

FORWARD 176



Front cover caption

LNER class J11/1 'Pom-Pom' 0-6-0 no.5236 heads a down goods train near Charwelton. Although carrying an LNER flowerpot chimney it still retains its large dome, smokebox wheel and coal rails on the tender. It was built by Vulcan Foundry in 1904 as GCR class 9J no.236 and withdrawn in 1954 as no.64367 when it was a Northwich engine.

photo: CGRS Collection



The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 176 ~ June 2013

Contents

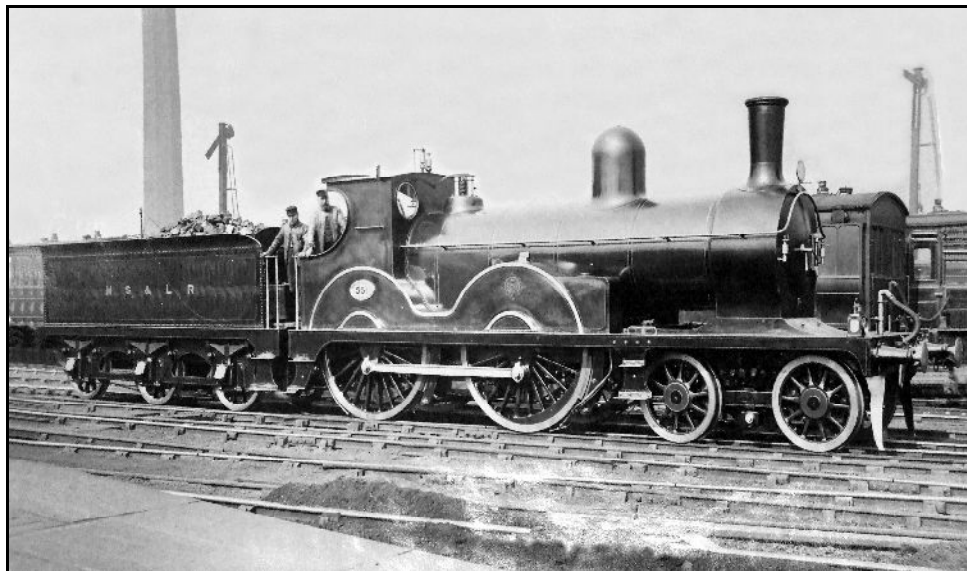
Editorial <i>by Bob Gellatly</i>	2
The Marylebone collision of 1913 <i>by David Reidy</i>	3
A Lincolnshire interlude <i>a photo feature</i>	8
Nottingham Express Transit (NET) Phase 2 <i>by David Hanger</i>	10
Wanderings around the Internet <i>by Bob Gellatly</i>	13
Great Central Great War Heroes - Part 7: from Worksop and Retford <i>by Ken Grainger</i>	14
Chesterfield Canal Festival	18
On Great Central lines today <i>by Kim Collinson</i>	19
A class 104 dmu leaving East Leake <i>a colour photo by Tony Ford</i>	22/23
Recent auction items	24
Modellers' corner <i>by Tony West</i>	25
David Andrews kits	26
Model railway exhibition diary	27
New members	27
Re-Open the Woodhead Line <i>by Paul White</i>	28
Arrivals on the bookshelf	30
The Pollard family railway history - Part 17 <i>by John E. Pollard</i>	38
Readers' forum	42

Editorial by Bob Gellatly

The fortunes of the closed sections of the Great Central mainline between Manchester and London vary from those parts which have been completely obliterated by landscaping and development for housing, supermarkets, businesses etc. to those that have been fully restored and in use eg the sections now operated as heritage railways at Loughborough and at Ruddington. The Woodhead tunnel remains but in use as a cable conduit. Parts of the route south of Sheffield seem to be destined to become part of HST Phase 2.

In Nottingham, where the NET tram system already reaches a point close to the former Weekday Cross Junction, infrastructure work is well under way to extend southwards. This involves the construction of new bridges, the most spectacular being across the former Nottingham Midland station on the alignment of the demolished GC bridge. David Hanger writes about the NET extension on page 11. It is a pity that the NET extension does not continue along the GC alignment to Ruddington to link up with the GCR (Nottingham) and, when the 'Bridge-the-Gap' project has been completed, provide the opportunity to reach Leicester North. Could that be another opportunity for tram-trains to operate as proposed for the Tinsley-Rotherham Central route?

The blockage of the Doncaster-Scunthorpe line at Hatfield Colliery is causing a lot of disruption. Passengers are being bussed between Doncaster and Scunthorpe and freight workings are having to use the alternative route via Gainsborough Central, the under-use of which was a focus of the editorial in *Forward 174*. See page 21 for an aerial view. First TransPennine Express are to operate one train each way on the Sheffield-Cleethorpes route via Gainsborough on Saturdays starting on 25th May, from Sheffield at 10:30 and from Cleethorpes at 18:11. Unlike the all-stations Northern Rail service this will only call at Retford and Grimsby en route. With TPE staff having learnt the route it would be a pity if the service was withdrawn once the original route is reopened. Additional stops at Worksop and Gainsborough would make the service more attractive.



Bill Taylor had a pleasant surprise when he came across this print while doing some research at Kew. It shows MS&LR class 2 4-4-0 no. 561. This was the first of the class and was built by Kitson in 1887 for display at the Manchester Exhibition. The class was known as the 'Kitsons'. The location looks like the platform end at Manchester London Road. It was the last MS&L loco to have a cast number plate.

The Marylebone collision of 1913

by David Reidy

Almost exactly one hundred years ago, at about 4.50pm on 28th March 1913, a collision occurred between two passenger trains at Marylebone Station. As the 1.15pm up passenger train from Leicester to Marylebone, consisting of five vehicles, was entering the station, its rear carriages were run into by the engine of the 4.50pm down passenger train from Marylebone to Princes Risborough which was just leaving the station. The speed of the incoming train at the time of the accident was probably rather over ten miles an hour, and that of the outgoing train slightly less. The engine of the outgoing train first came into contact with the side of the last vehicle but one of the incoming train, and that vehicle was derailed and suffered considerable damage. The buffer beam of the engine then came into direct collision with the leading end of the rear vehicle, a brake third carriage. The blow between these two vehicles was severe; the buffer beam and mainframe of the engine were bent, the steel underframe of the carriage was crumpled up, and the two front compartments practically demolished.

There were a number of passengers travelling in the rear carriage of the up train; one passenger was found to be dead and twenty three injured, three very seriously. A GCR inspector who was travelling as a passenger was among the injured. Five passengers in the down train also received slight injuries.

The engine of the up passenger train was a 4-4-0. It was fitted with steam brake working blocks on the four coupled wheels and on the tender wheels and with a vacuum brake apparatus working the blocks on the wheels of the train. It was also fitted with a hand brake working the blocks on the wheels of the tender. The train consisted of the following vehicles attached to the engine in the following order:

- Composite bogie brake van with 8 wheels
- Bogie third class carriage with 8 wheels
- Bogie brake with 8 wheels
- Bogie first class carriage with 8 wheels
- Bogie third class brake with 8 wheels

These vehicles were all fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, working blocks on all wheels of the train.

The engine of the down passenger train was a 4-6-2 tank engine. It was running chimney first at the time of the accident. It was fitted with steam brake, working blocks on the six coupled wheels, and with a vacuum brake apparatus for working the blocks on the wheels of the train. It was also fitted with a hand brake for working the blocks on the coupled wheels. The train consisted of the following vehicles attached to the engine in the following order:

- Bogie third class carriage with 8 wheels
- Bogie third class brake with 8 wheels
- Bogie first class carriage with 8 wheels
- Bogie third class brake with 8 wheels

All these vehicles were fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, working blocks on all the wheels.

The brakes in both trains were later reported to have been in good order.

Marylebone at the time had four platform lines, No 1 being on the east side and No 4 on the west side of the station. There was a platform 900 feet long and 35 feet wide lying between Nos. 3 and 4 platform lines, with an overbridge, the Rossmore Road Bridge, crossing the lines close to the north end of this platform.

There were four running lines approaching the station from the north viz the up and down main lines and the up and down slow lines. The main lines were on the east side of the slow lines, and in each case the up line lay on the east side of the down line. All four platform lines in the station were signalled for both arrival and departure.

The up train in this collision had approached the station on the up main line, and when the collision occurred it was running through the connection leading from that line to No 4 platform line. The down train had started from No 3 platform line and was due to run through the connection leading from that platform line to the down main line. The collision took place at the point where the two roads crossed each other, their fouling point being 75 yards north of the Rossmore Road Bridge.

There were two signal boxes at Marylebone viz the platform signal box situated on the platform between Nos. 3 and 4 platform lines at a distance of 140 yards to the south of the north end of that platform and the station signal box situated on the east side of the running lines at a distance of 245 yards to the north of the north end of the station platforms.

The GCR had exemption from block working between these two signal boxes. However, bells were exchanged between the two boxes for all trains arriving at or departing from the station. But their entrance into the station or their departure from it was practically under the control of the signalman at the station signal box, who also settled the order in which all trains should be dealt with.

The following signals were provided at the station signal box for a train running, as the up train was on this occasion, from the up main line to No 4 platform line:

An up home signal (No 87) situated 151 yards to the north of the signal box.

An up directing signal (No 79) situated 62 yards to the south of the box.

The signals for a train starting from No 3 platform line, as the down train was doing on this occasion, were:

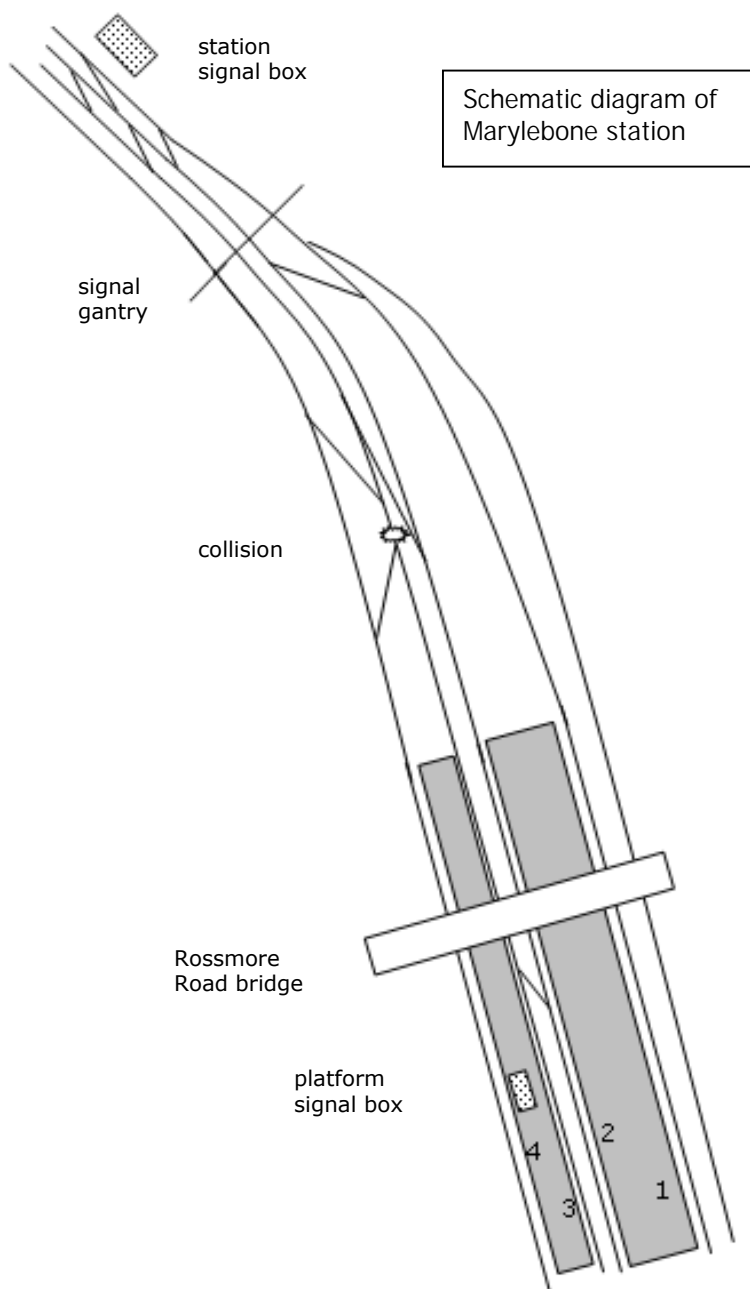
An intermediate down platform starting signal (No 16) fixed on the platform between Nos. 3 and 4 platform lines at a point situated 45 yards to the north of the platform signal box. This signal, which was worked from the platform signal box, was provided for the protection of a crossover road between Nos. 2 and 3 platform lines.

A down starting signal (No 7) fixed on the Rossmore Road overbridge at a distance of 120 yards to the north of the platform signal box and 265 yards to the south of the station signal box. This signal was worked from the station signal box, but was also slotted from the platform signal box.

The distance between the intermediate platform starting signal (No 16) and the starting signal (No 7) was therefore 75 yards.

The Board of Trade (Railway Department) official report of 8th April 1913 (they did things quickly in those days!) was in no doubt that the collision was due to disregard of a signal.

