gcr-rollingstocktrust.co.uk)**

Visitors to the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington will have been impressed by the progress being made in restoring GC rolling stock. This work is being carried out by a small but dedicated group of people who have the vision of seeing GC rolling stock restored to use on our heritage railways. The web site gives updates on the progress being made. A major problem, experienced by all such groups, is the lack of undercover storage for all the items in their possession and it is a sad sight to see stock continuing to deteriorate in the open.

### **"The Lincolnshire & East Yorkshire Transport Review" at [www.leytransport.i12.com](http://www.leytransport.i12.com)**

This website looks at a wide range of transport modes. The 'Train' section features much of GC interest around Lincolnshire. As well as photographic line surveys, you will also find timetables, maps and ephemera. Although most of the material is relevant to Lincolnshire and East Riding there are also forays to foreign parts such as 'Sheffield Victoria and the Woodhead Route' and 'Nottingham Railway Archaeology'. Also don't forget to look at the section on 'Signal Boxes'. There is a lot more here than at first meets the eye.

### **"Wikipedia" at <http://en.wikipedia.org>**

Anyone who uses the Internet as a source of information will already be familiar with Wikipedia. This is the on-line encyclopaedia, based in Holland, written by its users. I have increasingly turned to Wikipedia for information on all aspects of railways, both historical and present day. I have found it particularly useful in following the ever increasing rate of change that afflicts the current railway scene. Registering with Wikipedia allows you not only to correct or amplify existing content but also to write your own. Everyone's an expert!

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## **GCRS book sales**

Second-hand books and magazines are available for purchase from the GCRS web site, [www.gcrsociety.co.uk/sales](http://www.gcrsociety.co.uk/sales). New copies of 'Mexborough' by Mike Brearley are also available. Donations of books and magazines are welcome. Contact any committee member. All proceeds are towards GCRS funds.



## **On Great Central lines today**

**by Kim Collinson**

Loco hauled services continued to be observed through Penistone in May. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, 31233 with a Network Rail push and pull test train consisting of two vehicles passed through at 07:50 and returned at 09:10 on a working from Derby to Huddersfield and return. This was followed on the 17<sup>th</sup> by a ballast train from Doncaster worked by 66188 which passed Silkstone at 02:55.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> May a railtour from Huddersfield to Bath and return passed through Guide Bridge around 07:40 worked by 56311/56312 with 57311 on the rear. Although class 60 locos are now much reduced, the few remaining operational locos continue to be seen on GC lines, as on the 5<sup>th</sup> June when 60071 was seen at Ashburys working stone empties to Peak Forest, then on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 60085 was seen at Stalybridge after working chemical tanks from Immingham.

Early June saw heavy rain and storms cause disruption to GC services in the Sheffield area with Woodburn Junction box being struck by lightning. History was made on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June when the evening freight from Aldwarke arrived at Deepcar at 20:25 worked by 66088 with the first female driver, Naomi Lomax, to have worked over the route.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> June 66720 worked a train of new coal hoppers from W.H.Davis wagon works at Shirebrook to Thoresby Colliery for GBRf which is investing in 89 new hoppers for its UK Coal contracts. This is in contrast to the state of the steel industry which has announced huge job losses at its South Yorkshire and Scunthorpe plants. What the effects on rail traffic will be, only time will tell.

The route between Doncaster and Scunthorpe has been closed between the 22<sup>nd</sup> June and the 6<sup>th</sup> September for major engineering work - the most essential work being track bed stabilisation and relaying in the Crowle area as a result of the present formation sinking into the marshy ground of Thorne Moors. During the duration of the route's closure replacement bus services are in operation between Hatfield and Scunthorpe for local services with the TP Expresses and freight services diverted via the Brigg Branch which is now seeing up to six trains an hour, possibly more than in the lines heyday back in GC days.

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July the evening freight from Aldwarke to Deepcar struck a Land Rover on the track at Parkwood - the occupants fled as the train approached which was worked by 66122. Considerable damage was caused to the loco but the driver was not injured. After the vehicle was removed to the lineside the train continued to Deepcar at 00:15 on Saturday morning, but due to damage to the braking system the loco returned L/D. This incident occurred 28 years after the Woodhead closure.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July a Branch Line Society railtour from Crewe ran over various sections of the GC and LDEC routes as follows: The Thrybergh branch, Hatfield, South Yorkshire Joint and the Thoresby and Welbeck colliery branches. This might well be the last time that a passenger train traverses the branch to Welbeck as the colliery is due to close in December. The train was top-and-tailed by EWS 66090/Riviera Trains 47843 and The Midland Railway Centre's D1516 (47812), making a colourful combination.

*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.*

## The Pollard family railway history – Part 4

by John E. Pollard

It was a Saturday morning and I was on shed shunt with Charlie Monaghan. After engines had had their fires cleaned we were bringing them off the ash pits and putting them on shed. There were two Jazzers (Gresley K3s) on the sand house road with a gap between them. The first one was facing forward and the second was tender first. We got on the first engine and found she was low in steam and would not move. Charlie said, "Go and get the other one and give me a push." I went up to the second engine and climbed on. She was also a bit low on steam. I took the tender brake off, blew the vacuum brake up and opened the regulator. She still would not move so I went to the fireman's side and closed the cylinder taps which made her set off fairly quickly. I gave Charlie a right wallop. He rolled down past the points where he could set back to the shed. I wound mine into forward gear, but the taps shut again and I was off again at a brisk rate! I went up through the sand house road, under the coal hopper and was heading for No.4 box. Fortunately I managed to get her into back gear again before I got to the box and I started back down to the shed again. Charlie had got his engine onto the shed by now and was waiting at the points to turn me up the sheer legs road so I could reverse to get on the shed but I couldn't stop. There was an engine hung up on the chains under the sheer legs and I hit it. That stopped me but the engine I had hit swung forward on the chains and then came back and gave me a right wallop in return. I was knocked off my seat onto the floor. Fortunately, it being Saturday, no fitters were working on the engine. Charlie jumped on as I passed him and he took the regulator while I worked the hand brake. Between us we eventually got her on shed. Afterwards Charlie laughed and said, "Now you know that being a driver is not all fun and games!" I agreed. Jazzers only had a round stool to sit on and I had been knocked off mine three times.



BR class K3 2-6-0 (a "Jazz") no.61985 at Annesley on 28 Oct. 1962

photo: Chris Ward

Another time we were working the fish tubs to Lincoln Pyewipe Junction where we were to be relieved by Lincoln men who took them to Grimsby. It was a fully fitted train, number one speed. We relieved Woodford men at Bulwell and set off. As soon as my mate opened the regulator the cab was full of steam. The regulator gland had gone. I tried tightening the gland nuts but could not get them any tighter. It was typical of Woodford - there could not have been any packing in the gland at all. I was stuck in the steam all the way to Pyewipe. It was a sharp frost that night and when we arrived I climbed off the engine to go round the back to put the bag in the tender. As I turned from the engine I took a deep breath. The shock knocked me out and I hit the ground. My driver and the Lincoln driver picked me up and got me back into the warm damp atmosphere in the cab where I was able to breath again and came round. The entire cab was dripping in water. I had put my empty mashing can on the shelf on the face plate - it was full of water. On the run down to Lincoln I stood at the back of the fireman breathing the cold air to get used to it before we had to get off.

We used to have a Sunday turn when Neasden men worked an express to Nottingham and then light engine to Annesley. Two crews were sent to clean the fire, empty the smokebox and the ashpan, fill the tank, turn her and put her on shed ready for when the Neasden men were going back home. We had just finished and I was walking back to the mess room when I trod on a piece of coal and my ankle twisted under me with a sharp crack. I hobbled down to the office. The foreman took my boot off and my ankle started to swell up like a balloon. I forced my boot back on and the foreman said. "Off home my lad." I set off and cycled five miles home! The following eight weeks I was off work with a broken ankle.

My first regular driver was Bill Dale. We were in the Hull Link. Most of our turns were north from Annesley to Darnall or Sheffield Vic or to Pyewipe Junction. One of the jobs was a Summit-Immingham working. We went tender first with two brake vans to Summit Colliery sidings, made a train up with a brake van each end, then went tender first to Langwith Junction. We ran round the train and then set off over the LD&EC line to Lincoln. At Summit a new siding had been laid on the down side with about six roads. They had a small shed and two WD tank engines. There was also a small washing plant. The whole area is now covered by a large concrete plant. The colliery spoil heap has been reclaimed and is covered in trees and grass. You can still see where we used to go in and come out of the sidings if you know what to look for. When Bill and I were on the job we always got relieved at Langwith by their men, unlike the others in our link who worked through. When we reported to the foreman at Langwith Loco he said, "Catch a passenger train on the Midland and go home." When the train was approaching Kirkby Bill said, "You live here don't you?" I said, "Yes." He replied, "Get out then! The foreman said go home, so go home! I was back in the house with about four hours in and that happened all week every time I was on that particular turn.

Another of our jobs was a train we called "The Veg". It was a fully fitted number one braked goods from Nottingham Goods to Darnall. Usually we had a Geordie (*Raven class B16*) on it, a steam reverse engine as built by the North Eastern, or one of Gresley's rebuilds or a Thompson rebuild with Walschaerts valve gear ("long legged Geordies"). We signed on at Bulwell and travelled to Nottingham on the bus then walked down to Nottingham Goods. We relieved Woodford men and they worked the Mansfield-Banbury back home. We topped up the tank and sorted the fire out while the pilot took wagons off the back end and put others on for York. After the Master Cutler had passed we followed it to Vic station where we usually stood in the slow line until it left, then we followed it to Darnall where we got relieved. We were coming home from Darnall one night after working "The Veg". We had a steam reverse Geordie 4-6-0 and Bill was having trouble with the reversing gear. Just as we got into Heath station, on the section sheltered by the station canopy, she jumped into full forward gear, got hold of her water and slipped. There was one almighty roar - she really danced and jumped. I dragged the cylinder taps open and Bill managed to get her shut off, then opened her up and we



*BR class B16/3 4-6-0 (a "Long Legged Geordie") no.61418 at Annesley.*

*photo: Chris Ward*

were off again. I looked round as we left Heath and I think we must have woken up quite a few people judging by the number of lights that had been switched on!

I had not been with Bill Dale long before there was a reshuffle and I was put with a driver called Arthur Hallam. He was a firebrand and known as the Black Knight, but not to his face I might add, but we got on well together. We were in the Relief Link and Arthur had a good route knowledge. We signed on one Sunday for a Bulwell-Mottram train. Nearly all the Mottram turns were double-headed and we were the train engine. The assisting engine was on the front as far as Sheffield Victoria were it became the banking engine up to Penistone. I was told that this was because there were no jack catches on this section and if a train broke loose and the guard could not hold it, the wagons would run all the way back to Sheffield. On this trip we a GC four cylinder and the assisting engine was a Pom Pom. As we left the shed we went under the coal hoppers to top up the tender. I had already put a good fire under the door – you needed it with a four cylinder. By the way, we never called them Black Pigs. We only had small coal on the tender and we only got small coal when we topped her up. We could not stack it as we would normally have done with lumps. We went light engine together to Bulwell where we crossed over and set back into the down yard onto our train.

The guard came up and said, "You'll be in at Annesley to drop the assisting engine off as we only have a single load." My mate told the Pom Pom driver to take it easy and we would push him up to Annesley. This would save him having to drop a big fire when he put it away. So we set off and duly arrived at Annesley's No.4 home board, where I got off to unhook the Pom Pom and put our lamps up. Then I called up to Arthur, "I'm going to pin the wagons down and hook off as we need to go under the hopper again." "What for?" he replied. I said, "Look in the tender!" I had not put the shovel down since we left





LNER class B7 4-6-0 (a "Four Cylinder") no.1367 at Gorton.

photo: Photomatic

Bulwell and there was now a big hole in the coal. I phoned the signalman at No.4 from the shed departure board and told him we wanted to go under the hopper again. He said, "You've been once so you're not going again." In reply I said, "Put us on the shed then as this engine won't get to Mottram with this coal." The signalman relented and we set off for the hopper. He stood at the box window as we went passed and when he saw the level of coal in the tender he shook his head in disbelief. He had obviously not been on the footplate of a four cylinder when worked hard. We eventually set off from Annesley and I never put the shovel down until Arthur shut off to go down Staveley bank. I picked it up again as we approached Beighton and kept shovelling until we passed High Hazels box. (This box had its name changed to Handsworth.) We ran into Darnall station where we stopped for a crew change. As soon as I had put the bag in I was on the tender shovelling the coal forward to help the new fireman who would be working hard all the way from Sheffield Vic up to Woodhead.

