

FORWARD 177



Front cover caption

A trio of GCR engines at Mexborough shed in the early 1930s. On the left is class J13/2 0-6-0 no.5572 with LNER flowerpot chimney and tender with weatherboard from a scrapped D7. Behind the J13 is class L1 2-6-4T no.5366 and to the right is class F1 2-4-2T no.5732.

The J13 was a Parker design of 1889 (MS&L class 9) and built at Gorton. There were only ten engines in the class but they formed the basis for later 0-6-0 designs by Parker, Pollitt and Robinson, culminating in the well known class 9J (later J11) 'Pom-Poms'. In the photo no.5572 has been rebuilt by Robinson in 1910 with a Belpaire boiler and extended smokebox. The Part 2 classification was given to locos with the reduced LNER loading gauge, achieved by fitting the flowerpot chimney. The D9 tender was acquired in March 1930. No.5572 was withdrawn in Nov. 1935. *photo:*

Photomatic



The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 177 ~ September 2013

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Editorial by Bob Gellatly

The HS2 debate rumbles on with NIMBYs trying to stop it and local councils supporting it. One of the most bizarre suggestions has come from Sheffield City Council. They would like to see the HS2 station located at the site of Sheffield Victoria rather than at Meadowhall. This reflects the council's passion to revitalise the city centre. Of course, the suggestion has received short shrift from the Transport Secretary, Patrick McLoughlin. It would necessitate a vast increase in cost to tunnel underneath Sheffield to reach the city centre. As a local resident I have no wish to catch HS2 from Victoria - it will have no local connecting train services (unlike Meadowhall which is a major transport hub) and nowhere to park a car (unlike Meadowhall's vast car parks adjacent to the M1). For those passengers whose destination will be the city centre there is the frequent Supertram service in addition to the local train services. The article in the *Star* of 11 July was accompanied by a photo of a class 37 hauled railtour passing the site of Sheffield Victoria. The caption read "An excursion train chugs through Victoria". Class 37 fans would be amused to know that class 37s chug!

I apologise for the higher than usual number of typo errors in the last issue of *Forward*. One omission I made was not crediting Chris Wilson for the review of 'The Detective Inspector Vignoles' stories. To make amends I will mention the model railway club of which Chris is the hon. secretary - the British Model Railway Club of Montreal. See their website at <http://bmrcm.org> for more information.

The long-running series by John Pollard comes to an end in this issue with part 18. Many readers have spoken to me to say how much they have enjoyed reading John's articles. The number of people who have had first-hand experience of working with steam on our railways is steadily declining. Perhaps you have some memories you can share.

I was privileged to be at the official opening of Immingham Museum in its new premises on 24th June. There is plenty on display for anyone interested in the Great Central Railway as the name Immingham will always be linked to the GCR through its history. Our archivist is working hard to make the society's archives accessible both to museum visitors and to those wanting information in digital form.

Thank you to all those who support our society at model railway exhibitions and events by helping out with publicity and sales - so often our unsung heroes. I know from my recent experience at the canal festival at Staveley that this grass roots presence is important, not for the fund raising, but for bringing our society (and the GCR) to people's attention. Many passers-by will stop and chat for a while and, hopefully, even add to our membership.

There is mention of exploding forward magazines on page 12. I can assure readers that this copy is quite safe!

The Great Central Railway Society Autumn meeting "The York Gathering"

Sat. 26th October 2013
at the York Railway Institute, 22 Queen Street, York
YO24 1AD

If coming by train, turn right when leaving the station main entrance and walk 200m. If arriving by car there is an NCP car park on Queen Street or why not use one of the many Park & Ride sites around the city - only 70p fare for concessionary pass holders.

9.30am Doors open with sales and displays.
10.30am Talk by Ken Grainger 'Railways in Art'.
12.00 noon Finish with afternoon free to visit the 'Great Gathering' at the NRM.



Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 18th May 2013 at the NLSME club rooms, North Finchley

Present: 20 members.

The meeting was opened at 11:00 by the Chairman.

A minute's silence was observed for deceased members – J. G. Poulton, M. Mitchell, M. J. Burr, A. W. Donaldson, P. J. Korrison and D. Scargill.

1 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Brian Holyland, Kevin Curran, David Bodicoat, John Bennett, Richard Tilden-Smith, Will Adams, David Arnold, Alan Ashurst, Robert Carroll, Paul Chappell, Jayne Edwards, Adrian Elder, David Evans, Bill Fay, Ken Grainger, Paul Greenwood, David Guest, Richard Hardy, Ed Hotchin, Dave Hull, Gerald Jacobs, Trevor Kay, Michael Reade, Barbara Truman, Jack Turner, Brian Wainwright, Andrew West, Paul White, Bob Withers and Paul Wood.

2 Minutes of the 2012 AGM:

The minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting, which had been published in *Forward*, were accepted as an accurate record on a proposition by Geoff Burton and seconded by Martyn Chapman. They were then signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

4 Officer's Reports:

Chairman's Report – Mike Hartley said that it had been another memorable year. After 13 years, we now have a permanent home for our archives at Immingham Museum. Some work still needs to be done, particularly arranging technology so that the archives can be accessed by members. The museum officially opens on June 24th at 12.00 noon and all are welcome.

Postal costs have increased, but with forethought, bulk buying of stamps before the increase has enabled *Forward* to be sent out at the old rate, and for one more issue.

The Immingham Docks Centenary was a great day and well attended. The Society celebrates its 40th Anniversary in 2014 and any ideas on how to celebrate this will be welcomed.

Finally, thank you to Bob Gellatly for producing quality *Forwards* and Colin Todd who sends them out. Unfortunately, Colin suffered a stroke earlier in the year, but happily is now back with us to continue the mailings.

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

We have now received the etches for the ex D&S LD&EC horsebox kit and some white metal parts have just been received and need checking. Hopefully these kits should be available to members shortly. The 10 ton Open Wagon kit is now available from Dave Smith, £9 to members, £10 otherwise (plus postage).

Brian had represented the society at the Warley exhibition at the NEC. He thanked Steve Mills for his help at the exhibition. Brian finished by thanking the NSMEE for making available a room at Ruddington for committee meetings and Geoff Burton for arranging today's venue and speaker.

Treasurer's Report (including Membership Secretary's Report) – Eric Latusek reported that the total number of members stands at 485, a small increase on the 483 at the same time last year. Eric commented on the reasons (or none) given for not renewing. 61 members now pay by Standing Order. There are still 57 who have not renewed their membership and 2 new members have been recruited since April 1st.

Our Honorary Auditor is Richard Webster and Eric thanked him for his work.

Income has increased to £8,749.38 (£7,718.92 last year). Donations increased to £584.50 arising mainly from the appeal to enable us to buy the Sam Fay papers. Sales have increased, mainly due to the sale of kits and the Immingham Centenary booklet. The society bus trip to Immingham failed by £109 to cover the donation given to the South Yorkshire Museum for use of the bus.

Expenses were £10,778.82 (£ 6,618.03 last year). Largest expense is the printing of *Forward* plus the Immingham Centenary issue. Sales last year were mainly from the purchase of model railway etchings and DVDs for sale to members. Postage increased with the additional Immingham Centenary issue. Colin's illness resulted in problems of access to the pre-purchased stamps, but this has now been resolved and we have 750 stamps in hand.

Archive purchases included the Sam Fay papers, fully covered by donations and a storage cabinet had been constructed and paid for.

Other items of income and expenditure were explained.

The society currently has an adjusted balance of £8,239.46 (£10,396.90 last year) after taking into account advance payment of subscriptions. Eric explained the reasons for the committee proposing an increase in subscriptions to £16 a year from April 1st 2014, with a £1 discount for subscriptions received before that date for 2014-2015.

Stephen Gay suggested a lifetime subscription, but this was deemed impracticable.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Richard Graham, seconded by Martyn Chapman and agreed by all present. The increase in subscriptions was proposed by Richard Graham and seconded by David Reidy and approved unanimously.

Sales Officer's Report – Dave Smith said that he had been selling the Immingham booklets, DVDs, fridge magnets and mugs and that some kits will be available.

Stephen Gay said that he will give a donation for each of his books purchased at the meeting.

Editor's Report – Bob Gellatly said that the supply of material for *Forward* is still coming in, including some from new contributors - articles on modelling, signalling, timetabling and aspects of railway operations. We are lacking technical aspects of locomotive design and performance. The *Forward* style Immingham Centenary booklet had been sent to all members and was sold to the public at Immingham Open Day at £2.50 a copy.

He again thanked the printers, TSW Printers of Scunthorpe and particularly Franco Grippo for their efficient service. The printing is invariably completed before the scheduled date.

The website continues to provide information about the Society and an increasing number of new members cite the internet as their information source. The website is no longer a part of the LNER web ring as there have been no discernible benefits. He then gave some statistics on the website usage.

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

Northern Area Rep's Report – Brian read out Ken Grainger's report. He started by saying that he couldn't attend as his wife Carol was struggling to recover from major surgery.

It has been a momentous year for the society with at last progress towards an accessible archive at Immingham and the Open Day at Immingham Docks. He had organised the vintage bus trip from Sheffield and on arrival, the bus was included in the vintage vehicle display.

Sheffield Branch continues to meet on 1st Thursdays at The Harlequin and he thanked Bob for organising the programme. Ken is continuing to give presentations, but restricting them to the local area.

With Carol's condition and the finishing of 'Forward to Nottingham' which is being published in two parts by Booklaw, a pause had been placed on *Forward* contributions. But now 'Great Central Heroes' will resume.