At 4.46pm, when the up train, which was a few minutes late, was approaching the station signal box, signalman Ward sent the bell signal for a train into No 4 platform line to signalman Piper in the platform signal box. It was at once acknowledged by the latter. Immediately afterwards signalman Piper sent the bell signal to signalman Ward for the 4.50pm down train out of No 3 platform line, and this was also at once acknowledged. The two trains could not be dealt with simultaneously so signalman Ward decided that the up train should be first admitted into the station. He then set the road and lowered both No 87 and 79 signals for that train to run into No 4 platform line, whilst signalman Piper pulled off his slot on the latter signal. Accordingly, when at 4.51pm the up train arrived at the station signal box, all its signals were off for it to run into No 4 platform line, and it was whilst it was running through the connection leading to that line that its two rear vehicles were run into by the engine of the 4.50pm down train. At the moment



of the collision the up train had passed all its signals, and the latter had been put to danger behind it. But its road still remained set, and whilst that was the case the interlocking made it impossible for the down starting signal (No 7) from No 3 platform line to have been lowered for the down train.

Driver Lancashire, who was in charge of the engine of the up train, stated that, finding all the signals lowered for him to run into No 4 platform line, he ran past the station signal box at a speed of about ten miles an hour and that, just as he had run through the connection and had reached the straight, he heard the noise of another engine. He promptly stepped over to the left side of the footplate and saw that the engine of the down train was coming from under the bridge and realised that it might run into the rear portion of his train. Lancashire sounded his whistle and turned on steam, hoping to get his own train clear of the fouling point before the other engine reached it. He thought he had done so, but his automatic brake was suddenly applied and he then found that the rear vehicle of his train had been struck. Fireman Fitzsimons stated that he was attending to the hand brake at the time and was looking back to watch his train coming through the curve. He did not therefore see the down train approaching.

Driver Lawrenson, who was in charge of the engine of the down train, stated that immediately he received the signal from his guard he started his train. The intermediate platform signal (No 16) was lowered for him, but he did not notice the position of the starting signal (No 7). Soon after starting he moved over to the fireman's side to get a better view of No 7 signal, but he was under the impression that the fireman was looking out for it and he did not therefore think it necessary to see it for himself. When he reached No 7 signal he was unable to see it on account of the steam, and he passed it without knowing its position. After he had passed under the bridge, the fireman suddenly shouted to him to stop. He immediately closed the regulator and attempted to apply the brake, but in doing so he slipped and the application of the brake was consequently slightly delayed. Fireman Dubery stated that after the train started he was doing his own work until the engine was underneath the bridge and that up to that time he had made no attempt to see the position of the starting signal (No 7). He then looked out for it, but because of the steam he could not see its position until they were 10 or 12 yards beyond the bridge when he saw that it was at danger. He immediately shouted out to his driver to stop.

Lt Colonel von Donop's official report concluded: It was not disputed that starting signal No 7 was at danger at the time the down train passed. It was therefore clear that the collision was due to the fact of that train having been allowed to run past that signal when it was in the danger position. It was Driver Lawrenson's duty either to ascertain for certain that the signal had been lowered for him or to have brought his train to a stand before passing it. However, he allowed his engine to pass it without satisfying himself either by his own observation or by information from his fireman that the signal was lowered, and the responsibility for this accident must therefore rest upon him..... The Company inform me that, in addition to the present case, three instances have occurred during the last four years in which drivers have over-run their starting signal on some of these platform lines after the intermediate starting signal has been lowered for them. Fortunately, none of these previous instances resulted in serious accident, but in the face of these occurrences the Company should, I think, seriously consider the advisability of prohibiting the lowering of the intermediate signal for a starting train until the starting signal is also off.

Damage to rolling stock

4.50pm down passenger train

Side-tank engine No 24: main frames, footplate and buffer beams badly bent; leading end bogie axles bent; cylinder cover and release valve pipes broken; smoke-box damaged and two piston tail rods bent.

Bogie third No 87: buffers bent.
Bogie brake third No 592: buffers bent.
Bogie first No 967: buffers bent.
Bogie brake third No 590: buffers bent.

1.15pm up passenger train

Bogie first No 974: sole-bar of underframe bent; one bogie badly damaged and broken; wheel axle bent; bottom side of body stripped off and body badly shaken.

Bogie brake third No 594: two leading compartments practically demolished. Steel underframe badly double up at compartment end.

Damage to permanent way

Two ordinary rails bent; 3 switch rails broken; 42 ordinary chairs broken; 8 check chairs broken; 7 point and crossing chairs broken; 23 crossing timbers damaged; 23 sleepers damaged; 228 coach screws and ferrules, spikes and trenails damaged; 40 keys (No 5) damaged.



The view from platform No.3 as GCR class 11B 4-4-0 no. 107 passes under the Rossmore Road bridge and enters platform No. 2 at Marylebone.

photo: GCRS Collection

"The Cheshireman" steam railtour

The update to this railtour from Cleethorpes by The Railway Touring Company, mentioned in the last edition of *Forward*, is that it has been postponed from Sat. 18th May to Sat. 19th October because of the Hatfield Colliery landslip. However, I think this is optimistic and wouldn't be surprised if there is a further postponement. At least it will not clash with this year's AGM.



A Lincolnshire interlude



Lincolnshire was once served by an extensive network of Great Northern Railway lines, very few of which survive today. The 7.5 mile long single line Horncastle branch left the Lincoln-Boston line south of Woodhall Junction station (formerly Kirkstead). As the junction faced south, branch trains had to reverse to gain access to the bay platform at the south end of the station. There was one intermediate station at Woodhall Spa with a passing loop and two platforms. The LNER produced travel posters extolling the merits of Woodhall Spa. Horncastle station had a single platform with a run-round loop. The branch opened on 11th August 1855 and was closed to passengers on 13th Sept. 1954 and finally to goods on 6th April 1971. The RCTS ran a railtour to Horncastle from Nottingham Midland on 12th Sept. 1964 during the freight-only period. The loco used was 'Black 5' no.44918. The trackbed now forms part of the Viking Way footpath.

Interestingly, Robinson class N5/2 0-6-2T no.69275 was shedded at Lincoln 1945-52 specifically to work the Horncastle branch.

Further information about the branch can be found in *The Horncastle and Woodhall Junction Railway* (Oakwood Press, 1986) by A.J.Ludlam.

Ironically the home of *The Railway Magazine* is now at rail-less Horncastle.



BR 'Black 5' 4-6-0 no.44918 performing a run-round during its visit to the Horncastle branch with the RCTS railtour on 12th Sept. 1964. photo: John Debens collection



BR class N5/2 0-6-2T no.69275 at Horncastle (above) after arriving with a train from Woodhall Jnct. The oil traffic indicated by the iconic Esso fuel tank wagon on the left continued after closure of the passenger service in 1954. At Woodhall Spa (below) with a train from Horncastle to Woodhall Junction. Both on 24th September 1952. photos: J. Oxley



Nottingham Express Transit (NET) Phase 2

by David Hanger

The first phase of the NET system opened for public use on 8th March 2004. Following the success of the initial two routes to Hucknall and Cinderhill, which are used by around 10 million passengers a year, two further extensions to Chilwell and Clifton were promoted. Construction of these two links commenced in January 2013. On Friday 15th February 2013 along with a group of friends I inspected the progress of the works. The following relates to the former GC sections.

The extensions will more than double the size of the tram network by the end of 2014 with 17.5km of new track and 28 new tram stops. Construction is being undertaken by a Taylor Woodrow – Alstom joint venture on behalf of Tramlink Nottingham, the NET concession holder. Other members of the consortium are Wellglade (owner of local bus operator Trent-Barton), Keolis, OFI Infravia and Meridiam Infrastructure. The 22 year concession was awarded in December 2011 by Nottingham City Council. When completed the network will be 32km in length with 51 tram stops and 7 park & ride sites and will be able to provide around 23 million passenger journeys a year.

Nottingham Station

At Nottingham station the two sections of phase 2 are linked to phase 1 by a bridge over the station on a similar alignment to the original Great Central Railway bridge that was removed in the mid 70s. Over eleven consecutive nights, commencing 11th February 2013, the first section of the new bridge was pushed into position from its construction site, south of Queens Road, towards the station. Photos 1 and 2 show the bridge part way across Queens Road. The adjacent multi storey car park provided an excellent platform for photographing this fantastic piece of civil engineering. Photo 3 provides a close up of the sliding mechanism used when pushing the bridge into position. From our viewpoint two intermediate abutments could be identified within the station site plus a further one, just south of the current terminus on Station Street (photos 4 and 5). The first section measures 104 metres in length, 14.5 metres wide and weighs 11,000 tonnes. It is to be built in two sections. This will span the station, two separate bridges are to be installed over Station Road and Queens Road. The bridge follows the alignment of the original Great Central Railway bridge that was removed in the mid 1970s. Completion of this bridge is expected by the end of 2013.

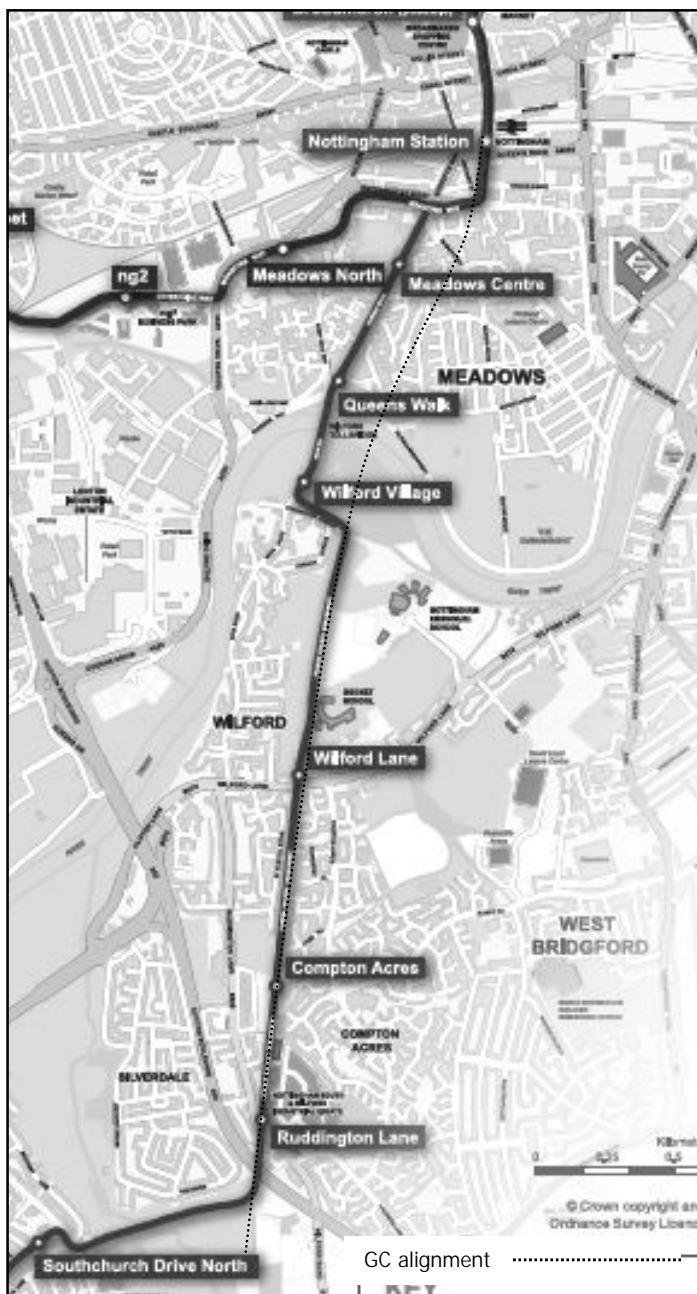
Clifton

To view the next major structure we drove to Main Road, Wilford Village and walked back to the Wilford Toll bridge. This bridge is currently in use as part of Nottingham's extensive cycle network and is being widened to accommodate the tramway. A pair of sharp turns takes the tramway onto a parallel alignment with the former Great Central Railway line (photo 6) as far as Wilford Road. Here the tramway follows the former railway alignment as far as Ruddington Lane.

Progress

In terms of actual construction the focus appeared to be on construction of bridges. Throughout the project there was evidence of much work on the diversion of road traffic. Reading through the extensive publicity generated, each neighbourhood receives regular updates with a timeline showing likely timescales for completion of key elements of the project. Construction of the tram track is programmed to start in Spring 2013. However it was suggested that the project is currently three months behind schedule. All construction works are expected to be completed by Spring 2014 giving a six month period for tram testing and staff training with the system open for public service by winter 2014.

It is proposed to have another walkabout in six months time by which time tram infrastructure should start to be in evidence. For further up to date information I would recommend that you have a look at the website www.thetram.net/phase2. I would like to thank NET for permission to use the map accompanying this article.



The part of the Phase 2 extension to Clifton that utilises the GC alignment.

See over the page for the photos referred to in the article.

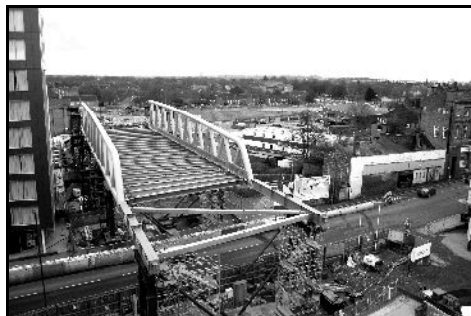


photo 1



photo 2



photo 3



photo 6



photo 4

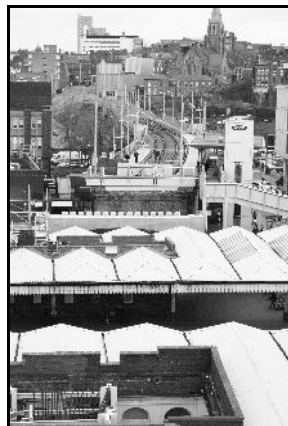


photo 5

Editor's note: The bridge will be known as the Karlsruhe Friendship Bridge – named after the German town twinned with Nottingham. When finished it will be an amazing engineering feat but a lot of expense would have been saved had the GC bridge been left in place.