Another time we were working a Sunday Annesley-Mottram with two WD Austerities. The assisting crew were Sheffield men going home and their engine would come off at Darnall. We drew out of the yard at Annesley and got the right away at Annesley North. The Kirkby South Junction back board was off at the mouth of the tunnel and Arthur was beginning to stroke a bit heavy. I was working hard with the shovel but fortunately we had a good steamer. We passed Kirkby South Junction, a slight dip through Kirkby Bentinck and New Hucknall followed and then it was collar up Tibby bank. As we were getting to the top of Tibby bank it seemed as if we were lifting the bridges with our exhaust while the fireman on the engine in front was spending a lot of time on his seat. When we were over the top, Arthur eased up a bit as it was almost level from Tibshelf to Pilsley and then downhill to Staveley. After Staveley it was fairly flat to Beighton with a climb up to Woodhouse and High Hazels. As we came under the bridge at Woodhouse station I crossed over to Arthur's side and shut the regulator. Arthur shouted, "What are you doing?" and I said, "We have pushed him far enough. He has not opened his regulator since leaving Annesley. We have done it all, now it's their turn." Arthur said, "I'm sorry John, I hadn't noticed." As we started to slow down the fireman in front left his seat and black smoke started coming from his chimney. He must have let his fire go

right down because they really struggled to keep us moving, but we hadn't got far to go. Arthur and I sat back and watched them, enjoying their discomfort. At Darnall they hooked off to go to the shed with quite a fire going, not what they had planned. The fireman would not be pleased as he would have to explain to the shed men why he still had a fire going. I don't suppose he told them the truth.

One summer Saturday we were on a relief turn at Bulwell when an Austerity came in the down loop with a train of pipes from Stanton to Liverpool. The engine had come from Scunthorpe with coke for Stanton and was working tender-first to Annesley with this train. We were told to relieve it and take the train to Heath for stabling before returning the engine to Annesley. When we climbed on we were told she was in a rough state and not steaming. Arthur asked the driver to get word to Annesley to have us put in the goods loop. We had a rough trip up to Annesley and just got clear of the main line before we ran out of steam. I nipped across to the ash pits and got a set of fire irons as there were none on the engine. That partly explained why the fire was in such a bad way. While I was working on the fire I asked Arthur to take her up to the turntable. When asked why, I explained that she would be stronger going in forward gear. This was met with "Rubbish!" and a lecture on valve gear.

We now had enough steam to get us up to the goods line signal where we filled the tank. The fire was coming on well and when we were ready we phoned the signalman at Annesley North, got the board off and away we went. We had no more trouble with her and she proved to be a good steamer with a clean fire. There was no problem in keeping the steam against the regulator with the injector on as we shot up Tibby bank like a greyhound. We went over the top, through Tibshelf and Pilsley and then started dropping down to Heath, our destination. At Pilsley I asked Arthur if he wanted the tender brake screwing down, which he did. Some drivers used the tender brake to keep the train together on a down grade. As we approached Heath Junction box the signalman came to the window and told us, "Drop down the Branch until the Fast has gone, then I'll put you inside." So we set onto the Branch, the guard stopping us when we were clear of the main line. After the Fast had gone through I looked out of my side



BR class WD 2-8-0 (an "Austerity") no.90537 at Annesley on 17 May 1964.

photo: Chris Ward

and saw the guard calling us back. I told Arthur to back up but instead we started to jump and dance, all the while slipping further down the Branch. I got the shovel and started putting sand from the boxes onto the rails but it made no difference. I was like a yoyo, one minute firing on the footplate, the next putting sand under the wheels. We were now sliding past Bonds Main Sidings. Fortunately the signals were off as the box was shut. It was only then that I realised that the tender brake was still screwed hard on. I unscrewed the brake and after a few choice words from Arthur he opened her up. She got hold and away we went, this time in the right direction.

Another job we used to get was taking the Park Royal – Newcastle Guinness train as far as Mexborough twice a week. It was a fully fitted number one speed working. We also worked the empties, also fully fitted, back to Woodford. Both trains were relieved at Annesley South. One night we relieved some Woodford men on the northbound train. Arthur asked if they had taken water at Nottingham. When they answered, "No", I knew we were in trouble as there was a notice on the shed board saying that there was a problem with the water supply at Kirkby Bentinck. We stopped at Annesley North box to tell the signalman we would have to back onto the goods loop to take water. He got on the phone and came back to tell us that the water was back on at Kirkby. However, we then found that we could not move forward or backward. Our engine was a Geordie 4-6-0, the original type with steam reverse. Arthur went down the running plate on his side and called to me to use the reverse. Nothing happened. The steam pipe to the reversing gear had broken. We were lucky that there happened to be a Langwith crew waiting at the end of the goods loop to go home light engine. They had a Tango (Gresley class O2) with a vacuum brake. They were not very happy when they were told that they had to shunt us off the main line into the goods loop and then put our engine in the Loco. Once we were under the hopper they uncoupled pretty quick and were off. We coaled her up and then went to fetch the last engine on the line to drag the Geordie onto the ash pit. When I looked into the firebox I got quite a shock. The box was full up to the mouth piece and all the way down with ash. The Woodford men could not have cleaned the fire all the way from London. Typical Woodford working!

The next time we were on the Guinness train it was a southbound run. Again it was a steam reverse Geordie. She was also in a mess. We had a right rough trip. All we had on the tender was wet slack. I think York Loco had a hopper full of the rubbish which they put on fitted freights going south. Their expresses would not have been able to run on it. This was the only time I ever came to a stop in section on a fast goods. We could not keep the brake off and eventually came to a stop going downhill! We came to a stand just before the Birdcage bridge at Rugby. We got her round and managed to get to Rugby signal box where there was a big pile of wood. The platelayers had been replacing the wooden fencing posts with concrete ones. I fetched some of the wood and started throwing it up onto the footplate while Arthur threw it on the fire. We put as much on the footplate as we could and set off again. The engine did much better after that.

I had to leave Arthur and the railway in Sept. 1950, as I got my call-up to do my National Service. I was put in the Royal Marines. As it happens I found myself a new mate in the Marines – a Southern Region fireman from Gillingham!

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### **Sheffield Railwayana Auctions**

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The Gateway Centre, Derbyshire County Cricket Ground, Derby DE21 6DA.  
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## High Marnham Rail Development Centre by Chris Booth

Although I initially covered this subject in issue 157 of *Forward*, I thought it might be appropriate to describe the operating methods etc, now that the project is open to traffic. On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009, Network Rail announced the opening of its flagship project in Nottinghamshire to be known as the High Marnham Rail Vehicle Development Centre (RVDC), which will play a key role in building the railway of tomorrow. The facility will help develop rail vehicles, technology and equipment as Network Rail gears up for the future.

Network Rail is investing over £100m in new, more efficient machinery and engineering technologies to help minimise passenger disruption caused by renewals and maintenance work. The newly-restored track will be used to carry out development work as well as acceptance trials which have to be completed whenever new equipment is introduced to the network.

The RDVC consists of 10 miles of track between Thoresby Colliery Junction and Tuxford. A possible future extension from Tuxford to the site of Fledborough station or High Marnham PS sidings is yet to be decided. It will also be used as a training facility. The centre provides a safe and realistic environment for engineers to get to grips with new machinery and develop new, more efficient ways of working.

### *Changes to track work*

For the project, former out of use sidings have been plain lined (*see photo on pxx*) at:-

Ollerton Colliery bunker line points	19m 15ch
NCC Works points	19m 25ch
No.17 crossover road at Ollerton	19m 44ch
Ollerton Colliery sidings	19m 50ch
Butterley Brick siding	20m 60ch

*(mileages are from Chesterfield Market Place)*

Other lines temporarily disconnected and not currently in use for the project are Bevercotes Colliery Branch and Boughton Junction sidings at 20m 15ch.

### *Changes to signalling*

Thoresby Colliery Down semaphore distant T30 has been replaced by a reflectorised distant board. At Ollerton Colliery Junction, all remaining semaphore and colour light signalling was donated to the Great Central Railway at Loughborough.

### *New operating methods*

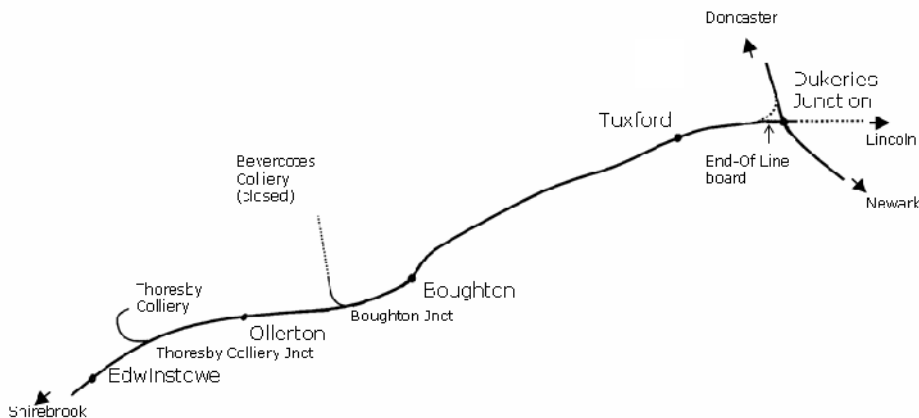
The reinstated section of line will now operate under a modified "One Train Working with Staff" method between Thoresby Colliery Junction signal box to the end of the operational line at 24m 78ch. A new "Start of Staff Section" board has been placed on the Up line on T4 signal 17m 48ch at Thoresby (the former section signal to Ollerton Colliery box). Trains arriving for the line will stop at Thoresby Colliery box, where an Annett's key will be collected from the signaller, this also acting as the train staff. The removal of this Annett's key from its receptacle on the block shelf, will enable the signaller to clear T4 signal once only. The signal will then be locked again preventing another pull until the Annett's key is replaced and removed again.

Once the signal is cleared the train can then proceed on to the 'One Train Working' section on the up line as far as a new "Stop Operate Ground Frame" board at Boughton Junction. Here the Annett's key will be used to release and operate a new two lever ground frame. Its associated points have been fitted with a new back drive and new yellow stretchers. After the movement has entered the single line the ground frame will be normalised thus preventing any other movements entering the single line.

Trains will then be authorised to proceed in either direction to and from a new "Stop end of line" board located at Tuxford just before the bridge over the ECML and a new reflectorised "Reversing Point" board located at 17m 37ch on the Down line at Thoresby. The section of Down line between Boughton and Thoresby thus becomes bi directional, trains not being allowed past the "Reversing Point" board whilst undergoing proving runs. This new board will replace Thoresby's Down semaphore distant signal T30. There are two new two lever ground frames at Tuxford loop on the site of Tuxford Central Station thus allowing trains to run round. Both of these ground frames have been converted to take the same Annett's key as Boughton, and Tuxford No.2 ground frame points have had new yellow stretcher bars fitted.

The Driver of each train exiting from the RVDC must stop at T28 signal at Thoresby this being at 17m 25ch. This has a new board stating "End of Staff Section. Return Staff to SB". Here the Annett's key will be returned to the signaller who will then clear T28 signal to allow the train to continue on its way. It will be permissible for a second train to enter the section, providing the first is secured and protected as per the Rule Book, and the Annett's key is returned to Thoresby Colliery Junction signal box.

A maximum line speed of 50mph is allowed with the exception of approx 1 mile on the Up approaching Boughton, where a short section of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> rail track has been laid, which will be 20mph, and from 23m 24ch to the end of the line, which will be 30mph. There are plans to introduce 75mph running to a section yet to be decided. The 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> rail is there with the aim of simulating this type of track for the development of vehicles that will work in these areas. Future plans include the reopening of the Bevercotes Colliery branch and the sidings at Boughton. This will then be controlled from a 7 lever ground frame.



