

FORWARD 167



Front cover caption

The Liverpool-Harwich Continental has just taken the GC Fallowfield Loop at Chorlton Junction behind GCR class 8J 4-4-2 no.1090 in the summer of 1913. This locomotive was the only example of an 8B to be modified by Robinson with 3 cylinders and Walschaerts motion in 1908 and reclassified as 8J. A painting of this scene by Vic Welch is on the cover of George Dow's "Great Central Album". The trackbed is now part of the Fallowfield Loop cycleway. The Midland line trackbed from Chorlton Junction will be the route of the new Metrolink Didsbury extension, scheduled to open early 2013, with future plans to take it on to Stockport.

photo: G.M.Shoults



The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 167 ~ March 2011

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

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

Editorial by Bob Gellatly

The first two meetings of the new Sheffield branch at 'The Harlequin' have been well attended. As a result, the organisers have decided to continue the programme of meetings, but a permanent branch organiser is still needed.

Our AGM this year is at Rugby. The AGM is never boring – you may even enjoy it! In the afternoon Tony West will give a talk on 'The Life and Times of Rugby GC'. The Autumn Meeting – "The Woodhead Special" – will be held at Penistone on Sat. 22nd October. The two speakers will be John Quick and Stephen Gay who will speak on (yes, you guessed it) the Woodhead line. Details of both meetings can be found in the 'Dates for your diary' section at the back of this issue.

For some time the committee has been looking into producing a leaflet giving guidance on gifts and bequests to the society. We had intended to wait until we had a permanent home for the society's archive material but decided to go ahead now. Ken Grainger, with advice from Bill Taylor, has put together the text which can be found on the opposite page.

Friday 28th January was a sad day for staff, passengers and railway enthusiasts alike as they lamented the final day of Wrexham & Shropshire services between Marylebone and Wrexham. (Its official name of Wrexham, Shropshire & Marylebone Railway was seldom used.) The service started on 28th April 2008 with a seven year operating agreement. The long distance loco-hauled trains added a bit of class to Marylebone bringing back memories of happier times when Manchester expresses used Marylebone. Loco hauled trains will continue to use Marylebone as from 14th Dec. Chiltern Railways have been operating two train sets, from Birmingham Moor Street and Banbury in the morning and return in the evening.

The photo of Leicester Passenger North signal box reproduced on page 16 of *Forward 166* should have been credited to 'Charles Weighman & Alan Bullimore'. I am grateful to Paul Tilley for obtaining permission to use it from the copyright holders. The 'Charles Weighman & Alan Bullimore' collection can be found on www.tillyweb.biz along with lots of other railway stuff well worth exploring. Paul Tilley has his own photo gallery at <http://john2221.fotopic.net>.

Annual General Meeting 2011

In accordance with Section 7(a) of the Society constitution, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 21st May 2011** at **The LMRCA Club, Hillmorton Road, Rugby, CV22 5AL** starting at 11.00am.

Under Section 9 of the constitution, proposals for changes to the constitution, properly signed by the proposer and seconder, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than Saturday 9th March 2011.

Under Section 5(c) nominations for the committee, signed by the proposer and seconder and made with the agreement of the nominee, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than 30th April 2011.

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

Only proposals made in accordance with the constitution will be accepted for the Annual General Meeting.

Brian Slater, Secretary

Subscription Reminder – These are due on 1st April at £14 for UK members and £18 for overseas members. Please send a cheque to the Treasurer or pay at the AGM.

Gifts and Bequests to the Society

In common with most members of the GCRS, you are probably an avid collector of books, maps, photographs, documents and all kinds of ephemera pertinent to the Great Central Railway - not necessarily of great monetary value but invaluable to those sharing your interest. Unfortunately though, we all too often fail to address the question of what is to happen to our collections when we are no longer here to enjoy them.

If your personal collection will continue to be appreciated by friends and family, all well and good, but if not and it will be nothing more than an encumbrance to them after you are gone, please don't let it go the way of so much other material which bereaved relatives have discarded or destroyed, unaware of its worth.



Society members are earnestly recommended to make a will, or add a codicil to their existing will, stipulating to whom their collections should wholly or severally be bequeathed. This should be done with the advice of your solicitor but, within the requirement to identify precisely what is being bequeathed, it is generally not necessary to list individual items other than to stipulate specific exclusions.

Despite not yet having a permanent repository of our own - an omission the committee is striving to correct - the Great Central Railway Society is anxious to safeguard and add to its archive of artefacts and material for the benefit of students of the Great Central Railway, and would be most grateful to receive such bequests. Bequests generally could only be accepted without preconditions, but the donor's expressed wishes would be respected wherever possible and the attribution of individual items would be recorded. It would, however, rarely be possible for a collection to be permanently kept together as a single entity and it will be appreciated that book collections will, with increasing inevitability, include duplicates of volumes already within the Society's care. And if, as is the case with most of us, your collection covers a range of railway companies, we would attempt to pass any non-Great Central material (duly credited) to the appropriate society. What is important is the survival of the material, not its acquisition by the GCRS.

If you are considering making a gift to the Society, either during or at the end of your lifetime, it would be advantageous to know what you have in mind. Either the Archivist or any other member of the committee would be very happy to discuss your plans and obtain answers to any queries you might have, to the best of their ability. Naturally, it goes without saying that any disclosures about your wishes would be in the strictest confidence and you can be absolutely certain that the Society would never, under any circumstances, contest the ownership of any items which your family might decide to keep.

Please give the matter some thought. Of course it isn't a comfortable prospect, but we can have the consolation of knowing that, when they are of no further use to ourselves, our collections can continue to be enjoyed and appreciated by others.

Ken Grainger

Welcome to the following new members

Mr D. A. H. Hargreaves, Holywell,
Flintshire

Mr R. Irven, Colchester, Essex

Mr D. Moore, Biddulph, Staffordshire

Mr A. Jones, Wombwell, Barnsley

Mr R. D. Wyatt, Chesham,
Buckinghamshire

Mr R. H. Fielding, Beckenham, Kent

Mr I. Kirk, Stoneycroft, Liverpool

Mr S. Tooley, Long Eaton, Nottingham

A green light and some red faces at Fairfield

by Brian Wainwright

Railway accidents are often human tragedies involving loss of life and limb; the one that took place at Fairfield on the morning of 24 September 1909 was an exception to this rule. Indeed, the story is droll rather than tragic, reminiscent of the sort of thing that happens on model railways rather than the real one.

Mr Thomas Goswell, a relief signalman with 19 years service, was in charge of Fairfield signal box which was at the east end of the station, coming on duty at 6am and expecting to work until 2pm. Despite his experience this was his first shift on duty at this particular box. He controlled the four track GCR main line (pairs of slow and fast lines, with the slow lines on the north side) and close to his box was the junction for the important branch to Manchester Central and the Cheshire Lines via Chorlton Junction. The station itself boasted six platforms serving all these lines, and beyond the bridge at the west end (on which the booking hall stood) was a small set of sidings on the down side of the branch, used mainly for what limited goods traffic was on offer. There were a few large houses near the station, including one occupied by Mr J.G. Robinson, but the station was at the very edge of urban development, with open country on the south side.

One of the signalman's first jobs was to deal with a light engine, no. 584, a 2-4-2 tank of class 3 (LNER class F1) built at Gorton in 1892 and at this time still with its original parallel boiler. On the footplate were driver Charles Hill (31 years service) and fireman Walter Chadwick (about 9 years service with 3 as a regular fireman.) The engine ran past the junction on the up fast, halted to reverse, and was crossed over onto the down branch. It ran right through the station to the points (worked by a ground frame) at the far end of the yard so it could set back onto its train, eight coaches forming the 6.37am local to Manchester Central. It's interesting to note that even as late as 1909 these were *all* four wheelers. Reading from the Manchester end there were two third brakes, 405 and 358; three all-firsts 705, 207 and 708; two thirds 314 and 343; and another third brake 860. The train was in charge of guard John Trevelyan (15 years service).

Meanwhile signalman Goswell had set the road for the train to be propelled out of the yard and over the crossover into the up branch platform. The use of the up platform for this down train was customary. This was because a connecting train brought a large quantity of parcels that needed to be transferred to the 6.37am Central train, and it was easier and quicker to move these across the platform than hump them over the barrow crossing to the down branch platform. Doubtless such passengers that changed trains also appreciated the convenience. I don't have a 1909 timetable, but in 1910 the connecting train would be the 6.15am off Stalybridge, due away from Fairfield at 6.28am. Unless the load was truly mountainous or the times in 1909 were tighter, there seems to have been no great need to rush.

It's easy to picture the scene; the bright green tank engine simmering away in the morning light, bunker first; doors slamming as about sixteen passengers climbed into the comfort of its obsolete brown-and-cream carriages; the station staff busy trundling heavy parcels and perhaps milk churns from one train to another, everyone anxious that there should be no delay to the train.

Dead on time, porter George Thompson gave the right-away to guard Trevelyan who immediately waved his green flag. Driver Hill, noting that the disc signal was 'off', gently opened the regulator and the train set off on its way. The crew looked out for the starter signal; it and the Hyde Road distant beneath it were at clear, so they stopped attending to the road and turned to their other duties within the cab. Signals normally 'prove' the road and it was not unreasonable for them to think they were right-away to their next stop, Hyde Road.

As some of you will be aware, it is against Regulations to start a loaded passenger train by way of a disc or subsidiary signal, and what was about to happen proves that there is a good reason for this. Signalman Goswell had lowered his signals right enough, but he had forgotten to reverse the points at the station end of the yard. Consequently, instead of joining the down branch line by the slip connection, the train was headed for the buffer stops at the end of the yard! In his evidence to the enquiry signalman Goswell stated it was the 'custom' not to alter the points until instructions were received from the station staff. It may be that on occasion further shunting was needed in the yard to attach a van or horsebox or whatever. In any event, it was an unfortunate 'custom' and one that might have been better observed in the breach.



In LNER days class F1 2-4-2T no. 5589 is still in unrebuilt form. It was the last of the class to receive its Belpaire boiler in 1929. photo: Photomatic

No one on the train noticed anything was wrong until no. 584 reached the end of the 300 yard siding and ran into the buffer stops at a speed estimated at between 6 and 9 miles per hour. Fortunately there were no serious consequences although a couple of passengers complained of slight injury. There was a fair bit of superficial damage to the loco and the leading coach and some broken glass further down the train.

Colonel von Donup, the Inspecting Officer, shared the blame between signalman Goswell, for not setting the road correctly, and the footplatemen for not keeping a proper look-out. However, he did rightly point out that the up branch platform was not properly equipped for the despatch of down trains and that if the Company wanted to continue to use the platform in this way it ought to install a proper full-sized signal interlocked with the points. He might have added, but did not, that if the Great Central had provided such a signal this accident could not have happened, no matter how forgetful the signalman might have been.

Stationmaster Herbert Gadsby was not on duty at the time of the accident but he stated in his evidence that he was aware that the train sometimes started from the up platform. He claimed however that it usually started from the down platform. Given that he was the person in charge of the safe working of his station, and had been for 10 years, he should not have turned a Nelson eye to bad practice of which he was aware,

and I find it a little odd that the Inspecting Officer did not comment on this point. The 'customs' of Fairfield Station were undoubtedly intended to speed the service and avoid delay. They may also have been intended to spare the porters the labour of pulling heavy trolleys over the barrow crossing. The trouble was that they also compromised safety, and the consequences could have been far more serious than they were.

This article is based on the original B.O.T. Accident Report published online at http://www.railwaysarchive.co.uk/documents/BoT_Fairfield1909.pdf. The original Report is Crown Copyright.

Model railway exhibition diary

Some events that may interest our readers

Sat 5th March: Abingdon & District MRC at White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre, Audlett Drive, Abingdon. <http://abwiki.mrsecure.com/doku.php>

Sat 5th March: Chesham MRC at Elgiva Theatre, St Mary's Way, Chesham.

Sat 5th March: St Anselm's Church MRE at St Anselm's Church Halls, Ventnor Ave, Harrow.

Sat 5th & Sun 6th March: Mansfield Model Railway & Photographic Exhibition at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Side, Mansfield.

Sat 19th & Sun 20th March: Nottingham MRC at Harvey Haddon Sports Complex, Wigman Road, Nottingham. www.nottingham-modelrailway.org.uk

Sat 26th & Sun 27th March: Warner's Group Publications "The London Festival of Railway Modelling" at Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London. www.model-railways-live.co.uk/Exhibitions

Sat 2nd & Sun 3rd April: Sheffield MRE at Birkdale School, Oakholme Road, Sheffield.

Sat 16th April: Amersham & Chorleywood MRS at Amersham Community Centre, Chiltern Ave, Amersham.

Sat 7th & Sun 8th May: Leicester MRG at Humphrey Perkins High School, Cotes Road, Barrow-upon-Soar.

Sat 7th & Sun 8th May: Cleethorpes MRS at the Memorial Hall, Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes. www.cleethorpesmodelrailway.co.uk

Sat 7th & Sun 8th May: Stockport & District RM at Stockport Grammar School, Buxton Road, Stockport. www.sdrm.co.uk

Sat 14th May: Hope Methodist Church Rushden MRC at Park Road, Rushden

Sat 14th May & Sun 15th May: L&Y MRG and Greater Manchester Transport Society at Museum of Transport, Boyle Street, Manchester. www.lydcc.org.uk

Sat 28th & Sun 29th May: Risborough & District MRC "Railex 2011" at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Harvey Road, Aylesbury. www.rdmrc.nildram.co.uk

Sat 11th & Sun 12th June: Peak Model Railway Exhibition at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell. www.wingfieldrailwaygroup.co.uk

The Gainsborough Model Railway (at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough) is open to the public on Sat 23rd & Sun 24th April (1.30pm-6.00pm), Mon 25th April (10.30am-6.00pm), and Sat 11th & Sun 12th June (1.30pm-6.00pm). More information at www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk



Hornby W&S 67014 'Thomas Telford'.



Hornby W&S DVT 82301.

HS2 route revised

In addition to the extensive revisions announced in Sept. 2010, further changes were proposed by The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP on 20th Dec. 2010. The following is an extract from the press release.