Wanderings around the Internet with Bob Gellatly

Last Chance to Read at www.lastchancetoread.com

Researching information from newspapers can be very time consuming as it invariably involves visits to libraries in various parts of the country. This web site could enable the researcher to work from home. There is a large collection of British newspapers available but only up to 1870. You will need to sign up to access the material and payment for downloading has to be made through PayPal. Some newspapers are free but others attract a fee, typically £2 per newspaper.

Paddy Oates' photo gallery at www.rail.tightfitz.com

Many GCRS members include photography as part of their railway interest. Some like to make their photos accessible to a wider audience by using photo hosting sites eg Flickr. Others go a step further and create their own web site to display their photos, as is the case here with GCRS member Paddy Oates. Paddy has a good collection of photos capturing the present-day scene around the Sheffield area of both Midland and GC lines - active and disused.

British Listed Buildings at www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

An easy to use resource that enables the enquirer to locate listed buildings and structures and find out why they are listed. As many railway buildings and structures are listed this is a useful research tool for the railway historian or for someone that wants to know what's out there in order to plan visits and photo opportunities.

The Famous Ian Allan abc Books at

<http://daverowland.smugmug/THEFAMOUSIANALLANABCBOOKS>

This is a section of Dave Rowland's Transport Gallery. I finished up her when I was trying to catalogue my collection of abc books from my youth - they included buses, ships and planes as well as trains! They are all here on this website. Just wallow in the nostalgia!

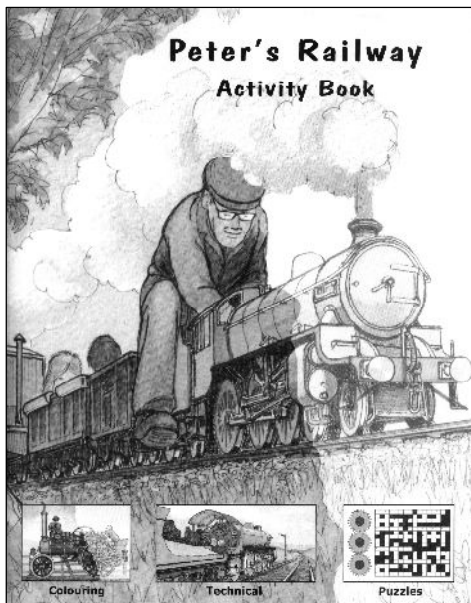
Peter's Railway Activity Book £3.99 from www.petersrailway.com

This latest offering from Christopher Vine's well-established 'Peter's Railway' series of books would make an ideal gift for young children or for GCRS members who are returning to their childhood!

The pages to colour are black & white versions of those in the 'Peter's Railway' stories, so children with these books will already be familiar with them. There is a pull-out section showing thumbnail coloured-in versions to copy. To achieve the expected results would be quite challenging for most children so a freelance approach to colouring is the more likely result.

There are a couple of puzzles and a fiendishly difficult spot-the difference challenge featuring 'Bongo' the B1. I could only spot 19 out of the 30 differences! No doubt my grandchildren will do better.

Bob Gellatly



Great Central Great War Heroes Part 7: from Worksoop and Retford by Ken Grainger

After a break (Part 6 was in the March 2012 issue) Ken continues his series on GC railwaymen who fell in the Great War.

Worksoop and Retford were the largest towns along the Sheffield and Lincolnshire Junction line between Sheffield and Gainsborough. Retford was the site of the level crossing and, in MS&L days, the all-important junction with the Great Northern main line. Worksoop was the junction station for the Midland Railway's colliery-tapping line from Nottingham and Mansfield, in recent times substantially resuscitated as the 'Robin Hood Line'. Worksoop still remains central to the Trent power stations coal traffic.

Both towns were inevitably called upon to bear their share of the cost of the Great War, with Great Central railwaymen making their own contribution to the sacrifice. Any local GC ex-regular reservists recalled to the colours came through the early battles in Belgium and northern France without loss, the first fatality not being incurred until May 3rd, 1915, in the ill-fated Gallipoli expedition. Along with the Nelson Battalion of the 1st Royal Naval Brigade, and the Royal Marine Brigade's Portsmouth and Deal Battalions, the Chatham Battalion of the Royal Marine Brigade had relieved the Australian 1st and 3rd Brigades facing Baby 700, the innocuously named fiercely contested commanding feature on the heights overlooking the Anzac beachhead. Amongst the many killed was 30 year-old Private Frank Dixon, unmarried and formerly a number taker and assistant shunter at Cresswell and Welbeck, who had enlisted in the Royal Marine Light Infantry at the beginning of the year. He is commemorated on Panel 13 of the Chatham Naval Memorial.



Private Frank Dixon

The first to fall on the Western Front were both from Retford and - what will become a recurring theme - were from the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment, the Sherwood Foresters. The first was 23 year-old Private Albert Sutton, the son of Mr and Mrs Marshall Sutton of 1 Ridgeway Buildings, West Street, Retford, formerly an Engineering Dept. Labourer serving in the 2nd Sherwood Foresters (18th Brigade, 6th Division), a regular army battalion but heavily reinforced after its severe losses at the Aisne in September, 1914. He died on October 5th, 1915, during what was officially a "quiet" period in the Ypres Salient. He lies in Grave DI.1 of the Potijze Burial Ground, Ypres. On October 14th, 1915, former Shunter Private William Thompson of the 1/8th Sherwood Foresters (139th Brigade, 46th (North Midland) Division) died in ferocious fighting for the Hohenzollern Redoubt, during the Battle of Loos. One of many with no known grave, he is commemorated on Panels 87-89 of the Loos Memorial.

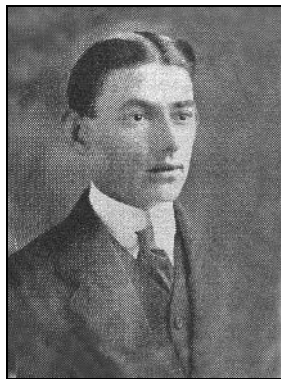


Private Joseph Slater

Formerly a "popular and respected" Worksoop Goods Porter/Guard, 31 year-old Private Joseph Slater was the son of the late William Slater and Mrs Catherine Frances Slater, of Wolstanton, Staffordshire. He had come to Worksoop some years earlier and lodged with Mrs Boole at 6 Meadow Terrace, Newcastle Avenue, Worksoop before enlisting in the 2/8th Sherwood Foresters in September, 1914. Drafted to France, he had escaped injury despite seeing some heavy fighting, but had succumbed to the rigours of trench warfare and was invalided back to England. Between clean sheets and tended by caring hands, he died in Colchester Hospital on April 11th, 1916, and was buried with full military honours in grave LH.6.27 of St. Margaret's Churchyard, Wolstanton. Amongst the wreaths laid on his grave was one from his Worksoop railway colleagues, to a "good comrade and true

friend", and another from the Newcastle Lodge (Workshop) R.A.O.B..

But 1916 is synonymous with the Somme. On 5th July, the 1st Sherwood Foresters, including former Shireoaks Platelayer, Private George Fenton, launched a determined attack at La Boisselle, where they had only just come into the line. After confused and bitter hand to hand fighting over several hours, they were finally forced to pull back, 'D' Company particularly having to give up hard won ground. Subsequently, George Fenton's cousin, John Hartley of Turnerwood, with whom George had been lodging until enlisting, heard from George's Platoon Sergeant how George had seen that one of his pals had been left behind, wounded and in imminent danger of being captured. George went back to try to rescue his pal, but was shot in the head and died shortly afterwards. He has no known grave and is amongst the many commemorated on the Sherwood Foresters' sections of the Thiepval Memorial, Pier and Face 10C, 10D and 11 A. The son of Joseph and Alice Fenton, of Cottam, Retford, George Fenton had only recently passed his twenty-first birthday. He had joined up shortly after the outbreak of war and been in France for about 14 months, with a short home leave about five weeks before he was killed. Whether the wounded comrade George had tried to rescue survived we cannot know - fifty-eight 1st Sherwood Foresters died that day.



Private Hector F. Rowland

It wasn't until October, 1916, that Mr M. Rowland of Myrtle Cottage, James Street, Worksop received confirmation that his only son, former Worksop Goods Number Taker, Private Hector Franklyn Rowland, a Drummer with the 7th Battalion, the Leicestershire Regiment (110th Brigade, 21st Division), formerly posted missing, had been killed in 110th Brigade's July 14th assault on the Bazentin Ridge. With no man's land at this point some 1200 yards wide, the assault waves of the 6th, 7th and 8th Leicesters crept forward to within 300-500 yards of the German lines under cover of darkness, then attacked at dawn. By 4am most of Bazentin le Petit Wood had been taken, but the remainder not until 7pm. Hector Rowland was amongst the fallen but, with no known grave, is amongst the Leicesters commemorated on Thiepval Memorial's Pier and Face 2C and 3A.

After their costly attack at La Boisselle on July 5th, and another at Contalmaison on the 8th, the 1st Sherwood Foresters were taken out of the Somme fighting line, but on the Western Front death was everywhere. Former Worksop Goods Guard, 29 year-old Lance Corporal Alfred Spencer, the son of Henry and Ann Spencer of 9 Chancery Lane, Retford, died on July 15th, 1916 and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial. He had joined the Colours in March, 1915, but had only been in France for six weeks when he died. His widow, Amy, with whom he and their three children had lived on Wellington Street, Retford, subsequently remarried to become Mrs Amy Armstrong of 9, Poplar Street, Retford.

By September 16th, 1916, the Battle of Flers-Courcelette phase of the Somme was raging. As part of 71st Brigade, the 2nd Sherwood Foresters were protecting the right flank of the Guards Division in its attack north from Ginchy. Among the dead was 22 year-old former Retford Loco. Spare Fireman, Private Frank Morley, the son of Tom Morley of 32 Poplar Street, Retford who was himself an old soldier, having



Lance Corporal Alfred Spencer



Private Frank Morley



Private Basil John Webster



Corporal William Jarvis Newton

served 8 years in India with the 17th Lancers, then in the South African War. As a special reservist Frank Morley had been called up on the outbreak of war and went to France in December, 1914. He was wounded at Hooze on August 9th, 1915, but was again fit to rejoin his unit in January 1916. Yet another with no known grave, his is one more name on the Thiepval Memorial, as is that of Private F. Foster, also of the 2nd Sherwood Foresters. Formerly a Porter at Shireoaks, Private Foster was the 22 year-old son of Mr and Mrs N. Foster of Bank Side, Guyhurn, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. He fell in 2nd Sherwood Foresters' October 15th, 1916, pre-dawn assault on the gun pits before their position, Cloudy Trench, south of the Gueudecourt - Beaudecourt road.

It would be a year before the mourning of the next Worksop Great Central railwayman, in the Passchendaele offensive - also known as Third Ypres. Private Basil John Webster of the 2/8th Sherwood Foresters was the 24 year-old eldest son of Thomas and Edith Webster of 1 Market Street, Worksop, a member of the Worksop Priory C.E.M.S. who had been promoted to Head Clerk at Kiveton Park Station not long before enlisting on February 2nd, 1916. He had first seen action in the quelling of the Irish Easter Rising of 1916, before completing his training and being drafted to France in February 1917. On September 26th, 1917, as part of 59th Division's 178th Brigade, 2/8th Sherwood Foresters launched an attack towards Gravenstafel. In what was described as a "brilliant" action, they overran a number of blockhouses and took all their objectives and then in the evening repulsed a determined German counter-attack. Basil Webster came through the action unscathed and it can be imagined he and his comrades must have been quite jubilant as they returned to billets on September 29th but then, as the Chaplain, the Reverend E. H. Dight wrote to his parents, Basil was killed instantly by a bomb dropped by an enemy aircraft - not then nearly as common a cause of death as it would become in the Second World War. With the Chaplain officiating he was buried the same day in Grave I.B.19 of Ypres' White House Cemetery. On October 18th, 1917, a memorial service was held for him in the Worksop Priory Church where he had been a regular attender.

With 1918 came Germany's last-throw-of-the-dice Spring offensive, opening with Operation 'Michael', launched on March 21st, initially spectacularly successful in driving the British 5th Army back across the old Somme battlefields, but without achieving a decisive break-through. The second phase, beginning on March 28th, was Operation 'Mars' which met with only limited success, but amongst those killed by its ferocious opening 4-hour artillery bombardment was Corporal William Jarvis (Billy) Newton of the 6th Queens Own Cameron Highlanders (45th Brigade, 15th (Scottish) Division), the eldest son of William Jarvis Newton senior and Fanny Newton of 46 Central Avenue, Worksop. They learned of Billy's death from his Company Sergeant Major, D. P. Fraser, whose letter of sympathy had the ring of sincerity. Joining the Great Central straight from the

Abbey Boys School, first as Booking Clerk and latterly as Mineral Clerk at Shireoaks, Billy Newton was Worksop born and bred but, along with several other Worksop lads, he enlisted in the Cameron Highlanders in September 1915, training at Invergordon and Ripon before being drafted to France in September, 1917. He would have known Basil Webster, having been a chorister at the Worksop Priory Church from the age of 10 until he joined up, but even then continuing to take his place in the choir when on leave. He has no known grave and is commemorated on Bay 9 of the Arras Memorial.