### *Network Rail comments*

Jerry England, Network Rail's director of engineering, has said: "The new facility will enable our rail vehicle engineers to safely trial, optimise and commission new and modified rail vehicles and on-track plant in typical conditions, without causing disruption to the network. It has wider benefits in that we can also carry out trials in realistic conditions of new machinery, thereby further supporting our product acceptance processes. We want the centre to be a facility for the whole of the rail industry which means we can offer a service to help our industry partners, reduce research and development costs, and we hope to improve the facility further if it proves popular with our industry partners."

Martin Elwood, director for Network Rail's national delivery service, added: "This rail vehicle development facility is the fulfilment of a long-held ambition for Network Rail.

The centre will provide a first class facility for the whole of the rail industry for training engineers and carrying out trials for new and modified rail vehicles safely. This will help reduce costs associated with research and development as up until now the industry has had to pay for non-Network Rail owned infrastructure to carry out track and vehicle testing activities."



Above: A Grant Rail track machine approaches the site of Tuxford station on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2009.

Below: The new Annett's key machine at Thoresby Colliery Jnct. signal box.

photos: Chris Booth



## **Killamarsh Central station on the move**

**by Alan Rowles**

The former MS&L (Derbyshire Lines) station has been purchased by local farmer, Mark Hewitt, from nearby Norwood. Mr Hewitt also owns M.W.Hewitt Environmental Services. Probably to the relief of Ackroyd & Abbott, the building company which owns the land on which the station stands, Mr Hewitt put in a bid and this was readily accepted. It came as rather a surprise to Mr Hewitt that he was the only person interested enough to put in a bid. Working on the advice of an architect, the controlled dismantling commenced at the beginning of June, with photographs being taken before and during the demolition to aid the eventual reconstruction. Probably due to the present economic climate Ackroyd & Abbott were no longer in a hurry to start building on the land and this enabled the joiners employed on this task to carry on with their day jobs and work on the station at weekends. As the dismantling has progressed it has become evident that despite years of neglect the timber is, in the main, in good condition. It is Mr Hewitt's intention to rebuild the station on his land alongside the Chesterfield Canal at Norwood and possibly open it as a heritage centre.

### *A brief history*

The MS&L station was situated on the Beighton to Staveley extension and saw its first freight traffic on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1891. Passenger services commenced 6 months later on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1892. The main building containing the booking hall and offices was situated on the up side and was accessed from Station Road. Only the chimney stacks contained brickwork the remainder, of what were substantial buildings, was constructed of timber surmounted by a slate roof. The cast and wrought iron canopies were manufactured by Goddard, Massey & Warner of Nottingham and their roofing material was glass. At some stage later in their lives the gabled roof sections were bevelled off to form hips with asbestos replacing most of the glass. The building on the down side was demolished in the late 1950s and replaced by what can best be described as a small brick and concrete bus shelter. Despite the late date this was provided with a solitary Sugg gas light.

Although Killamarsh only had a population of around 3,500, by the year 1900 it could boast three railway stations. The first arrival, in 1840, was the one on the Midland 'Old Road'. This was renamed Killamarsh West by British Railways in 1950. Closure came on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1954. The former MS&L station became Killamarsh Central on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1950. Passenger traffic ceased on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1963 and it closed to all traffic on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1965. Despite the demise of the station the line soldiered on for a further 16 years serving Arkwright Colliery, south of Staveley and 6 miles beyond Killamarsh. Coal traffic on the section from Beighton to Staveley ceased when a link was laid to connect with the Midland at Staveley and having lain unused for a couple of years the rails through Killamarsh were finally lifted in February 1983. The third and far less well known station was Upperthorpe and Killamarsh on the LD&ECR, which opened in 1898 and closed to all traffic on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1939.

Soon after Killamarsh Central closed its doors for the final time John and Margaret Buckle saw the potential for the fine old building and for around 40 years the station became Havenplan Architectural Emporium. Here you could purchase anything from a chapel pew to a stone trough or from a telephone box to rowing boat. Many items were also stored here for hiring to the likes of film and TV companies – "Heartbeat" was a regular customer. Its new purpose in life undoubtedly saved the station from the same fate as befell other stations up and down the country.

Although we, as a society, would have preferred to see the station relocated to a heritage railway, on reflection its new home is not too bad a second best, after all the Chesterfield Canal, alongside which it is proposed to rebuild it, was part of the MS&L, being incorporated in 1846.



*View of Killamarsh (GC) in 1909 with the Station Master, family and staff posed on the up platform.*

*Photo: Alan Rowles Collection*



*'Controlled dismantling' taking place on the up platform in June 2009.*

*Photo: Alan Rowles*



## Missing items from the GCRS archive

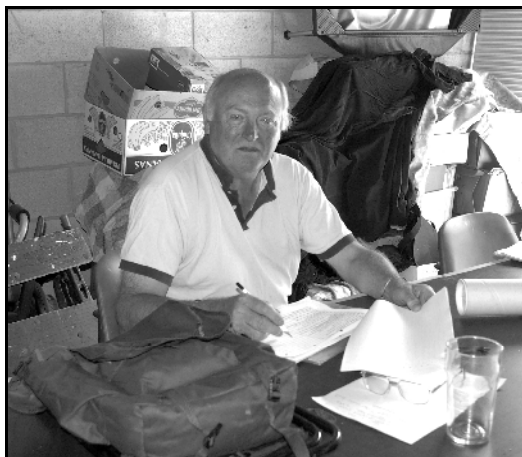
The archive inventory check has now been completed by the Archivist, Geoff Burton, with assistance from other members. This is the list of items that have disappeared since the last inventory was completed by Mike Fish some years ago. If you are looking after any of these items please let Geoff know.

### Item No.   Description

A25-Lib	The GC - The Remains of a Railway. Industrial Archaeology Study, Univ. of Nottingham/WEA
A67-Lib	MS&L Extension to London - Cutting of 1st Sod. Programme of arrangements 13/11/1894
A68-Lib	GCR Extension to London - Ceremony of Opening, Programme of arrangements, 9/3/1899
A69-Lib	n the Trail of the Great Central - Jeremy Buck, Underground News 6/1981
A74-Lib	"Illustrated Guide to London's Rural Retreats and Holiday Resorts" - GCR 1909
B10	Ecclesfield Station Signal Box, Lever Movements - LNER, 1936, copy
B14	P.W notices, Signalling alterations etc.... - GCR, w/e 28/7/00 - 4/8/00, copy
B36	Working of Freight trains - Aldham Junction - Memo, LNER, 1941
B45	GCR Extension Signal Box Diagrams - Signalling Record Society
B67	GC Signal Box Book   Sheffield GCRS Group 1992
B68	ditto
B90	Woodford No.1 & No.2 signal boxes - Photostat of photo's D. Jackson
C72	General Instuctions MSLR   1890
C73	ditto
D4	Parcels load guide - from Nott. Victoria, 1966
D37	Mishap at Nottingham Victoria - note, 1983, from 1935 newspaper
D38	Weighbridge books, 6 - Various of Grimsby, 1970's
D89	Doncaster-Thorne Widening, 1/5/14 -   " The Engineer"
D89	Marylebone Accident, 17/1/13 -   "   "   "
E12	A description of the New Docks at Great Grimsby - MSLR, C.1852, maps, Eng/Fr
F11	Manchester Central aerial view - A3 laser copy, don. R. Emblin
F12	Manchester Central & Piccadilly - Photographs, don. R. Emblin
G7	Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts - GCR, 1912
78	GCR and other companies' reports - Bradshaw, 1900, -02, -04, -06, -08, -10, -12, -14, -16, -18, -20, -22, 23 copies
91	OA&GBR - Accounts, 1942
92	MSLR - Half-yearly rpt & accounts, 31/12/1865, copy
93	Public record office class MT 29 "Index to Inspecting Officer's Report on New Works 1910-1958" - LNER Ex - Kay/Instone
96	Copies: Keadby 1915 GCR / SSYN - Canal Moorings - 1950's Canal/Pikes
L71	"Beyer Peacock, Loco Builders of Gorton, Manchester, a short history" - book, by R.L Hills
89	Birkenhead Railway - L. Walker, compiled 1930s
91	"Locomotives & Railways" Heywood, vols. 3,4 1/1902 - 6/1903 - Vols 1,2 1/1900 - 12/1901
93	"GC Section Notebook" - O. Russell, Letter, RW Jan. 1981
144	GCR Director 4-4-0, D10,D11,D11/12 - Model Rlys, details, Dwgs, photos, text
146	GCR class 11F 4-4-0 - ?
147	GCR Directors - MRN, 8/1953, J.N. Maskelyne
149	LDECR 0-6-4T - ?.?, Drawings etc..
150	GCR class 9P 4-6-0 - The Locomotive, 15/3/1918, copy
153	GCR ROD 2-8-0 - RM, 10/1965
154	GCR ROD 2-8-0 Pts 1&2 RW, 4/1969, J.W.P. Rowledge

158 GCR class 9K/9L 4-4-2T by C.A. Reddy - drawing, notes  
 162 GCR class 9N 4-6-2T & class 1B 2-6-4T - HMRS, N. Campling 4mm  
 178 Early days at Mottram Yard - RW, 7/79, Jackson/Russell, copy  
 217 A Century of Locomotive Building - R. Stephenson & Co., 1823-1923  
 243 Nos. 561,566,694,778,570,387,776,775,891,956 - Dgs (4-6 " long), copy  
 250 Observations at Dunford, etc. - B. Lumb, late 1940's, ex-O.R  
 257 Footplatemens' seniority book, Immingham - 1889-1957, copy  
 258 Copy; Class 14 2-2-2 - Side Elevation, The Engineer 2/1/1885  
 269 Trains Illustrated - 1959 2/5/6/9/11/12 1960 5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12  
 1961 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/11  
 298 Class D11 4-4-0 - GA plan, long section & boiler backplate elevation; 1:8  
 scale; 38" x 72" dyeline print of drwg no 12943-C stamped LNER Gorton 20/10/46  
 309 4-6-0 IMMINGHAM CLASS - Loco & tender details F.J Roche Drwg. Nos.  
 NE/L/54, NE/TE/24  
 M61 Eydon Road - Signal Box Diagram  
 62 Chalcombe Road - Signal Box Diagram  
 63 Brackley - Signal Box Diagram 1960  
 64 Helmdon - Signal Box Diagram  
 65 Culworth - Signal Box Diagram  
 66 Woodford No.1-4 - Signal Box Diagram  
 67 Charwelton - Signal Box Diagram  
 68 Staverton Road - Signal Box Diagram  
 69 Braunston & Willoughby - Signal Box Diagram 1948  
 70 Braunston & Willoughby - Signal Box Diagram  
 71 Barby Sidings - Signal Box Diagram 1950  
 72 Rugby - Signal Box Diagram 1950  
 73 Ashby magna - Signal Box Diagram  
 74 Leicester Goods South - Signal Box Diagram  
 75 Leicester Goods North - Signal Box Diagram  
 76 Abbey lane sidings - Signal Box Diagram 1917  
 77 Belgrave & Birstall - Signal Box Diagram  
 78 Quorn & Woodhouse - Signal Box Diagram 1965  
 138 Copy; Plan, Frodingham Loco Shed and area - LNER 1929/41  
 139 Copy; 8 miles to 1in. Goods and Passenger Stations - LNER Southern Area  
 post 1925  
 162 1" Ordinance survey map, 1911-No.19 - Ecclesfield, Kippax, Wakefield,  
 Howden, Bansley, Doncaster, Golle  
 163 1" Ordinance survey map, 1911-No.20 - Hull, Partington, Kirton, Saltfleetby  
 172 GCR Chesterfield-Staveley, GCR Buckmanton NJ-Beighton, LDEC  
 Chesterfield-Langwith - 25" and 6" maps pregrouping period  
 173 The Line of Rail-way from Sheffield to Manchester - copy, map  
 174 Brunswick shed CLC - Herculeaneum Dock 4mm model layout - RM, Nov. 1997  
 175 MSLR River Dun Navigation Sheet 13 - Keadby  
 176 Grimsby town Station/Loco depot - pre 1900  
 P52 GCR Open 3rd - 1911-13 Drwg no. 4324-C  
 94 GCR Open 1st (Novobax-Watford) - 1907, copy  
 R32 GCR 15T brake van - MRN, 1942, copy  
 84 GCR Louvred bogie fis van/truck to carry 15T - GA Plans & elevations; 1:12  
 scale; 27" x 60"; Dwg no. 2361; blueprint labelled LNER GC section Gorton Works; good  
 cond. But slight tear on fold  
 101 5' 6" bogie for bogie fish van and open carriage truck - 1:8 scale with some  
 details at 1:4 scale; 26" x 33"; not labelled; blueprint good cond. For age  
 162 RCH Standard specification for the construction of private owner wagons  
 (Potts collection) - P.O.S/8 Addendum to standards, Jan 1910  
 104 MSLR, TT - 4/1877  
 107 GCR "Supp. To App. No. 3 to the WTT" - 3/1899