After an omission last year when Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day coincided, he hopes that 'Valour' can be at Marylebone this year and the Sheffield remembrance on the Sunday. Still outstanding are the reinstatement of Marylebone War Memorial and the addition of L. Cpl N. Jackson VC to the Sheffield Memorial.

He finished by saying that the Railway Institute in York, near the NRM has been booked for the Autumn Meeting October 26th.

Midlands Area Rep's, Report – David Bodicoat did not submit a report.

Southern Area Rep's Report – Richard Butler said that his main activity was organising the London Area Group whose meetings are held at Keen House, Kings Cross. About a dozen are regular attendees with plenty of space for new visitors. Meetings start at 18:30.

Walkabouts were held with trips to Stanmore Village and the Welwyn-Hertford Line in June & July.

He thanked Andrew David for arranging tables at the Princes Risborough, Stoke Mandeville and Alexandra Palace model exhibitions.

There will be trips to Staines West – Colnbrook Branch in June and Dunstable – Welwyn Part 2 in July.

He concluded by commenting on the HS2 project.

Richard Graham said that last year, a small service had been held by The Railwaymen's Mission at Marylebone.

Stephen Gay asked how the London group was financed. It was by donations and sales.

Archivist's Report – Geoff Burton said that we now have a permanent base for archive storage. Photographs of the cabinet were passed around, but shelves are now required to make the items more accessible. It is hoped to get computer equipment and internet access so that visitors can scan documents for their own use.

Various questions were asked about the archive, which Geoff answered.

5 Election of Officers:

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

Chairman - Mike Hartley, Secretary - Brian Slater, Treasurer/Membership Secretary - Eric Latusek, Sales Officer – Dave Smith, Northern Area Rep - Ken Grainger, Midlands Area Rep - David Bodicoat, Southern Area Rep - Richard Butler, Editor - Bob Gellatly, Model Steward – Tony West, Archivist – Geoff Burton. In the absence of any other nominations, their appointment was proposed by Richard Graham, seconded by Martyn Chapman and agreed by all present.

6 Any Other Business:

It was suggested that Dick Hardy be put forward for an honour. Mike explained the difficulties.

Richard Graham proposed a vote of thanks to the committee.

7 Next AGM:

Banbury and Lovatt House at Loughborough were suggested. The committee will discuss and arrange accordingly.

The meeting was closed at 12:40.

Brian Slater
The Secretary

The 'Bridge to the Future' appeal

by Tom Ingall

Tom Ingall, from the GCR, reports on the rapidly developing vision which will see 18 miles of former London Extension re-united.

I expect that most of you will have at some point visited the preserved Great Central Railway at Loughborough. Some say this section has the best of the scenery on the entire London Extension, others point to the fast running achieved between Leicester and Nottingham. I'd hope you'd agree, we've managed to maintain something of the spirit of Watkin's vision today, though with the necessary compromises when maintaining a living railway.

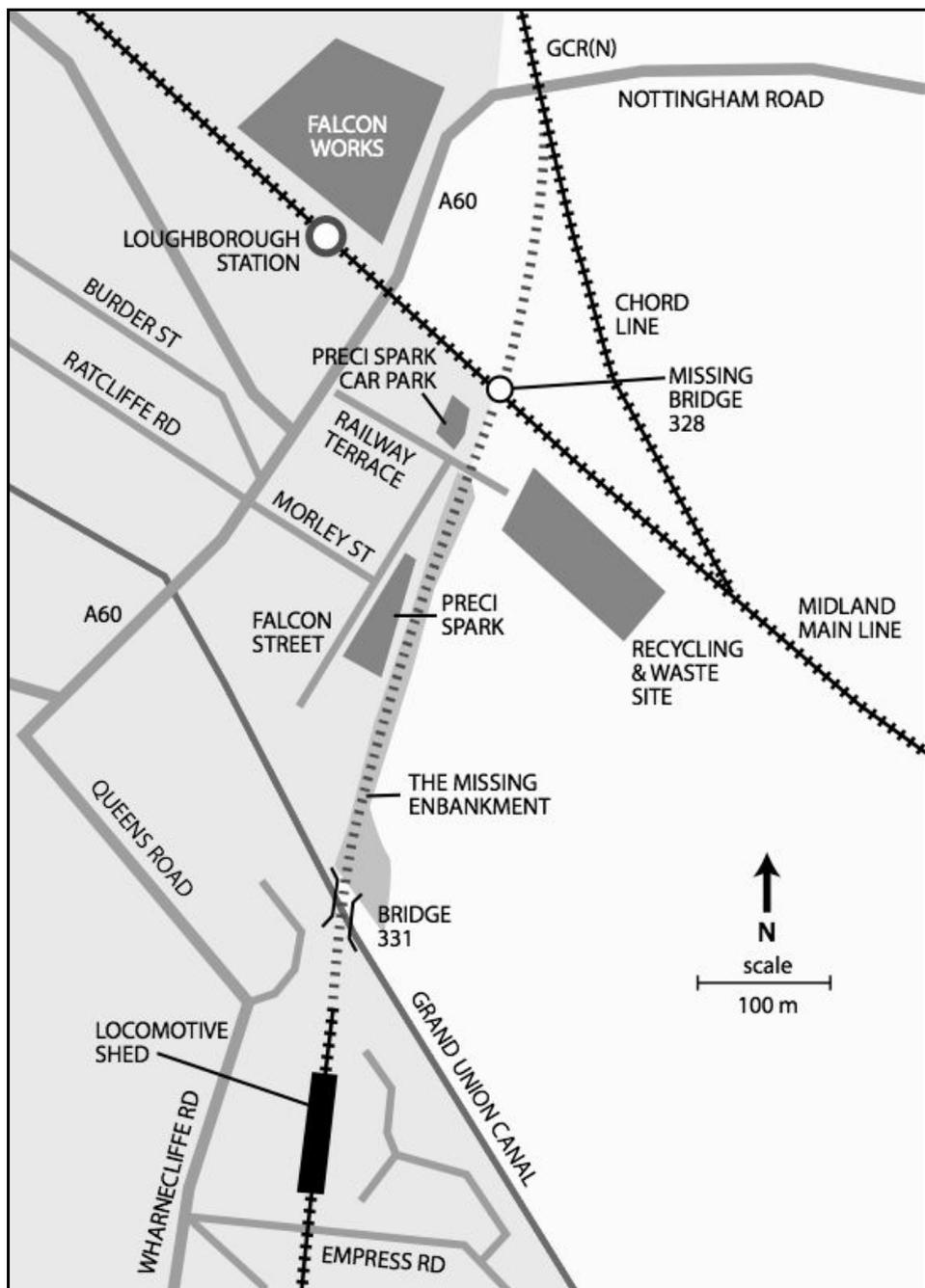
In December, we announced our partnership with the National Railway Museum and Leicester City Council to create the latest NRM outstation at our southern terminus, Leicester North (just metres south of the site of Belgrave and Birstall station). The vision is to have a quality exhibition space where locomotives and objects are displayed – but interpreted in context right outside the door. Consultants are at work right now to bring forward a heritage lottery bid for submission before the end of the year.

Then in May, came the big one. The dream we've chased down since our preservation adventure began in 1969; reuniting the two sections of the GCR in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire to create an eighteen mile system. A deal has been struck with Network Rail (the very best possible partners) to build a bridge over the Midland Main Line. It's the fundamental obstacle dividing the two railways, but at the same time the key to unlock the project. For a bargain price of only £1 million, it could be in place by 2015. Then by replacing just 500 metres of missing track, we will get an eighteen mile railway with a connection to the national network. So, one of the largest infrastructure projects on the UK heritage railway scene is ready to proceed.

Of course, if it was just a matter of reinstating empty track bed we would have done it a long time ago. Because some sections of the formation have gone, it's going to be fairly complex. Let's take a walk north of the shed at Loughborough to find out what needs to be done. The bridge over the Grand Union Canal is an original GCR structure (number 331) dating from around 1897. To carry trains again, it requires significant repairs. Once across the canal, a new 300 metre embankment has to be constructed. Discussions have taken place regarding where the material might come from, and what techniques (not available to the Victorian navvies) could be used to build it. Next we come to the bridge which crosses Railway Terrace, the road to Loughborough's refuse depot. This section is pivotal; the height of the bridge above the road is determined by the size of the lorries that need to pass underneath it. Meanwhile the angle it crosses the road at depends in turn on how the next section is tackled. That's where the line runs behind a new factory which has been built since the line was lifted.

At last, we're ready to stride across the Midland line itself - often referred to as 'The Gap'. The bridge will be in two spans using decks rescued from the remodelling of Reading station - that's what's made the £1 million tag possible. At the northern side, another abutment will connect the bridge to the surviving stub of the embankment, which leads to the metals of the Great Central Railway Nottingham. In the future it is still the intention to create some sort of interchange station here so passengers can walk to the adjacent Loughborough Midland station.

Some may question why only a single track link is planned, given the formation to the south is already doubled and the section to the north is ready to be doubled. Quite simply it comes down to cost. While it would be technically possible to reinstate double track across the whole link, the topography of the land is complex. It could be done but it would forever be out of reach financially for a heritage organisation. What's on the table is an achievable compromise.



Before we get ahead of ourselves it's important to be clear - this will be an incredible start but we're not in a position to sell you a ticket for the first train along the eighteen mile railway yet. Put the bridge in place and we still have the rest to do - the physical work and the fundraising. But we're not going to let the bridge just stand there! What is certain though, is that without the bridge there will never be a link. Furthermore, if we don't build it now, when the Midland Line is scheduled to be electrified in a few years time, it will be impossibly expensive to contemplate. It is a project whose time has come. We believe the momentum towards a 'golden spike' event will increase once this publicity grabbing element is complete and trains could possibly be running over it in six years time.