Operation 'Michael' was called off on April 5th, but in the meantime, on the 1st, claimed the life of 20 year-old former Retford Loco. Cleaner, Private C. Talbot, serving in the 1/5th Sherwood Foresters (139th Brigade, 46th (North Midland) Division). Tuswell, Retford born and the son of George and Martha Talbot of Cottam, Retford, he lies in Grave II.E.17 of the Aix-Noulette Communal Cemetery Extension, south of Bethune on the Arras road.

In April the Germans transferred their attentions to Flanders with Operation 'Georgette' and the Battles of the Lys. With the 9th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), a Second Army unit more-or-less constantly in action, just when Lance Corporal John Clifford Green became a casualty is not known - possibly the First (17th-19th April) or more probably the Second (25th-26th April) Battle of Kemmel. He died of his wounds on April 26th and lies in Grave C.8 of the Grootbeek British Cemetery, Poperinghe, newly created to the west of Ypres by field ambulances in April 1918 for the influx of casualties from the Battles of the Lys. Just 19 years old, Clifford Green was the younger son of John and Frances Green of Priory Cottages, 33 Lincoln Street, Worksop. Obviously not one to let the grass grow under his feet, he had worked for a time for the Worksop Co-operative Society before becoming a clerk in the Great Central Goods Office in Worksop, and was still only just past his 17th birthday when he enlisted on November 22nd, 1916. He joined the Highland Light Infantry and must have made quite an impression, despite his youth, earning promotion to Corporal, then latterly transferring to the Scottish Rifles as a Lance Corporal. After being stationed for over a year in Ireland and then back in England, he was drafted to France on April 3rd, since when his unit - a cosmopolitan formation if ever there was one - had "fought with great stubbornness". He was an Englishman in the Scottish Rifles, the 9th Cameronians, in the South African Brigade of the 9th (Scottish) Division! His parents had heard from him only a couple of weeks before his death, "written with all his cheerfulness". In that more God-fearing age he had been a regular member of the congregation at Worksop's Potter Street United Methodist Church.

Former Worksop Station Porter, 20 year-old Private George Henry Blow, must have known Clifford Green, they might even have been chums. George Blow was the only son of Mr and Mrs C. Blow of 10 Grafton Street, Worksop, and another attendee of the United Methodist Church. He had enlisted in March, 1917 and was drafted to France that June, but was later invalided home and spent six months in hospital, recovering to rejoin his comrades in the 1st Queens Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment (13th Brigade, 5th Division) just a week before his death. George Blow fell as the 5th and 31st Divisions drove forward at La Becque, east of the Nieppe Forest, on June 28th, 1918. He has no known grave and is commemorated on Panel 8 of the Ploegsteet Memorial (George and his pals would have known it as "Plug Street").



Private George Henry Blow

The successful La Becque attack marked the British Army's return to the offensive after stemming Ludendorff's Operation 'Georgette' onslaught in the Battles of the Lys, and the beginning of the concerted series of hammer blows that would lead to victory less than five months later, but not without further heavy cost. The last Retford GC loss was that of 24 year-old Private G. W. C. Robinson of the 6th Leicesters (110th Brigade, 21st Division), formerly of the Engineering Dept. at Retford, who died in the October 23rd,

1918, night attack which ousted the Germans from their defensive line along the River Selle, north of Le Cateau. He lies in Grave A.31 of the Ovillers New Communal Cemetery. His loss would have been felt all the more deeply by his parents, Joseph and Mary Jane Robinson of 98 Cobwell Road, Retford, for coming within three weeks of the end of hostilities. In their home, as in so very many others, celebration of the Armistice would be muted indeed.

In the compiling of this chapter of 'Great Central Great War Heroes' I have been very grateful for the assistance of a good friend, fellow GCRS member Frank Greaves of Worksop, for poring over contemporary copies of the Worksop Guardian newspaper in his local library to find the personal details and photographs which do so much to give back these long dead men their individuality. They are no longer just Siegfried Sassoon's "intolerably nameless names" on tablets of stone or metal plaques. If you can spare the time and would like to help preserve the memory of the Great Central Great War dead, please contact me (address inside front cover) for a list of the fallen from your own area. Together, we will ensure "their name liveth for evermore".

Chesterfield Canal Festival at Staveley

The Chesterfield Canal Festival will be held at **Staveley Town Basin** on **Sat. 29th and Sun. 30th June 2013** from 10am to 5pm. Admission will be £3 with under 12s free.

"We will have all three of our trip boats in operation. There will be an Entertainment Marquee, a huge range of attractions, stalls, children's rides and of course food and drink and a Real Ale Bar. Pleasley Vale Canoe & Activity Club will be doing Canoeing and Zorbing. MRW Railways will be setting up over 60 metres of track for their Miniature Train Rides.

On the Saturday, the Babbling Vagabonds will be storytelling around the site. On the Sunday we will have a Fun Dog Show. There will be a concert featuring the Swing Commanders at 7.30 pm on the Sat. night.

We will again be combining with Barrow Hill Roundhouse which will be running Open Days. Experience the Roundhouse at work with the resident Peckett Steam Engine and 03 Diesel Shunter hauling passenger trains plus turntable demonstrations and signal box tours. The two sites are only a mile apart and will be linked by a free vintage bus service."

The GCRS publicity/sales stand will be there - come up and have a chat! For more information about the canal visit www.chesterfield-canal-trust.org.uk.



The 2012 Canal Festival at Staveley Town Basin.

On Great Central lines today

by Kim Collinson

Two events connected with the coal industry have occurred during February, both affecting services over GC routes. A firm called Recycle Coal Ltd has signed a contract with DBS for trains of coal to be moved from the now being reclaimed spoil tips at the closed Rossington Colliery to Cottam and West Burton power stations. The first working was on the 6th February and hauled by 66170, the train being routed over the South Yorkshire Joint. This new flow of coal traffic is expected to last for around 2 years. A much more serious event then unfolded when on Saturday 9th February a driver reported concerns about buckling of the track at Stainforth. By the beginning of the following week pit staff from the adjacent Hatfield Main Colliery reported worsening conditions after the colliery spoil tip began to move, damaging and buckling all four running lines and covering them with spoil debris. The earliest investigations suggest it could have been caused by heavy rain. As a result all services through Stainforth have been suspended for at least 2 months as complete renewal of the track and signalling through the affected area will have to be renewed when the ground is finally stabilised. In the meantime buses are replacing trains between Doncaster and Scunthorpe with some Hull services diverted via Selby. *(See below for updates.)*

Freight trains, mostly coal workings, are being diverted via Brigg with steel and waste traffic from Scunthorpe having to run round at Barnetby. Also some trains are being diverted via Lincoln. This has meant that there will be virtually no services using the Doncaster avoiding line or the SYJnt between St. Catherines and Kirk Sandall during the duration of this incident apart from the working to Barnby Dun glassworks

Class 56 locos have made a return to GC freight services in 2013 on workings to the waste terminal at Calvert. This is fly ash traffic being moved from Didcot power station which is closing to coal fired generating. Locos involved are 56301 and 56303.

There have been several interesting workings during March over GC lines in the Manchester area as follows. Monday 11th saw 37518 haul 70000 *Britannia* and 'Black Five' 45407, both in steam, through Ashburys during the afternoon en route from the North Norfolk Railway at Sheringham to the ELR at Bury. Then on Sunday 17th a steam hauled railtour from Preston worked by 44871 and 45407 passed through Ashburys and Guide Bridge at 11:12 before continuing via Woodley to Sheffield and returning over the Penistone Branch, passing Dodworth at 14:34. Wednesday 20th March saw a Network Rail 3-coach test train from Carlisle to Longsight pass Guide Bridge at 17:35 powered by 31285. This was followed later that evening by a convoy of locos from Crewe to Leeds Midland Rd which consisted of 66519/66506/66617/66520 plus one MGR wagon with 66563 on the rear. The closed Ashburys signal box has now been demolished.

Construction of a new chord line from Applehurst Junction to the L&Y route to Knottingley near Joan Croft is taking place which will enable services from Immingham to access the Aire Valley power stations more directly. However, no traffic will be using this new chord until the track is repaired at Stainforth. Due to no run round facilities being available at Hatfield because of the landslip some of the stone trains involved in this new construction have run in a top and tail formation, an example being on the 4th March when 66099 and 66150 worked 15 empty MBA hoppers to Tunstead via Guide Bridge.

The closure of the route through Hatfield and Stainforth due to the colliery spoil tip landslide looks likely to continue until September. Since the beginning of April coal trains have begun running again from Hatfield colliery after protests from residents due to all the production being moved by road with lorries operating 24 hrs a day. The coal trains are having to operate in two sections due to damage to the trackwork beyond the colliery bunker line. As a result of the above incident the Gainsborough to Wrawby GC route is seeing its busiest period since the 1960s with up to around 30 diverted freight services using the route daily most of which are MGR services but also some steel flows,

waste trains and petroleum services. Some services from the Immingham area are also being diverted via Lincoln.

With the closure of Maltby colliery at the end of March only three deep coal mines remain in production in England, two of which are on the GC, these being Hatfield and Thoresby. Thoresby colliery now has the distinction of being the last English mine to be served by the only operational colliery branch line this being the route from Thoresby Colliery Junction. Since March a new coal flow has commenced between Butterwell opencast mine in Northumberland and Thoresby bringing coal for blending and is operated by Devon and Cornwall Railways. Class 56 locos 56301 and 56312 have been observed on the workings. At the closed Harworth colliery the branch and sidings into the mine are still intact as well as some of the signals despite the last train having run in 2006.

On the 20th March a structure gauging train from Carlisle to Longsight passed through Guide Bridge worked by 31285. This was followed on the 26th by 31106 on another Network Rail test train which ran over the Penistone branch during the morning. Perhaps the most unusual working so far this year was on the 9th April when another Network Rail test train ran from Derby to Deepcar and return worked by electrodiesel 73 138 and class 37 97301. What the purpose of this was for is unknown.

In the London area during March 67006/016/026 ran LD over the Neasden to Northolt route. On the 6th April steam locomotive 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* worked a special from Birmingham to Marylebone and 33207 was used to haul the ECS to and from Southall with 47245 as a pilot on the return because of fire risk. An Arriva Trains Wales Holyhead to Cardiff set of coaches worked to Marylebone on the 24th March with an excursion from Wrexham to Wembley. The formation was 67001, 82306 and 67002 plus six coaches. It came into Marylebone to reverse.

Freight company DRS has started a new contract with Network Rail to provide train crew and locos for infrastructure work. This has brought a return of class 20 locos to parts of the GC where these types are not usually seen these days, an example being the Gainsborough to Wrawby route. On the 25th March 20308/012 worked a Scunthorpe to York rail train and then two days later they were seen on a route learning trip which also ran to Lincoln and Worksop. The same pair were then employed on Saturday 27th April top and tailing 47802 on a railtour from Huddersfield to Swansea and return via Guide Bridge.

The chemical train from Lindsey to Stalybridge ceased in March due to the closure of the factory and also the waste train from Bredbury to Scunthorpe has been rerouted from Guide Bridge to Stockport and the Hope Valley. This now means that the section of the GC from Guide Bridge to Ashburys now has only one regular freight train daily, this being the stone train from Dowlow to the terminal at Ashburys.

On Friday 3rd May 31265 worked a test train from Leeds over the Penistone branch then continued into the early hours of Saturday morning by traversing GC routes via Rotherham Central, Shepcote Lane, Tinsley, Broughton Lane and to Deepcar thence back to Derby.

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.

Addition to the archive

Booklet "Woodford and the GCR" by J.W.Anscomb. Donated by M.E.Edwards.



An aerial view of the Hatfield Colliery landslip looking east on 14th February. The Doncaster-Scunthorpe line will be closed for some time.

photo: Network Rail



The return working of the Butterwell-Thoresby Colliery coal movement. Devon & Cornwall Railways 56311 rounds the curve on the approach to Firbeck Jnt on the SYJnt with the 6222 07:00 Thoresby-York on 19th March 2013.

photo: Chris Booth



A class 104 dmu leaving East Leake with a Rugby-Arkwright Street service in April 1969. Through services on the GC London Extension finished on 3 Sept. 1966. After that date a dmu service operated between Nottingham Victoria and Rugby Central. When Nottingham Victoria closed in Sept. 1967, the northern terminus for the service became Arkwright Street. Stations served were East Leake, Loughborough, Leicester, Ashby Magna, Lutterworth and Rugby Central, beyond which bufferstops were placed on both tracks. The trains operated as "pay-trains" so that station staff could be withdrawn. The service ended on 5th May 1969.

photo: David Ford

Some recent items from Great Central Railwayana Auctions

Auctions will be held at Stoneleigh Park on Sat. 13th July and Sat. 12th Oct. 2013.



SIR WILLIAM POLLITT nameplate from the GCR class 8E 4-4-2 no.365. Mounted on a wooden splasher with brass trim and GCR monogram transfer. Sold for **£18,000**.



A GCR chamber pot by Copeland Spode, decorated with the company coat of arms. Sold for **£200**.



An enamel street direction sign, LNER STATION VICTORIA, which pointed to the former GCR station in Nottingham. Double sided, contained in its original aluminium frame. Sold for **£2,300**.



A Tyers No.6 single line tablet, MARKHAM COLLIERY MR-MARKHAM COLLIERIES LD&EC. This was a short section which linked the Midland Railway sidings at Markham Colliery with those of the LD&ECR. Sold for **£140**.



A Met & GC Joint 12" dial roundhead wall clock, complete with fusee movement, pendulum and key with a fine mahogany case. Originally supplied by Burrell of Sheffield to Grandborough Road station. When closed in 1936, the clock was sent to Parkeston Quay, and in BR days, moved to the Sheffield District Passenger Superintendent's office. Sold for **£500**.