- 109 GCR, WTT (no. 290) - 7/1902
- 110 GCR, WTT (no. 308) - 7/1910
- 155 MSLR, Excursion & special trains - Sat 15/9/1860, copy
- 159 GNR WTT, excluding West Riding - Winter 1897/8, copy, ex-GNR Soc.(still at KES)
- X116 "Commercial Guide and Gazetter to the Towns and villages.....on.....The GCR....." - GCR, Ed. 1907
- 119 Railway Magazine Bound Vols 1971-83 and 19886/7/8
- 132 Locomotives & Railways 1902-1903 - Journal
- 133 Locomotives & Railways 1900 - Journal Vol. I and II
- 167 Journals (some of) - Mancunian: Manchester Loco Soc.
- 168 do - Lincs & H'side Transport Review
- 169 do - Premier lines: LNWR Soc.
- 170 do - NER Journal
- 171 do - GE journal
- 172 do - Midland Rly Journal
- 174 do - LNER study group
- 175 do - GNR soc.
- 180 LNER Study Group Seminar '75 - Supplementary notes, loco allocation etc.
- 196 Tribunal: Standard Revenue "The Trent, Ancholme & Grimsby Railway" - F. Henthorn
- 201 Railway Albums; Paper, notices etc.. - Ex-Samuel Walker
- 204 "Nineteenth Century Railway Accidents" - An index of the Board of trade Dept. reports, J.Dixon
- 225 MS&L, New Derbyshire Lines - Turning of 1st Sod, Programme of arrangements, Beginton 7th Feb. 1890
- 288 Provincial Eastern - 1987/8 Plan for South Yorkshire, Lincolnshire & Humberside
- 300 North Lincolnshire, Newspaper Cuttings
  - Barnetby Accident, Jan 1986
  - Proposed Closure Brigg Line 1988
  - Closure of Scunthorpe West Yard
  - Signal Boxes, Melton Ross, Weigh Office sidings
  - Closure of Keadby Power Station 1984
  - Preservation of Class O4 No. 63601



*Geoff Burton carrying out the archive inventory check in a secret bunker (not even on [www.secret-bases.co.uk](http://www.secret-bases.co.uk)) deep in the English countryside.*

## Recent auction items sold at Sheffield Railwayana Auctions

(see p14 for auction house details)



Metropolitan & Great Central Joint cast iron warning sign.  
Sold for **£400**.



Great Western and Great Central Joint cast iron warning sign.  
Sold for **£190**.



South Yorkshire Joint Railway cast iron bridge plate no.33.  
Sold for **£110**.



A selection of shed plates:  
14D (Neasden Feb.1958-June 1962).  
Sold for **£200**.  
15E (Leicester GC Feb.1958-Sept.1963).  
Sold for **£100**.  
17F (Trafford Park Dec.1956-Feb.1958).  
Sold for **£200**.



Nameplate from BR class EM1 electric loco no.26049 *Jason*. Sold for **£6,000**.





**The Robinson at Ruddington.** A GC Gala was held at Ruddington on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> July. On the Saturday the new 'Platform No.1' was officially opened. Following speeches from the Mayor of Rushcliffe, Cllr Peter McGowan, and local MP, The Rt. Hon Kenneth Clarke QC, a commemorative plaque was unveiled by His Honour Edgar Fay QC. This photo, taken on the Sunday, shows the preserved Robinson 2-8-0 no.63601 returning with a trip to the end-of-the-line at Loughborough. The signal box (originally from Neasden) was not operational on the day. *photo: Bob Gellatly*





A gauge 1 model of GCR class 9N 4-6-2T no.168 made by Christopher Ardron to a Paul Forsyth design. See additional notes on opposite page.  
*photos: Christopher Ardron*



## Modellers' Corner

by Tony West

Firstly a few snippets for you: Garth Patrick (GP models) will be at Telford on 5/6 Sept, hopefully with some of his new six wheelers as will Chris Basten (Dragon models). Unfortunately Chris has just had a spell in hospital so the new coaching transfers may be a little late, still I'm sure we modellers will wish him a speedy return to good health. Worsley Works have announced a set of etches for a GC Atlantic in 4mm; perhaps one of our 4mm comrades will do the honours with a photo or two and an appraisal of the goodies. Which brings me nicely to my next point, I (and I'm sure the editor as well) would welcome any contributions, whether photographic or written...at least you won't have to keep looking at my efforts!

I should like to thank all those members who invested in the latest product from S&T Wagon Works, the D6 3 plk open in 7mm scale. Basically this was a batch of fifty one-piece resin bodies with cast fittings which sold out within six weeks. This is the type of response which helps to encourage trade support for the GC modeller. Anyone who would like more or who missed out, please contact Simon (details in last *Forward*) as, subject to demand, a new batch may be cast. The next planned subject we are looking at is the large GC cattle van, something quite different to our previous subjects, so will keep you all posted.

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### Notes on the construction of a gauge 1 GCR class 9N locomotive by Christopher Ardron

*Photos on opposite page*

This model has been made following plans by Paul Forsyth. The chassis frames are 1/16th mild steel and a single cylinder is mounted between the frames under the smoke box. At the rear end of the loco is the spirit burner and spirit tank which incorporates a needle valve for fine adjustment of spirit to the burner. Inside the cab are controls for the regulator and blower. At the back of the cab is a lubricator which is also adjustable via a needle valve. The boiler is copper with six flue tubes inside the boiler barrel and lagged with cardboard (yes, it works very well!). The tanks, cab, buffers, spirit tank, spirit burner and cab fittings are all brass. The tanks and cab are soft soldered together while the cab fittings and smoke box are silver soldered together.

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### Model Railway Exhibition Diary

*Some events that may interest our readers*

Sat.5<sup>th</sup> & Sun.6<sup>th</sup> Sept. : Gauge 0 Guild at the International Centre, Telford.

Sat.12<sup>th</sup> Sept. : Northolt Model Railway Club at Northolt Village Community Centre.

Sat.3<sup>rd</sup> & Sun.4<sup>th</sup> Oct. : Manchester Model Railway Society at the New Century Halls.

Sat.10<sup>th</sup> Oct. : Sheffield Model Railway Society at Davy United Sports & Social Club.

Sat.17<sup>th</sup> & Sun.18<sup>th</sup> Oct. : The National Festival of Railway Modelling at the East of England Showground, Peterborough.

Sat.24<sup>th</sup> & Sun.25<sup>th</sup> Oct. : Hazel Grove & District MRS at the Hazel Grove Recreation Centre, Jacksons Lane.

Sat.7<sup>th</sup> Nov. : Wycrail 09 at John Hampden Grammar School, High Wycombe.

Sat.21<sup>st</sup> & Sun.22<sup>nd</sup> Nov. : Bassettlaw Railway Society at the Town Hall, Retford.

Sat.21<sup>st</sup> & Sun.22<sup>nd</sup> Nov. : The Warley Show at the NEC, Birmingham.

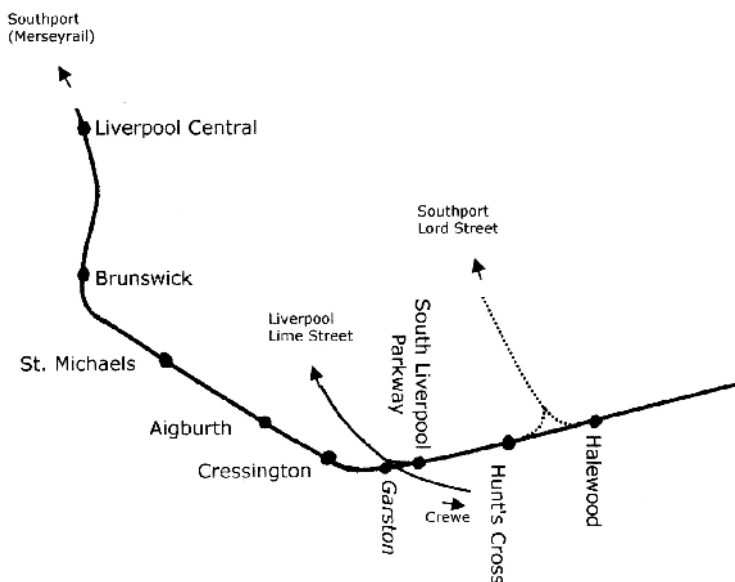


*See "Tickhill & Wadworth" by Tony Gee & Ken Hill at The Warley Show.*

## Along Cheshire Lines - Part 5 : Warrington to Liverpool

by Ken Grainger

A major advantage of surveying the Cheshire Lines' Manchester to Liverpool route in halves either side of Warrington, is that with the 'stopper' from Sheffield due into Piccadilly's platform 1 at 32 minutes past the hour, by nipping smartly over the footbridge to platform 14 we can just make the 37 minutes past the hour Liverpool 'fast' (a TPE class 185), which will whisk us to Warrington Central in just twenty minutes. That gives plenty of time for a leisurely look at the line onwards, but first noting along the way that Urmston station's conversion into a restaurant, the 'Steam House' is now complete and, as we approached Warrington Central, that the girder bridge to nowhere on the stub of the direct line has pleasingly (if somewhat inexplicably) been repainted. The girder bridge now looks very smart in green and red, but I have to say that Urmston station is a bit of a disappointment. Its name, anyway, sounds more like a Turkish Baths, but that apart, the building has been shorn of its distinctive CLC fretted bargeboards and without either them or the typical arched roof extension between its two pavilions, it lacks much of the essential Cheshire Lines character. Perhaps I'm being churlish, for at least the building has survived, but Cheadle station's conversion to 'The Cheshire Line' shows how much more sympathetic Urmston's could have been.

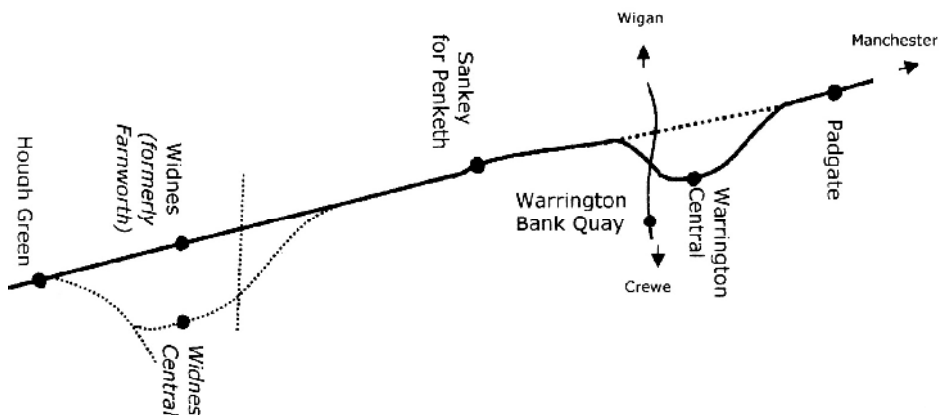


But back to west of Warrington: have we saved the best till last? That must be for you to say, but at the very least, with no less than six listed stations along the way, this final stretch into Liverpool can definitely claim to be "last but by no means least". Departure from Warrington Central is at rooftop height and quickly crosses the West Coast main line. Utilitarian Bank Quay is out of sight around the curve to the south, but we're not missing much - Warrington folk are served with much more style at Central. The site of Sankey Junction, where the Warrington Central loop formerly rejoined the long-gone direct line, has been largely obliterated by new housing, other than a stub of the redundant embankment trailing in as we swing left and cross over the Sankey Brook, flowing leisurely southwards to join the Mersey.