It's not just us who are believers in the cause. Phil Verster, Route Managing Director for Network Rail says, "Our electrification teams are already making significant changes to the infrastructure in this area so it's the ideal opportunity to get the bridge in place, with minimal disruption and cost. Once the full scheme is complete it will bring significant economic benefits to the region as well as reinstating a piece of our railway heritage."

Loughborough's MP, Nicky Morgan has added her voice to the campaign too, "I am convinced that reunification will bring big benefits to our local economy and I do hope everyone locally will support this important first step."

Now we just need to raise £1m. We have of course contacted over 6,000 of our own shareholders and members already and been met with a warm, generous 'I've been waiting for this for years!' response. At the time of writing (mid July) £148,000 has already been raised and I hope you'll want to help too.



A Network Rail computer visualisation of the new bridge across the Midland Main Line. This view and the one on the opposite page are both looking south from the Nottingham Road bridge that spans the station. The only thing in common is the positioning of the tracks which seems not to have changed over fifty years.

Making a donation is always a personal choice. Every pound we raise in donations is a pound less we have to chase, and we are deeply grateful. What we need is strength in numbers - lots of people making their own contribution according to their means. We're running this appeal through the David Clarke Railway Trust which is the supporting charity of the GCR. If you are a UK taxpayer and can make the Gift Aid declaration, the government will top up what you give by 25%. It costs you nothing extra, but makes a substantial difference for us.

You can donate online using a credit/debit card at the GCR website. Head to www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify and click on the 'donate' button. Alternatively, if you prefer, on the same page you can download an appeal form, print it out, fill it in and send a cheque (made payable to the David Clarke Railway Trust) to 'Bridge to the Future' appeal, Lovatt House, 3 Wharnccliffe Road, Loughborough, Leics LE11 1SL. You can use

the form to set up a standing order to give on a regular basis. If you can't print off the form don't worry – just send the cheque!

By working together we can put back what should never have been taken away. Whatever support you can give, whatever spirit it is given in – either to see a heritage railway progress or to honour the legacy of the past - it is greatly appreciated. Ten years from now, could we see a new build GCR class 2 haul a train of wooden bodied carriages along a substantial length of the London extension? It's a vision that's worth chasing.

Thank you for your support. Forward!



BR Standard 5MT 4-6-0 no.73010 crosses the Midland Main Line at the south end of Loughborough Midland station in the Summer of 1963 with what could be a down inter-regional working using Southern stock. Note the group of spotters gathered on the right of the photo at the end of the bridge, including one small boy stood on the bridge abutment.

photo: T.G.Hepburn/Rail Archive Stephenson

Welcome to the following new members

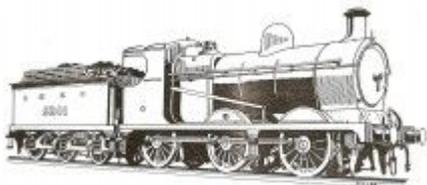
Mr G. W. Benson, Sheffield

Mr G.R. Jelly, Nottingham

Mr C. Mountney, Tidworth, Hampshire

Mr C. Moon, Tewksbury, Gloucestershire

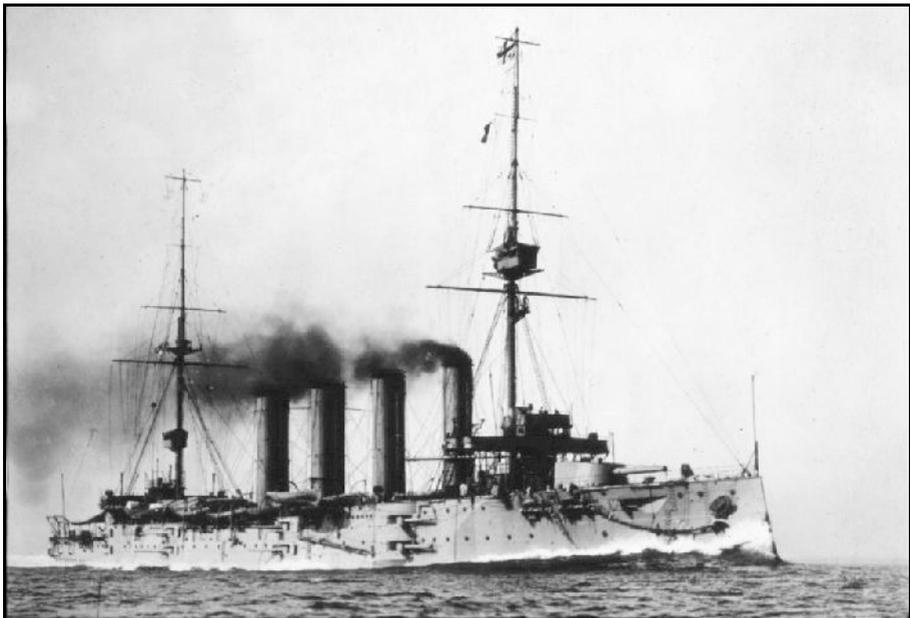
Mr A.E. Williamson, Sanday, Orkney



Great Central Great War Heroes Part 8: Britannia rules the waves by Ken Grainger

History books tell us that the Great War was triggered by the June 28th, 1914, assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo. That indeed was the spark that ignited the powder keg, but in truth the Great War was waiting to happen. Newly unified Germany, the new power on the world stage, was flexing her muscles and reaching out for a "Place in the Sun". Resentful France wanted revenge for her defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and to regain her lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Britain, as ever, was keen to maintain a highly advantageous *status quo*, but increasingly anxious about upstart Germany's growing industrial might and imperial aspirations. Above all, Britain felt threatened by the Kaiser's determination to match her naval strength. Not since Trafalgar, a full century before, had Britain's command of the seas been challenged. The unrivalled might of the Royal Navy had administered the *Pax Britannica*, maintained the links between Britain's widespread dominions, and protected her world-wide trade. But now the Kaiser was set on matching the strength of the Royal Navy by the creation of a High Seas Fleet and instigated an Edwardian arms race. Britain argued - not unreasonably - that her navy posed no threat to land power Germany, but that Germany's army, the most powerful in the world, would undoubtedly be a threat to her if she did not have naval supremacy. The stage was set.

At the outbreak of war, Germany just had one naval force away from home waters, Admiral Graf von Spee's Asiatic Squadron comprising the powerful modern cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* plus the light cruisers *Nurnberg*, *Leipzig* and *Dresden*. They were superbly worked up, noted for the excellence of their gunnery and crewed by picked men, but Britain was determined to eliminate them. In the widespread search east and west of Cape Horn, on November 1st, 1914, it was the misfortune of Rear-Admiral Christopher Cradock to meet them off the Chilean coast at Coronel, with his two obsolete Armoured Cruisers, *HMS Good Hope* and *HMS Monmouth*, both of which had been retired to the reserve before the war, but then recommissioned with ill-trained crews of reservists - which is how Great Central railwaymen became involved.



HMS Good Hope.

Cradock's only modern and regular manned warship was the light cruiser *HMS Glasgow*, but her thin armour and light armament were no match for *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*.

Christopher Cradock could have been under no illusion about the outcome when he sailed into battle against von Spee's squadron, but he knew that any damage he might be able to inflict, so far from any German dockyard facilities, would be fatal. The gods of war though were not with him and his men. With the British ships silhouetted against the afterglow of the setting sun and their German adversaries indistinct against the gathering gloom of the Chilean coast, an early hit put one of *Good Hope*'s two 9.2" guns - the only weapons capable of hurting von Spee's ships - out of action. An attempt to close the range to bring into action *Good Hope* and *Monmouth*'s 6" batteries - most of which were in casemates along their hulls and inoperable in the heavy seas - were thwarted as *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* stood off and continued the destruction. *Glasgow* could only escape to tell of the loss of *Good Hope* and *Monmouth*, from neither of which were any survivors. The dead included former Immingham tug fireman Able Seaman Samuel Henry Hammond and 35 year old former Grimsby Dock gateman Able Seaman James Thomas Sutton, a native of Wainfleet and the husband of Clara Sutton of 18 Rosegarth Street, Boston.

Their pre-war occupations were what might be expected of naval reservists but, less predictably, also lost with *Good Hope* was a former Leicester Goods Porter, 34 year old Able Seaman George William Jayes, the son of George and Hephzibah Jayes, of Leicester. His widow remarried to become Ethel Towe of 92 Willow Bridge Street, Leicester. Along with so many others for whom the sea is their grave, Samuel Hammond is commemorated on Panel 2 of the Chatham Naval Memorial, with George Jayes and James Sutton on Panel 2 of the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Stung into action by the defeat at Coronel, the Admiralty detached two of the Royal Navy's battlecruisers, *HMS Invincible* and *HMS Inflexible*, to avenge Cradock. With the fickleness of the gods of war, only one day after the battlecruisers had arrived for coaling at the Falklands on December 8th, 1914, von Spee hove into view, intent on one last raid before heading for home. By the time they recognised the battlecruisers' tripod masts it was too late. *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* valiantly stood at bay, trying to buy time for the light cruisers to escape, but were every bit as hopelessly outclassed as had been *Good Hope* and *Monmouth* at Coronel. Of von Spee's squadron, only *Dresden* survived that day, to be hunted down and sunk three months later.