"The changes to the proposed line of route are:

- **Primrose Hill:** we have moved the tunnel 100 metres further north to bring it closer to the proposed locations for vent shafts, it would also be deeper underground.
- **HS1:** HS2 would link directly with HS1 from Old Oak Common to the HS1 line. The line would be in tunnel to Chalk Farm, then run above ground along the North London Line and into the HS1 tunnel just north of St Pancras. It would not affect current levels of service on the North London Line.
- **Northolt Corridor:** we have reduced of the width of corridor from 22 to 16 metres; have moved alignment slightly further away from housing to reduce the amount of land taken; and have lowered the alignment to allow the Chiltern Line to pass over HS2 on a viaduct.
- **Heathrow:** in order to construct the direct link to Heathrow as part of the second phase of the high speed network, there would need to be some construction work in phase 1, including an underbridge and a length of retaining wall at Northolt.
- **Old Amersham to Little Missenden:** we have included a 150 metre green bridge over the cutting to reduce its visual impact and avoid severing a public right of way.
- **South Heath to Wendover:** we have lowered the alignment by around five metres, and incorporated a 900 metre green tunnel as the line passes South Heath to reduce its visual and noise impacts on the village, and avoid severing existing roads.
- **Hartwell House:** we have moved the alignment further from Hartwell House so that the line would not be visible from the house, and incorporated additional earthworks and planting to reduce its visual and noise impacts.
- **Brackley:** we have moved the alignment further from Mixbury, Brackley and Greatworth, and lowered it so that it would be in a deeper cutting to reduce noise impacts.
- **Edgcote and Chipping Warden:** we have moved the alignment away from the Grade 1 listed Edgcote House to preserve the ornamental lake, but it would be no closer to local villages; and have lowered and covered the line where it passes Chipping Warden to reduce the visual and noise impacts on the village.
- **Ladbroke and Southam:** we have moved the alignment eastwards away from Ladbroke, it would now run in cutting and at surface level, avoiding the need for a long viaduct.
- **Stoneleigh:** we have lowered the alignment by between five and ten metres and moved it away from the village of Stoneleigh.
- **Burton Green:** we have lowered the alignment and covered the line as it passes through Burton Green to reduce the visual and noise impacts on the village.
- **Lichfield:** we have moved the alignment further from Lichfield meaning it would join the West Coast Main Line further north."

Ever since the route of HS2 was proposed it has stirred up NIMBY protests in the attractive (and fairly affluent) areas that the route passes through. These latest changes reflect those concerns but there is a limit to the extent that you can make a high speed railway invisible and silent.



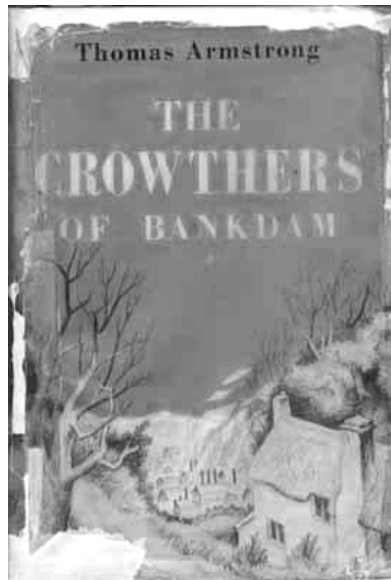
HS2 protesters at Brackley.

The Great Central Railway in fiction

by Paul White

There has long been an association between railways and literature; Charles Dickens' chilling story of *The Signalman* and Sherlock Holmes' frequent recourse to rail travel, including chartering his own train, come to mind. This tradition has in recent years been brought right up to date with Andrew Martin's series of railway novels featuring Jim Stringer, the railway detective, which I can thoroughly recommend. No doubt readers will have many other examples that they could cite, but I would like to describe two novels, published in 1940 and 1933 respectively, which feature the former Great Central Railway.

The first is *The Crowthers of Bankdam* by Thomas Armstrong. This was originally published by Collins in 1940. It is the story of a great Yorkshire wool-trade family and their rise from small beginnings in the 1850s to become a dominant concern in the early 20th Century. During this time there arose two well-defined branches of the family; one hard-working and shrewd, the other effete and social-climbing. Much of the drama of the latter part of the book rests upon the interplay of these two branches, as one tries to wrest financial control from the other. Mill-fires and collapses provide drama of another kind and the book abounds with interesting sketches of West Riding life, character and industry. It is quite a weighty read at over 600 pages, and there are a further three books in the series, *Pilling Always Pays*, *Sue Crowther's Marriage* and *Our London Office*.



"The Crowthers of Bankdam" by Thomas Armstrong

The town of Ramsfield, in which the majority of the action is set lies in the West Riding, not very far from Penistone. Towards the end of the book the principal characters obtain cars, but there are numerous references to railways throughout the book, some of them specifically the Great Central or its earlier manifestation, the MS&L. On page 143 we find Zebediah Crowther boarding a west-bound train in Sheffield at the time of the American Civil War, "jumping into a second-class compartment of a composite coach". The first stop the train makes is at Penistone Station, where we hear "the hiss of escaping steam, the clatter of trolleys and the racket of a long haul of coal wagons being shunted into the iron-works siding made speech impossible for a full four minutes". No doubt the iron-works was Cammell-Laird's and the scene described is a far cry from the sleepy Penistone of today. The journey has a lasting importance for Zebediah, for it is on this train that he meets his future wife, Clara, and her father, Mr Handel Baker, a music teacher with big ideas. The episode ends with the train "grinding over the sharp curve into Ramsfield Station, setting up a discordant whine" – which would place Ramsfield somewhere on the Penistone – Huddersfield line.

By 1883 we discover that the line through Ramsfield has been converted into "a double up-and-down line"- perhaps those familiar with the story of the Penistone-Huddersfield line could give a date for this work taking place. Although a Lancashire and Yorkshire line rather than Great Central one it had great importance in later years as part of the route of the Marylebone-Bradford expresses. One of the most dramatic occurrences in the book is the collapse of Bankdam Mills due to the installation in the top storey of machinery which proves too heavy for the structure. A telegram is sent to a Manchester firm requesting a crane to lift the machinery off those trapped inside. Fearful that the

message may not have arrived, Lancelot Handel Crowther decides to drive over to Manchester; taking a train was not possible as "there had been an accident on the railway, and the line was blocked". The crane arrives the following morning from Manchester by road, possibly because the line was still blocked, or perhaps the single bores of the Woodhead tunnel would not accommodate such traffic.

The Crowthers are in the business of manufacturing woollen cloth, and on page 508 we find Mr Eshbaal Goldstein, an agent doing business with many foreign countries, in a panic due to the imminent outbreak of WW1. "Mr Goldstein's eyes rolled. He tore his black hair in the warehouse, and there, emotionally exhausted, collapsed onto a cuttled piece of Great Central Railway Blue Pilot..."

Speculation in machinery means a profitable war for one of the branches of the Crowther family, but they are not untouched by the worries the conflict brings. Vicky Crowther's young man (whom she later marries) is called away from Ramsfield at short notice to rejoin the fleet. The telegram arrives on a Saturday night, causing immediate travel problems. Vicky's father, Simeon, telephones the Ramsfield stationmaster. "Mr Herbert Lodge would have done a lot for a principal of a firm with as large a carriage account as had Messrs Simeon Crowther & Sons Ltd., but he could not create a more expeditious Saturday night and Sunday service, and although he offered to have the London train stopped at Penistone, he pointed out that this would only change the waiting to the other end. He had one interesting thing to tell Mr Crowther – "thousands of reservists were travelling that night". In the end, the journey is undertaken by car.

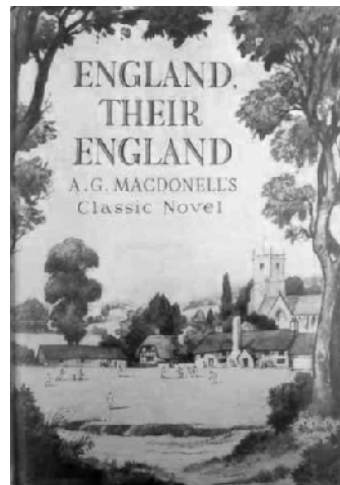
A little later the action passes to London. Bill Carruthers, a young naval officer, and Vicky Crowther wish to announce their engagement to Vicky's parents. We are told that the leading businessmen of Ramsfield were frequently in London, but that "Mr Simeon Crowther for over twenty years had never gone further than the Great Central Hotel. It was quiet, he was well-known there, and usage had made it almost homely". The impression of homeliness is borne out by the description of suite of rooms occupied by the Crowthers, and its proximity to the railway is illustrated, as when Bill and Vicky embrace, "somewhere an engine whistled, somewhere an iron-wheeled truck passed from wood-boards to a stone-paving".

That the Crowthers did not always use the Great Central is evidenced by Vicky's arrival at St Pancras some months later; we are told that her train arrived late into St Pancras, but we can only surmise that this was due to the vagaries of the war rather than any unpunctuality of the Midland.

Edwin Crowther, son of Lancelot Handel Crowther and like Bill Carruthers a naval officer became involved in fighting the Russian Revolutionaries in the aftermath of WW1. When the situation became hopeless British forces were pulled out. With them came a number of fleeing Russians with aristocratic and business connections. Edwin marries the Princess Anastasia Kaivanov; the Crowthers had done business with the Kaivanovs over many years, and they are first referred to in connection with the Crimean War. The princess brings with her debauched brother, Prince Sergei Ivanov. The pair caused "minor sensations at Marylebone ... from behind the long windows of the first-class dining car, a sea of flabbergasted Yorkshire faces watched...long before Nottingham was reached those travellers homing to Ramsfield had formed a reasonable supposition...the consensus of opinion was that she'd be a piece who'd take a good deal of watching...". The truth of that last statement can be confirmed by reading the book, now out of print, which I did with great pleasure some thirty years ago.

The story was filmed in 1947 as "The Master of Bankdam" starring Dennis Price as Joshua Crowther and Anne Crawford as Anne Pickersgill. Outside shots of the fictional mill were actually of the Titanic Mill, built as you may have guessed in 1912 and situated some way to the west of Huddersfield, and aptly not far from the Huddersfield-Penistone line.

Seven years earlier, the Great Central Railway's southern extremity was described in some detail in a lyrical passage from *England, Their England* by A.G. Macdonell, first published by Collins in 1933. The author served for two years in WW1 as a Lieutenant with the Royal Field Artillery before being invalided out with shell shock, a condition which the principal character in the novel, Lieutenant Donald Cameron also suffers from. A prolific novelist, playwright, journalist and broadcaster, most of his other work has been forgotten with the exception of *England, Their England*, a gently satiric and humorous portrayal of England between the wars, its chief claim to fame being a description of a chaotic village cricket match. Macdonell died at the tragically early age of 45 on January 16th 1941. His work being out of copyright, I am able to reproduce in full his Great Central journey, which you will find on pages 219-222 of the book.



"England, Their England" by A. G. Macdonell.

"Two days later he (Donald) was at Marylebone Station, quietest and most dignified of stations, where the porters go on tiptoe, where the barrows are rubber-tyred and the trains sidle mysteriously in and out with only the faintest of toots upon their whistles so as not to disturb the signalmen, and there he bought a ticket to Aylesbury from a man who whispered that the cost was nine and six, and that a train would probably start from Number 5 platform as soon as the engine-driver had come back from the pictures, and the guard had been to see his old mother in Baker Street.

Sure enough a train marked Aylesbury was standing at Number 5 platform. According to the timetable it was due to start in ten minutes, but the platform was deserted and there were no passengers in the carriages. The station was silent. The newspaper boy was asleep. A horse, waiting all harnessed beside a loaded van, yawned. The dust filtered slowly down through the winter sunbeams, gradually obliterating a label upon a wooden crate which said URGENT PERISHABLE.

Donald took a seat in a third-class smoker and waited. An engine-driver came stealthily up the platform. A stoker, walking like a cat, followed him. After a few minutes a guard appeared at the door of the carriage and seemed rather surprised at seeing Donald. "Do you wish to travel, sir?" he asked gently, and when Donald had said that he was desirous of going as far as Aylesbury, the guard touched his hat and said in the most respectful manner, "If you wish it, sir." He reminded Donald of the immortal butler, Jeeves. Donald fancied, but he was not quite sure, that he heard the guard whisper to the engine-driver, "I think we might make a start now, Gerald", and he rather thinks the engine-driver replied in the same undertone, "Just as you wish, Horace". Anyway, a moment or two later the train slipped out of the station and gathered speed in the direction of Aylesbury.

The railway which begins, or ends, according to the way in which you look at it, from or at Marylebone, used to be called the Great Central Railway, but is now merged with lots of other railways into one big concern called the London, Midland and South Coast or some such name. The reason for the merger was that dividends might be raised, or lowered, or something. Anyway, the line used to be called the Great Central and it is like no other of the north-bound lines. For it runs through lovely, magical, rural England. It goes to places that you have never heard of before, but when you have heard of them you want to live in them –

Great Missenden and Wendover and High Wycombe and Princes Risborough and Quanton Road, and Akeman Street and Blackthorn. It goes to places that do not need a railway, that never use a railway, that probably do not yet know that they have got a railway. It goes to wayside halts where the only passengers are milk churns. It visits lonely platforms where the only tickets are bought by geese and ducks. It stops in the middle of buttercup meadows to pick up eggs and flowers. It glides past the great pile of willow branches that are maturing to make England's cricket bats. It is a dreamer among railways, poetic, kindly and absurd and lovely. You can sit at your carriage-window in a Great Central train and gallop your horse from Amersham to Aylesbury without a check for a factory or a detour for a field of corn, or a break for a slum. Pasture and hedge, and pasture and hedge, and pasture and hedge, mile after mile after mile, grey-green and brown and russet, and silver where the little rivers tangle themselves among reeds and trodden watering-pools.

There are no mountains or ravines or noisy tunnels or dizzy viaducts. The Great Central is like that old stream of Asia Minor. It meanders and meanders until at last it reaches, loveliest of English names, the Vale of Aylesbury."

Recent events of course add a poignancy to this description of an almost Arcadian landscape. HS2 is set to cut across the Chilterns and already a groundswell of local opinion is being generated in opposition to what many feel will be a destruction of a landscape that typifies England. No doubt there were such fears among many when the London Extension was being built over 100 years ago, but as Macdonnel so evocatively describes, the line became part of and complementary to this landscape, and despite his amusing descriptions of buttercup fields and geese waiting for tickets was actually of use to a local population. The new proposal will shoulder its way through, without stopping to service local areas, and there is no doubt that the new build will cause scars which will take many years to soften. Perhaps it would have been better to go along with Central Railway's plans, which of course would have revived a great deal of the Great Central's original route, without any need to cut through fresh areas. Only time will tell.

Finally I would like to thank Ms Lottie Fyfe of Pan Macmillan Publishers for her invaluable advice regarding copyright. The first part of this article referring to *The Crowthers of Bankdam* originally appeared in a slightly different form as a book review in *Forward* 36 in November 1982. I would be interested to hear of other references to the Great Central in fiction.



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The Pollard family railway history – Part 10

by John E. Pollard

We had two engines come to Annesley to work a special from Nottingham Vic to Darlington. One was a Southern "Schools" class which was supposed to work the job but it was realised by someone that the train it was working would be overloaded, so they had to provide another engine to assist. It was a Midland class 2 4-4-0. At this time the push and pull engine on the Dido had broken down and the Midland class 2 was turned out to work the Dido. This meant a guard was required, as it was a case of running round at Bulwell and at Newstead. I got the job and I wasn't happy as it meant a lot of extra work. The only good thing was we had a tail lamp at each end which we put in the brake or first compartment, whichever end the engine was. The loco men didn't like the job either as it meant running tender first to Bulwell. We were glad when the push and pull unit came back.