Sankey for Penketh station is rather surprisingly on a noticeable curve, the remaining route being pretty much a 'bee-line' all the way to Garston. The resulting super-elevation requiring an agility in boarding and alighting from Warrington-bound trains which makes a mockery of the former stairs from the road overbridge having been replaced by gentle slopes. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile breaking your journey here for a closer look at the Grade II listed station building, again of the MS&L lancet-windowed, asymmetrical pavilions style, as already seen at such as Glazebrook and Padgate, on the Liverpool platform, with the original waiting room opposite. The station is unstaffed but (fingers crossed) in good order, though painted over sections of the red brick building's lower courses indicate past graffiti attacks. It still retains its CLC-trademark drinking fountain though here the sandstone carving has weathered particularly badly. Sankey also still has its station clock, which probably isn't working, but we can't be absolutely sure since it has no hands! And don't miss the CLC cast iron notices at either end of the road overbridge. Both are broken horizontal, but are all there and clearly legible, warning against overtaking the bridge with loads exceeding "what is normal for the district".

Heading onwards from Sankey for Penketh, the cooling towers of Fiddler's Ferry power station loom across the fields to the south. Fiddler's Ferry was the destination for so many of the trainloads of coal which slogged over Woodhead, then via Godley and Skelton Junctions to complete their journey on the ex-L&NW Lymm line, which is now a foot and cycle path.



The site of the junction where the Widnes Central loop formerly turned off is hardly discernible - just a brief widening of the trackbed. The loop line anyway wasn't a part of the CLC: the Great Northern chose not to participate and so it was built just by their Midland and MS&L partners. BR saw things from the Great Northern viewpoint and closed the loop in October 1964. Until January 1959, when it was renamed Widnes North, the station we now know as Widnes had the name of its residential northern suburb, Farnworth, commemorated in a dual name cast plaque mounted beside the station entrance - a railway archaeology 'Rosetta stone'. It became simply "Widnes" in May 1968, but from the following April there was no longer the ex-L&NWR Widnes South anyway with which it might be confused. Widnes station again conforms to the MS&L lancet-windowed pavilions style, though here the waiting shelter which once stood on the opposite (eastbound) platform has gone. On my most recent visit the station was being very smartly repainted in blue and white, including a not overly brash "Welcome to Widnes" across the two-storey pavilion. Unusually here the trademark drinking

fountain has been painted, but both that and the footbridge were then still in tired green and cream, awaiting the painters' attention.

While at Widnes, its worth walking back a couple of hundred yards along the parallel Lancaster Road to see the remains of Farnworth tunnel which you might have noticed from the train as it slowed for the Widnes stop. The tunnel was opened out in the early 1920s, but from the first road bridge east of the station the bases of the western portal are clearly visible, plus the remaining lower courses of the brick lining and, above, a distinctly out-of-character concrete overbridge which the opening out made necessary. The tunnel can only have been a hundred yards or so long, and must have been extremely shallow. In fact there is no apparent reason for it ever having existed.

Though you can't see where (from the train at least) the Widnes Central loop rejoined the main line just east of Hough Green station - Hough, by the way, in the vernacular rhymes with "tough", as distinct from "cough" or "bough". Hough Green is again of the two pavilions style as at Sankey and Widnes, and like them is Grade II listed. Very differently though, at Hough Green we are reminded we have now entered Merseyrail territory by the yellow paintwork - a bit strident at first, but you soon get used to it. Hough Green still has its waiting shelter on the Warrington platform but uniquely here it is still serving its original purpose. At first glance, the trademark drinking fountain looks as if it had been lost when a taxi office extension was tacked on to the main building, but its upper section survives over on the opposite platform, just by the old road bridge which provides cross-platform access.



*Sankey for Penketh looking west. A Northern Rail class 150/2 is heading for Liverpool.*

By contrast and befitting its village status, not to mention being sited atop a not insignificant embankment, Halewood's station was a modest wooden structure, most notable as the site for a good many H. Gordon Tidey photographs of CLC expresses featuring Pollitt Singles, class 11 4-4-Os and even more venerable Sacre gems. Superannuated they might have been, but they could still match today's 40-minute dash between Manchester and Liverpool. It can't have been too much of a surprise when Halewood station was closed in September 1951, but since then lots of new housing has

urged the building of a new station, which opened in May 1988. As modern wayside stations go, Halewood's isn't too bad, the brick-built platform shelters not altogether without style, though nothing to compare with the traditional stations we have been visiting. It's a little to the west of the original, at the eastern end of the triangular junction for the one-time line to Gateacre, Aintree and north Liverpool, which was very busy in its day, then on over the sand dunes to Southport Lord Street, which wasn't so busy. Its services were suspended "for the duration" in January 1917 as an economy measure. The earthworks are still clearly visible, curving away at the Liverpool end of the platforms. Incidentally, the handsome red brick frontage of Southport Lord Street, its clock tower inscribed "SCLER" (Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway) can still be admired, despite its line having closed as long ago as 1952. A large placard announces that the boarded-up building has been acquired for hotel and retail development, which is hopefully good news (we all know the alternative for redundant railway buildings) but whether the placard pre or post-dated 'the credit crunch' is not known. After initial use as a bus station, the former platforms area now houses a Morrison's supermarket, but it isn't only railway stations that suffer such indignities: the Garrick Theatre next door - splendidly Art Deco - is now a Mecca Bingo.



*View of Liverpool platform buildings at Widnes (formerly Farnworth).*

The western end of the Gateacre and Southport lines' triangular junction was on the formerly four track approach to Hunts Cross, which accordingly had four platform faces. Platforms 1 and 2 still serve the Liverpool-Manchester main line but, while the one-time Southport platform 4 still exists (beneath burgeoning undergrowth), and platform 3 has become the terminus of Merseyrail's Northern line electrics, which, with the main line trains being diverted into Lime Street, utilise the CLC route to Liverpool Central before going on to Southport Chapel Street. Apparently it was originally intended to continue Merseyrail's Northern line beyond Hunts Cross to Gateacre and maybe even Aintree, but those plans were abandoned and the lines were finally lifted in 1979.



*Hough Green looking east from the road overbridge. A Northern Rail class 150/1 provides the stopping service to Liverpool.*

At platform level Hunts Cross station is dominated by massively over-engineered stepped ramps, which have replaced the former stairways down from a new booking hall at road level. The original booking hall still rears four storeys high at the western end of the Liverpool platform, its outline daintily softened by upper floor dormers and typical fretted bargeboards. It is now "The Waiting Room" bar restaurant, Grade II listed and not at all a bad place to wet one's whistle. We could have stayed with the Lime Street train and changed at the new South Liverpool Parkway (for John Lennon Airport), but with the new station having all the charisma of a public convenience, Hunts Cross is much preferred.

South Liverpool Parkway is the June 2006 replacement for the one-time Garston station, some recognisable remains of which can be seen just a few yards to the west. Along with the other stations towards Liverpool Central, Garston had closed in April 1972 to be reopened by Merseyrail in January 1978 but then finally closed when replaced by South Liverpool Parkway. Sensibly the new station is sited at the junction for the Lime Street line, adjacent to the Allerton sidings which must drive the local 'artists' mad. No sooner have they 'tagged' and otherwise sprayed all the wagons with graffiti than more stock is brought in and they have to start all over again! Thus far though, the 'artists' seem to be standing up to the challenge manfully.

As the main line trains turn northwards for Lime Street, we are now traversing the Garston and Liverpool line, which parallels the Mersey estuary and has stations appropriate to the pleasant leafy suburbs it passes through. Cressington is a delight. The Liverpool platform shelter matches the semi-hipped main station buildings, with the cross-platform footbridge sprouting from the centre of the building. In style it is quite unlike any of the preceding stations along the line, but does have the fretted bargeboards and, on the platform wall, a CLC drinking fountain.

The former 'Mersey Road & Aigburth' reopened as 'Aigburth for Otterspool Promenade'. In former times Otterspool had its own station, but being at the end of a long lane to

nowhere-in-particular that unsurprisingly closed in March 1951. Like Cressington, Aigburth is Grade II listed and is similar in layout, including the unusual out-of-the-front-of-the-building footbridge arrangement but doesn't have Cressington's picturesque hipped gables or, for that matter, a drinking fountain. Aigburth is nevertheless a very attractive station, though a discordant note is the crudely hacked away end valances of the Liverpool platform waiting shelter canopy, to improve visibility of the platform end colour light signal.

There is still one more listed station on the line, at St. Michaels. The platforms are dominated by stepped ramps down from road level, nearly as ridiculously over-engineered and every bit as overpowering as those at Hunts Cross, - goodness knows what weight they were designed to take (probably more than the Sankey station overbridge) - but the booking hall is again quite enchanting. Beyond St. Michaels and the residential suburbs, the line changes character and becomes an underground (complete, intriguingly, with the customary dead-eyed passengers - or had they been like that all along, but I hadn't noticed, having eyes only for the passing scene?). It emerges just long enough for one last intermediate station before burrowing through to the new, subterranean Liverpool Central.



*Hunt's Cross looking west. The Merseyrail 'Northern Line' services start here. The sight of an East Midlands Trains class 222 'Meridian' on this line is not normal!*

Brunswick has the same appeal as most modern stations, but does give the opportunity to see traces of the one-time Brunswick shed, squeezed in beside the carved rock face which provided a backdrop for so many fine portraits of MS&L and Great Central locomotives. The new Liverpool Central is a tube station, with all the charm that implies, though its surface level entrance does have a certain style. It still fronts on to Ranelagh Street, opposite a Midland Hotel, but a very much less opulent one than that facing Manchester Central. The original surface level station's overall roof is of course long gone, but its sidewalls still stand either side of the car park and Network Rail depot which now occupy the site. You will need permission (on the occasion of my visit, readily given) to go along to the locomotive stabling area and adjacent George Street tunnel

mouth, to peer through the mesh down to where the trains still rumble through, on the original alignment but now a good twenty feet lower. Of the splendid station buildings, once the Cheshire Lines Headquarters, only the one-time Parcels Office remains, round the corner on Bold Street. It is now the "Caffe (*sic*) Noir". At least we have the opportunity to reflect on our survey of the Cheshire Lines, the self-styled (and with every justification) "Line of Interest", with a celebratory 'cuppa'.



*Cressington (above) and Aigburth (below) both have the characteristic style of footbridge.*





Above: The CLC Liverpool Central in the 1900s.

photo: Stations UK

Below: The Merseyrail Liverpool Central today.



## Sir Sam Fay. The L&SWR Years - Part 1

by Bill Fay

*An article compiled from diaries and other anecdotal notes left by Sir Sam Fay relating to his time with the London & South Western Railway Company between 1872 & 1901.*

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In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railways were the most go ahead and exciting industry to be part of and attracted the most ambitious and imaginative young men. Sam Fay was just such a young man. Sam was born at Hamble-le-Rice, Hampshire, on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1856, his father being bailiff and gardener to the local Rector and later a farmer at Awbridge, in the parish of Michelmersh, near Romsey. The Fay family had farmed at Awbridge since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, probably having arrived as Huguenot refugees from France. Sam had the benefit of a basic education at the village school and later, for four years at Blenheim House School in Fareham, although his elder brother, Charley, was not given this advantage; maybe family circumstances had improved by the time Sam came along.

His first introduction to railways was not auspicious. In later life he recalled a screaming fit on the platform of Blechynden (subsequently Southampton Central); his mother had left him on his own in order to cross the line to buy tickets to Burley and Bournemouth. During the journey her purse, with money and tickets, was stolen! Sam spoke with a typical Hampshire accent, as exemplified by the late Lord Denning, although it became more muted as his life progressed. In those days local accents were more marked and widespread than they are today. As a youngster he joined a fishing crew, visiting Cornwall where he found the local accent difficult to follow. Again, in 1880, his accent was a problem when he visited Castle Hedingham in Essex. He helped out at the local school by giving dictation – "the young beggars evidently took me for a foreigner, they could not understand what I said."