Back in the North Sea, early naval clashes had done nothing to undermine Britain's confidence in her navy. In a cruiser action at the Heligoland Bight in August 1914, at a cost of damage to one British cruiser, three German cruisers were sunk with another three suffering either heavy or moderate damage. British dominance at sea was demonstrated by its ability to transport the Expeditionary Force across the Channel, then reinforce and keep it supplied throughout the war without molestation by the enemy, and by supporting troops near the coast by shellfire from shallow draft monitors. *HMS Severn* was engaged in support of the French and Belgians at Dixmunde in October and November, 1914, and it must have been during this period that 33 year old Able Seaman C.H. Winter, a former Sheffield Relayer and the son of William and the late Katherine Winter, was taken ashore suffering from either illness or injury, because *Severn* was refitting back at Chatham when he died on December 26th, 1914, and he was buried in Grave V.A.27 of Dunkirk Town Cemetery.

In January, 1915, only signalling confusion (communications were ever the bane in the Great War) rescued Hipper's battlecruisers after they had been intercepted by their British counterparts under Admiral Beatty. They escaped with just the loss of the *Blucher*, plus severe damage to *Seydlitz* which had her rear turrets burnt out and was only saved from destruction by the timely flooding of her aft magazine. That incident though would have repercussions a year later at Jutland. Warned by the near loss of *Seydlitz*, the Germans rapidly modified their ammunition hoists with inter-locking air-

tight doors, to prevent flash from stricken turrets reaching the magazines. The victorious and probably overconfident British sailed home still unconscious of their vulnerability.

The chickens came home to roost on May 31st, 1916, when intercepted signals, for which the Germans did not know the British had broken the code, revealed that the German High Seas Fleet was at sea. The British Grand Fleet steamed from Scapa Flow to reinforce Beatty's battlecruisers, and that evening the battle fleets finally met. The early exchanges resulted in the loss of three of the British battlecruisers from magazine explosions, with almost the total loss of each of their crews, prompting Admiral Beatty's laconic comment, "There's something wrong with our bloody ships today!" *HMS Indefatigable* blew up from what it was thought to be a magazine explosion caused by flash shooting down from a hit on X turret. *HMS Queen Mary* was ripped apart by an explosion in her forward magazines, and one of Christopher Cradock's avengers at the Falklands, *HMS Invincible*, suffered a magazine explosion after a shell had penetrated her midships Q turret. Among her many dead was 26 year old Stoker First Class William Lovett, formerly a Gorton Hand Driller and the son of Edward and Ellen Lovett of 18 Queen Street, Droylesden, Manchester. Needless to say he has no grave and is commemorated on Panel 18 of the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Twice brought to bay by Admiral Jellicoe's Dreadnoughts, Admiral Scheer, by a combination of good seamanship (they had practised well their "battle turn-away") and good fortune, managed to extricate the High Seas Fleet with just the loss of two capital ships, the battleship *Pommern* and the battlecruiser *Lutzow*. Some of the other German ships displayed great durability by surviving fearful damage and casualties. The *Derfflinger* limped back to Wilhelmshaven with all her guns disabled and her decks bloodied by the heaviest casualties of all Jutland's survivors, and the luckless (or lucky, depending on your viewpoint) *Seydlitz*, her decks awash and with her rear turrets again burned out, was only kept afloat by judicious counter-flooding. Unable to make it back to Wilhelmshaven, she had to be beached.



Ship's Writer Albert Dean and his ship HMS Black Prince.

As Jellicoe continued the pursuit through the night, vainly hoping to renew the battle the following day, there were further losses on the fringes of both battle fleets, including the armoured cruiser *HMS Black Prince* which found itself within a group of German battleships. Unaware of her peril, she innocently signalled a request for directions and was blasted to destruction by no less than five German battleships. There were no survivors, the dead including former Grimsby Fireman, 20 year old Stoker First Class Albert Vause, and Hyde Road clerk, 27 year old Ship's Writer Albert Dean, both commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial - Albert Vause on Panel 19 and Albert Dean on Panel 20. The son of Benjamin and Sarah Ellen Dean of 178 Park Road,

North Birkenhead, Albert Dean had joined the Great Central in 1903 as a clerk in the Traffic Manager's Office in Liverpool, transferring to Hyde Road shortly after the outbreak of war, but then joining *Black Prince* just a week before Jutland.

The battle fleets did not renew the contest the following morning, or indeed ever again. With the disparity of losses, the Germans claimed victory, but were fooling no-one. As a ditty of the day ran:

*The Germans cry aloud "We've won!"
But 'tis a strange to-do,
If they're the victors that run away
And those the vanquished that pursue.*

Jellicoe's Grand Fleet sailed back to Scapa Flow. The lost British ships and their crews were gone, mourned but hardly affecting the superiority in numbers. As the Germans extracted the horribly mutilated human remains from the torn and twisted metal of their ships, it would be many months before the High Seas Fleet could again be ready for sea. Knowing how very close to disaster they had come, Admiral Scheer privately insisted to the Kaiser that the German navy must henceforth concentrate on submarine warfare. There would be no further challenge to Britannia's rule over the waves during the war but beneath the waves was a different matter.

As early as September 5th, 1914, the scout cruiser *HMS Pathfinder* was returning to her Firth of Forth base after a patrol. Desperately short of coal, she was only making 5 knots and presented an easy target when she was spotted, within sight of land south east of May Island off St. Abb's Head, Berwickshire, by the German submarine U-21. *Pathfinder* became the first warship to be sunk by a submarine-fired torpedo, with heavy loss of life including former Grimsby Dock Gate Foreman, Stoker First Class John Joliffe. He is commemorated on Panel 5 of the Chatham Naval Memorial.

Then on 22nd September, 1914, the obsolescent armoured cruisers *HMS Hogue*, *HMS Aboukir* and *HMS Cressy* were patrolling the 'Broad Fourteens' off the Dutch coast. This regular patrol was of questionable value; even Admiral Jellicoe had advocated its cessation, and the seamen referred to themselves as "the live bait squadron". It was intended to be carried out by zigzagging fast, light cruisers, but the Royal Navy never had enough light cruisers and the seas were frequently too rough for the destroyers of the day, which were not comparable with their sleek, ocean-going successors of World War II. *Hogue*, *Aboukir* and *Cressy* were spotted plodding along, too slow to zigzag, by the German submarine U-9. She torpedoed *Aboukir*, and with what would later have been regarded as reckless naivety (though at first it was thought *Aboukir* might have struck a mine), *Hogue* and *Cressy* stopped to render assistance, offering themselves as sitting-duck targets to suffer the same fate as their consort. Those lost with *Hogue* included 38 year old Yeoman of Signals Louis Forsyth Statham, formerly Dock Gate Foreman at Grimsby Docks. Originally a Londoner, the son of John and Maria Emily Statham, he left widowed Florence G. Statham of 56 Durban Road, Grimsby. He is commemorated on Panel 8 of the Chatham Naval Memorial.

One of Germany's earlier submarines, U-9 with the outsize iron cross she was awarded on her conning tower, survived the war to be surrendered to the Royal Navy at its end, but her master did not survive. Rewarded for his feat by being given command of the new submarine U-29, Kapitanleutnant Otto Weddigen audaciously stole into the Pentland Firth on March 18th, 1915, but was spotted and rammed by the iconic British battleship *HMS Dreadnought*. There were no survivors.

It is perhaps understandable that *Aboukir* had initially been thought to have struck a mine. With the naval Great War being largely concentrated within the confines of the North Sea, mines were a major maritime weapon, with minelaying the primary function of Germany's UC-series submarines. On 9th March, 1917, *HMS Albacore*, one of the destroyers patrolling the approaches to the Grand Fleet's Scapa Flow base, struck a mine laid by the German submarine UC-44 off Kirkwall. Despite severe damage, with her

bows blown off, *Albacore* survived, but 17 of her crew did not, including one-time Marylebone Goods Porter, Stoker First Class Alfred Edwin Saunders, who lies in Grave B.59 of the Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery, Hoy, Orkney. UC-44 was destroyed later that year, ironically by the premature explosion of one of her own mines.

The Great Central's greatest loss to a mine was the SS *Leicester*, commandeered along with her crew as a naval stores carrier and on passage from Portsmouth to Cromarty when, at 10.30 on February 12th 1916, 2½ miles south east of Folkestone, she sank after striking a mine laid by the German minelaying submarine UC-6. Of her complement of twenty four, local fishing trawlers picked up and brought back into Dover just eight survivors, and one of them, Fireman Fred Barker, died of his injuries two days later. He, along with Steward John Cumblidge and 50 year old Able Seaman Alfred Dales, was brought home and laid to rest in Grimsby's Scartho Road Cemetery, in adjoining graves 42.D.5, 6 and 7. The remaining fourteen, including 15 year old Mess Room Boy Charles Larson and, at the other end of the spectrum, 58 year old Able Seaman George Edmonds, are commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial to the merchant seamen who "have no grave but the sea". A list of them is appended at the end of this article.