Modellers' corner

by Tony West

Bachmann have now given October this year as the release date for their class J11 0-6-0 in 4mm scale. A pre-production example has been photographed on their stand at a recent show and despite the angular later type dome it certainly looks like a Pom Pom!

Within days of penning the last missive it appeared that two more ventures are in the pipeline regarding transfers, both being for wagons, and one of which is promising MS&L lettering.

Gladiator are thankfully now back on course with their 7mm scale class J10. A set of frames from the first test etch was on display at the recent Kettering show. A possibly useful by-product will be the inclusion of dummy inside valve gear which of course would be suitable for the class 9F tank (N5). I have already mentioned this to Geoff Stratford as a possible separate etch...again I will keep you informed.

As a complete surprise, in the latest *GOG Gazette*, Ace Products are advertising a class J10, again when I can find out more ...

Still in 7mm, Quainton Road Models are to market some of the past S&T wagons, this time as a complete kit. The first to be released will be the D8 5plk open later this year. Interested parties are also invited to vote for the next to be released, the D6 3plk open or perhaps the GN 4plk open?

contact details

Gladiator Model Kits: Geoff Stratford, *The Malt Shovel*, 25 Main Street, Carlton, Nuneaton CV13 0BZ

tel. 01455 291236, email: contact@gladiatormodelkits.co.uk,

web: www.gladiatormodels.com

Ace Products: W.G.Ascough, 7 Ringley Park Road, Reigate RH2 7BJ.

tel. 01737 248540, email: aceproductsinfo@supaworld.com,

web: www.a4ace.supanet.com

Quainton Road Models: David Howes, *Chyanbre*, Polyphant, Launceston, Cornwall PL15 7PT.

tel. 01566 880157, web: www.quainton-road-models.co.uk



Bachmann pre-production sample of LNER class J11 0-6-0 no.5317 in 4mm. BR early (64311) and late crest (64325) versions will also be available.
photo: Tony West

David Andrews kits

Please find attached copies of lists from David Andrews of his GCR kits that will be deleted in June this year and the list of those that will continue to be available whilst he is still trading. The lists could change again and he does of course have new kits in the pipeline.

David has said that he is willing to produce kits that are deleted in the future BUT he would want an order for at least 4 kits. He will not be destroying the etching tools or patterns. There are no plans to sell any of the kits to another trader until he stops completely, but after that the situation could change.

I can recommend his kits as you get a lot of good quality parts for your money and I have never had any problems with them.

Robert Fielding

Kits to be deleted

D601	GCR/LNER/BR LI/L3 (GCR 1B) 'Zeppelin' 2-6-4T	£259
D607	LNER/BR Thompson Q1/1 0-8-OT	£239
D608	LNER/BR Thompson Q1/2 0-8-OT	£239
D615	GCR/LNER/BR B7 (GCR 9Q) 4-6-0 (Standard Tender)	£299
D616	GCR/LNER/BR B7 (GCR 9Q) 4-6-0 (Self Trimming Tender)	£299
D625	LNER/BR 04/5 2-8-0	£339
D626	LNER/BR 04/6 2-8-0	£339
D627	LNER/BR 04/7 2-8-0	£299
D631	GCR/LNER D9 (GCR 11B) 4-4-0	£259
D632	GCR/LNER/BR D9 (GCR 11D) 4-4-0	£259
D636	GCR/LNER/BR D10 (GCR 11E) 'Director' 4-4-0	£279
D639	LNER/BR D11/2 'Scottish Director' 4-4-0	£279
D663	GCR/LNER/BR B4 (GCR 8F) 'Immingham' 4-6-0	£299
D671	GCR/LNER/BR C4 (GCR 8B) 'Jersey Lily' 4-4-2	£299

Kits to be continued

D611	GCR/LNER 83 (GCR 9P) 'Lord Faringdon' 4-6-0 (Std Tender)	£339
D612	GCR/LNER B3 (GCR 9P) 'Lord Faringdon' 4-6-0 (S-T Tender)	£339
D621	GCR/LNER/BR 04 (GCR 8K) 'ROD' 2-8-0	£299
D637	GCR/LNER/BR D11/1 (GCR 11F) 'Imp Director' 4-4-0 (Std. Tender)	£279
D638	GCR/LNER/BR D11/1 (GCR 11F) 'Imp Director' 4-4-0 (S-T Tender)	£279
D641	GCR/LNER/BR J11 (GCR 9J) 'Pom Pom' 0-6-0	£259
D642	LNER/BR J11/3 'Pom Pom' 0-6-0	£259
D651	GCR/LNER B2 (GCR 1) 'Sir Sam Fay' 4-6-0	£299

Order from David Andrews, 20 Hillside Gardens, Woodmancote, Cheltenham GL52 9QF.
tel. 01242 672744, e-mail: davidandrews@locomotivekits.com
website: www.locomotivekits.com

Editor's note: Sorry if this is too late to order deleted kits but the list was received on 6th March - too late for the previous issue of *Forward*.



Model railway exhibition diary

Some events that may interest our readers

Sat 1st & Sun 2nd June: Lincoln & District MRC at Washingborough Community Centre, Fen Road, Washingborough, Lincs LN4 1AB.

Sat 8th & Sun 9th June: Peak MRE at Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell DE45 1AH.
www.wingfieldrailwaygroup.co.uk

Sat 22nd June: Model Transport Exhibition at Central URC, Norfolk Street, Sheffield S1 2JB.

Sat 20th July: Northampton & District MRC at Northampton High School, Newport Pagnell Road, Northampton NN4 6UU.

Sat 17th & Sun 18th August: Scarborough & District RM at The Memorial Hall, Potter Hill, Pickering YO18 8AA.

The Gainsborough Model Railway, at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough DN21 1BE, is open to the public (1.30pm-6.00pm) on Sat 15th June, Sun 14th July, Sat 24th Aug, Sun 25th Aug and Mon 26th Aug (10.30am-6.00pm).

Visit www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk for more information.



The OO layout 'Lincoln Central' by John Whiteside will be at the Lincoln & District MRC show.

Welcome to the following new members

Mr N.H.Graveston, Burnley, Lancashire
Mr V.W. & Mrs P.A.Simms, Durham
Mr D.M. Mountford, Bramcote, Nottingham
Mr P.D.James, Hucknall, Notts
Mr C.S. Bell, Slapton, Towcester, Northants

Mr P.A.Brown, Clare, Suffolk
Mr E.Brundrett, Clitheroe, Lancashire
Mr C.G.Rowlatt, Presteigne, Powys

Re-Open the Woodhead Line!

Report by Paul White

The "Re-Open the Woodhead Line" campaign held an open meeting at Glossop Labour Club on Thursday 21st March. The meeting was chaired by David Bryson and the speaker was Mr Christopher Quayle, who is a transport civil engineer.

Mr Quayle delivered an interesting PowerPoint presentation, showing graphically the centres of population separated by the South Pennines and outlining the poor communications that exist between some of these centres both by road and rail, and of course most notably between Manchester and Sheffield and the South Yorkshire conurbations. At present only three roads make meaningful communication between these areas; the A650 (a much truncated motorway proposal), the M62 and the A628 Woodhead Road. While the M62 was a good link, there was still extraordinary strain on road space, with the Sheffield/Rotherham/Barnsley areas being relatively poorly served. The A57 Snake Pass is unsuitable for heavy traffic and is subject to frequent landslips; it may one day suffer the same fate as the A625 via Castleton which closed forever due to the instability of Mam Tor. The position of Longdendale on the A628 is particularly unfortunate as a bottle neck where road space is shared with the A57 over Mottram Moor, resulting in the passage of 15,000 vehicles per day, or 5 million per year: 1.4 million of that figure are HGVs, 26% of the total by number, but 58% by length! The controversial Mottram Bypass scheme, costed at an enormous £300m for a mere 5 km including a tunnel under the Mottram Ridge, had been dropped. Back in the 1970s there had been a proposal for a motorway all the way through the valley to the Sheffield area, and much of the preparatory work to connect this proposal to the Mancunian Way had been done along the A57 into Manchester. Much of the opposition to this had been focused on the damage that such a proposal would do to the landscape of the Longdendale Valley, but as one member of the audience pointed out, the whole of that valley's landscape is entirely man-made anyway. In Mr Quayle's view the motorway solution would even now make sense and its addition would make the Trans-Pennine road network work better - but arguably at too great an environmental cost.

Going on to Trans-Pennine rail routes, Mr Quayle outlined the dramatic losses which had occurred since, but not entirely because of Beeching. The Todmorden, Diggle and Hope Valley routes had survived while the Woodhead and Midland Main Line routes had not. In the original "Beeching 2" proposals, the survivors would have been Todmorden and Woodhead, with Woodhead being "developed" for freight. In the event, nearly 50 years later Woodhead is long closed, while the Diggle route, having survived the threat of closure, is now to be developed and electrified as the main arm of the "Northern Hub". One consequence of the events of the past thirty years is that Sheffield and Manchester now have only one direct rail link, the less than satisfactory Hope Valley line with its multiplicity of long, wet Victorian tunnels, with no alternative during engineering closures but tortuous bus journeys. Those who remember the Woodhead Route during its latter years will recall regular Trans-Pennine Sunday diversions by the express Trans-Pennine DMUs, which, despite the Nunnery reversal, took less time than the Hope Valley services.

Rather than Woodhead being developed for freight traffic as Beeching proposed, this role has now passed to the Diggle Route, the 1894 single-bore tunnel providing just enough room for containers. However, delays now occur due to bottlenecks, leading to wistful complaints from older rail staff who recall a four-track route all the way from Stockport via Stalybridge to Leeds. The Leeds New Line is long gone, as is the Micklehurst Loop and most of its infrastructure, but it looks like one of the old Nicholson single-bore tunnels will be opened at Diggle to ease the projected extra traffic the "Hub" will handle. Mr Quayle recalled recent proposals to reintroduce container and lorry traffic to a re-opened Woodhead Line: the former Central Railway proposal for a freight line over former GC tracks to the Channel Tunnel, and Julian Newton's Translink proposal for lorry-on-trains shuttles. Regarding the latter Mr Quayle pointed out the problems with

the proposal, namely the siting of terminals near centres of population at Deepcar and Hattersley, and despite the generous loading gauge of the 1954 tunnel the floor would have to be expensively lowered throughout by 700/800mm. Despite this, it had to be the case that the tunnel would be better used as a railway tunnel rather than its present use as a cable duct. Despite all the protests, little could effectively be done as BR had handed the tunnel over to National Grid in the 1990s for a "nominal" sum - possibly £1!

In January 2008 with the news of the National Grid cable proposal, there had been a flurry of high-profile interest in the Woodhead issue, with questions in Parliament and the commencement of a "Save the Woodhead Tunnel" campaign. While the idea of using the tunnel for piggy-back lorry trains had a high profile, re-opening would also bring other benefits to other freight requirements, local passenger services, coast to coast freight and passenger services and Inter-City passenger traffic. While there were some infrastructure issues, exacerbated by the use of the new tunnel as a cable duct there could still be the basis of a new tunnel based on the route of the original single bores, although this would be a very expensive option: in any case the curve at the western end of the new Woodhead Tunnel would restrict speeds, while the old tunnels are straight, and consideration would have to be given to improved safety measures.

The Diggle Route, which had been selected as the core of the "Northern Hub", was handling six trans-Pennine passenger services per hour and it was already difficult to interweave freight services into this pattern; once again there was the problem of Victorian tunnels with barely enough clearance for the latest containers, and further problems should they be again increased in size. Re-opening Woodhead could offer a radical solution to some if not all of these problems, especially if linked with the re-opening of the CLC link from Godley through Tiviot Dale and on to Liverpool, thus helping to establish a "ports to ports" link between Liverpool and Immingham/Hull, creating a "land-bridge" between the east and west coast. Such a policy could also have an effect on the port of Rotterdam, which is reaching capacity.

The piggy-back lorry trains idea could be revived, but with better-sited terminals and a longer transit, possibly from Bredbury Waste Terminal in the west to Tinsley in the east, offering an end-to-end transit time of 50 minutes as against today's crawl, cutting time and saving fuel. With such a scheme in place it would be possible to ban lorries over a certain weight from trans-Pennine roads. It would also be possible to put all major northern cities on a dedicated main line linking Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool, with connections at Guide Bridge for Manchester Airport, Stockport and south through the Midlands to Birmingham and London.

While the proposed Northern Hub was a major step forward in the provision of rail services, and upgraded some radial routes with the provision of new chords and flyovers, there was still no step-change in capacity, and all freight would still pass through the centre of Manchester. Mr Quayle's suggestions for the re-opening of Woodhead and associated lines would have four tracks passing south of Manchester, east-west freight diverted via Tiviot Dale doubling line capacity and with concomitant benefits for local rail traffic, and relieving pressure on the roads by forming a credible alternative to long-distance HGV haulage. There would be less blight due to new road-building and wider benefits accruing to the Peak District National Park. A reduction in carbon use would be another major effect, and the suggested linking together of all Northern cities by rail would help towards the elimination of wasteful domestic aviation. In short, wholly positive effects - hopefully there is someone out there listening!



Arrivals on the bookshelf

"Arrivals and Departures"

Published by Lutterworth Museum, 2013 at £5.50.

A4 spiral bound, 48 pages

Available from the museum.

Contact wendy.warren@sky.com.