In 1907 Vanity Fair published a Spy portrait of Mr Sam Fay with the accompanying article saying:

"There is no nonsense about him, but there is an American accent, or, to be exact, it sounds an American accent. It is not. Given the chance, he will assure you with great firmness that he speaks the true Hampshire tongue of which the great American language is but a base and colourable imitation. That tongue, he contends, went to the United States from Poole Harbour and Buckler's Hard; and the Great Republic has striven in vain to live up to it"

He recollected that in his youth he "thought it was a fine thing to wear uniform and say 'right away' to the guard and engine driver." In those days there was stiff competition for jobs on the railways. Aged 15, Sam was lucky in that his father knew an auditor of the London & South Western Railway and through him received a coveted nomination to a clerkship from Lewis Ayre, who had been a director since 1835 (since before the first



*A young Sam Fay*



section of line was opened between Nine Elms and Woking in 1838). His luck held, or more likely he created a good impression, for he was quickly selected, subject to passing some comparatively simple mathematical and other tests at Waterloo. These he passed, even though he did not feel he had done himself justice.

### *Itchen Abbas*

So in 1872 he had his longed for start on the railways as a boy clerk at Itchen Abbas station, learning about passenger and goods station work, including telegraphy and booking clerk's duties. Three months later he became station clerk under the Station Master, one Mr Wilmer. Itchen Abbas was the southernmost station on the Mid Hants Railway, which opened for traffic in October 1865. In Sam Fay's day the line was worked by the L&SWR, who finally bought it in 1884. It closed in 1973 and is now the preserved "Watercress Line." Itchen Abbas is the only station on the line not to have survived. One of his duties was to operate the bell signal between Itchen Abbas and Winchester Junction (then the junction between the Alton line and the main Waterloo/Basingstoke/Southampton line). This involved giving the signal to the box at the junction and releasing the down starter signal from the ground frame on the platform. Twice he forgot to give the signal and one can only imagine the lively language this occasioned at the box when an unannounced train arrived. Rightly this was a serious offence and he received a good "wiggling" from Mr Hills, the District Inspector. Luckily he was not dismissed; the Edwardian railway scene would have been poorer without him. Later Hills was to be a station master under Sam Fay!

### *Stockbridge*

After nine months at Itchen Abbas and a short spell at Alresford he was transferred to Stockbridge where his duties were the same. Stockbridge was on the Andover and Redbridge Railway (nicknamed the "Spratt and Winkle line"), which was taken over by the L&SWR in 1861 before completion. It opened to the public in 1865 and closed in 1964. The line, which followed the route of the Andover Canal, was doubled in the years 1883-1885. His new superior was most un-station masterly and Sam thoroughly disapproved of him. His own recollection was:

"There the station master, whose name was Worsley, son of a clergyman, drank pretty heavily. He had a revolver which he was fond of using to fire at the railings on the platform or at the fire in the porters' room grate. He was short with a big head. I remember a yokel on the overbridge by the station telling him during a backchat when Worsley was fresh (*from drink*), "Go on, you've got to grease your head to get your shirt on." Worsley was a bachelor, his sister keeping house for him, a very refined lady who had to put up with his unpleasant methods."

Although not averse to a drink himself, Sam was saddened by the drunkenness which was prevalent in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Writing in a more sober age he recalled that it was a common sight to see men and women reeling about the streets, especially on a Saturday night. He had memories of many promising careers ruined or cut short by drink. No doubt he would be horrified to recognise the scenes of drunkenness, now aggravated by drugs, commonplace in our town centres today on every night of the week. At Stockbridge they had a porter nicknamed "Coppertop" who, not one of the brightest, was a constant source of entertainment to the other staff. On one occasion he was sent to ask the engine driver for the keys to the tunnel. Sam did not report the driver's response as it was "unprintable."

His L&SWR staff record shows he moved in February 1875 to Turnham Green and later in the year to Southampton. His own records show this as a period he spent as relief staff working at various stations up and down the line, filling in for temporary vacancies or for those absent for leave or illness. So maybe he was nominally attached to Turnham Green and Southampton while actually working as relief at nearby stations.



*Stockbridge station in the early 1900s.*

*photo: Geoff Merritt Collection*

### *Kingston-upon-Thames*

In 1876 Sam was appointed a clerk at Kingston-upon-Thames station. This was to be a more settled period, during which he courted and married Frances Farbrother. We are fortunate that he kept diaries from January 1878 to July 1881, part of his time at Kingston. They give some insight into the life of a young ambitious railway clerk at the time and end when his own efforts were bringing him to the attention of senior managers and directors of the L&SWR. At that time Kingston was the county town of Surrey and an Assize town. Sam had occasion to attend the courts on railway business; he mentions two cases involving passengers opening doors, first on the wrong side of the train and secondly, when the train was not in the station - a not uncommon experience in an age when railways were still a novelty.

Neighbouring Surbiton had only just started to grow around the Waterloo/Southampton line and had been a small village; the station there had been the original Kingston Station. This line had been opened in two parts, firstly from Twickenham to Kingston in 1863 and then from Coombe (later Malden for Coombe) to Kingston in 1869, to tap into the increasing population of the area. A Mr C. Pettit was the Station Master and Sam evidently respected him; obviously a "proper" station master. Pettit seems to have been a paternalistic manager for when Sam was ill Pettit went to see him every day and even sent him "baked apples and pudding." There were three clerks when Sam started at Kingston of which he was a junior up to December 1879 when the senior clerk, one Osborne, was transferred to Windsor Goods. Sam took Osborne's place and his salary (or "screw" as he referred to it) was increased to £80 per annum. It appears from the diaries that Hampton Wick also fell under the control of Kingston as he was sent there as relief clerk regularly. At times Kingston was "deuced busy" for the ticketing clerk; he records 1,480 passengers in a day and 1,200 in an afternoon on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> June 1878 respectively and 23,000 passengers for July that year and 25,000 the following

July – "Best month we have ever had here." At the same time as dealing with passengers the clerks were responsible for a not inconsiderable parcels traffic.

The third clerk, Damen, was responsible for goods traffic and when he went on leave Sam took on his work as well – "This goods relief is rather too much of a good thing." Osborne and Fay worked either a morning shift (5am to 1pm) or an evening shift (1pm to 9pm). Which duty they were on depended on local arrangements but this was regularised in April 1878 when Scott, the General Manager, decreed that where there were two, one clerk must work a week of mornings and the other a week of evenings alternatively. Sam commented that this change "does not meet general approval." This came about when Gooden, a clerk at Putney, reported late one morning, missing the first train of the day about 5am. Scott threatened him with the sack if this recurred. The hapless clerk protested asking how he could be expected to get up when his last train was 12pm the previous night.

It was common then for lowly clerks away from home to live in lodgings. Initially Sam lodged with a Mrs Redfern who provided him with breakfast, "a rasher and cocoa", and evening meal. At first he appears to have been quite content with this but in July 1878 he gave notice because "I can't stay here with that fool of a Compton" (More about Compton, a bookstall clerk, later). He found alternative lodgings in East Road but "Mrs Redfern has taken my leaving so to heart that I have given them up." However by November 1881 matters had further deteriorated and he did move:

"Mon. 22<sup>nd</sup>: Cleared out of my lodgings at Mrs Redfern's, The bookstall clerk, Davis, also left. Things have been going on very rough here lately, bad dinners and worse cooking, late hours kept by the inmates keeping us awake, and last but certainly not the least objectionable feature, the anything but moral conduct of Mrs R's niece."

His new lodgings were a bedroom in Shanklin Villa, Richmond Park Road, costing 4 shillings per week, and having his meals in a local tavern. This was not a good move – "12<sup>th</sup> February: I have got a nasty attack of the shingles and am in the doctor's hands. I believe my damp bedroom has something to do with it." Happily he was soon to find more congenial surroundings. His friend Walter Farbrother was married in early March and Sam went to live with the newlyweds at 13 Albert Road, Norbiton – "My new room is a treat looking straight across the Fairfield."

This Walter was the brother of Frances Farbrother who he was courting at the time and who he was to marry in 1883. She and Walter were the children of a local cabinet maker and undertaker. On many occasions Sam records helping Walter, either being a pallbearer or assisting in collecting a dead body by horse drawn hearse from as far away as St Georges Hospital, Hyde Park Corner. Two of Frances and Walter's nephews, Charles Farbrother and William Farbrother were later to join the L&SWR, ending up as Southern Railway station masters at Cosham and Bournemouth respectively. No doubt Sam had some influence on both careers. It is unclear as to whether he met Frances through Walter or, perhaps more probably, through the landlady, Mrs Redfern. She was certainly a friend of the latter's (and they may have been related) as they had a short holiday together. Courting seems to have involved many a long walk, occasional dances and regular church attendance – "To Ham Church in the evening. Mr Hough preached a beautiful sermon; he must be a good man."

Apart from courting and walking Sam spent much of his spare time on sporting activities. Rugby football features but his favourite winter pastime was skating on local ponds and lakes which froze over most winters. The winter of 1878/79 was particularly good for skaters if not for the railways. On Christmas Eve – "trains very late, two engines failed thro' the bursting of the pipes with frost" and on Boxing Day "the river has been frozen over above Kingston Bridge but not enough to bear the weight of skaters."

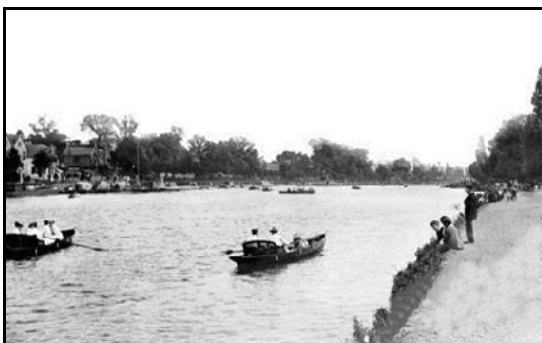
Rowing was, however, his favourite sport, pursued through most of the year. It certainly appealed to his competitive streak. The Kingston Rowing Club thrives today as it did in Sam's time. From his diaries it is apparent that many local clerks were members of the club and he was put up for membership by his senior clerk and good friend, Osborne, being elected on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1878. Seven months later he was on the committee - his first management experience. He rowed as often as his duties allowed. "Went for row in a four to Swan and back, got on first rate" and "Went for a scull in the morning." His intended was, however, not so keen - "Trottie (a family name for Frances Farbrother) doesn't like this rowing business because it keeps me away from her till rather late," and again, "I did not go to see her till after nine o'clock; she thought I was drowned." Evidently his rowing was a cause of friction between them!

Sam was a useful rower but perhaps not top notch, seemingly often coming second in finals. His excuse was that he did not get enough practice but this is a little hard to believe seeing as he records being on the water so often. The prizes certainly motivated him - "Am going in strong for the sculling prize (an epergne)", and referring to the medal on offer for the fours, "I *must* (his italics) have one of them." In presenting him with the cup for second in the Junior Sculls the Mayor of Kingston said that he hoped Sam (age 21) would long live to drink champagne out of it. He did, living another 75 years.

Rowing was not all hard work. The club ended the season with a dinner which can only be described as magnificently Victorian; his diary for 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1878 records: To our Rowing Club dinner at the Sun Hotel, the Mayor in the chair, had a capital dinner. I first of all performed on some turbot and oyster sauce, then stewed eels, turkey and sausages, a leg of fowl, a half a partridge, then some hare, jelly, cheese and celery, finishing with dessert. A bottle of hock, 2 quart bottles of pale ale, 2 bottles of champagne between four of us. The speeches and songs were very good. About 50 dined. It was a very select party. The dinner was 6 shillings a head without wine, but after cashing up the sum total of my feed I fear the landlord Mr J. Bond did not get very much out of me"

One can only hope that the present members of Kingston Rowing Club get to enjoy such a feast!

As well as his work, rowing, and courting, Sam took a great interest in current events. His diaries record in some detail two visits to see the House of Commons in action; a place he would get to know very well in supporting and opposing many railway bills. Tickets of admittance had to be obtained from a member and Sam's father got them for him from William Cowper-Temple, MP for South Hampshire, who lived at Broadlands, subsequently to be the Mountbatten home. Cowper-Temple is best known for steering through Parliament the Bill which led to the construction of the Thames Embankment in London.