Another Great Central steamer, the SS *Bury*, which pre-war had plied the Grimsby - Hamburg route, had the misfortune to be in harbour at Hamburg at the outbreak of war. She was seized and her crew was interned at the Ruhleben civilian internment camp, to the west of Berlin between Spandau and Charlottenberg-Wilmersdorf. After wartime usage by the Germans on the Jade, *Bury* was returned to her owners in January, 1919, and continued to ply her trade until 1958, but not all of her crew came home. On June 1st, 1915, her 53 year old Chief Engineer, William Jackson died at the Schlachtensee Sanatorium near Berlin, where he had been taken suffering from tuberculosis and diabetes. He left a widow, two sons and a daughter. He had been in MS&L/Great Central service for 24 years since being appointed as the Second Engineer of SS *Huddersfield* on May 1st, 1891. Then on September 20th, 1915, *Bury's* 23 year old Second Steward Thomas Watkin died at Dr Weiler's sanatorium, Charlottenberg. The son of a Great Central stevedore, he had been in GC service since 1910. *Bury's* final loss, on December 21st, 1917, was her Captain, 53 year old Edward Russell, the much respected captain of the Ruhleben Internment Camp who had served the MS&L and the GC for 21 years, 10 of them as Master on Continental steamers. He lies at Spandau.

There were to be no big gun duels after Jutland, but the mines war claimed casualties from more modest craft engaged in the constant battle to keep the sea lanes open, with trawlers, drifters, even wooden paddle steamers, being pressed into service for the deadly business of minesweeping. On November 9th, 1916, the auxiliary paddle minesweeper *Fair Maid* (laid down for the North British Railway for service on the Clyde but purchased before completion by the Admiralty) was sunk near the Cross Sands buoy off Harwich by one of the mines sown by the submarine UC-18. Five of her crew died, including 34 year old Second Steward William Ewart Gladstone Conroy, formerly Head Waiter at Grimsby, the husband of Annie Conroy of 18 Park View, Cleethorpes. He is commemorated on Panel 20 of the Plymouth Naval Memorial. UC-18 was herself sunk in February 1917, by the *Lady Olive*, a 'Q' ship submarine-hunting armed merchantman.

Henry Watts, formerly Dock Gateman at Grimsby and latterly acting Berthing Master at the Fish Docks, joined the Royal Naval Patrol Section in February, 1917. He was killed on April 24th, 1917, serving as a Trimmer on HM Trawler *Gaul*. He was brought home to Cleethorpes Cemetery Grave C.T.5 but one wonders how his widow, Jane, and their six children would have felt about his death being reported as resulting from "a minor naval engagement in the North Sea". Within a week, on April 30th, 1917, HM Trawler *Arfon* struck a mine laid by the submarine UC-61 and sank off St. Alban's Head, Dorset, with the loss of ten of her crew, including former Grimsby Labourer 19 year old Trimmer Charles Henry Stephenson, the son of Alfred and Margaret Stephenson of 200 Barcroft Street, New Cleethorpes. He is commemorated on Panel 27 of the Chatham Naval

Memorial. UC-61 met its own end after becoming stranded north of Boulogne on July 26th, 1917.

Another paddle steamer co-opted for minesweeping was the Caledonian Steam Packet Co.'s PS *Duchess of Rothesay*, which served as HMPMS *Duchess*, based at Harwich. She survived to be returned to her owners after the war, and indeed to be called up again for service in World War II, but Lieutenant Charles Vernon Crossley DSC, the 34 year old former Chief Officer of Grimsby Docks' Portmaster's Dept. died on February 13th, 1918, though the circumstances of his death have not been established. He lies in Cleethorpes Cemetery's Grave G.D.6.

HM Drifter *Amiable* was a 1910 vintage Yarmouth vessel which also survived being called up in both World Wars, but her Engineman, 30 year old Harry Lockwood, formerly of the GC's Marine Dept. at Immingham and the husband of Ethel Lockwood of 129 Wellington Street, Grimsby, died in hospital on October 30th, 1918. He was brought home to Scartho Road Cemetery, Grave 43. C. 7.

HMS Seagull was an 1889 vintage torpedo gunboat which had been converted for minesweeping in 1909. She sank after colliding with a tramp steamer, the SS *Corrib*, in the Firth of Clyde on September 30th, 1918. The 53 dead included 19 year old Stoker Second Class Albert Edward Wheeler, formerly of Neasden Loco., the son of William John and Mary Kathleen Wheeler of 132 Carlyle Avenue, Stonebridge Park, Harlesden, London. He is commemorated on Panel 28 of the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

Deaths at shore bases or on board depot ships inevitably leave more questions than answers: illness or injury? And if injury, whether by accident or from hostile action? *HMS Vivid* was the Devonport barracks where 21 year old former Gorton Draftsman, Engine Room Artificer Fourth Class Wilfred Algernon Burfield died on February 13th, 1916. The son of Ethel S. Cockburn (formerly Burfield) of 164 Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells and the late F.G. Burfield, Wilfred Burfield lies in Grave Church S.3.13 of Plymouth's Ford Park Cemetery.

20 year old former Manchester Goods Clerk, Signaller James Longson, the son of James and Mary Jane Longson of Buxton Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith, was far from Devonport despite being on the strength of *HMS Vivid III*. He drowned on April 14th, 1918, and lies in Grave L.5 of the Port Said War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt.

A former Immingham Marine Dept. Trimmer, the 40 year old son of Henry and Hannah Mary Farr, George Herbert Farr died on October 30th, 1918, and lies in Grave 43. D. 8 of Grimsby's Scartho Road Cemetery. He had been Second Hand aboard *HMS Satellite*, an 1881 vintage steam-and-sail corvette relegated to Royal Naval Reserve drill ship and other harbour duties from 1904 until she finally ended her service in 1947.

There could be no more illustrious cap ribbon than *HMS Victory*, a title which encompassed Portsmouth naval barracks as well as Nelson's flagship. It was the final posting of 33 year old Deck Hand Herbert Moore, the husband of Francis B. Moore of Church Street, Goxhill and formerly employed by the Great Central at Grimsby Docks. He had earlier served on the SS *Remembrance*, alias SS *Lammeroo*, another of the navy's 'Q' ships, ostensibly defenceless merchantmen intended to lure U boats within range of their hidden guns, but in her case torpedoed in the Mediterranean by the German submarine LI-38 on August 14th, 1916. Herbert Moore died on November 9th, 1918, and was laid to rest in Goxhill (All Saints) churchyard, grave reference old ground 1208.

Just days after the end of hostilities, on November 14th, 1918, Electrician 5th Class C. Bennett died. He had been on the strength of *HMS Vernon*, the navy's torpedo training school, at that time housed in a group of old ships moored in Portchester Creek. Formerly of the Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Dept. at Gorton, he was brought back home to Gorton (St James) Churchyard Grave L.3.

23 year old Private William Entwistle of the 8th Battalion, Royal Marine Light Infantry, who died on July 1st, 1920, was the last naval loss to be commemorated, but again raises questions. He is buried in the north eastern part of the Castletown Berehaven (St. Finian's) Cemetery, County Cork, in the south west of Ireland, but the scout cruiser *HMS Active*, on the strength of which he is listed, had already been sold for breaking by then, if the date of his death is correct. *Active* had though been based at Queenstown during 1917, before ending the war in the Mediterranean. William Entwistle was the son of William and R. Entwistle of 213 Douglas Road, Sheffield and had formerly been employed in the Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Dept. in Sheffield.

As the 'Senior Service', the navy wasn't limited just to the war at sea. There was an independent Royal Naval Air Service until it merged with the Royal Flying Corps in April, 1918, to form the RAF. In the face of army disinterest the early development of tanks (as "landships") was by the navy, and, despite retaining naval ranks and traditions, the men of the Royal Naval Division fought alongside their army comrades as soldiers.

30 year-old Private Frank Dixon of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, the son of Henry and Sarah Dixon of Newton-on-Trent, and formerly a number taker and assistant shunter at Cresswell and Welbeck, has already been mentioned in *GC Great War Heroes part 7 - Workshop and Retford*. He died fighting with the Chatham Battalion of the Royal Naval Division's 3rd Brigade, defending the ANZAC beachhead at Gallipoli on May 3rd, 1915, and is commemorated on Panel 13 of the Chatham Naval Memorial. Also of the Royal Marine Light Infantry and the Royal Naval Division's 3rd Brigade, Portsmouth Battalion's Private Walter Arthur Garratt, formerly at Dukinfield Locomotive Carriage and Wagon, also became a casualty during the repelling of the determined Turkish attacks on the ANZAC beachhead during the first week of May, and was evacuated to Egypt. He died of his wounds on May 11th, 1915, and lies in Grave A.146 of the Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery.

On 6th May, 1915, 33 year old Stoker First Class (naval ranks didn't fit well with soldiering) William McKenzie of the Royal Naval Division's Hood Battalion, husband of Alice Maud McKenzie of 20 Jackson Street, West Marsh, Grimsby and formerly a coal tipper at Immingham, died in the division's 2nd Brigade attack along the Achi Baba Nullah, south of Krithia in Gallipoli - a costly failure with only minimal gains. The struggle for Krithia and the commanding eminence of Achi Baba was renewed on June 4th, with 2nd Naval Brigade again attacking over the same ground. They did have some



Leading Seaman George Spencer

initial success but were driven back by enfilade fire from their flank where the French attack had failed. The dead included Anson Battalion's former Rotherham shunter Able Seaman William James Bligh who, like William McKenzie, is commemorated on Panels 8 - 15 of the Helles Memorial.

After the evacuation of Gallipoli, by now reluctantly transferred from Admiralty to Army authority as the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division - but still stubbornly adhering to its naval traditions - the division arrived in France in time for the Somme. Leading Seaman George Spencer, like William Bligh formerly a Rotherham shunter, of 3rd Brigade's 188th Trench Mortar Battery had served at Gallipoli and, in September 1916, been awarded the Military Medal for having the presence of mind to snatch up and throw back a live grenade from his position, saving the lives of his comrades as well as his own. He was killed in the final phase of the Somme, the Battle of the Ancre, on November 13th, 1916, but has no known grave and is commemorated on Pier and Face 1A of the Thiepval Memorial.