"Schools" class 4-4-0 no. 30925 'Cheltenham' being prepared for an RCTS 'East Midlander' rail tour at Annesley in May 1962. The buffers are being painted white. The assisting class 2 4-4-0 no. 40646 is just visible on the right.
photo: V. Forster Collection

One time I was on a relief turn. It was a beautiful day. About five of us were sat outside the guards' room in the sun. The phone rang and a guard inside answered it, then called, "It's for you, John." So I went in and took the phone. I was told to go to Newstead and relieve a Stanton job and take it to Bulwell. I picked my traps up and set off. There was a narrow wooden crossing over the track and as I started to cross, four men on the other side of the crossing stopped in order to let me cross. One of the guards who was sat outside the guards' room, Horace Walker or "Wacker" as we knew him, called out, "You'll get the sack, John, for stopping that crew." I stopped and turned to Wacker and called back, "Don't worry about that, now that *he's* here we'll all get the sack." The four men were our Inspector, the Yard Master, the District Superintendent and the late but not lamented Dr Beeching. When I passed the Yard Master I got a very nasty look off him but he didn't say anything. Shortly after, Beeching started his dirty tricks. Traffic was diverted via the Midland and the old Great Central was gradually run down. It was too good a service for him and his gang and had to be destroyed.

Just before one Christmas I had a week on an evening parcels train from Nottingham Vic to York. Annesley men worked to Sheffield Vic, then York men came on. We travelled to

Nottingham Vic each evening to pick up the train. As we walked into the foyer at Nottingham Vic on the first evening, there was a notice stating that there wouldn't be a Sunday Passenger service to London the following Sunday due to relaying work being carried out. I looked in my p.w. book and couldn't find any reference to this work. The notice was there all week. On the Saturday night as we were going through the foyer an Inspector was rubbing the notice out. I stood and watched. When he had cleaned the board he started to write "Permanent way work cancelled. Normal Sunday service from this station tomorrow." When he had finished he turned round and I asked, "Are Beeching's boys coming tomorrow?" He said, "Yes, they're having a survey on how many passengers we get for London. I expect we will lose our Sunday service on their findings." Just another of the good doctor's dirty tricks. He was certainly a credit to Marples. I fear to think what he would have been like if he had been a medical doctor. If you had a splinter in your finger he would have amputated your arm!

One day I was working a Stanton ironworks job. The Loco sent a class 9 engine out for it. I hooked it on and we set off for Stanton. The ironworks were served by a branch off the GN's Nottingham-Derby line at Ilkeston. When we arrived at the works we handed the train over to the shunters and went for our food. After we had finished, a shunter came in and said, "You're wanted on the phone, guard." When I answered the phone it was the controller. He said, "You shouldn't be down there with a class 9 engine, they're not allowed over Bennerley viaduct. Do you know the road back via Eggington Junction and then via the Midland from Derby? I said, "No. Let us just go to Ilkeston and then I'll speak to you again there." He said, "Right", so I went and had a word with my driver and told him we were going back light engine and why. When we got to Ilkeston I went in the signal box and had another word with the controller. I asked him if we could just go on to Awsworth and I would have another word with him from there. Again he agreed so I put the phone down and turned to the signalman who had been listening. He burst out laughing when I told him we were going to Awsworth. He pulled the starter off and I got back on the engine to tell the driver to stop at Awsworth. So off we went. At Awsworth I went in the signal box. The signalman was already grinning as the Ilkeston signal man had obviously been on the phone before we arrived. I asked if I could phone Control and he pointed me towards the phone. I picked it up and told the man who answered that we might as well go light engine direct to Annesley from Awsworth. He said, "You can't take that engine over Bennerley viaduct it's too heavy." I told him that we had already come over the viaduct and it was still standing. The "Tin Viaduct", as we called it, was between Ilkeston and Awsworth! As we had already gone one way over it with a heavy train on I didn't see what the problem was with just a light engine. I put the phone down, turned to the signalman and said, "Light engine Annesley!" He laughed and said, "I've never seen anyone work the Control like that before". I said, "It's easy with these men – they're Midland men and don't know this line". Soon after that the ban on class 9 engines on Bennerley viaduct was lifted. I believe it is still standing today even though the railway has long gone. I think it is a listed structure as it was made of wrought iron.

I was sat outside the guards' room one morning. There were four of us getting some fresh air and the shunters were running a train off number 1 road. A train was dropping down number 2 road - the engine was one of the clapped out "Scots" that the Midland Region had sent to replace our Eastern Region engines. The crew were having trouble holding her and she started to run through. She met a twenty ton plate wagon loaded with steel. The plate wagon lifted up then dropped back on the rails and ran down the yard. The "Scot", *Sherwood Forester* I believe, dropped her bogie wheels on the floor and then dug her nose in with the cab and tender up in the air. There she remained in that undignified pose until the Colwick crane came to sort things out.

We were working a Woodford train one week. We had a steel train every day. Each train, as it came out of Scunthorpe, was numbered and the trains were required to be in number order on arrival in South Wales. This worked perfectly until the Midland got its

hands on us. We used to run to Woodford, then Western men took over and the trains went through in order. The week I am writing about, we went to Woodford on the Monday. On Tuesday we went to Burton and backed the train in the sidings. Wednesday it was Woodford. Thursday it was Burton. On this Thursday we kicked the brake off and put the train on top of the one we had left on Tuesday. On Friday it was Woodford and Saturday was back to Burton where the train was put on top of the previous two from Tuesday and Thursday. The Midland could move traffic but it took a long time. They certainly disrupted the steel traffic to Wales but it was the GC that got blamed for it.

We had a period at Annesley when traffic which normally came through our way was diverted via Toton yard on the Midland to show better figures on their traffic. The trains were then taken to Nottingham London Road where we brought them into Nottingham Vic, ran round and then took it on to Woodford. The delay caused by this arrangement was unbelievable but again the nameless and faceless moguls on the Midland kept their heads down and the GC was blamed for the delay. It was all part of the plan to destroy the GC line and, of course, it succeeded.

I was working the Woodford run one week. I had a driver, Ken Archer, who was a bit of an erratic character on the footplate. We had been alright all week and I had been lulled into a false sense of security. I thought Kenny Archer must have changed but I was wrong. We were coming home and as we approached Leicester Goods North home board it was on. I had my brake screwed hard on – it was an old North Eastern twenty ton box brake and it was a rough one. As we neared the Goods North home board it came off and Kenny opened up the class 9. I could not see the starter because of a curve in the road and an overbridge. I thought that with the speed Kenny was going we were right away I wound the brake off. Then I heard the wagons buffering up. It turned out the signalman had a red flag out of the box window. I could not get my brake back on in time and the brake stopped with a almighty bang. The chimney pipe came down, the stove overturned everything flew about including me. I hit both doors before I hit the floor. I got another snatch as the brake stopped short on the couplings. The shunters at Goods North came over to see if I was alright and then Kenny set off and we ran into the slow line at Leicester Station. My brake was level with the South signal box. I screwed it on and got out to have a look round. As I looked at the brake I could not believe what I was looking at. I called to the signalman who came to the window and I told him to get North box on and tell him to hold our train. Then get on to the tappers and send them down quick. The tapper came and asked what the trouble was. I told him to look at the brake but he could not see anything wrong. I took him over the other side of the up main line and said have a look now. He shook his head and said, "Good grief". We went back to the brake and I said, "Look at this!" There was a row of sheared bolts on the top step - the cracked end spars were all that was holding the van body on the frame. The tapper put a red card on the van. I went up into the signal box, got on the phone and asked the inspector if he could get a brake van sent up from the goods. His unprintable reply meant no, so I told him we had just brought sixty five coal empties and they were staying in the station. We drew forward until the brake was clear, then I screwed it down, pinned some wagons down, went up to the front end, pinned some more down, hooked the surplus off and put them in the bay platform. The inspector meanwhile, in between swear words, was in a right state. Apparently Leicester City were playing Nottingham Forest that afternoon and Leicester were running a special and a train of sixty five coal empties were not on his agenda. I climbed on the engine and we left light engine for Annesley - it was his problem now!

I made sure that whenever I had Kenny as a driver again I kept the brake blocks warm on the van and ready for a quick application. He did a repeat performance at Leicester Goods but I was ready for him and I did not get bumped. On that occasion we had a train of pallet vans loaded with tin plate for the Metal Box Company. The train had come from South Wales with no problems until we got to Leicester Goods. The tin plate was in large crates and very heavy. We had about ten to put off at Leicester, the rest were for

the factories at Sutton in Ashfield and Mansfield. When Kenny stopped at Leicester Goods it was with his usual bang but I was ready and had my brake hard on. I got out and started to walk down the train. After about six wagons from the brake van the train started to look very odd - the sudden stop had moved the crates of tin plate in the vans forward in all the vans except for the six I had hold of. They were well down at the front and well up at the back and the buffers were well out of line. It would not have taken much to get them buffer-locked. I fetched the examiner and he had a fit when he saw them. We had to leave the whole train so that the wagons could be taken to the warehouse to be reloaded with the crates of tin plate in the middle of the vans. Another trip home light engine!



BR 9F 2-10-0 no.92090 with a down runner coming off the girder bridge at Rugby on 12 Oct 1963.

photo: Richard Postill

On another occasion I was working the Sutton in Ashfield Metal Box Company train. We had some tin plate for them and a load of empty shock vans to be filled with empty cans for the pet food factory at Melton Mowbray and the pea factory at Wadsley Bridge. The Metal Box Company told us what time they required us at their gates, so we usually stood at the back of Sutton Town GN box until about ten minutes before we were required with our train split into two sidings. This system worked perfectly until the Midland took us over and the station master at Sutton Junction took over both the Central and GN stations. I was in the signal box one morning when I walked the station master. "What are you doing, guard?" he asked. "Waiting time," was my reply. "You've not moved for over an hour," he said. "You're right, gaffer," I told him, "Our train is ready and we've had our food". "In that case," he said, "let's have you moving". I asked him if he knew what he was doing and he said, "Yes, let's have you going. I'm in charge here. Set the road signalman and get them away from here". The signalman asked him if he really wanted us out but he started to threaten us so we backed down. The signalman set the road and we started to move the engine forward, drawing the front half of the train out on to the main line. We then set back to collect the back half. I

coupled up, gave the loco men a wave, the driver whistled up, the signalman pulled the starter off and we were away. Of course, when we got to the Metal Box Factory we had to stop and wait for them to open up. The only trouble was that they did not want us until twelve noon and it was only nine! About half past ten a porter from Sutton came round the road on his bike with instructions to take the train forward to Summit, run round and go back to Sutton, where we would have to run round again to go back to the factory at the right time. It would have been very awkward reversing the train twice so I told him, "No, the station master wanted us out of Sutton and now we're out we're not going back". So we were in section half way between Sutton and Summit boxes for nearly four hours as we also had about an hours shunting to do at the factory putting wagons in and taking others out. The GN branch was at a standstill!

The next day when the stationmaster came on his rounds to Sutton GN box to sign the register, he ignored us and walked away without a word. The signalman told us that as soon as we had passed the starter the previous day the station master had said, "That's got them working". To which the signalman replied, "Yes, but not for long. They will be blocking the line for about four or five hours". The signalman then had to explain why.

Editor's note: Bennerley viaduct is a grade II* listed structure and is on the English Heritage "At Risk Register". There is a YouTube video at <http://tinyurl.com/4grvb9u> of trains on the GN Nottingham-Derby line which ends with a train crossing Bennerley viaduct. It was also featured briefly on Michael Portillo's *Great British Railway Journeys Series 2 No. 15- "Langley Mill to Melton Mowbray"*, broadcast on 21st January.



A view of Bennerley viaduct looking towards Awsworth on 22 March 2009

photo: Matthew Malyon

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On Great Central lines today

by Kim Collinson

Rotherham Central station, which was only rebuilt and reopened in 1987 near the site of the original station which closed in 1966, has again been demolished this year for another new station to be constructed. The station remains open with temporary buildings in use while rebuilding work continues.

A steam hauled railtour on Sunday 7th November from Preston to Manchester worked by 44871 and 45407 was due to work over the GC from Ashburys to Guide Bridge then via Woodley to the Hope Valley but due to a derailment at Totley it was diverted via Stockport and Derby and was over 2 hours late leaving Sheffield and eventually passed through Penistone at 16:50.

Saturday 13th November saw 47580 work a special from Sheffield to Edinburgh and return via Barnsley, then on Saturday 28th the same loco worked through Guide Bridge on a charter from Leeds to Oxford.

The Autumn sandite workings in Yorkshire and the East Midlands finished at the end of November with 66083/102 working the last trains via Penistone and over the Deepcar branch which passed through Oughtibridge at 15:27 on the 28th November.

The severe winter weather at the end of November caused havoc with GC services especially in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. On Tuesday 30th the daily Aldwarke to Deepcar freight worked by 66074 became stuck in snowdrifts at Wardsend around 18:30 and was eventually assisted in the rear by 66158, arriving at Deepcar around midnight, but then due to the ground frame being frozen the whole train was returned to Aldwarke at 01:18 the following morning.

Heavy snow, freezing points and a lack of staff to clear routes resulted in whole routes being closed from Wednesday 1st December for the rest of the week. These included the Barton branch, Sheffield to Lincoln, Sheffield to Mexborough via Rotherham Central and the Penistone branch, the latter despite a snowplough on the 2nd December being worked by 66069/102 which passed Silkstone at 16:11 en route to Huddersfield and on its return at 17:55. This is the longest period of time that no passenger trains have operated over GC lines during periods of adverse weather. Passenger services resumed on Monday 6th December over the routes that had been closed since the 1st although severe disruption to services continued for several days especially on the trans Pennine routes. Freight traffic also resumed on the same date although many terminals and sidings were not serviced for several days later.

On 26th December a Network Rail employee discovered that about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of track had been stolen from the mothballed Harworth branch, near Tickhill.

Just when services were returning to normal after the bad weather, Northern Rail conductors went on strike on 27th and 28th December causing widespread disruption to services around Manchester and Humberside, some routes seeing no trains over the two days.

Over Christmas and New Year major engineering work at Reading saw several FGW HST services diverted over the GW & GC Joint.

Since summer 2010 Freightliner has been the sole user of Trafford Park Freight Terminal. On 19th November, DB Schenker (formerly EWS) returned when 66007 worked the 04:19 from Dollands Moor and 18:17 return.

Wednesday 12th January saw new 70008/010 pass through Guide Bridge en route from Crewe to Leeds.

It is sad to report that Wrexham & Shropshire operations have ceased with the public being given only two days notice of withdrawal. The last train, on Friday 28th Jan, was the 18:30 departure from Marylebone which was worked by 67013. Locomotive hauled

services will continue to be seen at Marylebone as Chiltern Railways are now operating two return services to Birmingham Moor Street and Banbury using class 67s.

On 15th January 66085/150/062 worked engineering trains between Neasden and Northolt Junctions.

Departmental bubble car 977873 was at Wembley depot on 25th January, working over the GW & GC Joint line the following day.

On Saturday 29th January a railtour from Bristol visited sections of the CLC around Manchester, including Skelton Junction, worked by 31190/601 before continuing to the Sheffield area where 60099 in Tata Steel livery was attached for top-and-tail working to Deepcar, Tinsley yard and the Westthorpe branch run-round stub (all that remains of the LD & EC Sheffield branch).