*The river at Kingston upon Thames in 1896.*

Of course what he recorded reflected the times. The second Afghan War and Russian expansionist aims in the Balkans feature, as does the Zulu War of 1879. Regarding the latter he recorded news of the disastrous battle of Isandlwana with the loss of 500 men of the 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment - "great excitement in consequence" and a day later "A large number of troops have been ordered to the Cape. Mr Zulu had better look out!" In the event he was right and the Zulus were defeated. It was in this war that Prince Napoleon,

son of the exiled Napoleon III, was killed, age 23 – "he was cowardly left by his comrades." Sam evidently saw this as a great event and went, by train, to Chislehurst to see the funeral procession which was a sight he would never forget. The cortege must have been quite magnificent, almost a state funeral, with the coffin on a gun carriage drawn by eight horses, followed by many a Prince, the military and a great number of French, the whole topped and tailed by squadrons of lancers. He was also prescient following the First Boer War which followed – "We have managed to come to terms ... thus laying in a crop of troubles in the future."

The following year was one of excitement over the general election, returning the Liberal Gladstone as prime minister. In early March Sam had gone to a meeting at the Assize Courts addressed by the two Liberal candidates for Mid Surrey (Stern and Higgins). A mob attempted to put their champion, a stonemason, on the platform but in the attempt the gas pipe was broken bringing the meeting to a premature halt. Sam, at that time was evidently a Tory supporter; later in life he became a staunch Liberal. A few years later he was elected to Kingston Council, whether as a Tory or Liberal I don't know, or maybe as an independent as independents in local government were far more common then. His reaction to Gladstone's victory appears very jingoistic, probably reflecting the age – "goodbye to English patriotism and England's supremacy throughout the world." His thoughts on Disraeli's death, the next year, were in similar vein but did touch on his own ambitious views and the optimism of Victorian times – "his (Disraeli's) career must act as a stimulus to many a young man trying to rise in the world."

His diary entries did not ignore railway events. The late 1870s and 1880s were a time of depression in agriculture and industry to which the railways were not immune. Indeed industrial unemployment, for the first time, became a major issue. He makes reference to the strike of Midland Goods guards against a reduction in pay in January 1879. In the same month Scott, the L&SWR General Manager, resisted pressure from his directors and the other companies to lower staff wages and also to add the 5% government duty to season tickets. This was a tax levied on passenger fares at the time and it appears that the L&SWR bore the cost of this as far as season ticket sales were concerned.

Sam was certainly not lacking in ambition and comments on this in his diary:

"Read "Harold" by Lord Lytton again this morning. Methinks my nature is somewhat the same as his, at least as to ambition, but we are all ambitious there surely can be no sin in it. My fancy takes very high flights at times, building castles in the air that I know never will be realised In sober moments my thoughts plan out my future, they make me chief clerk at some good station, then with my darling Trottie in charge of a small country station and eventually a large one"

He did not record what the "castles in the air" were but they were probably more accurate than his "sober" thoughts as he never did become a station master, more like a 'Master of Station Masters' on the L&SWR and 'Master of the Railway' on the Great Central.

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## Aylesbury Vale Parkway officially opened

Although it has been in use since 12 Dec. last year, the new station at Aylesbury Vale Parkway, just north of Aylesbury, was officially opened by Transport Secretary, Lord Adonis, on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July of this year.

Chiltern Trains operates an hourly service to Marylebone from the new station. The line north of Aylesbury was previously freight only except when the 'Quaintonian' operated (see *Forward 158 p45*).

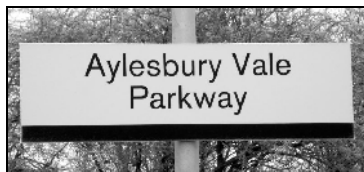
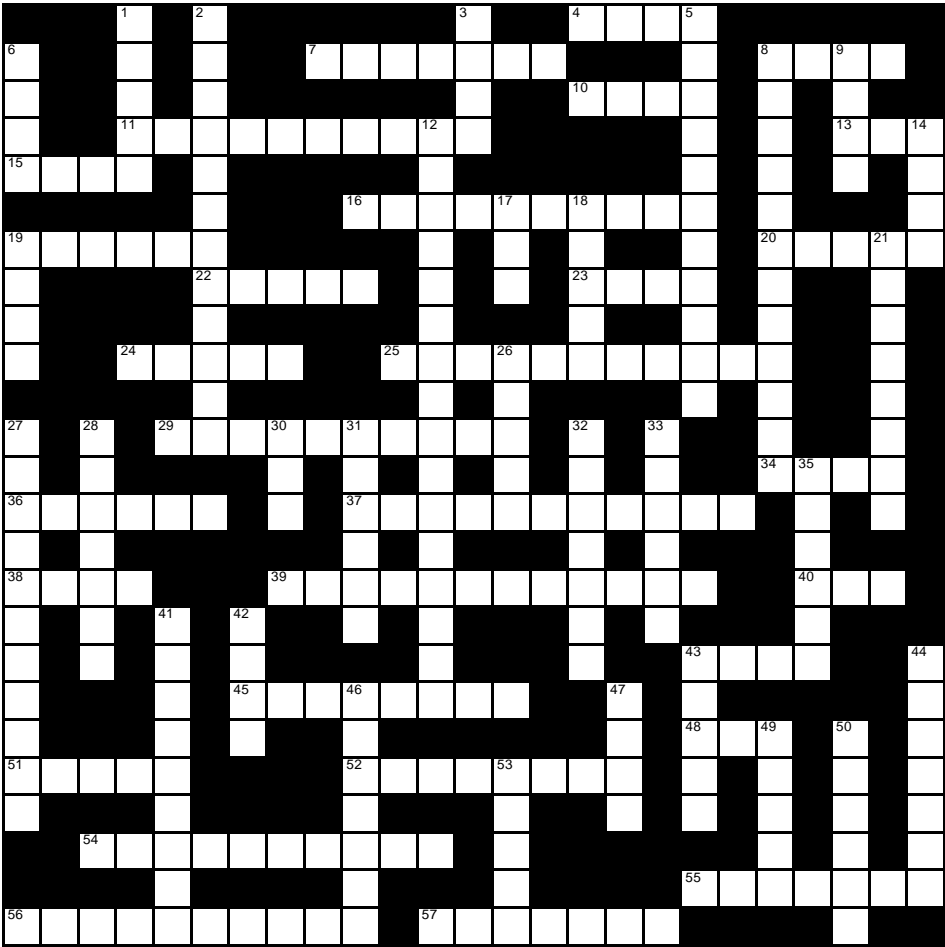


photo: Roger Marks

**Crossword (*Forward 161*)** : Answers in the back of this issue.



**Across**

- 4 An inebriating train. (4)
- 7 Important member of the track gang. (7)
- 8 Creates scale in the boiler. (4)
- 10 Dining room for the workers. (4)
- 11 Power unit for a train. (10)
- 13 Sub zero conditions. (3)
- 15 Shunter's tool. (4)
- 16 Engaged by the railway company to build the line, station buildings etc. (10)
- 19 To remove particles from a liquid. (6)
- 20 Short section of connecting line. (5)
- 22 Often found next to the station in large towns and cities. (5)
- 23 A type of fixing common on the railway. (4)
- 24 Delivers the coal from the coal stage to the tender. (5)
- 25 A long siding with connections to the running line at both ends. (7,4)
- 29 Between Lancashire and East Coast. (10)

- 34 Cover for the regulator valve. (4)
- 36 Controls the flow of steam in and out of the cylinders. (6)
- 37 The LNER carried out their own in 1946. (11)
- 38 To move coal forward in the tender. (4)
- 39 Favourite location for photographers on the preserved Great Central Railway. (8,4)
- 40 Distributed around the loco by capillary action, gravity or steam. (3)
- 43 Common name for a motive power depot. (4)
- 45 An abbey on the Barton Line. (8)
- 48 Used in a Westinghouse brake. (3)
- 51 Word loved by the media to describe a collision. (5)
- 52 Needed on the footplate if the driver doesn't know the road. (8)
- 54 All that remains of Nottingham Victoria station. (5,5)
- 55 Precedes the home. (7)
- 56 Type of signalling control for single track working. (7,3)
- 57 Makes decisions when things go wrong. (7)

### Down

- 1 Could be 4mm to the foot. (5)
- 2 Long gone station between Worksop and Retford. (7,5)
- 3 Type of injector invented by Giffard in 1859. (4)
- 5 Aim of the GC Rolling Stock Trust. (11)
- 6 Message conveyed by a red signal. (4)
- 8 Without a train braking system. (5,7)
- 9 'The Night ----' by W.H.Auden. (4)
- 12 Allows smoke to escape from a long tunnel. (11,5)
- 14 Word used to describe any location where sidings are provided for railway activity. (4)
- 17 Essential for cleaning a steam locomotive. (3)
- 18 Word used to describe a small signal box. (5)
- 19 Red and green varieties carried by a guard. (4)
- 21 Driver's control for cut-off. (8)
- 26 "----- Railway", a magazine for the railway heritage scene. (5)
- 27 New name for Loughborough's goods office. (6,5)
- 28 GN shed in Nottingham. (7)
- 30 A platform that can only be used for terminating services. (3)
- 31 Could be leaf or coil. (6)
- 32 His locomotives were subjected to Thompson's 'improvements'. (7)
- 33 Organised labour movements. (6)
- 35 A university town that saw GC locos on cross-country trains to the South Coast. (6)
- 41 Once had a CLC station called Lord Street. (9)
- 42 The allocated slot on the timetable which can be lost due to late running. (4)
- 43 What's left in the tender when the lumps have been used up. (5)
- 44 A telephone connection between a group of signal boxes or stations. (7)
- 46 A way of working trains up and down an incline without a locomotive. (7)
- 47 Saddle, well or side. (4)
- 49 Written for every eventuality. (5)
- 50 He operated the detonator machine in poor visibility. (6)
- 53 According to the proper definition, a class 153 unit doesn't qualify as one of these! (5)

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### Back numbers of *Forward* on CD

Eric Latusek has offered to provide back numbers of *Forward* on CD to GCRS members. If interested please contact Eric (*see front cover for contact details*).



## Readers' forum

### from Paul Allcock, Bridgetown, Western Australia

Re. *Forward 160* p8: article by John Pollard 'The Pollard family railway history – Part 3'

A friend recently lent me a copy of *Forward 160*. After reading John Pollard's article I felt inspired to put pen to paper.

During the late 1950s I lived at Annesley Colliery, literally in the middle of it, as my father, Jim, was the head time keeper there. I attended Newstead Primary School – very handy for Annesley shed. One particular incident sticks in my mind. It was either late 1957 or early 1958. The school was buzzing when one lad turned up and announced that the shed had a visitor: 'Lord President', one of the P2 rebuilds. He was promptly accused of lying – an offence against the strict rules of the spotter's morality code. A group of us set off with him to the shed in order to prove him wrong and to administer appropriate punishment. To our amazement he was found to be telling the truth. We gazed in wonder at the result of Thompson's attentions to one of Sir Nigel Gresley's masterpieces. It was the only P2 rebuild that I ever saw. I presume that it had failed somewhere nearby but I have never seen any reference to it in the railway literature. Does anyone know the circumstances?

On another matter, Annesley Colliery was also connected directly to the Midland line as well as to the GN via the 180° curve shown on the map, so there were two separate sets of transfer sidings. The colliery had two locos, both 0-6-0 saddle tanks with outside cylinders. Does anyone have any photos of these? I did take pictures with my Brownie 127 but both camera and pictures are long gone. 'Annesley No.1' was a Hudswell Clarke, painted a dark green and 'Annesley No.2' was a Peckett, painted a somewhat lighter shade of green. In 1957 they were replaced by a Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 diesel mechanical bearing the name 'CHARLES BUCHAN' and the number 'EMFOUR 7' (denoting ownership by East Midlands region no.4 area). After the diesel's arrival, No.1 went to Kirkby Summit pit and No.2 remained as standby, although I never saw it turn a wheel up to the time we moved to Toton in the autumn of 1959.