In the April, 1917, Battle of Arras, the division moved into the line before Gavrelle and, in their April 23rd house-to-house taking of the village, Nelson Battalion's 31 year old former Hexthorpe Platelayer, Able Seaman Harry Parker, was among those killed. The son of the late James and Emma Parker of Gordon Street, Doncaster, and the husband of Elizabeth Spafford (formerly Parker) of Westgate, Tickhill, Harry Parker is yet another with no known grave and is commemorated on Bay 1 of the Arras memorial.

Howe Battalion's 35 year old Able Seaman J.H. Oldham, formerly a clerk in the Chief Accountant's Dept. at Ardwick, the son of Frederick and Annie Oldham of Glossop and husband of Sarah Oldham of 132 Daubney Street, New Cleethorpes, died of wounds on January 17th, 1918, and is buried in Grave X.B.9 of the Rocquigny-Equancourt Road British Cemetery, Manancourt. His wounds were probably incurred in the latter stages of the Battle of Cambrai when, on December 30th and 31st, the Germans launched a surprise attack on Welsh Ridge, on the southern flank of the Cambrai front.

Former Birkenhead Goods Porter Able Seaman William Platt of the Anson Battalion died on April 6th, 1918, as the German *Kaiserschlacht* offensive was finally brought to a halt at Villers-Bretonneux. He has no known grave and is commemorated on Panel 1 of the Pozieres Memorial.

The 63rd (Royal Naval) Division continued in action right up to the end of the war, its last two former Great Central railwaymen to fall both dying on August 25th, 1918, in the final drive across the old Somme battlefields. Both Hawke Battalion's Leading Seaman William Atkinson, formerly with Thompson McKay at Barnsley, and Anson Battalion's 19 year old Able Seaman Charles Wood, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wood of 3A Waterhouse Place, Glossop and formerly of the Traffic Dept. at Glossop, are commemorated on Panels 1 and 2 of the Vis-en-Artois Memorial. As with so many of their comrades and as is cruelly the norm for sailors, neither has a known grave.



Headstones at Scartho Road Cemetery Cleethorpes. Left to right: Steward John Cumblidge, Fireman Fred Barker and Able Seaman Alfred Dales. All died when the SS *Leicester* sank off Folkestone.

Those lost with the SS *Leicester* on February 12th, 1916, and listed on the Tower Hill Memorial to Merchant Seamen who "have no grave but the sea", are given below.

Fireman	Arthur George	Wringe	51	Born at Brightlingsea, the husband of Ellen Wringe (nee Osman) of 10 Stirling Street, Grimsby.
Fireman	Harry Clark	Smith	53	Born at Ely, the son of the late William and Rhoda Smith.
Fireman	Edward	Shepherd	31	The Grimsby born son of Martha and the late John Lewis Shepherd, and husband of Mary Jane Shepherd (nee Marfleet) of 1 Lyndhurst Terrace, Cleethorpes
Fireman	Arthur	Parker	43	Born at Dunham Market, the son of Susan and the late Henry Parker, and husband of the late Lillian Parker (nee Raworth).
Mess Room Boy	Charles Baden	Larson	15	Born at Gorleston-on-Sea, the son of the late William Larson and Eva Violet Coo (formerly Larson) of 32 Levington Street, Grimsby.
First Donkeyman	A	Hudson	52	Born at Muckton, Louth, the son of the late Thomas Hudson and Mary Bush Hudson, of 27 Queen Street, Grimsby.
Second Donkeyman	A	Hollingsworth	22	The Grimsby born son of Joseph and Kate Hollingsworth, and husband of Elizabeth Hollingsworth (nee Webster) of 31 Tennyson Street, Grimsby.
Able Seaman	George Herbert	Harrington	26	The Grimsby born son of Thomas and Eliza Harrington, Back of 13 Grimsby Road, New Cleethorpes.
Second Officer	Ernest	Hague	39	Born in Hull, the son of the late John William and Eliza Hague, and husband of Sarah Ann Hague (nee Wilson) of 15 Victoria Avenue, Wellstead Street, Hull.
Fireman	Edward	Goodey	32	Grimsby born, the son of the late Jonathan Goodey and husband of Harriet Goodey (nee Johnson) of 28 Phelps Street, New Cleethorpes.
Able Seaman	George Edward	Edmonds	58	Born in Brighton, the son of the late George and Emma Edmonds.
Second Engineer	Ernest	Cosman	41	Born in Hull, the son of Eliza and the late John Cosman, husband of Sarah Annie Cosman (nee Pyman) of 136 Legsby Avenue, Grimsby.
First Engineer	Robert	Charlton	44	The son of Elizabeth and the late George Brown Charlton, husband of Miriam Charlton (nee Stapleton) of 172 Wellholme Road, Grimsby.
Ship's Cook	Gerhard Frederick William	Brumund	42	The Grimsby born son of the late Henry and Betty Brumund, and the husband of Frances Annie Brumund (nee Coleman) of 48 Crow Hill Avenue, Cleethorpes

On Great Central lines today **by Kim Collinson**

On the 7th May 37516 and 47580 were observed in the Siemens TransPennine depot at Ardwick after bringing stock from Carnforth for tyre turning. It was also noted that the depot sidings now have overhead electrification masts erected.

Saturday 25th May saw an excursion from Aberystwyth to Hull pass through Guide Bridge at 20:58 top and tailed by 57313/57316.

In June there were a couple of treble headed freight workings through Guide Bridge. On the 15th the 13:38 Leeds FLT to Crewe was worked by 66572/70007/66527. Then on Friday 21st 70003/66520/70015 worked a Crewe to Leeds Hunslet sidings conveying one empty MGR hopper!

Over the weekend commencing the 15th June the now closed Guide Bridge signal box (formerly Ashton Junction) was demolished. This now leaves Dinting as the last remaining conventional signal box on GC lines in the Manchester area.

Class 37 locos were very active on test and inspection specials over the GC in the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire areas during May. 37423 worked to Tinsley and Deepcar on the 21st, then the following day was seen at Scunthorpe and Brigg. 37259/37607 worked through Mexborough on the 23rd and on the 13th June 37419/97304 worked another test train, again from Doncaster to Deepcar.

The year 2013 was the 100th anniversary of stainless steel manufacture in Sheffield and as part of the celebrations for this event, possibly the most unusual event to have occurred on GC lines and sidings took place between the 12th and 17th June. On Wednesday 12th preserved 'Merchant Navy' 35028 *Clan Line* was hauled in light steam by 66174 from Stewarts Lane to Tinsley arriving just after 15:00 hrs. Over the next three days the loco was in steam shunting wagons from Outokumpu Bar Mill to the exchange sidings and the upper head shunt making between 8 and 12 trips daily with loads of 400 tons. Despite the growth of vegetation and site security it was still possible to get some photos of this unique event.

Further good news at Tinsley is that there is a new flow of aggregate traffic from Bardon Hill to the recently opened stone terminal which has been built on land where the express freight sidings were at Shepcote Lane. The first train ran on the 6th June worked by 66607 - the first time that Freightliner has worked traffic into Tinsley yard. Further developments took place at Tinsley when on Friday 19th June 60062 ran light from Toton and on Saturday 19th was named *Stainless Pioneer* in the Stainless Precision and Coil Expansion plant. These works have also had their rail connection restored which has resulted in a short section of the former Sheffield District Railway being brought back into use as a headshunt to access the yard sidings. It has also been reported that the former hump control tower at Tinsley has been given listed building status as possibly the only one of its type still remaining. These developments at Tinsley are an incredible turnaround for the yard which could so easily have closed completely not so long ago.

Saturday 22nd June saw a railtour from Bristol to the Leeds area routed via GC lines in the Sheffield area via Woodhouse, Sheffield, Woodburn Junction, Rotherham Central and Thrybergh, top and tailed by 60019 and 66148.

On Wednesday 26th June a Network Rail inspection saloon was worked by 47853 over the Penistone branch from York to the Manchester area.

On the 3rd July 37402 was engaged on Network Rail track testing and line-proving runs between Doncaster and Hatfield prior to the partial reopening of the route from the 8th July with full services expected to resume at the end of the month after the line was blocked by the colliery landslip.

The long stored Network Rail engineering wagons at Guide Bridge Avenue sidings were finally moved during July to Doncaster. These sidings are now empty, but Brookside sidings are still in regular use as a stabling point for the Manchester area waste trains

and also for aggregate wagons for local terminals as well as the location of a maintenance depot for track machines.

On Monday 8th July the GC route via Stainforth was reopened after the colliery landslip at Hatfield with both freight and passenger workings fully restored to their booked route from the end of the month. During the line's closure the diversions via the Brigg route saw an intensive service. For example on the 28th June at Kettleby level crossing the following were observed over a short time: 66531 at 10:36 (west), 66069 at 10:44 (east), 66135 at 10:56 (west), 66595 at 11:13 (west), 66172 at 11:22 (east), 66165 at 11:37 (west) and 66548 at 12:05 (west). TransPennine Express class 185 units have also appeared with one service each way on Saturdays (see photo on p21).

Commencing each Friday, 26th July until the second week in September, steam hauled charter specials are again running between Crewe and Scarborough and return via Guide Bridge. 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland* worked the first one, this being followed on the 2nd August by A4 Pacific 60009 *Union of South Africa*, both diesel 47580 on the rear due to the risk of lineside fires.