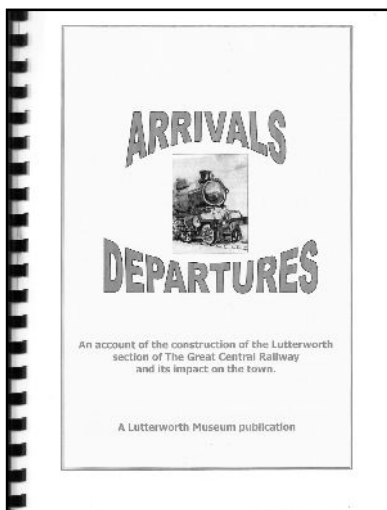
This publication is described on the cover as an account of the construction of the Lutterworth section of the Great Central Railway and its impact on the town. Lutterworth's population fell between 1841 and 1891 as a result of being bypassed by the Midland Railway. It would be over half a century before the town became rail connected.

Whilst the reputation of the Navvies preceded them, this book explains how the Navvies were accommodated within the town through a combination of railway huts provided by the contractor, lodging houses and the workhouse. The book goes on to explain the impact on school results and interaction with the local constabulary. The coming of the railway brought mobility to the residents and businesses of Lutterworth. The book concludes with details of marriages and baptisms between 1891 and 1911 of railway employees.

This is not a book for the railway enthusiast but it does provide a comprehensive social history of Lutterworth over the 20 years during construction and the early days of operation of the railway in my adopted town of Lutterworth.

I found the book an easy read and an interesting read. Probably more local history than railway history but still of interest for anyone wanting a different insight into the Great Central Railway.

David Hanger



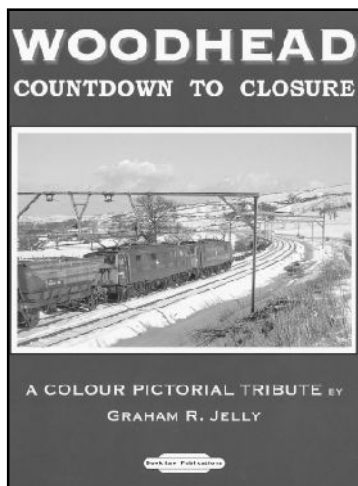
"Woodhead Countdown to Closure: A Colour Pictorial Tribute" by Graham R. Jelly

Published by Booklaw Publications, 2013

(<http://booklaw.co.uk>) at £19.99

ISBN 978 1 9070 9415 6. Softback with 96 pages.

There have been several good books on the Woodhead route in recent years, not least the excellent trilogy by Foxline covering Manchester London Road to Sheffield Victoria through the years. The latest, entitled *Woodhead: Countdown to Closure*, is by Graham Jelly and published by Booklaw. A short introductory summary of the line is followed by some excellent photos, two of which are displayed on each page, of the diesels and electrics that regularly plied the much loved and missed Woodhead route throughout the 1970s. Views of Sheffield Victoria station in 1977 on pages 14-16 cause the reader to say "if only". Although time moves on towards HS2, it is good to remember the past, and this book does a great job in portraying the BR blue era over Woodhead. Highly recommended.



Richard Butler

"The Buckley Railway Album and Associated Industries" by P. G. Davies, C. J. Dawson and J. R. Thomas

Published by The Buckley Society (www.buckleysociety.org.uk), 2007 at £9.95.
Hardback 184p. 207 photos.

Local history publications come in many shapes and forms and vary wildly in accuracy and content. This nicely produced album definitely comes from the upper end of the local history pantheon and records in great detail the entire length of this tiny and little known company - it owned just two locomotives and two brakevans! George Dow calls the later Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay Railway a 'ramshackle railway' and this epithet certainly covers the Buckley as well. There is a concise introduction to the history of the line and its salient features but, quite rightly, those wanting more detail are referred to J. I. C. Boyd's monumental *Wrexham, Mold & Connah's Quay Railway* (Oakwood 1991). There is no point in covering history when it is done so brilliantly elsewhere.

The photographs and maps show a rudimentary single line surrounded by mines, quarries and brickworks; nor are the staff forgotten. The accompanying captions are good and descriptive and work hard to tell the reader exactly what is being looked at, something that cannot be said for many railway publications. The authors are to be congratulated on finding so many illustrations that cover the history and environs of this tiny, five miles long railway. My favourites are those of the J69 tank locos although the Mollington series from 1876 give a window onto a railway beyond our modern comprehension. As usual Amadeus, the printers, have reproduced them to their customary high standard. All in all, a gem of a book and I'm ashamed to say that it has taken me five years to discover and acquire a copy. Recommended.

J. Richard Morton

Editor's note: I still haven't found a copy. As only 1,000 copies were printed and sold out very quickly the chances of finding one are not good. However, a DVD version of the book is available from The Buckley Society.

"Railway Memories no 27: Sheffield" by Stephen Chapman

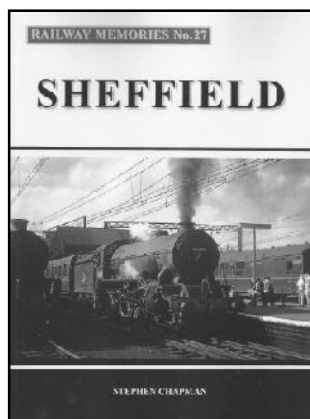
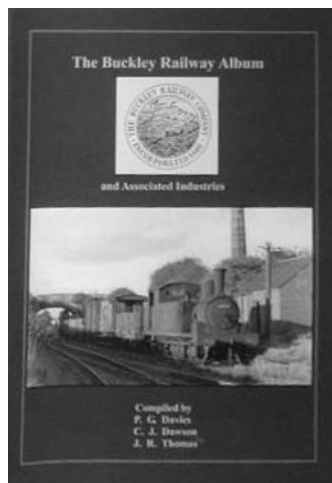
Published by Bellcode Books, 2013 at £16.99.

ISBN 978 1871233 28 5.

Softback 128p. 209 photos and 9 colour.

Sheffield's railway history has not been well served by recent publications, some of which have been so inept and glaringly inaccurate that they might just as well be considered as works of pure (poor) fiction. Happily that is not the case with the latest offering from Bellcode Books whose proprietor, Stephen Chapman, has put this title together. It continues the well worn formula of the much respected "Railway Memories" series and thoroughly upholds the standards of its twenty-six compatriots.

There is a good introduction to the area's railway history, largely charting the intense rivalry of the Great Central and the Midland, before a clear analysis of rail services, both passenger and freight, that have been offered across



the region. To get anywhere near clarity in such complex realms is pretty good going and Stephen deserves hearty congratulation in doing so. The book then falls into two obvious sections with highly illustrated tours of what became the LMS and LNE lines in the city. Thrown in, for good measure, are three brief anecdotes of the system working at its fullest, from the author himself and from railwaymen Alan Ashley and Tom Greaves. Indeed the last mentioned makes a major contribution to the photographic content and very good it is too. Included are some of the lesser known parts of the network, Bridgehouses goods depot for instance and the long gone overall roofs of both Victoria and Midland stations are significantly featured. In addition there are maps, plans, engine shed allocations and extensive quotes from the relevant sectional appendices of working timetables to support the photographs. The "short memories" snippets are both entertaining and, sometimes, surprising.

So a good combination of history, memory, and downright nostalgia expertly put together and reproduced beautifully by the Amadeus Press from Cleckheaton. Very good value and strongly recommended.

J. Richard Morton

"LNER Passenger Trains and Formations 1923-68: The Principal Services" by Steve Banks and Clive Carter

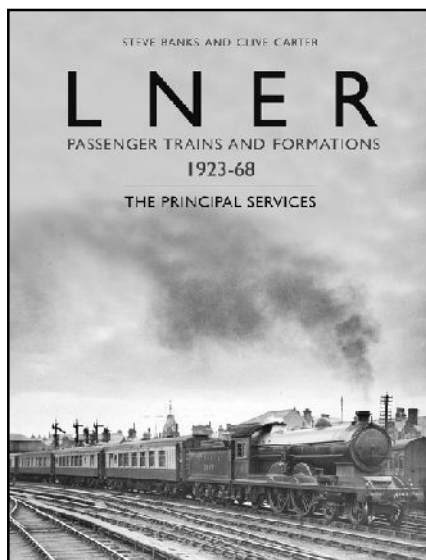
Published by Ian Allan (www.ianallanpublishing.com), 2013 at £45.00. ISBN 978 0 86093 649 7. Hardback 256 pages.

This carefully-researched and detailed study provides a record of the composition of the major passenger trains operated by the LNER and its BR successors from Grouping in 1923 through to the end of main line steam in the late 1960s. It covers the expresses - such as the famous 'Flying Scotsman' - through to coaches and portions, cross-country expresses, secondary expresses, sleeping car services, Pullman trains and later developments (such as later named trains like the 'Master Cutler' and the 'Elizabethan').

With the plethora of locomotives and rolling stock now available, it is increasingly practical for most modellers to be able to recreate faithfully the actual formation of the services that they are replicating in miniature. However, very little has been published for the modeller which covers the actual composition of specific trains and as such this comprehensive volume is certain to appeal to modellers of all abilities. Fully illustrated throughout with a beautiful selection of photographs, this marvellous new book provides accessible reference material for all those who wish to recreate LNER passenger trains.

Publisher's press release

Editor's note: Long-standing members of the GCRS may remember Steve Banks from the time he was secretary of the society 1988-90.



The PR Video collection

Quite recently Dave Richards, who owns and runs PR Video, gave the society permission to show two of its DVDs at the Sheffield branch meeting. Indeed, he was quite surprised that we had even bothered to ask; many simply ignore copyright law and just go ahead with screenings. Whilst Dave is best known for recording the exploits of preserved steam

out on the main line through his work with PSOV there is a rather lesser known side to his exploits.

PR Video has built up a small, but significant, collection of railway archive films that mainly cover the East Midlands and includes a large amount of Great Central material. Much of this comes from cameramen David Swales, John Procter and David Webb and is of very good quality showing scenes that have long lapsed into the memory. The footage comes generally from 1960 onward and portrays the East Midlands network when steam was still the prime mover. David Swales, for instance, had a penchant for recording scenes at Bulwell Common, Sherwood Rise, New Basford, Trent Lane and Nottingham Victoria whilst John Procter also filmed around the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire area but includes ironstone lines and, of all things, a flood of SR Pacifics at Nottingham Victoria. David Webb concentrates on Leicester's MR and GC lines, although his more eclectic offerings include Gleneagles, Basingstoke and a trip on the West Bridge goods.

The films have no dubbed sound beyond that of a whirring cine projector and the not very numerous captions are sometimes misleading but the films themselves are memorable. Passenger services certainly appear but many of the featured scenes concentrate on freight and shunting activity with some of the lesser lights, O4s, O1s, B1s, WDs, 9Fs and 4Fs. Colwick engines are well to the fore. Particular favourites are some of the special excursions headed by one of the very last "Pom-Poms" and last day services to Derby Friargate and on the Nottingham to Worksop line. "Runners" from Annesley abound and there are occasional diversions onto latter-day Nottingham trolleybus scenes and circus parades along Derby Road in Nottingham! There is much to entertain, entrance and captivate in these films and some intriguing views that defy identification; MR tank no 41712 on hire to a colliery.....but which colliery?

The transfer to DVD has been highly successful, hardly surprising given Dave's other railway work and, frankly, the series deserves to be much better known. All in all a very worthwhile and important collection.

The 5 DVDs available are:

David Swale's East Midlands Memories vols 1 and 2

East Midlands Memories Again: In the Raw

David Webb's Steam Memories vol. 1

The John Procter Collection: East Midlands

Each DVD costs £12.95 post free.

PR Video can be contacted at 36 Jacks Lane, Marchington, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire ST14 8LW.

Tel 01283 820451 and email address: dave@prvideo.fsnet.co.uk.

In addition Dave has edited a fine album of John Procter's photographs *A Lifetime in Steam*, published by Book Law at £23.99. John was a well known and much respected enthusiast from Nottingham who knew the GC well. Sadly he died from cancer in 2007 but his films and photographs, taken all around the UK and beyond, live on. All the profits from the book are being donated to Cancer Research UK, over £1,000 having been raised so far.

J. Richard Morton



'The Detective Inspector Vignoles' series by Stephen Done

Published by The Hastings Press (www.hastingspress.co.uk).
Softbacks.

There are currently five books in Stephen Done's 'Detective Inspector Vignoles' series, the latest being *The Last Train to Brackley Central*, set in 1950. If it is on time, a sixth mystery *New Brighton Rock* is due this year. The other titles, with the dates of their settings, are: *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* (1946), *The Murder of Crows* (1947), *The Torn Curtain* (1948) and *The Marylebone Murders* (1949). The chronology is significant because there are political and social changes and references to various happenings on the Eastern Region (Great Central Division) during these times eg the Locomotive Exchanges in *The Torn Curtain*, which also has a concurrent mystery set in Trieste.

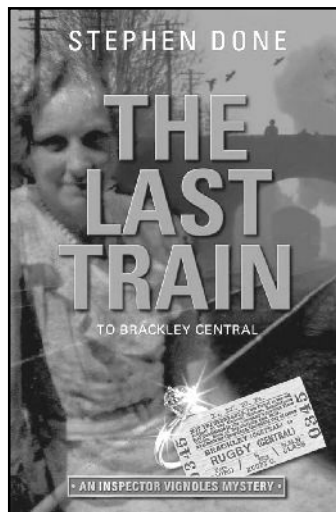
Steven Done himself was born in 1960 during the twilight of steam on British Railways but thanks to his volunteering work on the Llangollen Railway and the Welshpool & Llanfair Railway, he has a thorough grasp of cleaning, firing and driving locomotives. In his mysteries we are frequently on the footplate. His stewardship as a museum curator is reflected by excellent research; his love of ornithology by fleeting atmospheric inclusions of birds. His whole output is imbued with a wonderful sense of period, from the use of dance tunes as chapter headings, to product placement at innocent moments eg Swan Vestas matches etc.