*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.*

Notes on a 1966 pocket timetable and some queries by George Huxley

The GC main line was closed for through traffic between Marylebone and the North on 5th September 1966. From that date the lines between Rugby and Calvert and between Banbury Junction and Culworth Junction were abandoned. So eager were the authorities in the Ministry of Transport and the London Midland Region to wreck an allegedly duplicating route that the line from Ashendon Junction to Grendon Underwood Junction was overlooked; it was omitted from the closure notices. A special *ex post facto* closure proposal had to be published for the line between the two junctions. It was, however, arguable that the omission rendered the entire GC closure invalid.

Few GC trains ran via Ashendon as the end drew nigh but, if I remember rightly, the nightly newspaper train from Marylebone to Manchester went that way almost until the time of closure. In 1903 the train left Marylebone at 2.45am and was called in the public timetables "Newspaper Express". Thus the service antedated the opening of the GW & GC joint line. In the 1930s, under the LNER, the Express left, I believe, at 2.32am and ran via Ashendon. The pocket timetable of mid-1966 shows a departure from Marylebone at 2155(SX) and 2245(SO) for Nottingham. If this is a remnant of the traditional Newspaper, did it too run via Ashendon? Did the Newspaper still run until September 1966 nightly without being advertised in the public timetables? By the autumn of 1966 what was left of the newspaper traffic (for Leicester at least) had been transferred by the LMR to St. Pancras.

To have withdrawn all passenger traffic from the line between Ashendon and Grendon Underwood before the agreed closure date would have been illegal. The question arises: which of the trains shown in the pocket timetable travelled via Ashendon rather than Wendover?

Another question arises about the duration of the pocket timetable. The period of validity ended on 5 March 1967, yet the starting date was less than three months before the GC closure. Opposition to the closure proposal was strong and well reasoned. Were the authorities in the Ministry and in the Region, though both under pressure from the Treasury, allowing for a last minute refusal, or reversal, of the consent to close on the part of the then Minister Mrs Barbara Castle MP, who was reputed to be a friend of the railways?

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Nottingham—London				Sundays			
	05 46	08 00	11 05	13 30	15 05	17 05	
Nottingham Midland							
Nottingham Victoria	01 52						
London St. Pancras	08 30	10 40	13 30	16 30	17 30	20 00	
London Marylebone	05 19						
continued							
Nottingham Midland							
Nottingham Victoria							
London St. Pancras							
London Marylebone							
London—Nottingham				Sundays			
London Marylebone	00 40						
London St. Pancras	00 05	09 45	10 45	12 45	14 45	15 45	
Nottingham Victoria		03 50					
Nottingham Midland	02 40	12 10	13 45	15 10	17 10	18 45	
continued							
London Marylebone							
London St. Pancras		16 30	18 45	19 45	21 15	22 15	
Nottingham Victoria							
Nottingham Midland		19 00	21 00	22 32	23 34	00 48	

Nottingham—London				Monday to Saturday			
	so	a	mx		b	so	c
Nottingham Midland	00 58	05 44	06 55	07 55	08 05	08 15	
Nottingham Victoria		02 15					08 15
London St. Pancras	03 45	08 10	09 14	09 55	10 23	10 42	
London Marylebone	05 48						11 25

continued							
	so	d			e	so	ix
Nottingham Midland	08 55	09 55	10 58	11 55	12 58	13 55	
Nottingham Victoria					12 20		
London St. Pancras	11 20	12 02	13 03	14 05	15 03	16 11	16 11
London Marylebone					15 18		

continued							
Nottingham Midland							
Nottingham Victoria							
London St. Pancras							
London Marylebone							

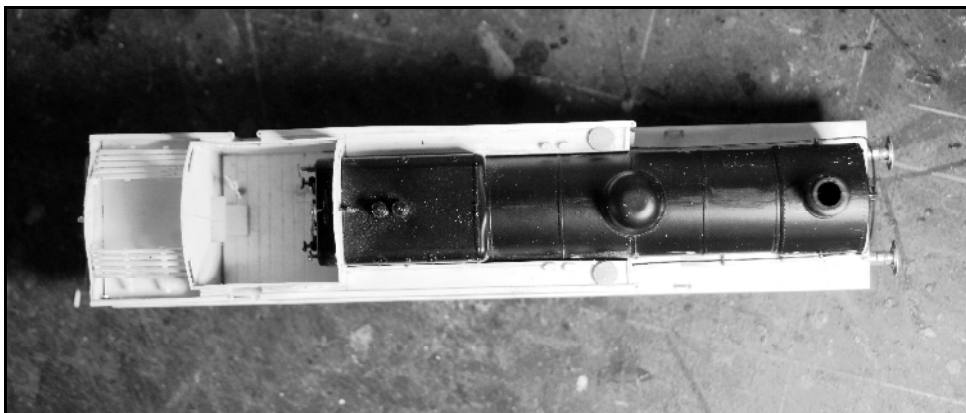
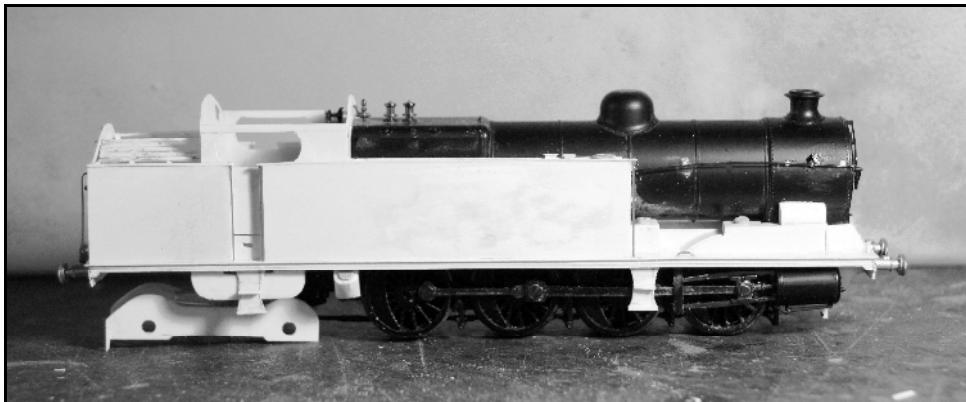
London—Nottingham				Monday to Saturday			
	06						
London Marylebone	08 38						
London St. Pancras	07 50	08 50	09 50	10 50	10 50	11 50	12 50
Nottingham Victoria		11 35					
Nottingham Midland	09 57	11 03	11 53	13 04	13 04	13 53	14 58

continued							
	06						
London Marylebone	14 38						
London St. Pancras	13 50	14 50	15 50	16 50	16 50	17 50	
Nottingham Victoria		18 01	19 58	20 03	18 52	19 52	
Nottingham Midland	15 53	17 04	17 53				

continued							
London Marylebone							
London St. Pancras							
Nottingham Victoria							
Nottingham Midland							

A "Daisy" visits Conisbrough - another Bachmann conversion by Keith Parkin

Inspired by Graeme King's article on the Bachmann O4 in *Forward 165*, I unearthed from my archive the March 1973 issue of *Model Railway Constructor*. I had bought this when working in Adelaide and started a plasticard model of a 'Wath Daisy' as on the 'plans page'. The final paragraph of the article had issued a challenge: "*One feature of these locos which could be of help to the modeller is that the coupled wheels and boiler were the same as Robinson's most famous design – the ROD 2-8-0s. Perhaps someone who is a dab hand at conversions could produce a model of the 0-8-4T without having to scratch build. Any takers?*" Thirty seven years later, although not a particularly dab hand at conversions, I have taken up the challenge and built a Wath Daisy.



One reason for the delay had been the need for an excuse to operate one as they were not widely used beasts and I was not intending to model either Wath or Whitemoor yards where they spent most of their lives. However in 1949 (Whitmoor) and 1953 (Wath) they were displaced by diesel shunters. They had a few trials at Frodingham but by late 1953 all of them were at Mexborough with nothing particular to do. At the end of the year they moved ten miles east to Doncaster but still with little to do save shed shunting until withdrawn between 1953 and 1956. However a photo in *Doncaster and its Railways – the second selection* by Peter Tuffrey shows they occasionally escaped and operated revenue earning trains. 69904 was seen with a substantial train of oil wagons passing Hexthorpe Junction heading west. As I have a model of Conisbrough this was all the excuse I needed.

For such a small class (just 6 locos) there is a surprising variety. The GCR had four built by Beyer Peacock in 1907/8 as class 8H. One of these was rebuilt by Gresley with a booster and side window cab but keeping the rectangular tanks. He then had two more built at Gorton with boosters, side window cabs and sloping front side tanks. There were thus three visually distinct versions. Even when the boosters were removed during WWII the longer (and smaller wheeled) bogies were kept. Full details can be found in the standard references *RCTS Locomotives of the LNER part 9B* and *Yeadon's Register of LNER locomotives volume 28*.

I chose 69902 as it was the only one to run in BR days with chimney and dome passably similar to the Bachmann O4 model. Happily it also retained the original cab sides, bogie and rectangular tanks and thus looked much more like the GC version than the others.

The Bachmann chassis was used with major modification at the rear which would really preclude it being reused under an O4 if you changed your mind. The rear frames and brake operating bracket would foul the bogie so needs metal removing – I just managed to keep enough to use the fixing hole. Immediately in front of this is the minute circuit board which acts as the connection between the pick-ups, motor and tender. As I have a layout on which DCC would be no advantage I was quite happy to unsolder the tender connecting leads and short the pick-ups directly to the motor. I don't think anyone who wanted DCC would have a problem mounting a chip within this loco. The steps on the motion bracket have to be removed leaving it rather flimsy. The boiler is the only other Bachmann component utilised. It needs new mounting points as it will be getting a new running plate. The handrail knobs were re-positioned: 69902 only had one per side – centrally on the smokebox. The vacuum relief (snifting) valve was removed (though most of the others had one).



The completed model of 69902 passing through Conisbrough in charge of a goods working.

All the rest was scratch built using various thicknesses of plasticard. Partly this was nostalgia but I like working with it anyway and it is quite strong enough for this loco with its huge side tanks providing not only rigidity but also plenty of space for weighting with sheet and 'liquid' lead. I used the drawing by Piers R. Conner in the *Model Railway Constructor*. He drew it as built so a few changes were made by reference to photographs. The vacuum brake pipes had soon disappeared. The buffer planks needed corners removing. The bogie brakes had also gone. The drawing also shows nine-spoked bogie wheels – photos show ten spokes. My bogie is not an engineering masterpiece – just a plasticard H frame with brass 2mm fixed bearings. A vertical pin below the bunker locates in a slot in the bogie cross piece. And with this wheelbase the slot needs to be quite long – there is a lot of overhang even on my three foot minimum radius curves. I have no doubt proper modellers could add side control and perhaps springing.

At least I did not have to worry about the tender which caused such angst for Graeme King and Andrew Emmett - until I want to use it behind a D49!

I have included photos showing the start of the conversion – Bachmann bits are black and plasticard bits are white. The completed loco, now in service, is shown passing through Conisbrough Station.

Modellers' Corner

by Tony West

This year appears to herald a renaissance in the fortunes of modellers of the GCR. There is the great news that a society member, John Bateson, is bringing out the first in a range of high quality etched Robinson loco kits in 4mm scale - see the Scalefour Society website at www.scalefour.org for details. Then there is the tremendous news that 'our' society will be marketing the ex D&S 4mm range of etched GC rolling stock kits. Even Bachmann have joined in with an 8K in GC livery - very commendable - shame though about the Gresley chimney, snifting valve and snaphead riveted smokebox! No real excuse for this these days.

At the Reading show, just before Christmas, I purchased one of the six wheel fish vans (Diagram 49) which had just been released by Quainton Road Models in 7mm scale. There had been a delay in the release of this kit due to the proprietor insisting that the kit should be right in terms of quality of components before releasing it. Although I have yet to build mine I can say that it appears to be an excellent offering - crisp etchings, beautifully detailed castings and some of the best instructions seen so far which include colour photos of the underframe details of preserved MSL six wheelers. No excuses for getting your brake rodding wrong now! There was also a hint that the etchings may be made available in 4mm. The next offering promised is a 29ft PBV.

If anyone is interested in helping out with the GCRS stand at the Gauge 0 Guild show at Telford on 3rd and 4th September, then please get in touch. It's not hard work, you get to do all your modelling shopping, meet like minded modellers and talk GC all day long without paying the entrance fee!

Contact details for Quainton Road Models

David Howes, "Chyanbre", Polyphant, Launceston, Cornwall PL15 7PT.
tel. 01566 880157
e-mail: Quainton.Road.Models@mac.co

Items sold recently by Great Western Railwayana Auctions

(see page 11 for auction house details)

	
<p>Wrexham Mold & Connah's Quay Railway pattern trackside gradient arm and a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile marker. Both in chunky and quite heavy cast iron. Sold for £60.</p>	<p>LNER four aspect handlamp with original reservoir and LNER burner. Brass plated 'London & North Eastern Railway MANSFIELD' on the side. Restored condition. Sold for £110.</p>
	
<p>Great Central Railway cast iron 'Trespassers On This Property Will Be Prosecuted' sign. Sold for £45.</p>	<p>South Yorkshire Joint Lines Committee brass Thunderer guard's whistle complete with chain. Manufacturer's name on lip 'Henry Riley, Constitutional Hill, Birmingham'. One side clearly stamped 'S.Y.J.L.C.' and the other side stamped '14'. A rare item. Sold for £300.</p>
	
<p>Shedplate 41F - Mexborough until March 1964. Sold for £110.</p>	<p>Shedplate 14D - Neasden from 1958 until June 1962. Sold for £160.</p>



Marylebone says goodbye to Wrexham & Shropshire. With 67013 *Dyfrbont Pontcysyllte* providing power at the rear, DVT 82301 awaits departure from Marylebone with the 18:30 to Wrexham on Friday 28th January 2011. This was the last W&S service. The event was accompanied by emotional scenes as both W&S staff and supporters lamented the operator's demise.

photo: Railway Herald / Ken Brunt



Bo+Bo no.76040 passing Torside signal box with the 6E08 Wallerscote-Rockware Glass
Doncaster sand train on 18 Nov 1980. photo: Chris Booth



A pair of Bo+Bos nos.76006 and 76022 pass Wadsley Bridge light loco en route from
Mottram to Rotherwood on a wintry 4 Feb 1980. photo: Chris Booth

Memories of the Woodhead line

by Chris Booth

With 2011 being the 30th anniversary of the closure of the Woodhead line, I would like to share with you my memories of a route that should never have closed, and which is even today still missed by many an enthusiast. I think the defining moment that was to begin my interest in railways must have been when, as a mere six year old stripling, I dragged my parents along from Worksop to Halifax to visit my grandparents (or did they drag me!). The day began by riding from Worksop to Sheffield Victoria on one of the Derby heavyweight dmus (later class 114) in green livery with "speed whisker". Changing trains at Sheffield Victoria, an electric service for Manchester was taken as far as Penistone, where another change was made to travel via Huddersfield to Halifax.