Overhead electrification catenary and wiring has now been installed at the Siemens depot at Ardwick in connection with electrification of routes west of Manchester. Ardwick will be the maintenance depot for the new electric traction.

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.

Model railway exhibition diary

Some events that may interest our readers

Sat 14th & Sun 15th Sept: EM Gauge Society at George H Carnell Leisure Centre, Davyhulme, Greater Manchester M41 7FJ. www.emgs.org

Sat 14th & Sun 15th Sept: Glossop & District MRC at Bradbury House, Market Street, Glossop SK13 8AR.

Sat 21st & Sun 22nd Sept: Model Rail Live at Newark Showground, Lincoln Road, Newark NG24 2NY. www.modelraillive.co.uk

Sat 28th & Sun 29th Sept: Soar Valley MRC at Charnwood College, Thorpe Hill, Loughborough LE11 4SQ. www.svmrc.co.uk

Sat 28th & Sun 29th Sept: Scalefour Society at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury HP21 9PP. www.scalefour.org

Sat 5th Oct: Manchester MRS at The Armitage Centre, Moseley Road, Manchester M14 6ZT. www.mmrs.co.uk

Sat 12th & Sun 13th Oct: The Elizabethan Railway Society at The Summit Centre, Pavilion Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 7LL. www.elizabethanrailwaysociety.co.uk

Sat 19th & Sun 20th Oct: National Festival of Railway Modelling at the East of England Showground. Oundle Road, Peterborough PE2 6XE. www.model-railways-live.co.uk

Sat 26th & Sun 27th Oct: Hazel Grove MRC at Hazel Grove Recreation Centre, Jacksons Lane, Stockport SK7 5JX. www.hgdmsr.org.uk

Sun 27th Oct: Woodthorpe MRC at Sherwood Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG5 3FN. www.woodthorpemodelrailwayclub.co.uk

Sat 2nd Nov: High Wycombe & District MRS at Cressex Community School, Cressex Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 4UD. www.hwdmsr.org.uk

Sat 2nd Nov: St Peter's Church Braunstone MRS at St Peter's Church, Woodshawe Rise, Leicester LE3 1RH.

Sat 2nd & Sun 3rd Nov: Barnsley MRC at Hoyland Leisure Centre, West Street, Hoyland, Barnsley S74 9HE. www.barnsleymrc.org.uk



First TransPennine Express diesel unit 185 110 passes through Kiveton Park as the 10:20 Sheffield-Cleethorpes via Gainsborough Central on Sat. 8th June 2013. This Saturday only service operated from 25th May to 6th July during the Hatfield Colliery landslip engineering work. *photo: Bob Gellatly*



'Merchant Navy' no.35028 *Clan Line* took a break from hauling Pullman coaches on VSOE specials in order to haul steel ingots around the Outokumpu steel works alongside the former Tinsley yard in Sheffield on Sat. 15th June 2013. This was a private event for employees only. *photo: Paul Beardsley*



The 'Pennine Limited Railtour' at Sheffield Victoria. On Sat. 19th September 1964, the LCGB ran a railtour from St. Pancras to Marylebone with quite an ambitious itinerary involving no less than six different locomotives. Class A1 4-6-2 no.60128 *Bongrace* is standing at platform 4 having brought the train from Peterborough East into platform 3 where class EM1 Bo+Bo no. 26000 is coupling on to take the train to Guide Bridge. The LCGB headboard has already been transferred. Some of the passengers have alighted onto the platform to observe the change over from steam to electric traction. The chimneys of the Royal Victoria Hotel can be seen above the platform canopy on the right. The full tour itinerary and locomotive details can be found on that excellent website www.sixbellsjunction.co.uk.
photo: Robert Carroll Collection

Some recent items from Great Central Railwayana Auctions

The next auction will be held at Stoneleigh Park on Sat. 12th Oct. 2013.



Locomotive nameplate, CITY OF LINCOLN, from the GCR class 1 (LNER B2) 4-6-0 no. 424 (LNER 5424). Withdrawn at Immingham in Nov. 1945. Sold for **£8,500**.



Yorkshire Engine Co. Meadow Hall Works no. 858 of 1906. From GCR class 9J (LNER J11) 0-6-0 no. 1115 (later nos. 6115, 4395 and 64395). Withdrawn at Retford in Jan. 1962. Sold for **£500**.



North British Locomotive Co. Hyde Park Works no.22017 of 1918. From ROD 2-8-0 no. 1959. Later LNWR 2947, LNER 6304 /3829 and BR 63829. Withdrawn at Langwith Jct March 1964. Sold for **£360**.



A boundary post between the MS&L and the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation. Double sided, 30½" high. Sold for **£620**.



A Great Central Railway 6¾" china tea plate from one of the company's inspection saloons. Sold for **£290**.

Memories of the Buckley Branch by Bryony Reynolds

During the mid 1950s my father used to take me with him to watch the trains going by as it was one of his main interests in life, so he must have been very pleased when his daughter became as equally interested in trains. On many occasions my father would meet me from school in Chester and we would go by Corporation bus from Handbridge to Chester General Station. Here we would be entertained by the numerous locomotives going to and fro about their duties, ex-LMS types were in profusion closely followed by ex-GWR types, interspersed by the odd LNER loco, mostly B1 types. Afterwards we would catch a train home alighting at Penyffordd, mother being anxious as to why we were so late.

However I digress. After visits to the LNER Penyffordd station our interests were diverted to Buckley Junction where we became quite friendly with all the staff there; Tommy Ellis, Harold Reeves, Harry Webb and the Station Master Mr Longland. We would eagerly await the arrival of the Buckley shunter from off the branch later on in the evening; the train was composed of lots of different loaded wagons to be shunted into the sidings at the station for various destinations around the country such as Sheffield, Liverpool, Guide Bridge, Hawarden Bridge, Mold, Denbigh, Holyhead, Wrexham etc.

The guard/shunter Harold Reeves would go across to the booking office and telephone the signalman, usually one Russell Pritchard, who generally responded in a broad Buckley dialect, "What's you got on 'Arold?"

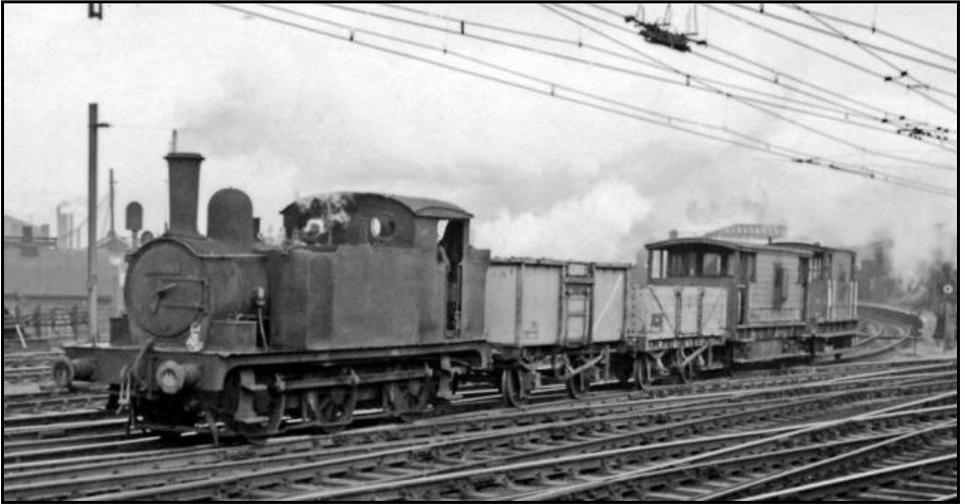
Mr. Reeves would reply, "Aye, ee, ok, no, ten POs, three for the bridge, aye, put them on the down loop, ok, four across the road in up loop then the rest for the yard. Oh, aye, and four for 'Ope Junction".

Of course, this was all double Dutch to me, whether dad understood I do not know. I used to like sitting in the waiting room where there always seemed to be a lovely warm fire, amidst the aroma of disinfectant and paraffin oil burning away in the lamps. Passengers arriving and leaving, tickets being issued, the stomp, stomp of the ticket punch in the booking office, men going to work - usually Summers' Works at Shotton for 1/- return or 2/- return to Wrexham Central. How cosy, friendly and secure things used to seem in those days - as if nothing would change.

One evening Mr Downey the guard in charge of the train that week observed our interest in the on goings and enquired as to whether we were interested in having a trip on the train down to Connah's Quay. I eagerly shouted, 'Yes,' in total disbelief that Mr. Downey would even suggest a trip. Of course, my father was also invited. We were to meet the train at Buckley Old Station at about 12 o'clock on the forthcoming Saturday and we were to bring our butties with us.

We arrived at Buckley Old earlier than arranged and looked forward to the trip with eager anticipation. The train finally arrived, hauled by an ex-GER 0-6-0 tank engine (*class J67/1 no.68584 and class J69/2 no.68531 were shedded at Rhosddu at the time - editor*), dragging behind it an assortment of wagons and two brake vans. Whilst the loco did a bit of shunting, we made ourselves at home in the van where we were joined by the guard and shunter. After the engine had taken water from the water tank aside the Drury Lane bridge, permission was given for the driver to proceed along the line passing Shone's brickyard and then over towards Standard pipe works where two coal wagons were dropped off for the Gas Works and three shock-wagons containing pipes from the Standard for shipping from Connah's Quay Docks.