In fact there never was a Detective Department as such on the LNER or BR, but its invention is the keystone of the series. Just as Aidsfield was the anchor for the TV series "Heartbeat", so is the London Extension of the GCR the patch of Vignoles and his colleagues. It is populated with a host of well developed railway characters. The working and housebound women are also treated with respect and his wife, warm and tolerant, is even a bit of a sleuth.

I would have been 14 years old when one of the characters, 16 year old Simon Howarth, became an apprentice cleaner at Woodford Halse loco shed. We both had our train spotters' ABCs, as did Vignoles. Travelling between estranged parents on the "South Yorkshireman" in 1948 I knew how the adults worried about rationing, petrol coupons and austerity. I knew all the dance tunes, but I did not know what took place on or near railway property - counterfeit money operations, coal theft, black market racketeering, insurance fraud, rape, murder, heavy water smuggling and so on. All under the surveillance of the good Inspector and all sorted as one clue leads to another (some a bit obviously placed), with the occasional red herring.

The Last Train to Brackley Central is unique since the settings include, briefly, El Alamein in 1882 (with a locomotive present) and in 1942 before moving to familiar territory - Amersham, Brackley, Woodford Halse and Leicester Central - all stations, staff and offices well described. Unusually some clues in the investigation of a missing diamond ring, evidently cursed, are given by a ghost. The supernatural element is chillingly established, aided by incorporating folklore and the mysterious calls of birds. Vignoles steps in and reason more or less prevails, but it is Simon Howarth, now PC 467, who helps link the elements.

There are customary locomotive, goods, passenger train and signal box operations binding the action. Stephen Done revels in the pastoral, atmosphere, analysis of evidence and motive; but he can also turn the screw of suspense with remarkable



struggle and chase sequences. Most of his villains come to a sticky end so we are spared tedious interrogations in court.

I made a pilgrimage to Woodford Halse, which I model in 00 gauge, from Canada in 2010 and was saddened by the experience. Leafing through the *British Railways Past and Present Volume 65 Northamptonshire* (reviewed in *Forward 175*) was equally depressing. When I picked up *The Last Train to Brackley Central* the whole London Extension suddenly came back to life. I could hear the teacups rattling in Woodford Halse refreshment room, hear an A3 shrieking through the station on the up "South Yorkshireman" and see the steam wreathed station master standing to attention, top-hatted, on the platform.

Rivet counters might discover some liberties which Steven Done confesses in shaping the series but they should not let that spoil a good read. If possible, begin at the beginning with *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*. My favourite so far has been *The Murder of Crows*, a real winter of discontent. One should also mention the attractive maps and artwork on the covers.

Chris Wilson

"The Lancashire Derbyshire & East Coast Railway vol.1" by Chris Booth

Published by Blurb, 2013 (www.blurb.co.uk/bookstore) at £25 - £32.

Hardback/softback 8"x10", 80 pages.

The LD&ECR was built in order to tap the rich coalfields in the East Midlands; the plan being to construct an 170 mile long railway from a deep-water dock on the Manchester Ship Canal at Warrington to new docks on the Lincolnshire coast at Sutton-on-Sea, thus allowing an outlet on either coast for the export of coal.

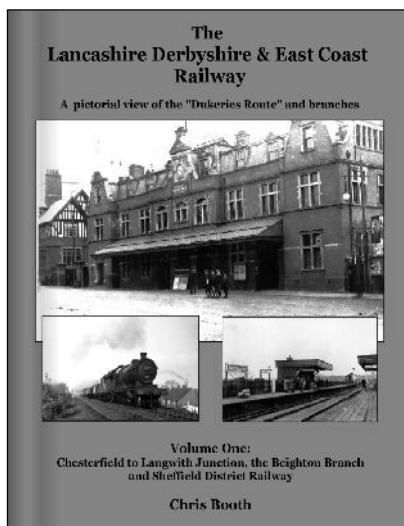
As time was to prove, this ambitious plan would be whittled down to the central section from Chesterfield to Pyewipe Junction near Lincoln and a branch from Langwith Junction to Beighton, thus allowing the company access to Sheffield via the Sheffield District Railway. The remaining sections would never be built and gradually the built sections would succumb to closure.

Although the route would have a passenger service that lasted in parts until 1955, it would always primarily be known for the movement of coal. Take a pictorial journey along the LD&ECR over the decades to see what was and what now remains of the line that became known as "The Dukeries Route".

Volume One explores the line from Chesterfield to Langwith Junction, then along the Beighton Branch to the Sheffield District Railway. It also looks at Tuxford and Langwith Junction Motive Power Depots and there is a brief introduction to the original signalling of the line. Volume Two will cover the remaining section to Pyewipe Junction along with the Mansfield Railway connection. This end of the route was mostly intact until the 1980s, and some of it is still in use today, doing the job it was built for, the movement of coal, albeit from the one remaining colliery at Thoresby.

Chris Booth

Editor's note: Blurb facilitate self-publishing and sales through their website. Books are printed to order. You can also pre-view a book on-screen before purchasing. A reader's review of this book would be welcome.



Track Diagrams by Iain Mackenzie

I have recently been in contact with Iain Mackenzie, who was the author of the Silver Link book *Great Central Signalman*. He is willing to make bound copies of his GC London Extension track diagrams available to GCRS members. I'm sure there may well be a number of members who would be interested in such diagrams.

The diagrams, which he has drawn, cover the London Extension from Heath (exclusive) to Grendon Underwood Junction, and show the line as signalled around 1950 with some more recent updates plus the original diagrams from Carrington to Weekday Cross as at 1900. These are all signal box type diagrams, not full track diagrams.

Iain would charge £12, including postage, for the bound copies, which consist of 40 pages, mostly two to a page (see below).

His address details are: Iain Mackenzie, 6 The Bungalows, Waverhead Terrace, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4NU. Tel. 01747 822192.

He was a signalman on the GC line at Braunston and Willoughby and then at Rugby LNW for several years, but as the Beeching cuts began to bite took a draughtsman's course, hence the high quality of the diagrams, and moved to the SR at Croydon.

As well as the GC diagrams, Iain also has available diagrams for other routes:

LNW Main Line Bletchley-Tamworth

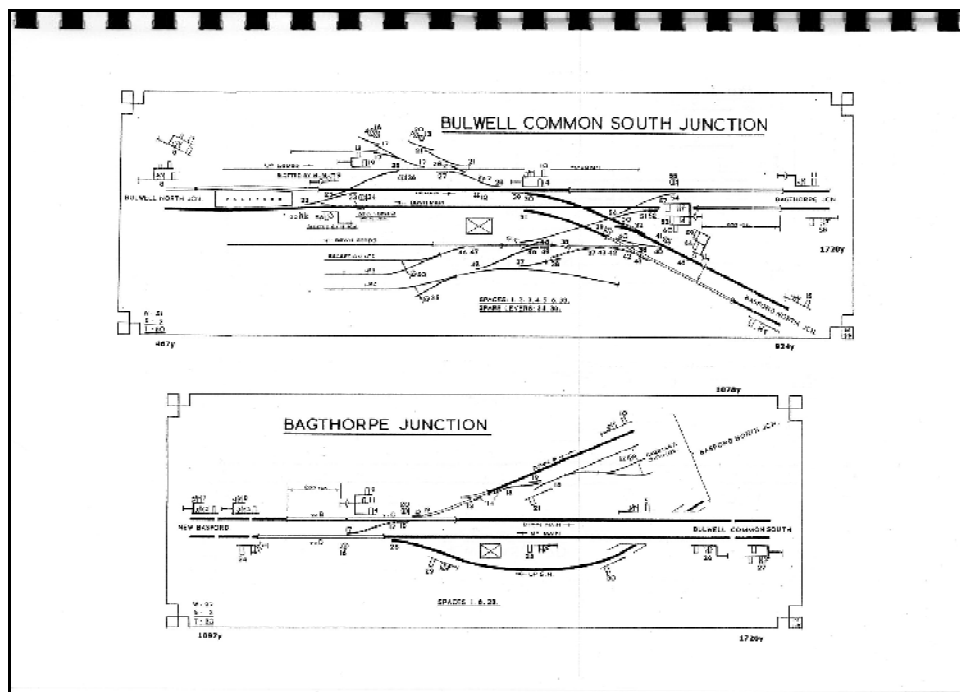
Midlands Main Line Oakley (Beds) - Leicester

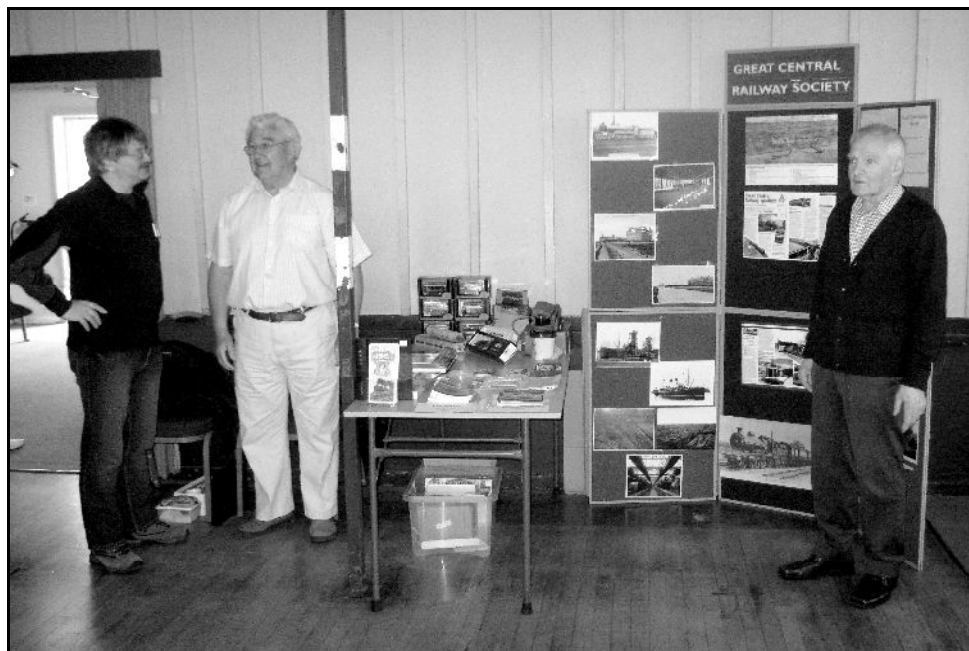
SMJ Line

GN & LNW Joint Line

GN Nottingham Victoria to Derby Friargate.

David Bodicoat





above: Mike Hartley talks to Gordon Luck while Peter Matthews stands by the GCRS display stand.
below: GCRS member, Gordon Luck, with his P4 scale layout 'Fish Dock Road'. If asked, Peter will give you a shunting problem to solve.
photos: Bob Gellatly



The Pollard family railway history - Part 17

by John E. Pollard

John continues to recount memories of his brother Les Pollard at Annesley mpd.

When it came time for Les to pass out as a driver they worked a flanker on him and booked him on the Mansfield Passenger turn. With Len Gunn as driver they signed on at 5.53am and left the shed at 6.03am tender-first light engine to Mansfield. They had one of Annesley's 'Pom-Poms'. On arrival at Mansfield they backed up on the stock in the bay, coupled up and put the heater on. They then ran all stations to Nottingham Victoria. When they ran in at the Vic, Inspector Whitehead was on the platform with Len Rafe and Ron Weaver. He was going to take all three for their driving test that day. The Inspector told Len Gunn and Ron Weaver to go in the first coach and to come back to the footplate when they arrived at Leicester. He told Les he was to fire the engine to Leicester and Len Gunn would drive.

They left on time and stopped at Arkwright Street. Then it was right away Ruddington. As they picked up speed the Inspector told Len, "Stop playing about. J G. Robinson built these engines to be worked in full regulator. Put it across."

"Don't," shouted Les to Len, "This engine will do the job in first regulator."

"You keep out of this," said the Inspector. "Put it right across," he told Len. So over went the regulator. She caught hold of her water and primed herself almost to a standstill. They managed to keep her going to Ruddington. Les got her round enough to set off for East Leake but it was very hard work.

As they stood at Loughborough a column of black smoke was going sky high. Les managed to get the fire right and they kept time to Leicester, where Len Rafe and Ron got on to turn her and take her over to the down side. Inspector Whitehead took Les and Len over to the down platform with a face like thunder, apparently for a telling off, when suddenly a smile came over his face and he set off down the platform towards a well dressed man carrying a brolly. It was Lord Lanesborough who lived near Swithland and was later a backer of the Mainline Steam Trust which preserved a section of the Great Central line at Loughborough. Inspector Whitehead stood there talking to him until the stock was in the platform and the engine was on the train. Les took over as driver and Len Rafe picked up the shovel. The starter came off, the guard whistled and waved a green flag. Les, with a grin on his face, said, "Right Len, J. G. Robinson built these engine to be worked in second regulator. That's right isn't it Inspector?"

"Yes," said Whitehead, "but don't you dare do it with this engine." They had a nice easy run to Nottingham, on time everywhere. At Nottingham, while Len Rafe and Ron turned the engine, Les and Len Gunn sat in the coach with the Inspector answering questions on the locomotive and rules. Then it was time for Ron Weaver to drive to Leicester and Les had to fire for him.