Some time during 1961, I remember sitting on the window sill in the then recently refurbished buffet at Sheffield Victoria and looking up at the large mural of an MS&LR steam locomotive on the wall. My dad went down to the news stand situated in the subway to get my favourite comic to read, which was the boys' favourite *The Eagle*. I recall that through the window a black liveried EM1 locomotive came into view, this being E26055 *Prometheus*. I remember saying to my mum that the last two numbers of the electric engine were the same as the last two numbers of the year I was born, 1955. From that memory this locomotive would forever be my favourite of the type and would regularly haul the trains we travelled on. It would seem to follow me around for years to come, whenever a trip over Woodhead was undertaken, until its demise in the 1980s. This also proved to be the beginning of my interest in the Woodhead route - a defining moment in my rail enthusiast days.

My real flirtations with the Woodhead proper would begin in 1969, when I became a fully fledged rail enthusiast and began to travel the country in pursuit of my hobby. The passenger service on the Woodhead route was by this time on its last legs. The EM2s had been in store at Bury, prior to being sold to the Netherlands and rumours of passenger services being concentrated on the Hope Valley line were being circulated, however, whenever a trip to Manchester was called for, the Woodhead route would always be used in preference to the boring Hope Valley line.

The days spotting would begin on the 06:41 Worksop to Sheffield. On passing Rotherwood sidings, the first glimpse of the EM1s could be had. On one trip, taken on August 18th, 1969, nos. E26012/014/041/043/044 were there awaiting further duties. The Lincoln to Sheffield services had by then been routed into Sheffield Midland station, so it was a walk across to Victoria. If there was a train waiting at Victoria, it would invariably be headed by either a green or blue EM1, and consist of five coaches, however a one hour wait would ensue should the train have departed, which it mostly would have, as the timetable seemed to have been arranged to make sure you had a wait, one of the politics of closure I suppose. Never mind, there was always plenty of freight to be seen passing through.

I remember "cabbing" my first EM1 at Victoria on this date, my favourite, E26055 *Prometheus*. Also seen on the same day at Victoria were E26012/014/052 *Nestor*/056 *Triton*. The Manchester train had E26022 at the head, for the 55 minute run to Piccadilly. Passing Barnsley Junction, with its huge signal box on stilts, a busy scene unfolded, with several coal and steel trains in evidence. Penistone, also with its signal box on stilts, Huddersfield Junction, was passed before heading into the wild moorland. Woodhead tunnel was always a constant temperature inside, it was great to stick your head out the window (not recommended, but kids would be kids!) and breath in the cool atmosphere, no diesel fumes just fresh Pennine air. Out of Woodhead, past the small station, and into Longdendale, with its reservoirs, a very picturesque sight especially in winter. Passing Mottram Yard, and Godley Junction, also then still busy with freight, we passed Guide Bridge stabling point, where E26010/012/018/042/043/044/047 *Diomedes*, were all stabled. Arrival at Manchester Piccadilly was usually punctual, from

here we would head off to such railway centres as Crewe and Liverpool. These trips carried on throughout the school holidays, varying amounts of EM1s being seen on them. On 23rd August 1969, for instance, E26000 *Tommy*/001/002/003/004/009/012/017/018/020/027/031/034/037/045/047 *Diomedes*/048 *Hector*, were seen, haulage to Manchester being behind E26052 *Nestor*.

I started work in 1970, just as the passenger service came to an end, it then only being possible to traverse the route on one of the occasional diversions. During the early 1970s, work, a girlfriend, marriage and home-making, curtailed the expensive rail travel. However, the nearest spot to home to see the "Woodhead" electrics, was Rotherwood, so whenever possible a visit was undertaken. By the end of 1973, TOPS numbers had begun to appear and the terminology EM1s was replaced by class 76s.

Travel became less expensive for me when in 1975 I started work with British Rail as a signalman at Dinnington Colliery Junction on the South Yorkshire Joint Line, the free and privilege travel rates then being allowed, becoming a welcome bonus. On 30th June 1979 a visit to Rotherwood found 76027 / 28 / 40 and a nameless 76049 (*Jason*) all in blue livery. On 12th August I decided to pay a visit to Wath. This was an unofficial visit and unfortunately access was denied. I had to use the road bridge vantage point (as many enthusiasts have done) to see what was on the depot. The following were noted: 08047/049/050/051, 20019/023/211/228, 37134/226, 47165, 56006/011/013/019/032, 76003/008/009/011/021/029/030/036/038. I took a few photos and went home. On receiving the developed film back and placing the photos in my album, I discovered that I only had five shots of 76s in my album and as the rumours of impending closure of the Woodhead route were flying about, I decided it was time to get a move on and take some more. As a consequence, visits to Rotherwood became more frequent.

As a signalman, visiting other signal boxes was an interest, so I decided to visit Wadsley Bridge signal box and check it out before the line closed, so on 4th February 1980, a visit was undertaken. An enlightening conversation with the signalman was undertaken, the politics of the line's closure being the main subject. Single line working between Sheffield Victoria and Wadsley Bridge was in force and as a consequence traffic was light that day. However 76014/030 passed with a Rotherwood to Fiddlers Ferry mgr, followed shortly by 76006/022 light engines to Rotherwood. The next train to appear was a Whitwell Colliery to Oughty Bridge household coal train, hauled by 20034/098 and driven by a Worksop driver who I knew well. As the train had to stop to drop off the pilotman, I cheekily asked the driver for a ride, to which, he agreed. The run was only a short one from Wadsley Bridge to Oughty Bridge and back, but I enjoyed it immensely.

A visit to Reddish was now called for, so on July 8th 1980 the journey via Sheffield and the Hope Valley line to Manchester was undertaken, retracing my steps back to Reddish station and the short walk to the depot. Calling in on the depot foreman, permission to visit the depot was obtained, providing a class 76 badge was purchased the proceeds of which went to charity. As that guaranteed a visit, money quickly changed hands. On depot were class 76s in varying states of repair, some dumped bogie-less, others without pantographs, some however, were still in working order. The full list was 76002/004/007/012/013/022/031/032/033/036/038/041/043/047/048/050/051/052/053/054/055/056/057, 25188, 40019/023/055/098.

From Reddish, it was back to Manchester and a trip on a class 506 unit to Guide Bridge. Here 76023/009 were photographed on a mixed freight for Ashburys and 76008 light loco. Back to Manchester, and then Sheffield, for the run up to Penistone. At that time, Sheffield to Huddersfield trains came out of Midland station, up on to the GC line at Nunnery, where they then reversed to pass through the closed Victoria station. Victoria station almost brought a tear to my eyes; it was derelict and falling down, a far cry from the days in the 60s when I paid regular visits. At Penistone the former main line platforms were also derelict, the Huddersfield branch platforms being the only ones still

in use. One item of note here is that the one remaining piece of platform canopy is supported with Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire cast iron spandrels.

The only electric hauled train seen at Penistone, was 76011/029 on the inevitable mgr. Leaving Penistone, it was back via Sheffield to Worksop, where passing Rotherwood, 76009/015/023/024/046/049 were seen stabled in the yard. Another visit to Reddish on November 18th 1980 found 76001/013/015 the only 76s in working order amongst the withdrawn examples along with 40134. Also photographed that day was 76012 at Dinting. My final visit to Wath ensued on 28th February 1981, access again being denied, but photographs were taken from the road bridge.

With the closure of the line looming ever nearer, a last ditch effort to photograph the section from Penistone to Hadfield was made. So with the benefit of the short reprieve granted to the route, from the initial closure date of June 1st to July 20th 1981, I set off by car on July 3rd. The first stop was at Torside Crossing, where I photographed 76040 hauling 6E08 Wallerscote to Rockware Glass. This was followed, by 76032/034 on 6M21 Wath to Fiddlers Ferry mgr coal train and 76012/007 with 8E34 Garston to Mansfield Concentration Sidings coal empties. Chatting with the signalman about the feelings of the men on the closure of the line, he then began to tell me about the discovery of a body in the adjacent reservoir, needless to say a gruesome subject best not dwelt upon now.



As I remember the EM1s in the 60s. 26040 in black livery passes through Sheffield Victoria station with a rake of 16 ton mineral wagons for Rotherwood. photo: Chris Booth collection

The next port of call was Woodhead Station, where the station building looked as though it had become a sheep refuge; there were droppings in every room! Photographed here were 76021 on a short Manchester bound mineral empties train, followed by 76022/023 with 8M17 from Wath to Mottram. I decided to take the classic high shot from the top of a hill, looking down at the tunnel portals, I wish I could climb hills as fast as the sheep that I disturbed! The only photograph I took from that vantage point was of 76032/034 which passed light engines to Wath. I might add here that the plaque that commemorates the opening of the new tunnel, once attached to the portal, is now situated on the wall of Manchester Piccadilly station platform 1. A quick dash over the hillside to Dunford Bridge, found the station also still intact, even down to the closure

notices. The signal box was visited and 76038/039 hauling 6M55 Wath to Fiddlers Ferry photographed.

Sheffield Victoria, or the remains of it, were the next port of call, The buildings were windowless, the canopy glass smashed and there was water everywhere, the all pervading smell of decay was in every room, a far cry from the days of my childhood. There was the buffet, gutted and it's large mural gone, sitting on that same window sill brought memories flooding back. There in the subway was the news stand, sodden and rotten, no more comics on sale there! The booking hall was a vandalised wreck, with the inevitable graffiti everywhere. There were still gems to be found however. Whilst exploring the offices, I came across a tiled frieze in a wall, with monogrammed GCR tiles, a table with LNWR branded into a stretcher, a waiting room bench seat with MS&LR beautifully carved into the back. A similar seat was placed in the foyer of the NRM's Leeman Road entrance, maybe it is the same one? All these are now long gone. A Huddersfield bound dmu passed through and after that nothing stirred other than the fluttering of pigeons. Now of course only a single line to Deepcar passes the remains of the station site, the Huddersfield services being diverted via Barnsley.



GCR monogrammed tile in an office in the derelict Sheffield Victoria 20 July 1981. photo: Chris Booth

My last rites were paid to the class 76s on 24th March 1983, when 40168 was seen hauling 9X14 through Sheffield station en route from Reddish to C.F. Booth's at Rotherham. This train consisting of 76007/011/022/023/035. This was one of several convoys of 76s that were to make their way across the Pennines for scrap. Visiting the scrap yard at Rotherham later the same day and being granted permission to have a look round, I found the 76s seen earlier at Sheffield, waiting entry to the yard. 76012/021/023/026 were already in the sidings intact, with 76051 being cut up, whilst the cabs off 76016/030 were lying about. A very sad sight. My very last journey undertaken beneath 1,500 volt DC wires, on what remained of the MS&W system, was on 7th November 1984, when I had a ride on the Manchester – Glossop - Hadfield class 506 units. This was during the last few weeks of their service, before the line was converted to 25kv AC.

In 1991 I decided to revisit all the places I had photographed, to take then and now shots. Some of the locations had changed dramatically, particularly around Torside where you would never know there was ever a railway there. The view from the hillside at Woodhead had changed little, apart from the lack of track, but I am sure that the hill was a lot higher than it was ten years ago! The large Huddersfield Junction box, by now simply renamed Penistone, was the last box on the Sheffield to Dinting section of the Woodhead route. Closed on Saturday 11th April 1998 its functions were transferred to a new power box at Barnsley station.

That then are my memories of the Manchester Sheffield and Wath electrified line - "The Woodhead Route". My one regret is not having photographed the Barnsley Junction to Wath section. I hope you found these memories interesting.

Arrivals on the bookshelf

"The WD Austerity 2-8-0 : The BR Record" by J. Hooper. Published by Booklaw, 2010.
Hardback with 304 pages. Approx. 400 illustrations.
ISBN: 9 781907 094590
Cover price £34.99
www.booklaw.co.uk

For anyone with the slightest interest in the WD Austerity 2-8-0s, or a fascination in steam hauled freight trains, then this book is an absolute must. It is a hive of information, without being too technical. There are 300 pages of easily absorbed facts listing works visits, allocations by shed, loco detail differences, mileages, storage and scrapping dates.

Nearly 300 excellent photos, the majority previously unpublished, show these wonderful locos doing the tasks they were designed for - slogging along with every type of goods train. Quite a few are at ex-GC locations which readers will easily recognize. On seeing these photos, you soon realise that coal was the main earner for BR, not flash expresses, and certainly not one coach trains with a copper-capped tank engine.

This book is good value at the RRP of £34.99, but was recently on offer at Booklaw for about £28.

It currently takes pride of place on our coffee table because there is always something new to see which was missed during previous browsings.

Tim Crafts

"An outline history of the Railways of Nottinghamshire" by Michael Vanns. Published by Nottinghamshire County Council's Libraries and Archives, 2010.
Softback with 88 pages. 70 photos.
ISBN: 978 0 902751 67 5
Cover price £7.50
www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk

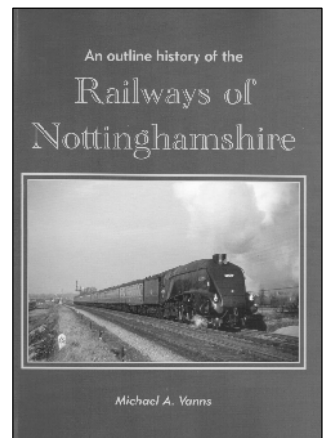
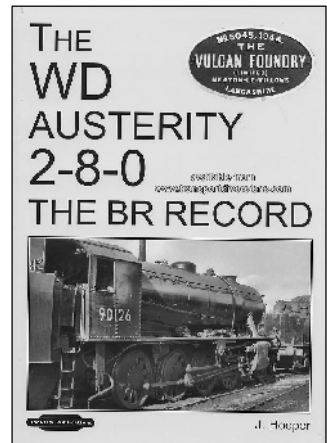
The book launch took place at the Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington on 4th December.

"The book covers the period from the very first appearance of railways in the county, right through to the high-speed privatised lines of today - over 170 years of railway history in one book.

All the railway companies that had a stake in Nottinghamshire are discussed including the Midland, Great Northern, Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire, the Lancashire Derbyshire & East Coast, Great Central, LMS and LNER. And with so many companies competing for access to the county, its railway history is littered with anomalies and conundrums."

Available at Nottinghamshire libraries or by post (£7.50 plus £3 P&P) from Nottinghamshire County Council Libraries, Archives & Information
4th Floor, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP.
Cheques should be made payable to "Nottinghamshire County Council"

Publisher's information



Great Central Railway Great War Heroes Part 5B – "The Elite of Sheffield"

by Ken Grainger

The second part of a two-part review of former GC employees from the Sheffield area who died in the Great War.