Years later, about 1970, I returned to Annesley colliery and the shunter was an ex-BR 350hp diesel named (I think) 'ROBIN', although I cannot find any reference to it. Subsequently Annesley colliery was connected underground to Kirkby Bentinck colliery and its own rail connection severed. I went back again in 1993, this time as an overseas visitor, and after identifying myself at the colliery gate was invited into the offices and given a quick tour around. There wasn't much that was still recognisable then and I believe there is nothing now. Very sad!

### from Michael Crampin, Thornton Curtis, Ulceby

Re. *Forward 160* p32: article by Chris Booth 'The Barton-on-Humber branch today'

A few updates following Chris Booth's article. Most of us living on this line regard it as the New Holland branch and only the single track from New Holland as the Barton branch although the Friends of the Barton Line have rightly adopted the whole thing as they are the leading voice in keeping the line open.

Sadly we have lost those lovely LNER boards from Thornton Abbey station; they have been replaced by the tiny standard issue ones. I understand the originals are in the care of the Friends of the Barton Line. Having lived on Station Road since 1955, I have witnessed the sad demise of a lovely little station. When we first moved here there were a fine set of station buildings and a siding in the station yard. We used to load sugar beet into coal wagons for transport to the Brigg factory and if there was a problem with the Brigg factory then it would go on the old GN line to Bardney.

We would also load corn there for onward transport. I dread to think what Health and Safety would make of it now; a plank was placed across the top of the wagon and as the



sacks came up the elevator (with no guards on) the chap on the plank would catch hold of the bottom of the sack so the corn poured into the wagon. If you got it wrong then you were sitting in the bottom of the wagon with a 12 stone catch weight sack of corn on top of you with another coming up the elevator.

The siding was lifted and so we had an empty yard. We used to have a bass of fish from Grimsby delivered on the 5.40pm passenger out of Grimsby every Friday night in the seventies. Henry Major, the porter, would not allow it into his parcels office cum waiting room and always hung it on one of the guttering supports outside the door. Eventually we lost the buildings, including a lovely Victorian postbox let into the wall of the station house.

The project to relay the line from Killingholme back towards Goxhill has been knocked on the head quite quickly. The suggested new curve would have joined the line somewhere near Thornton Abbey station as the old route would have had the trains facing the wrong way. The route was surveyed in April and by May the parish council was informed that it was a non starter. I think there were several problems involved. The original line was laid as a light railway, although it took the same traffic as the mainline, however the weights on today's coal trains is, shall we say, a tad heavier. The embankment which leads to the bridge crossing the beck is in a fairly dilapidated state and is probably too unstable to take that sort of weight as it is on a peat bed on both sides of the beck. Surprisingly (as this part of the world is regarded as flat) there is a very steep incline from the bridge into East Halton station and that station is some 30ft below ground level. The Y3s used to have to pause for breath on the bridge before attempting the climb up to East Halton.

#### **from Richard Graham, Wembley**

Re. *Forward 160* p38: article by Paul White 'Woodhead after closure – Part 7'

The account of the Wembley Tower scheme in the *Times Educational Supplement* cited by Paul White in his article is erroneous. The development of pleasure grounds at the site was not a result of the opening (temporarily in October 1893, permanently in May 1894) of Wembley Park station: they were always part of the Tower scheme. The Tower itself was demolished in 1907, not 1904.

Geological difficulties causing instability contributed to the failure of the Tower (see *Dow vol.3* pp.299-300 on the 1918 landslip in the nearby Wembley Hill cutting), but this was not the only reason. Some years ago I had a look at the finances of several companies as reported in *The Stock Exchange Year-Book* and compared the Tower Company with similar if smaller rivals at Blackpool and New Brighton, with the conclusion that the Wembley project was under-capitalized. Of course it is debatable whether this was because of the constructional difficulties.

One also wonders if Watkin had not become ill and resigned his railway chairmanships in 1894, whether the drive which led to the creation of the London Extension might not have also brought the Wembley project to fruition.

#### **from John Quick, Oughtibridge, Sheffield**

Re. *Forward 160* p45: letter from Henryk Szablewski 'Leicester viaduct bridge plates'.

The structures on the London Extension were identified by ascending numbers in the up direction. Mr Szablewski is correct in thinking that the numbers in brackets referred to the arches. I have in my collection an excellent view of 8G 4-6-0 no.1114 standing by bridge plate no.374 (58). It was recorded by William Bradshaw on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1910.

For those wishing to restore a bridge plate to GC condition, the early background was dark blue, and later I believe it changed to black. In both cases, numerals and raised edges were white.

Re. *Forward 160* p48: letter from Barry Taylor 'photo of GC Atlantic on the S&MJR'.

On 6<sup>th</sup> October 1909, the GCR ran a special train from Marylebone to Stratford-on-Avon. This conveyed the American Ambassador and others to the opening ceremony of the Harvard Institute, in connection with the founder of the American university of that name. The train was worked by 8B 4-4-2 no.1086 and consisted of 6 vehicles, all Parker stock. It left London at 9.55am, ran via the Met/GC and arrived at Stratford at noon. Departure from that place was at 5.08pm, a little late but it arrived correct time at Marylebone at 7.20pm, having returned by the GW/GC joint line. The smokebox of no.1086 was decorated with the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes, a wreath of leaves and a "HARVARD" headboard. The GCR Journal for November 1909 gives details but there is a very fine photograph on p15 of that superb piece of railway history, "The Stratford-on-Avon and Midland Junction Railway" by Arthur Jordan.

### **from Frank Stratford, Huncote, Leicestershire**

Re. *Forward 160* p45: letter from Henryk Szablewski 'Leicester viaduct bridge plates'.

I can confirm that the numbered plates started at the northern end with the first being just south of Abbey Lane Sidings signal box and the final one just short of Braunstone Gate goods warehouse. Not all the plates were on arches. Some were on ordinary steel spans, including the two beautiful bow string bridges, the one at West Bridge still, tenuously, in situ. Each arch had two plates, one on each side. Quite a job for the foundry.



*Braunstone Gate goods warehouse looking north in 1979. The Braunstone Gate bridge is visible on the left. Taken from [www.gcrleicester.info](http://www.gcrleicester.info) with permission. photo: Nigel Tout*

*Editor's note:* De Montfort University has requested permission to demolish the bowstring bridge and associated viaduct at Braunstone Gate, seen in the photo above, in order to build a sports centre on Duns Lane. In a closed meeting on 3rd August, Leicester City Council agreed to the request despite protesters gathering outside the Town Hall at the time of the meeting. Another bit of Leicester's GC heritage is lost.

### **from Dick Bodily, Milton Keynes**

*Information requested:* Specials on the SMJR

I've recently joined the GCRS and have a particular request for information. My memories of the GCR are mainly centred around Woodford and my main rail history interest is the SMJR. I've been researching various topics for Andy Thompson's SMJR website including SMJR line Special Workings and Railtours. Andy's website, which might

be of particular interest to those London area members who recently visited part of the SMJR, can be found at <http://thesmjr.ning.com>.

I have discovered several of these SMJ specials that travelled to or from the GCR at Woodford. These are listed below in chronological order.

6<sup>th</sup> Oct 1909 : "Harvard Special" from Marylebone to Stratford worked from Woodford to Stratford by SMJR 0-6-0 no.18

27<sup>th</sup> June 1912 : "Manchester Home Trade Picnic" from Manchester London Road to Stratford, worked from Woodford to Stratford by GCR Atlantic no.258

4<sup>th</sup> May 1957 : Troop train to Stratford area, possibly from Kineton Camp, worked from Woodford by an unknown B16 with 50A shed plate.

9<sup>th</sup> Aug 1959 : RCTS "The Grafton" from King's Cross, worked Blisworth to Woodford, with reversal at Byfield, by Black 5 no.45091.

14<sup>th</sup> May 1960 : SLS from Snow Hill, worked between Woodford and Blisworth, with reversal at Byfield, by a DMU. Further information as to type and allocation required.

12<sup>th</sup> Oct 1963 : LCGB "Thames, Avon & Severn Railtour" from Broad Street, worked from Woodford to Stratford by GWR Mogul no.6368 and GWR 0-6-0 no.2246.

24<sup>th</sup> April 1965 : SLS "Farewell to SMJR Railtour" from Snow Hill, worked from Stratford to Woodford by LMS 4F no.44188.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone with details of any other such workings or indeed with any further information about those listed above. I am also compiling for the above mentioned website a list of locomotive classes that were seen on the SMJR. I have come up with some rather unexpected ones on Woodford - Byfield workings and through freights via the Woodford - Stratford South Curve link. Again I would be pleased to receive any information on this subject as well.

### **from Bob Pixton, Swindon**

*Caption information: Strike breakers*

Can anyone help me with identifying the date and location of the enclosed photo which I bought recently. It appears to show strike breakers pulling a railway cart out of a goods yard. The photo is marked GCRS Collection C501 on the reverse which may help if anyone has a list of the Society's photographs.



*Editor's note:* I have put this photo amongst others on a new section of the Society's web site where caption information is requested: [www.gcrsociety.com/photospage3.html](http://www.gcrsociety.com/photospage3.html)

### from Ken Grainger, Sheffield

*Photo appeal: SS Leicester*

I would like to obtain a photograph of the Great Central Railway steamship, the 'SS Leicester'. If you have such a photograph I would be grateful if I could borrow it or I could pay for a copy to be made.

### from Keith Trembling, Nottingham

*Photo appeal: Austerity no.90286*

I belong to a group of five enthusiasts who have been engaged for a number of years in collecting photos of every steam locomotive that ran under British Railways. We have now whittled down our wanted list to just 18 locos. One of them is ex-WD 2-8-0 no.90286. The reason I am appealing to *Forward* readers is because this loco was shedded at Mexborough for many years before being transferred to Doncaster for the last few years of its life, so there is a chance that someone reading this took a photo of it. Should you have this elusive photo I would be grateful if you could send me a copy. All expenses will be met.

*Editor's note:* Keith has provided me with the complete wanted list if anyone is interested in helping.

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### GCR plaque

Following Bill Tooke's query in *Forward* 159 a source of railway plaques has been found. Friends of the National Railway Museum Enterprises Ltd. produce a range of plaques for different railway companies, including the GCR. They cost £50 each and are available from the museum shop at York or online at [www.railwayfriends.org](http://www.railwayfriends.org).



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### Crossword Solution (*Forward* 161)

**Across:** 4 Beer, 7 Lookout, 8 Lime, 10 Mess, 11 Locomotive, 13 Icy, 15 Pole, 16 Contractor, 19 Filter, 20 Chord, 22 Hotel, 23 Bolt, 24 Chute, 25 Passing loop, 29 Derbyshire, 34 Dome, 36 Valves, 37 Renumbering, 38 Trim, 39 Kinchley Lane, 40 Oil, 43 Shed, 45 Thornton, 48 Air, 51 Smash, 52 Pilotman, 54 Clock tower, 55 Distant, 56 Annetts key, 57 Control.

**Down:** 1 Scale, 2 Checker House, 3 Cone, 5 Restoration, 6 Stop, 8 Loose coupled, 9 Mail, 12 Ventilation shaft, 14 Yard, 17 Rag, 18 Cabin, 19 Flag, 21 Reverser, 26 Steam, 27 Lovatt House, 28 Colwick, 30 Bay, 31 Spring, 32 Gresley, 33 Unions, 35 Oxford, 41 Southport, 42 Path, 43 Slack, 44 Circuit, 46 Ropeway, 47 Tank, 49 Rules, 50 Fogman, 53 Train.

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### Rear cover caption

BR class O4/3 2-8-0 no.63735 at Colwick shed in 1951. Colwick is 3 miles east of Nottingham on the GN line to Grantham. A GNR shed was built there in 1876. The LNER carried out an extensive modernisation in 1936. Under BR Colwick was allocated the shed code 38A, becoming 40E in 1958 and 16B in 1966, the year it closed. Ex-GC locos were allocated to Colwick from the Grouping, particularly the 2-8-0s used on local coal traffic. Access from the ex-GC lines was via Weekday Cross Jnct. just south of Nottingham Victoria station.

*photo: J.Cliffe*