When the Midland Region got their hands on us, with the help of Beeching and Marples, our locomotives, which were well up to the job, were withdrawn and scrapped. Some of them had come back from the shops in tip-top condition and were put straight on the scrap line. In their place we got Midland Region rust buckets that were totally incapable of doing the job. Les was driving one week and he got a 'Royal Scot', no. 46125 3rd *Carabinier*, on the 5.15pm Nottingham Vic - Marylebone train. The engine was that bad that they couldn't sit down on her. That was on the Monday. When they got to work on the Tuesday they had the same engine. While they were stood in the station waiting time to leave, Les told his mate, "I'm going to break this engine."

"Do you think you can?" asked his mate.

"You'll soon see," said Les. Just before time Les started to pile coal in the firebox to give his mate a start. They got the road and left the Vic. When they cleared the bridge over the Trent, Les shouted, "Hang on!" and put the regulator right over. When they handed over at Woodford they just said, "It's a rough one mate. The oil is in the locker." As

Neasden shed had already closed by then, they had to take enough oil from Annesley so the engine could be oiled before it came back. The relieving crew just said, "Right, we've had this bitch before."

It was the same on Wednesday and Thursday. Les couldn't understand what was holding the engine together. Finally on the Friday, when they signed on, they had a 'Britannia'. "Where's the 'Scot'?" asked Les.

"Well," said the foreman, "it stopped the job at Amersham for two and a half hours last night. It seized up solid and had to be skidded into the sidings (*where it was cut up later - Sept 1964*)". However, Les's efforts had backfired. When he and his mate got on the 'Britannia' they found it gave a worse ride than the 'Scot' they had managed to get rid of.



'Royal Scot' no.46125 '3rd Carabinier' in steam at Annesley shed.

photo: Chris Ward

Les and his mate, Malcolm Sherwin, with Horace Walker as guard, relieved a special fish train at Annesley South for the Western Region. They had a train made up of twenty five fish vans, then the brakevan, then what we called 'swingers' - five fish vans behind the brakevan. The engine was a 'Standard 5' no. 73000, the first of the class at that time and she was a Woodford engine. They had a good run to Banbury where they came off and a Western 'Hall' came on. Then they took the engine to Banbury Loco where they turned her, filled the tank and had a tub of coal put on the tender. The foreman told them he didn't have any instructions for them so they could go to the mess room for their food.

After they had mashed and sat down, the Western men seemed to be ignoring them, so Les asked why. When the Western men realized they were not Midland men they opened up and said, "We don't like them Midland beggars!" Les also wondered why there were so many Welshmen at Banbury. The Western men told them that they had all-line promotion which meant that when a vacancy occurred anywhere on the Western Region the senior man was offered the job. This meant that a passed fireman at a small depot could find himself made a driver at any large depot. On other regions men had to wait for a vacancy to happen at their own depot or district to get promotion.

Soon the foreman came in and told them to take their engine back to Woodford. They said 'bye to the Banbury men and went light engine to Woodford. They coaled her and

left her. They reported to the foreman who asked if they had had their food and when they said yes he said, "Right, there's a 'Green Arrow' on shed that has to go to Doncaster for repairs. You can take her back to Annesley. She's all ready to go." Les and his mate climbed on, put their kit away, checked round and then dropped down to the outlet board. When they got the road, Les opened the regulator and they pulled out onto the main line and set off for Annesley. As they picked up speed, Les thought, "There's something wrong here." They free-wheeled through Catesby tunnel and as they approached Staverton Road signal box Les got hold of the brake and stopped outside the box. The signalman came to the window. Les knew him well - he had had a few rabbits off him in the past. Les said, "I just want to have a look round her. There's something odd with this one." He walked round both sides and couldn't find anything wrong, so he had a look under the smoke box. Because she had blown her middle cylinder cover off, the fitters had disconnected the main steam pipe and put a plate in to blank the cylinder off. She only had two cylinders instead of three. What had been odd was the missing beats at the chimney top. Les carried on.



BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 no. 73000 approaching the birdcage bridge at Rugby with an up working on 12th Oct. 1963.
photo: Richard Postill

They got water at Nottingham Vic and continued to Annesley. As they approached Annesley South Junction the board was off for the main line. Les stopped and whistled for the inside board. The board slowly went back down and then came off for the main line again so they drew up to the platform. Two passed firemen, Bill Howes and Sid Hooper, were waiting there. Les told them they had taken water at the Vic so he reckoned they could get to Mexborough no problem. Les and his mate got off and away they went. Les walked over to the loco shed. They had nine and a half hours in and the foreman said, "I had you relieved so Sid and Bill could bring the engine on shed. Where is she?"

Les said, "I reckon she's passing New Hucknall about now." The foreman blew his top. "She should have come on shed for exam. I'll have those two hauled over the coals when they get back."

Les and his fireman, Malcolm Sherwin, were sent to work the Littlewoods Parcels train from Annesley South to Woodford. When they went in the cabin on the platform there was a passenger guard there. Les asked him where he was from and he replied Marylebone. Les thought that was odd that we had a London guard. We had not seen them up our way since the war.

The train came in and Les and Malc got on. The driver they relieved, Eric Kemble, said, "She's a good 'un." Les got the tip from the guard, opened her up then, when he had the train on the move, shut off and free-wheeled to Nottingham Vic where they filled the tank. When it was full he whistled up, they got the road and were away. As they were approaching Wilford Brick Sidings Les noticed the steam gauge dropping back. He knew Eric Kemble wouldn't say she was a good 'un if she wasn't.

As they were nearing Gotham, all signals off, they were starting to struggle for steam. The fireman picked the shovel up and Les said, "Let me have a look." He got hold of the shovel, swung the fire hole door open and had a look. There was a thin fire down at the front end so he started banging a load of lumps down to the front, shut the door and pushed the regulator right across. She started to come round near East Leake. He then gave her another good load down the front. His mate asked, "What are you doing?"

Les said, "What type of engine have we got?"

"A 'Black 5'," his mate replied.

"Listen to her," said Les, "have you ever heard a '5' with six beats?"

"No," said his mate, "What is it?"

"A 'Jubilee'," said Les, "Keep her thick at the front." It was no. 45561 *Saskatchewan*. They had a good run from then on. As they passed Braunston and Willoughby Les looked at the tender and got a shock. The water level indicator was flat on the bottom. He picked it up and let it go - it hit the bottom with a clang but the injector was still working. He told his mate, "Don't put any more coal on, we may have to shovel it out fast." He then had another look at the tender. Although it appeared to be a normal sloping Stanier tender, it said 3,500 gallons not 4,250.

They managed to get a good dip on Charwelton troughs and ran into Woodford down to the old yard where the engine was coming off. As they were waiting to go to the Loco the guard came down and said, "I had to book you some loco time at Gotham."

"What about the 25mph p-way slack there?" asked Les.

"Oh," said the

guard, "I forgot about that. I'll rub it out". As they were going on shed Les's mate said, "I didn't know there was a p-way slack at Gotham."

"There isn't," said Les, "but I'm just taking a chance that he doesn't know the road."



'Jubilees' at Nottingham Victoria: no. 45561 'Saskatchewan' stands in the bay on the left as no. 45562 'Alberta' stands in platform 1 with a passenger train on 29th Aug 1964.

photo: Chris Ward

Readers' forum

from Keith Parkin, Sheffield. [kjpcarrhouse@btopenworld.com]

Queries re. (1) return of locos after general repairs and (2) locomotive diagramming information.

There are two matters on which I would appreciate help from fellow members – both related to locomotive utilisation.

(1) There is a photograph¹ of no.69817, an A5 tank, on shed at Mexborough on Sunday 15th May 1955. Yeadon² records this loco as released from Darlington Works on 6th May 1955 after a "general". It was shedded at Gorton.

I understand it was usual to release locos from works to the nearest running shed for a few days to run in. But what was then the usual practice for returning them home? Did they run light engine (surely an annoyance finding paths on busy routes)? Did they work as assisting locos? Or were they hauled dead, as might be expected through the new Woodhead tunnel in this example? Would sheds en route "borrow" them? Is this a typical example – barely halfway home nine days after nominal return to traffic?



BR class A5 4-6-2T no.69817 at Gorton shed in stored condition on 23rd August 1959.

photo: Colour-Rail

(2) As railway enthusiasts, and especially if we are also modellers, we tend to become embroiled in the technical minutiae of locomotives and tend to forget, that to their owners and operators, they were there simply to pull trains. In contrast there is a black hole in the wealth of published material on railway operating.

I have a model of a station in South Yorkshire in 1953 which I would like to operate prototypically. I have the freight and passenger working timetables, the rule book appendices, and the carriage and van working books (rolling stock is not a problem). I also know exactly which locomotives were at every shed (and indeed when they were under repair) but what does not seem available is the locomotive diagramming information - which shed was expected to provide what power for each service. It is obvious that this information would have a more restricted circulation than, say, working timetables but have none actually survived? The NRM say they have none. I have only seen one example of this information –see the reference below³. This is superb, covering both loco and men's rosters – now all I want is the same information for the Mexborough area! Has anyone any suggestions as to where such information could be found?

References

¹ Yorkshire Post's Special Autumn Supplement 1997 (photo).

² Yeadon's Register of LNER locomotives Vol. 21 (Booklaw/Railbus 2001).

³ North Eastern Region Passenger Locomotive Working: main line June-Sept 1952 (facsimile published by NERA with co-operation from the RCTS, 2011).

from Robert Barker, Wembley, Middlesex

Suggestions for days out.

Members planning a day out might consider visiting Buscot Park, near Faringdon, Oxfordshire, which was purchased by Alexander Henderson, the future Lord Faringdon, in 1889. Although best known by readers as the Chairman of the GCR, a visit will show that Lord Faringdon was also an art collector of some stature. The flight of stairs up to the second floor is roped off, but if you look up the stairwell you will see a portrait of Lord Faringdon by Sir William Orpen, which was presented to him by the shareholders of the GCR to mark his chairmanship of the company up to 1922.

For good measure, the previous owner of Buscot Park, Robert Tertius Campbell, laid out over six miles of 2ft 8in gauge track to convey produce around the estate and to Buscot village, in particular sugar beet for his distillery. Three 0-4-0 tank locomotives named *Edith*, *Emily* and *Alice* were supplied in 1870 by Appleby Bros. of Southwark. The firm probably took them back by 1880 but horse haulage continued until about 1900. The National Trust guide book records surviving traces of the railway, but a serious investigator would do well to examine Google Earth and to take a large scale map with them.



Portrait of the 1st Lord Faringdon by Sir William Orpen.

Another stately home containing an unexpected surprise is Arundel Castle in West Sussex. After the 15th Duke of Norfolk cut the first sod of the Sheffield District Railway at Attercliffe on November 20th 1896, he took the ceremonial barrow and spade home with him to deepest Sussex, where it is now on show to visitors.

from Bill Taylor, Skegby, Notts

Forward 175 p44: Requests for station track plans

I was able to supply information for both Chesterfield Central and Silkstone in response to the queries made. I have track plans for most GC stations north of Rugby but not the LD&ECR or the CLC. I am happy to respond to readers' requests. I can be contacted by post at 51 High Tor, Skegby, Notts NG17 3EX, or by e-mail at Billcar@btinternet.com.

from Paul White, Stalybridge, Cheshire

Forward 175 p20: Stalybridge signal box fire

Just a note to report a conversation I had with one of the signalmen who operated Stalybridge signal box up to its recent closure. Kim Collinson reports "On Saturday 1st December the closed signal box was totally destroyed by vandals who set fire to the building".

I was surprised by this as there had been no newspaper report of the incident. My signalman informant tells me that vandals were not responsible. Contractors removing cable and leaving smouldering debris were responsible for a fire but the building's demolition was carried out as scheduled. He now works at Dinting which he describes as "very quiet".

from Neil Robinson, Bury, Greater Manchester

Manchester and Salford Docks

The *Manchester Evening News* website (<http://tinyurl.com/clbwk9m>) is showing a number of photos relating to the history of Manchester and Salford docks. This one will be of interest to GC Society members. It is of Manchester docks and shows a GCR barge in the foreground. The date of 1890 given in the caption cannot be correct - the MS&L was renamed GCR in 1899. I would suggest early 1900s.



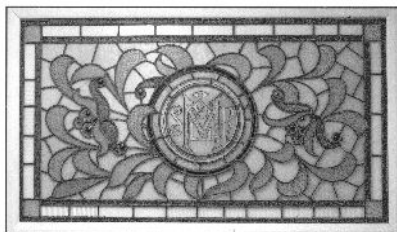
A view of Manchester docks with a GCR barge in the foreground.

from Mike Hartley, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire

Stained glass window at Immingham Museum

The window, which has the initials MS&LR in the centre surrounded by a floral pattern, came from Gorton Works and is now displayed at the Immingham Museum. Does anyone know

- (1) whereabouts in the works it came from and
- (2) is it unique or were there others like it?



Rear cover caption

Robinson's only 2-6-4 tank design for the GCR was the class 1B introduced in December 1914. The first of the class, no.272, is in photographic grey for its official photo at Gorton. The design was based on the LD&ECR class D 0-6-4 tank engine and intended for the same type of traffic - heavy coal haulage over short distances. R. A. Thom, who designed the class D, was then the Assistant Works Manager at Gorton. A total of 20 were built. Nicknamed 'Crabs' they were not particularly successful on the heavier trains. They found their niche working on pick-up and transfer goods. They were also used for banking duties on Worsborough Bank. No.272 became no.69050 in the BR period and was withdrawn in 1955 from Woodford Halse. The whole class (by then designated L3) had gone by the end of 1955. Quite a long life for an unsuccessful design!

photo: NRM