The Somme finally floundered to an end in the mud and misery of November, 1916, before 1917 heralded another battle and another magnificent memorial to the missing. The Arras Memorial's classical arcades commemorate nearly 35,000 soldiers who have no known graves, primarily from the April-June Battle of Arras but also from the *Kaiserschlacht* German offensive of 1918. Amongst the missing of the Battle of Arras are 35 year-old former Bridgehouses goods clerk, Rifleman Tom Johnson, of the 278th West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales Own) who died in the April 12th, 1917, attack at Bullecourt. From Ward Place (later renamed Walney Place), Birley Carr, but originally from Pitsmoor, Tom's family's tragedy was compounded when his widow, Clara, who had returned to school teaching after his death, was killed in the Charfield (Gloucestershire) railway disaster of October 14, 1928.

The 10th Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment, is represented on the memorial by former caller-off, 25 year-old Private Charles Wiseman, from Fox Street, Pitsmoor, who died on April 21st, 1917, and by Chief Accountants Dept. clerk, Private Sam Staveley, killed on April 28th. One-time Deepcar clerk, Private W.D. Nail, from The Green, Penistone, also of the 10th York and Lancaster and also killed on April 28th, did have a known grave but it was destroyed by shellfire and he has a Special Memorial in the Chili Trench Cemetery, Gavrelle. The interminable columns of names on the Arras Memorial also include former Thompson McKay carter, Private Joseph Smith, of the 7th Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment, killed on May 11th, and the 14th York and Lancaster's 23 year-old Sergeant Joe Garratt, killed in the course of an evening attack on the German trenches on June 29th, only a few days after he had been invited to take up a commission. Before the war, Joe had been a porter at Sheffield Victoria, where his father was station policeman, and who was on the detective staff at the time of Joe's death. He also had three brothers working on the Great Central, one of whom, Inspector Fred Garratt, was the first to notice the sagging of Victoria's station roof in 1951, presaging its imminent collapse.



Private Fred Russ



Rifleman Tom Johnson



Sergeant Joe Garratt

We will never know whether it was any comfort at all to his family at Crofts Buildings, Campo Lane, that 31 year-old Private Fred Russ did at least have a grave. Awarded the Military Medal "for gallant conduct in the field", Fred had been a signal cleaner and lamp

man at Tinsley before joining the 2nd Battalion, Border Regiment. He was killed on May 10th, 1917, and after the Armistice, was taken from his temporary grave to the Queant Road Cemetery, Buissy, south of the Arras - Cambrai road.

Like Loos, Arras was supposed to be a BEF diversion and provide support for a major assault by the French - this time the much vaunted 'Nivelle Offensive' on the Chemin des Dames which, its architect confidently predicted, would end the war "in 48 hours". It very nearly did end the war as, in the wake of a bloody fiasco, the French army dissolved into widespread mutiny. For the rest of 1917, it would be down to the BEF to distract the German army, and Flanders was the chosen battleground - the Ypres Salient again. This last little corner of Belgium to remain unoccupied by the Germans was of vital strategic importance, guarding the approaches to the BEF's lifeline, the Channel ports, and took a remorseless toll throughout the war. "Wipers" was never a quiet sector.

On May 5th, 1915, 20 year-old former Waleswood station porter, Sydney Schofield, of the 2nd East Yorkshires, was killed in the Second Battle of Ypres but, like so many, has no known grave and is commemorated on Ypres' Menin Gate. Also from Waleswood, former platelayer, Private Savage, of the 7th York and Lancaster, was killed on December 6th, 1915, but his was one of fifty four Menin Road North Cemetery graves which were subsequently destroyed or obliterated by shellfire. They are commemorated by individual memorials in Ypres' Menin Road South Cemetery.

The Great Central's Memorial Roll entry for former Sheffield goods porter, Private Alfred Mycock, of the 1st Devons, is an enigma. His death was reported in the December 1915 issue of the *GC Journal*, however the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour does not include any Alfred Mycock, nor are there any Devonshire Regiment Mycock/Maycock (or similar) at all, which is confirmed by the Dorsetshire and Devonshire Regimental Museum. The least unlikely match is Rifleman Frederick Mycock, of the 7th Kings Royal Rifles, killed July 30th, 1915 and commemorated on the Menin Gate, but this remains the most tenuous entry in the Roll of Honour, with apologies to Private Mycock's memory if it is incorrect - I hope he would understand.

There are no doubts about 31 year-old former Sheffield Victoria porter, Private Wright, of the 1st East Yorks, who died on July 3rd, 1915, and lies in the White House Cemetery, Ypres, or yet more York and Lancaster GC Sheffielders. Of the 2nd Battalion, Private Willis, a 21 year-old former Neepsend fireman from Ellis Street, Brinsworth, Rotherham, died on December 20th, and lies in Ypres' La Brique Military Cemetery, and former Thompson McKay carter, 30 year-old Lance Corporal John Anderson, of Burnaby Street, Walkley, died on July 26th, 1916 - another of Menin Road South Cemetery's over 1,500 burials. The 7th Battalion's 23 year-old Private George Barber, a former carriage cleaner from Pitsmoor Road, was killed on May 30th, 1916, and is one of just two GC Sheffielders commemorated on the magnificent rotunda of the Ploegsteert Memorial ("Plug Street" to Tommy), which honours over 11,000 who died in the sector to the south of Ypres, but have no known graves.

In the north, 1/4th KOYLI's Private Herbert Angel, who died on July 22nd, 1917, ensured a Sheffield presence on the Belgian Nieuport Memorial. Inevitably, it was the 'PBI', the front-line infantry who incurred the greatest casualties, but all branches suffered. 44 year-old former platelayer, Sergeant Farrell, of the 129th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, from Spital Street, Pitsmoor, died of wounds on July 27th, 1917, and lies in the huge Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery at Poperinghe, in the rear area west of Ypres.

The memorial panels of the Menin Gate could not accommodate all the Salient's missing, the all-but 35,000 who died after August 16th, 1917, overflowing onto the great arc of the Tyne Cot Memorial. Former relayman, Private Charles Erratt, of the 6th York and Lancaster, was one of the first, being killed on that very day. Another 6th York and Lancaster, 27 year-old Private Joseph Wilks, died on October 11th, the day after former Broughton Lane shunter, Private Causer, of the 2nd Duke of Wellington's (West Riding)

Regiment, who lies in the Cement House Cemetery, Langemarck. Joseph Wilks is buried in the Dozinghem Military Cemetery which, along with Mendinghem and Bandaghem, perpetuates Tommy's sardonic pseudo-Flemish names for Poperinghe Casualty Clearing Stations, which were as far as many of the seriously wounded got. Private John Day, of the Machine Gun Corps' 172nd Co., from School Street, Swallownest, didn't even make it that far - he lies in the Brewery Orchard Cemetery at Bois-Grenier, south of Armentieres, the burial ground for the dressing station established in the cellar of the adjacent brewery. A 23 year-old former goods clerk, he had joined the Great Central as a junior clerk at Rotherham Goods in June, 1909. He died on February 26th, 1917, less than a fortnight after reaching the front.



Private John Day



*J.E. Day memorial in Brewery Orchard Cemetery
photo: "soilsister"*

The infamous mud of Flanders made tanks unusable, but the new-fangled weapon was given its chance in a massed attack at Cambrai in November, 1917. The immediate result was so spectacular that the church bells were rung in triumph back in Britain. And (by Great War standards, at least) casualties were not excessively heavy, but on November 27th, in the securing of Bourlon Ridge, former caller-off, Private William Matthewman, of the 276th Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment fell. Thus Sheffield's Great Central Railwaymen are also represented on the Cambrai Memorial at Louverval.

The Somme, Ypres, and Passchendaele have all passed into folklore as bywords for heroism and sacrifice, but also in German households every bit as much as in British for sheer misery, endurance and suffering. 1918 is not regarded with nearly the same awe, but the carnage was every bit as great. 1918 was to be the year of decision. The collapse of the eastern front following the Russian revolution had allowed Germany to build up an overwhelming numerical superiority on the Western Front. However,

Germany knew that if the war continued into 1919, she would be faced with countless numbers of fresh American troops. Moreover, the Royal Navy's blockade was biting ever more deeply, reducing Germany's front-line soldiers to the most basic rations while her civilians at home faced real starvation. If Germany was to win the war, it had to be in 1918, and Ludendorff planned his all-or-nothing *Kaiserschlacht* Spring offensive.

In the meantime the killing never stopped. On January 9th, 1918, the 175th York and Lancaster's Private Walker, from Orchard Terrace, Woodhouse, and formerly a signal lighter at Woodhouse, was killed. A special memorial records that he is "known or believed" to be one of the Tyne Cot Cemetery's over 8,000 "Known unto God" burials. He was the second Woodhouse GC casualty, following the 7th East Yorkshire's 22 year-old former platelayer, Samuel Jackson, originally from Retford, who had succumbed to his wounds on May 12th, 1916, and been buried in Boulogne's Eastern Cemetery. On March 8th, George Oakes, from Marcus Street, Pitsmoor, formerly a lamp room lad, but by then a 22 year-old Lance Sergeant in the 13th Kings Royal Rifle Corps, was killed but has no known grave: one more name for the Tyne Cot Memorial.

Spearheaded by storm troopers - hand-picked and specially trained soldiers creamed off from their individual units - the German "Michael" offensive was unleashed on March 21st, driving the overwhelmed British 5th Army back across the old Somme battlefields. As the British troops fell back, it is little wonder that so very few of their dead have a known grave. Among the many who died on that first day were 30 year-old Private George Miller, of the 2nd York and Lancaster, and 25 year-old Gunner Horace Micklethwaite, of 'C' Battery, 86th Brigade Royal Field Artillery, from Cogg's Farm, Bolsterstone. Both are commemorated on the Arras Memorial, together with one-time Attercliffe clerk, Lance Corporal Lawrence Hornbuckle, of the 13th York and Lancaster, who was killed on March 24th. By the time it was called off, "Michael" had driven a deep wedge into the Allied lines and inflicted heavy casualties, but only at an equally heavy cost in German lives, which fell mainly on their irreplaceable storm troopers.

"Michael" had been intended to draw reserves away from Flanders, where the major objective was to take the Channel ports and defeat the British by the follow-up "Georgette" onslaught in April. As with "Michael", "Georgette" inflicted severe casualties, but only gained ground in the face of limited withdrawals, with the major objectives of Ypres and the vital Hazebrouck rail centre remaining out of reach, and again the Germans suffered equally heavily themselves - once more primarily from their select storm trooper units. On April 6th 24 year-old Private George Beever, of the 9th Loyal North Lancs, from Valley Road, Meersbrook, was killed and is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, whilst Private Vincent Wade, of the 2nd York and Lancaster and formerly of Neepsend Loco died on April 12th to add another name to the Tyne Cot Memorial. Sergeant Charles Rutland, a 30 year-old former Sheffield police officer, colleague of Joe Garratt's father, of the 121st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, died on April 21st but at least has a known grave in the Morbecque British Cemetery to the south of Hazebrouck. GC Sheffielder losses of the York and Lancaster and Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry again go hand-in-hand, with 9th KOYLI's Lance Corporal Percy Thorpe, of Rock Street, Pitsmoor, dying from wounds on April 23rd. He lies in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinghe. He might well have been wounded in the same action in which 2/5th Manchester's former Sheffield goods clerk, Private Bert Milnes, of Crofton Avenue, Hillsborough, was killed on April 22nd. He lies in the Tincourt New British Cemetery, east of Peronne. Just one more GC Sheffielder, the 2nd West Yorkshire (Prince of Wales' Own) Regiment's 19 year-old Private William Alien, was claimed before the *Kaiserschlacht* offensive finally blew itself out in July, 1918. From Wallace Road, Parkwood Springs, and formerly of Neepsend Loco, William Alien was killed on May 29th but is yet another with no known grave and is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial.

As the German armies regrouped, the exhausted French were all for waiting for 1919 and the coming of the Americans, but Haig saw his opportunity and in August 1918

began the 'Hundred Days Offensive' which would end the war. Ludendorff dubbed the Battle of Amiens "the black day of the German Army", but the British could only advance at the cost of more heavy casualties. On 12th August, the 7th East Yorks Private James Smith, formerly of the Sheffield Engineering Dept., was killed and is commemorated on yet another memorial, the Vis-en-Artois Memorial to those with no known grave who fell in the final months of the war. Another on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial is 2nd Lieutenant Harold Thornsby, from Petre Street, formerly with the GC's Traffic Dept., who died on August 24th. Latterly with the 10th West Yorkshire (Prince of Wales' Own), he had formerly served with the Sheffield City Battalion, the 12th York and Lancaster, which was disbanded that February. August 24th was also the day 9th KOYLI's 29 year-old Private Henry Grayhurst died. Formerly employed at the Royal Victoria Station Hotel, he lies in the Regina Trench Cemetery, Grandcourt, by the Albert - Bapaume road. Those same South Yorkshire regimental names keep recurring; 5th KOYLI's 20 year-old Private Albert Mawhood, from Burnaby Street, Walkley, and formerly at Neepsend Loco, was killed on August 27th and lies in the Gomiecourt South Cemetery, between Arras and Bapaume.

It is supremely ironic that as the war reached its final weeks, men were once again fighting and dying in the same places the original BEF had retreated from four long years earlier. On 10th September, 1st East Yorks' 32 year-old Private John Gibson, from Turners Hill, Park, was killed and buried in the same Le Cateau Military Cemetery as the 2nd Suffolk's Private Parmenter, the first GC Sheffielder to fall in August 1914. Then on September 28th, 20 year-old Private Fred Alsop, of the 2nd York and Lancaster died and was buried in the Chapelle British Cemetery, Holnon, west of St. Quentin. Fred Alsop's widow's address is a reminder of the grim industrial housing then to be found in Sheffield: 6th Court, 10th House, Leicester Street, which lives on as Leicester Walk in that warren off Netherthorpe Road.

Any lingering German hopes of stabilising the front were dispelled by the breaching of the Hindenburg Line at the Battle of St. Quentin (Sept. 29th – Oct. 10th). In this final phase, a more fluid form of warfare had returned, with mobile infantry supported by tanks and ground attack aircraft. It was in this phase that former Chief Goods Dept. clerk, Lieutenant Frank Hopkins, died on October 1st, in a DH9 light bomber of the Royal Air Force's 108th Squadron, based in northern Belgium. Lieutenant Hopkins was the only GC Sheffielder airman to be killed in the conflict. There had also been just the one sailor, 33 year-old former relayman, Able Seaman Winter, of the coastal bombardment monitor *HMS Severn*, who had died on December 26th, 1914, and lies in the Dunkirk Town Cemetery.

St. Quentin was not won without heavy losses to a defiant and still resolute foe. 19 year-old Private Walter Dove, of the 2nd York and Lancaster, from Bramber Street,



*G. Wilson memorial in the Leers Communal Cemetery.
photo: Johan Moors*

was evacuated to Rouen, but died of his wounds on October 2nd and is buried in the St. Sever Cemetery Extension. The following day former Thompson McKay employee, Private J. Sheehan, of the 1st KOYLI, from Shepherd Street, Shalesmoor, was killed in action and lies in the Guizancourt Farm Cemetery, midway between Cambrai and St. Quentin. On October 5th, 13th Durham Light Infantry's Private Harold Masdin, formerly of Sheffield Goods, was killed. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial. The 57th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps' Private Bentley, formerly of Attercliffe Traffic Dept., died on October 9th and lies in the Delsaux Farm Cemetery, Beugny, south-west of Cambrai.

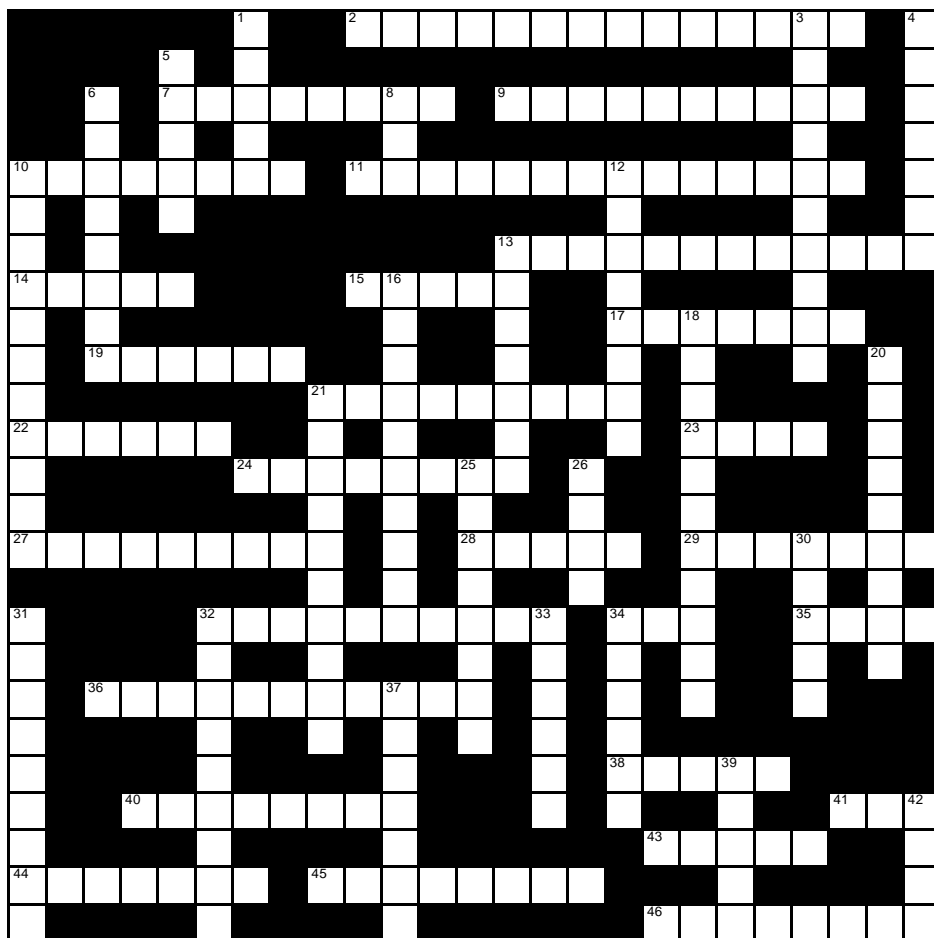
Perhaps it is inevitable that the last GC Sheffielder to fall should be a York and Lancaster, of the 13th Battalion, formerly the '1st Barnsley Pals' but, since the February, 1918 reorganisation, incorporating the 12th (Sheffield City) and 14th (2nd Barnsley Pals) Battalions. 32 year-old Private George Wilson, from Bastock Road, Owlerton, died on October 24th, a day on which the British army advanced three miles and took 9,000 prisoners. In this mobile final phase of the war, he lies not in a vast War Graves Commission cemetery, but shares a plot with just three of his comrades and six Coldstream Guardsmen who joined them in May, 1940, in the Leers Communal Cemetery, Roubaix, north-east of Lille. George Wilson fell just a tragic couple of weeks short of the Armistice.

One final note. All those thousands upon thousands of burials "Known unto God" still only account for half of those awesome memorial lists of those with no known graves, so if you visit the Sheffield Memorial Park, or any other undeveloped section of the Western Front, tread softly, for you know not who might lie beneath your feet.



BR class D11 4-4-0 no. 62660 'Butler-Henderson' takes a break at Stainforth & Hatfield with the RCTS South Yorkshire Rail Tour No. 4 on 21 Sept 1958.
photo: Garth Smith

Crossword (*Forward 167*) : Answers in the back of this issue.



Across

- 2** Author of "An Illustrated History of the Woodhead Route". (4,10)
- 7** In the opposite direction. (8)
- 9** Has a bookshop at Stamford station. (6,4)
- 10** Junction for City Goods, Sheffield. (8)
- 11** Station on the Met & GC Joint. (5,9)
- 13** They let off steam. (6,6)
- 14** A timed work session. (5)
- 15** A shade of green used by the LNER. (5)
- 17** A step up from spotting. (7)
- 19** Unit used for water capacity. (6)
- 21** Junction used by GC trains to reach Manchester Central. (9)
- 22** Nickname for a class 50 diesel. (6)
- 23** Railway staff train between Bulwell Common and Annesley Loco. (4)
- 24** Venue for GW Railwayana auctions. (8)
- 27** Given before final demise. (4,5)
- 28** Person responsible for overseeing the safe running of a train. (5)

- 29 Estate of the Duke of Portland who had a waiting room at Worksop station. (7)
- 32 The study of beauty. (10)
- 34 Used by the driver when a passenger train set is being pushed by a locomotive. (3)
- 35 Responsibility. (4)
- 36 Used by cleaners of steam engines. (6,5)
- 38 Removed from Neasden shed facade. (5)
- 40 Destination of the 'runners' from Annesley. (8)
- 41 Assigned task. (3)
- 43 Journey taken for pleasure. (5)
- 44 Name carried by a WM&CQ loco. (7)
- 45 In front of the boiler. (8)
- 46 Where Thomas Parker served his apprenticeship under Robert Sinclair. (8)

Down

- 1 Bus on rails inflicted on the present day travelling public. (5)
- 3 Was the first station out of Barnsley towards Penistone but now closed. (6,4)
- 4 A window cleaning B1? (7)
- 5 It can become an obsession. (5)
- 6 Between Hexthorpe Jnct and Bentley Jnct is an example of this kind of line. (8)
- 8 Its last General Secretary was Jimmy Knapp. (3)
- 10 Flying junction west of Retford. (7,4)
- 12 Carried on the smokebox in BR days. (4,4)
- 13 Provided to meet the needs of the public. (7)
- 16 Goods that should not be delayed. (10)
- 18 The canal that crosses the Manchester Ship Canal at Barton. (11)
- 20 Used to get a message across to the public. (9)
- 21 Where the 9.18am Nottingham Victoria-Edwinstowe came off the tracks on 2 Sept. 1950. (6,4)
- 25 Nickname associated with Gresley's GN 2-6-0 class. (8)
- 26 Fitted around the rim of a wheel. (4)
- 30 Something the wearer should be proud of. (5)
- 31 A one-off used to prove the type before committing to full production. (9)
- 32 Nickname for Thompson B1 class. (9)
- 33 The essence of something. (6)
- 34 Machine or tool used for a specific task. (6)
- 37 Usually found on the running plate. (7)
- 39 Delivers coal into the tender from the coaling plant. (5)
- 42 Staccato sound produced by a steam engine working hard eg a J11. (4)

An invitation from George and Davina Huxley

Following on from the successful open day held in 2009 (see *Forward* 162 p41), George and Davina Huxley would like to hold another open day in 2011. Members of the GCRS (plus family and friends) are invited to come and view the gauge 0 garden railway (the Harrietstown, Ballysophia & Cashelcorinna Railway) and enjoy afternoon tea on the lawn (weather permitting). The date is **Saturday 11th June**. The time is 3.30pm. The location is in rural Oxfordshire. Please contact George or Davina Huxley on 01608 677595 to accept the invitation and receive directions on how to find them.



Readers' forum

from Reg Instone, Shirley, Solihull

re *Forward 165* p43: Paul Armstrong's photo of an L&NWR WTT.

It should be noted that in LNWR WTTs "C" means a "conditional" train, which ran only when traffic demanded. "M" and "MO" are Mondays excepted and Mondays only, as might be expected, and "SM" means Sundays and Mondays excepted. I have done some research on this subject. The following are extracts from a piece on the subject which I am writing for the LNWR Society.

"LNWR goods trains from Colwick yard in Nottingham to Sheffield commenced on 5th October 1892, only two months after the Derbyshire Lines were opened. There was also a daily express goods train service between Camden and Sheffield by July 1896. The start of LNWR services over Woodhead seems to date from around the same time, between 1889 and 1896. Whether or not they were running before the LNWR Nunnery Goods depot opened in May 1895 is difficult to establish.

The first available LNWR WTT to show the service is that for July 1896 (there is no known MS&L WTT for this period). By then there was a train six days a week from Bushbury via Crewe, Stockport and Guide Bridge, leaving Bushbury at 11.25pm (11.00pm on Sundays) and arriving at Woodburn Junction at 5.18am and the LNWR yard 7 minutes later. Return was at 8.55pm, the engine leaving shed at 8.00pm to marshal the train. The other regular service via Woodhead was at 9.26pm from Liverpool via London Road on Monday to Friday nights, arriving at Sheffield LNWR at 4.05am. Return was at 10.15pm to Ordsall Lane (Manchester) on Mondays to Fridays (engine off shed at 9.45pm), and 7.45pm to Liverpool on Saturdays (off shed at 7.00pm). Where the engine for the Monday departure came from is not clear! There was also a conditional extra at 7.45am from Ordsall Lane via Guide Bridge. All these trains had a maximum load of 33 wagons. I am not sure whether these trains propelled onto the branch from Woodburn, or a shunting engine came onto the back of them. Trains from the up main line to L&NWR branch whistled 5 short.

By 1901 the Bushbury train left there at 10.45pm (8.20pm Sundays), arriving in Sheffield at 5.10am or at 5.15am after it was extended to City Goods, with a return from Nunnery at 9.37pm calling at Dunford. Following the opening of City Goods, it started from there at 9.20pm before calling at Nunnery. It was reduced to five times a week operation in 1909, when the Sunday night outward and Monday night return workings were discontinued. Retimed to leave City Goods at 8.30pm by October 1915, it was withdrawn altogether later in the Great War (by 1919). The Liverpool and Sheffield service continued to run six days a week from 1901 until 1921 at least; it did not run from Liverpool on Saturday nights or from Sheffield on Sunday nights. Departure from Liverpool was at 9.15pm with arrival at City Goods scheduled for 2.00am, 2.05am at the new depot by 1905, and 2.30am by 1913. Deceleration during the war resulted in an arrival time of 2.35am in 1915, 3.55am in 1919 and 4.02am in 1921. It called at Woodhead until 1915 and at Dewsnap by 1919. On Sunday nights from 1909 until 1915 it ran about two hours earlier, leaving Liverpool at 7.35pm. The train from Sheffield left City Goods at 10.00pm and Nunnery at 10.22pm, 10 minutes earlier by 1915, and did not call for traffic between there and Manchester London Road, where it arrived about half past midnight. It left earlier, at 6.20pm, on Saturdays by 1921. (This would be a result of the 48-hour working week, introduced nationally in February 1919, and other post-war improvements in pay and conditions.) All these trains were shown to carry Class "A" lights over the G.C. line, other than the train from Bushbury which was not so indicated until 1915.

There was also a conditional extra from Stockport Edgeley at 9.50pm (1.50am by May 1905) with Class "A" lights, calling at Woodhead in 1913 only, and until 1913 another leaving Ordsall Lane at 5.35am and Guide Bridge at 7.20am, in 1905 and 1913 also

calling at Woodhead. In 1919 there was also a conditional banana special at 10.15pm from Garston Docks when required on Mondays to Thursdays, arriving at City Goods at 2.15am. The intermittent nature of the Woodhead calls might indicate that they were for pathing requirements rather than for traffic. In the absence of any contemporary logs, statistics, summaries, Train Registers or Guards' Journals, there is no way of knowing how frequently these conditional trains actually ran. It should be noted that, except when the Ordsall Lane train ran, there was no train on or off the branch at Woodburn Junction between 5am and 9pm – so it is very unlikely that any photographs of them exist!"

Responses to Keith Parkin's Query: Milk Tanks from Barnsley (*Forward 165 p45*) and subsequent correspondence (*Forward 166 p38-43*)

from Paul Armstrong, Southend-on-Sea

Since my letter in *Forward 166* was written I have had a chance to view a copy of the *BR (LMR Midland Division) Hours of Opening of Signal Boxes* from 15th September 1952. It shows that Barnsley Court House Junction signal box was open from 4.50am Monday until return of empty milk tanks from Summer Lane, Sunday. Unfortunately Summer Lane signal box is not included in this booklet. I read this entry to mean that the milk tanks were removed as an independent movement, possibly by a pilot engine. Further details of the movement may be included in the working timetable or in the details of Barnsley area trip workings.

from David Wrottesley, Sheffield

I have read Reg Instone's constructive suggestions about Summer Lane and its milk traffic in *Forward 166*. In addition, the track diagram was very helpful. I am, however, a bit concerned at his allegation that there might have been "bending of the rules". This suggests collusion between the train crew and the stationmaster at Summer Lane to perform forbidden propelling movements by passenger trains. This, when the Barnsley yard pilot or local trip engine was not available, to attach/detach milk tanks. The likelihood of a Penistone - Doncaster passenger train being used to perform such movements, even with clipped and padlocked points is remote. I can see no time or operational benefit that would have been achieved by such movements. The inward loaded tanks would still have to be reversed/propelled into milk siding and positioned under the canopy at the milk dock after they had been detached. I do not know the date/year that propelling by loaded passenger trains over unlocked facing points was prohibited, but I imagine it was very early in Victorian days. This, when it was discovered it was unsafe and dangerous.

In my contribution I was not originally aware of the exact layout and suggested possible moves. I thought the milk siding was on the Barnsley Court House side of Summer Lane adjacent to the up line. I now realise that this is incorrect as it was on the Dodworth side. In consequence the fifth paragraph of my letter should read –

"I am sure that sometime prior to the arrival of the up local train, the local trip engine would have drawn empty milk tanks from the milk platform siding on the up side into the head shunt. It would have been in a position to propel and then attach to the rear, after arrival of the passenger train in Summer Lane station up platform. This after the points have been changed. I think loaded tanks would have been worked in via Penistone. They could have been detached in a similar fashion by the pilot/trip engine and then drawn into the head shunt before being propelled into the milk siding platform."

Keith Parkin stated that the station dwell time at Summer Lane on the 5.37pm ex-Penistone was 5 minutes in 1954. I have a 1958 *ER Public Timetable T68* which states that the 5.15pm Saturdays excepted Penistone - Barnsley Court House had one minute but the 5.30pm Saturdays only had five minutes. In addition, a further Saturdays only 7.50pm had three minutes. This Saturday evening activity is most interesting.

I am a former timetable manager employed by BR(ER) for 40 years. I became very interested in railway timings in 1958 when I commenced my railway career at Kings Cross ER HQ timing office. I was not involved in the detail of the passenger workings on ex-GCR lines at Barnsley but I surmise that in 1958 outwards empty tanks were attached on Saturdays and routed away via Court House/Sheffield Midland on the 5.15pm, and inwards loaded/detached off the 7.50pm. The Barnsley yard pilot finally placing the loaded tanks at the milk siding platform before returning late on Saturday evening to the Loco at Barnsley Exchange.

I suspect train loads of milk tanks were worked into the down sidings from the down line and worked across as required by the pilot to the milk siding platform, empties being worked back from up to down side after unloading to be made up into empty trains.

from Barry Elliott, Normanton-on-Soar, Loughborough

I have in front of me the *1938 Railway Clearing House Handbook* and I quote (although it doesn't tell us much more).....

SUMMER LANE see Barnsley

BARNSELY

Barnsley Coop Siding, Summer Lane.

Corporation Sanitary Department, Summer Lane.

And that's it !

from Pete Howard, Brinsworth, Rotherham

My brother John started his 43 year footplate service at Barnsley shed on 3rd April 1950 as an engine cleaner. He was soon passed for fireman duties (passed cleaner). He recalls working on Summer Lane pilot at least once, on an N5 tank engine, firing for driver Percy Denton. This duty started at 7am. It was a one-shift duty in the Old Man's Link.

Driver Percy Denton was a magician who would entertain his fireman when not working the engine. John thinks they worked traffic from Barnsley Top Yard to Summer Lane, where they placed it in the required sidings and shunted as required. On the same side as the dairy (up side) was Qualter Hall Engineering works. John cannot recall if they had any rail traffic. John cannot remember any milk tanks either. In December 1951 John was called up to the army. He cannot remember working the Summer Lane pilot on returning to work in 1953.

Sometime in 1956 John took a regular fireman's position at Mexborough shed. Barnsley shed closed in 1959. Most of the enginemen transferred to Mexborough where a new link was formed known as the Barnsley Link, which covered work in the Barnsley area still worked by steam. Later the ex-Barnsley men were absorbed into the Mexborough Links proper. At the same time a new depot called Barnsley Mens was formed. This covered dmu diagrams between Chesterfield and Leeds, plus a handful of steam work, the engines being supplied by Mexborough. The senior drivers from Barnsley had this work but some had to put themselves back to firemen – the oldest was 62 years.

My 41 years footplate service started on 21st January 1952 at Darnall shed. In Dec. 1960 I transferred to Mexborough shed. In early 1962 I was one of 70 sets of Mexborough locomen sent to work from the new diesel depot at Wath. I think it was 1964/5 when Mexborough shed closed and we were all made redundant. However, with the redundancy notice was a letter telling us that we could all be redeployed at Wath. This was the correct procedure as it allowed those who wanted to, to be transferred to another shed. My driver at the time requested a transfer to Doncaster.

Early in 1967 driver H. Steele of Barnsley Mens depot died in service and I applied for the position. I was only a fireman at the time but got the job. I was sent to Ilford to be trained on the class 31 diesels. All diesel drivers on the Eastern Region trained on the

class 31s. I passed as a driver and started duties at Barnsley Mens from 16th June 1967. I was only there until 14th Oct. 1967 when redundancy caught up with me again. This was caused by the loss of dmu work at the Barnsley Mens depot. I was able to transfer to Tinsley shed on 16th Oct. 1967 and remained there until 19th March 1993. It was while at Tinsley that I recall working as a second man to a fellow Barnsley driver on a class 08 loco from Barnsley Top Yard to Summer Lane and return.

In June 1967 there were 22 drivers at Barnsley Mens, 8 in the passenger link and 14 in the goods link. All of the drivers other than myself had been trained to drive the dmus. If this work had not been lost I would also have been trained for dmu work. Barnsley Mens remained open for another year or so with just 7 drivers and 7 second men (some of whom had been drivers) to service a few local collieries.

In 1993 Tinsley announced that 30 locomen were no longer needed and invited volunteers for redundancy. This time round my brother John and myself decided to accept the redundancy and we took an early retirement in March 1993.

from E. Irving Smith, Sheffield

Re: *Forward* 166 p5: "Memories of Sheffield Victoria in 1957" by Ken Grainger

A sincere thanks to Ken Grainger for all his contributions to *Forward*, and especially for his most recent article "Memories of Sheffield Victoria in 1957". Ken obviously preceded my spotting days at Sheffield Victoria by a couple of years but it still held its unique fascination even then.

As a family we used Victoria as a starting point for holidays to Lowestoft, Llandudno and Scarborough and once went on a school trip to Heathrow via Beaconsfield behind a Brush Type 2. Stunning! I felt that Victoria was a modern looking station. I preferred it to Sheffield Midland and never fell foul of any platform ticket inspectors. Under my watch the boat trains were usually "Britannia" hauled - *Hereward the Wake*, *Boadicea* and *Rudyard Kipling* spring to mind - and I always enjoyed the afternoon departure of the Pullman Car *Master Cutler* behind a D200. I'm sure that I also spotted D0280 *Falcon* and DP2 on the Cutler.

Happy days indeed and, as Ken observes, who would then have thought those fabulous electrics would come to naught? A plague on their houses!

from Dave Cousins, Swinton, Manchester

Re: *Forward* 166 p5: "Memories of Sheffield Victoria in 1957" by Ken Grainger

The article by Ken Grainger, which is otherwise an interesting piece, is spoilt by the inclusion of a statement which I find insulting to railwaymen. The offending passage is: "At least the electric locomotives looked like railway engines - still to come were the days of spurious yellow end panels to protect the myopic (and moronic), let alone garish colour schemes as a distraction from poor design."

Who were these people described as "myopic and moronic"? They were the railwaymen whose duties took them onto the tracks.

When diesel and electric power was taking over from steam, several changes occurred:-

1. Train speeds increased.
2. Diesels and electrics were much quieter in their approach.
3. The engines were painted dark green.
4. Lineside vegetation was allowed to grow which was also dark green.

There was an alarming increase in the number of fatalities among track workers as a result of these changes. It was the railway trade unions who demanded action, leading to yellow end panels on locomotives. As someone whose duties took me onto the tracks I can personally vouch for the improvement this made, helping to stem the rise in accidents.

Ken Grainger spends a great deal of his time ensuring that railwaymen killed in the Great War are duly revered (and rightly so), yet in this article refers so contemptuously to those railwaymen killed on the railway through no fault of their own as "myopic and moronic", simply because the safety precautions offend his aesthetic sensibilities.

I'm sorry about the strength of feeling expressed in this letter but I do feel that Ken Grainger's comments are unacceptable.

from Tim Crafts, Basford, Nottingham.

The "Golden Ball" public house that has appeared on countless photos taken at Bulwell Common has sadly been demolished. It is yet another landmark gone from the later years of the London Extension. However, the station house still exists, albeit in a heavily extended state, and stands out from the more modern and featureless properties around it.

from Mike Hartley, Scunthorpe. e-mail: mikeandpamela.7@ntlworld.com

Information requested: Location of station staff photos

These two photos were given me by the grandson of Edward Robert Charlesworth, who is shown seated on the left in the first photo and is stood second from the right in the second photo. The location suggested was Langwith or Scarcliffe c.1912. Can a *Forward* reader identify the location?



Edward Robert Charlesworth – photo 1.



Edward Robert Charlesworth – photo 2.

from Tony Dewdney, Macclesfield, Cheshire. e-mail: tjdewdney@talktalk.net

Information requested: Proposed route of the LD&ECR at Macclesfield

A friend has just shown me a fascinating document - a longitudinal section of the proposed route near Macclesfield, which was never built. Its title is *LD&EC Railway, Railway no. 7, Section 28* and it shows six miles of the route, including the crossing of the North Staffs Railway and the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Canal, which then was owned by the railway of that name, now the Macclesfield Canal. It is obviously in or near Macclesfield and I think I have worked out roughly where it would have been. I would be very grateful if someone in your Society could identify precisely where it is - a map of the proposed route would be ideal.

from John Leathes, Petersfield, Hants. e-mail: cattigga@sarajohn.fsnet.co.uk

Information requested: WWI navy vessel No. 1

I wonder if a member of the GCR Society will be able to help me with a query concerning the GCR in The First World War?

I am a naval postal historian (amateur I hasten to add) and was in the Navy for a number of years. I have a mysterious cover from a vessel XSV No.1 which has defied us all in the hobby for years. It was only the other day that I discovered that a No.1 did actually exist.

A couple of small craft were taken over by the Navy in the early days of the war. In the record of craft taken up from trade they appear just as Vessels No.1 and No.2. The records show them classed as "Steam Launches and Water Boats" and they were hired from the Great Central Railway Company in August 1915. Can anyone help identify these vessels?

from Tony West, Mortimer, Berks.

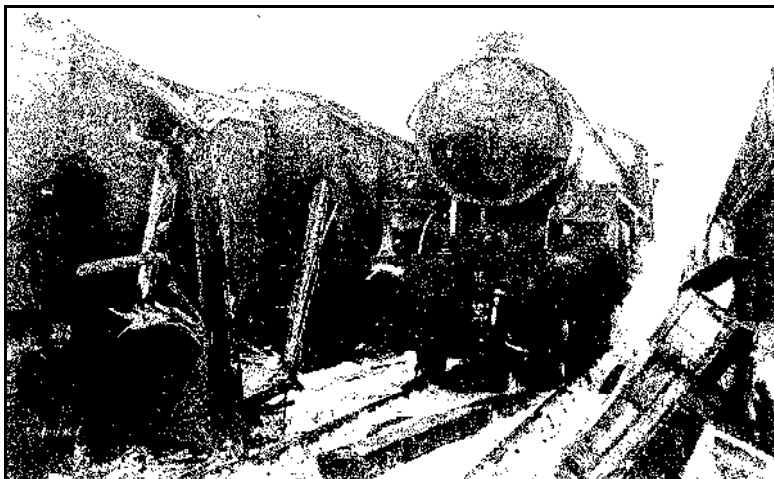
Re: *Forward 166* p14: "The Pollard family railway history – part 9" by John Pollard

The collision at Leicester Central described by John Pollard is indeed a salutary lesson in what happens when the rules are not followed correctly. Some time ago I corresponded with Bill Warwicker who was stationmaster at Leicester Central at the time and he kindly provided me with a couple of photos taken the day after.

Both photos are facing south towards Leicester Central Station. The first shows the back end of the goods train. The third person from the left is Bill Warwicker, helping to supervise the clearing of the down line. The second photo is a close up of the B1 that was being used to clear the line, the sleeper lying in the track being the weapon of choice. The 'method' used was to place one end of the sleeper against any obstructing wreckage and wedge the other end against the buffer beam - you can visualise the rest. Very crude but effective and definitely pre H&S.



Leicester Central accident: The end of the goods train on the up line.



Leicester Central accident: Class B1 4-6-0 no. 61376 being used to clear wreckage on the down line.

from J.Richard Moreton, Sheffield

Re. *Forward 166* rear cover caption.

The rear cover picture of 11B no.1031 isn't at Gorton! This is a view taken at the North Eastern's York South depot with roundhouse no.3 in the background. This was used by Midland engines from 1879 and has the weather vane of a 2-2-2 "Jenny Lind" right on top of the ornate ventilator. In later days it became ruinous and had its roof taken off. Nevertheless the York pilots continued to use it until demolition in 1963 although I'm not sure that demolition adequately covers its final demise as the place virtually fell down all by itself.

The locomotive immediately behind 1031 comes from the Great Eastern and appears to be one of the Holden singles which worked GE trains into York for quite a spell. GE services to York began on 1st November 1892 and came from Liverpool Street (3 times daily) and a boat train dining car express from Harwich Parkeston Quay. How far these can be described as express services is probably best left to the imagination!

GC services first arrived in York on 13th March 1899 and consisted of 3 return services to Sheffield Victoria. The 9.25am train began at Newcastle (7.05am) and was the Breakfast Car express to Bournemouth. Coming north the train left Bournemouth at 10.47am arriving in York at 7.40pm, going forward at 7.55pm behind a NE engine and reaching Newcastle via Stockton and Sunderland. In 1906 the famous Barry to Newcastle service began although it was the NE that worked the train to and from Sheffield Victoria.

On the goods side the GC did not work into York but exchanged traffic with the NE at Milford Jct, 14.5 miles to the south. Where there was no returning traffic GC engines went back light to Mexborough and conversely travelled in the same manner to pick up GC trains if nothing was required to be moved northward. Mexborough also supplied an engine to shunt at Milford.

Hope this is of interest. Many of the details are from *Rail Centres: York* (Ian Allan, 1963) by that great doyen of North Eastern historians, Ken Hoole.

Crossword Solution (*Forward 167*)

Across: 2 Alan Whitehouse, 7 oncoming, 9 Robert Humm, 10 Woodburn, 11 Great Missenden, 13 safety valves, 14 shift, 15 apple, 17 cabbings, 19 gallon, 21 Fairfield, 22 Hoover, 23 Dido, 24 Pershore, 27 last rites, 28 guard, 29 Welbeck, 32 aesthetics, 34 DVT, 35 duty, 36 cotton waste, 38 clock, 40 Woodford, 41 job, 43 jaunty, 44 Premier, 45 smokebox, 46 Greenock.

Down: 1 Pacer, 3 Summer Lane, 4 Chamois, 5 hobby, 6 avoiding, 8 NUR, 10 Whisker Hill, 12 shed code, 13 service, 16 perishable, 18 Bridgewater, 20 publicity, 21 Forest Town, 25 Ragtimer, 26 tyre, 30 badge, 31 prototype, 32 Antelopes, 33 spirit, 34 device, 37 sandbox, 39 chute, 42 bark.

The Great Central Rolling Stock Trust is based at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington. The Trust owns three 1910 Barnum carriages, has a fourth on loan from the National Rail Museum, and five further vehicles, one of which is a unique clerestory coach (body only) of 1903, generously donated by Stuart Copson. The Trust has also obtained a second 1889 MS&LR 6-wheel passenger vehicle which was severely damaged in an off-site shunting accident and now needs a major rebuild. It also has a unique suburban brake body of 1905. The trust estimates that it has 75% of the existing GCR rolling stock under its care. The Trust needs volunteers and financial support to achieve its aims of restoring these vehicles and running them on the GCR(N). The website is at www.gcr-rollingstocktrust.co.uk. The secretary is Richard Tilden-Smith at richard@gcr-rollingstocktrust.co.uk.

Rear cover caption

Former GC class 9N 4-6-2T no.447 stands at Neasden after its first outshopping as an LNER engine class A5/1. Its GCR number is now painted on the tank side (but without the usual lower case 'c' suffix) and it retains the original brass number plate on the bunker side. Note the early style L.& N.E.R. on the tank side. The LNER number 5447 was applied in March 1925. It did not survive long enough to undergo further renumbering as it was withdrawn in Dec. 1942 due to badly cracked frames. Subsequent members of the class suffering from cracked frames were provided with new frames so no further withdrawals of the class were made until 1957.