I was amazed at how rough riding the brake van was, lurching and bouncing as if it was running over the sleepers only, and so awfully noisy one had to shout to make oneself heard. I expected to hear some enthusiastic talk about railways and locomotives but there was none, only idle men's chatter as to how Wrexham or Chester football team would go on in the local FA match - how boring I thought.



Ex-GER Holden class J69 0-6-0T no.68571 with a short pick-up goods near Stratford on 23 Dec 1959. With a change of location this could be the Buckley branch pick-up! photo: © Ben Brooksbank

Then we passed the junction for the line up to Church Road, Ashton's Branch and the Old Mountain Colliery. Only the morning train went up there hauling coal wagons for Jim Wainwright to load for distribution to his customers of house coal - he delivered by horse and cart.

On past Davison's 'top' and down over Liverpool Road bridge on a very steep gradient passing the Brick and Tile works, passing the General Refractories brickworks then passing the signal, which happened to be against us, but stopping short of St. Mary's Crossing that was controlled by the signal that we had passed.

The shunter disappeared along a short branch siding to Parry's brickworks whilst the guard went to Castle Brick sidings to look for any wagons that needed taking out for our train. The engine left us and reversed into Parry's siding, emerging after a while with several wagons, one of which contained a sloppy slurry substance which I was told was fireclay for Shotton Iron Works to use in the furnaces. This load was then attached to our train which was by now becoming quite lengthy. Before receiving the right of way the driver and the shunter dropped their tea cans off at the crossing keeper's cottage to be collected on our return from Connah's Quay.

Slowly we trundled on along the Branch which was now becoming more rural in nature. Long grass and weeds abounded along the line, there being no ballast between the tracks at all, instead the track was embedded in ashes from all the brick kilns en route. This was where I became aware that this line once belonged to the Great Central Railway Company - their signs reading, 'Trespassers will be prosecuted fine 40/- or one month in prison.' Of course no one seemed bothered by this and locals used the track as a public right of way.

We then went onto a high wooden trestle bridge spanning the old A55 road which seemed quiet in those days compared with now. On we rattled through cuttings, under a road bridge and after a few hundred yards on, the engine whistling loudly and came to a stand at which I was told was Northop Hall sidings. At this location about three wagons of coal and one of bricks were detached and then shunted into a siding for the local coal merchant and a builder to empty; we then collected the empties and attached them to our train. Here we crossed Bryngwyn Lane, the engine again whistling loudly whilst we crossed the lane.

It was now downhill all the way to Connah's Quay, no steam being used and the engine's

safety valve erupting violently releasing all that pent up, unused power from the boiler. Indeed at times the engine gave a few loud puffs of steam from the chimney to overcome the resistance of the train's brakes which had been applied to save the loco from gathering speed down the incline. But in spite of all attempts to retard progress we still gathered speed and by now the guard was screwing down the brake van's handbrake ably assisted by the loco's brakes.

The track had become invisible due to all the vegetation growing between the rails and along the trackside, but what a wonderful atmosphere it created and travelling through what I discovered later were Wepre Woods - delightful countryside indeed.

The train was by now crossing over the Mold Road bridge, the road having or being on an 'S' bend with blind corners on both sides of the bridge. The scenery was now changing to a more industrial atmosphere. Prince's brickworks on our right side but as there being no wagons to pick up we did not stop.

The view in front was of John Summers Steelworks with dozens of chimneys belching out smoke and fumes. To our left, construction of Connah's Quay coal fired power station was taking place - cooling towers and brickwork including all the electrical paraphernalia.

Then passing a council estate we finally came to a stand opposite the old Buckley Railway Company's engine shed and water crane situated almost opposite Railway Terrace/Cable Street on Connah's Quay hill. The tracks going to our left went to the rear of Connah's Quay railway station whilst to our right the line ran under the main road on a steep grade.

Positioned on this line was an 0-6-0 tank locomotive which shunted the docks. It was known as the 'Docker' and was only about eleven feet tall, thus suitable for this job due to all the low bridges. Then our loco drew forward after detachment from our train. The brake van unhooked which then ran forward under its own gravity into a siding alongside Railway Terrace. Our engine then collected the other wagons from in front of the 'Docker' which in turn picked up our train and took its load onto the dockside to be shunted into various sidings at the docks. Meanwhile our engine and train stopped at the water column to take on water and the driver oiled the loco. Afterwards we picked up the brake van from the sidings head shunt.

Signs of where the old loco shed had stood were quite easily observed by the location of the pit where the engine would stand after its daily duty. The ash pan would then be cleaned out, smoke box emptied of ash and the engine's big ends, eccentrics and the rest of the valve gear would be lubricated in readiness for the next day's duty. It would probably be 'coaled up' from a coal wagon standing alongside.

Davy Walter Jones was the driver on this occasion; he lived in Church Road, Buckley. He told my father his hobby was gardening and that he loved his work as an engine driver. He was employed as a driver at Rhosddu Shed in Wrexham (6E code) where he had worked up through the ranks and links. Now in the Passenger Links he had been transferred to Rhosddu on the closure of Buckley Old engine shed where he had started at the age of fourteen as an engine cleaner and other jobs. He was an out and out Great Central man and his Class 9K (LNER C13) 4-4-2 tank was the best passenger tank engine ever built, that was until the BR Standard class 2 2-6-2 tank came to Wrexham to replace the C13s.

In 1955 or so he was sixty-five and had to retire from the railway. He was heartbroken and following a stroke passed away shortly afterwards. The shed at Connah's Quay was where the 'Docker' was stabled and it apparently closed at the same time as the Buckley Old shed around 1915, whether these facts are correct or not I don't know. However, getting back to the story of our journey, the fireman by now was putting a good fire on and building up the steam pressure in order to have the power to climb the banks back up to Buckley and on to Wrexham. The fireman and driver worked as a team and by now

a good head of steam, with the engine blowing off at the safety valves, meant we were ready to set off for Wrexham. Instructions from the Guard were received and the next stop was Mary's Crossing (named after the crossing keeper) near Northop Hall.

The start from Connah's Quay was indeed a big struggle for the engine due in part to our load of eight wagons plus a brake van and a greasy rail even though the sanders were working quite effectively. By the time we reached Mold Road Bridge the train was moving quite smartly with the driver giving the little engine some hammer in an effort to get a decent turn of speed to climb the steep bank ahead ranging from 1 in 30 to 1 in 45. These gradients were average until we got to somewhere near Ashton's Branch junction.

We stopped for our butties and mugs of tea at St Mary's Crossing at Northop Hall, did a bit of shunting at the Castle Brick sidings then climbing all the time we arrived at Buckley Brick and Tile where some more loaded wagons were picked up. From here on there were problems and the gallant little engine had to half its load thus taking a few wagons up to Davison's, dropping them off in a siding and then going back down to the Brick and Tile to collect the remainder of the wagons. Some more shunting was done at the Standard collecting some eight or nine shock wagons loaded and packed with pipes - straw bales added to the wagons so as not to be broken when rough shunted.



The 'Docker' - Robinson's class J63 0-6-0ST no.68209 at Connah's Quay.

photo: unknown

The loco's water tanks were replenished at Buckley Old, a bit more shunting took place there and after a phone call or two to Buckley Junction signal box and one to the porter at Buckley Junction we sadly bade our farewells to all the train crew and the train trundled out of sight.

I look upon those times with great happiness. I am the last person alive to travel on a steam engine the entire length of the Buckley Railway from Buckley Junction to Connah's Quay. Now those days have gone forever only to leave the remnants of what was once a railway overgrown with trees and weeds and the proud industries of Buckley's past long gone.

From Northop Hall (Bryngwyn Lane) to Connah's Quay was thereafter used for wagon storage until they were scrapped. Sadly the entire line went in 1965. (LNER = Lost and Never Ever Returning!)

Arrivals on the bookshelf

"Railway Women. Exploitation, Betrayal and Triumph in the Workplace" by Helen Wojtczak

Published by the Hastings Press
(www.hastingspress.co.uk), 2005 at £30.
ISBN 1-904-109-907. Hardback, 376 pages.

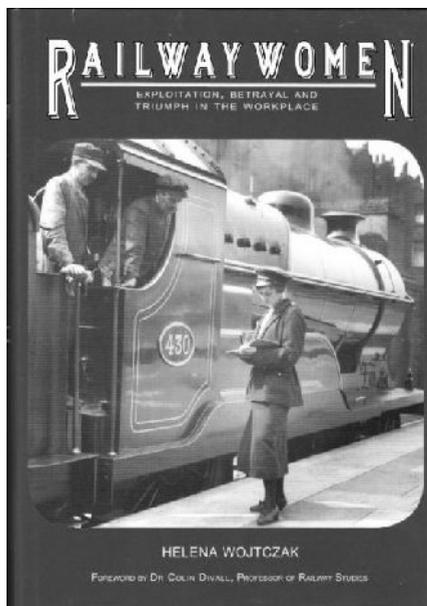
This is an esoteric book and one not likely to appeal to many enthusiasts. It is, however, an outstanding contribution to railway literature. Ranking alongside Terry Coleman's 1965 book *The Railway Navvies*, it deals comprehensively with the history of women in the British railway workforce. The book's title sums up the story eloquently and accurately.

The author was the first woman to be employed as a guard by British Rail. She parted company with Connex after a 21 year career in circumstances which are, perhaps, a metaphor for the attitudinal conditions which railway women have had to work under. Two typical examples are recorded on pages 80 and 81. The first was a dispute with the GCR about a prohibition on confidential clerks joining the Railway Clerks Association. Ostensibly, the ban was to prevent female employees joining the militant suffragette movement, members of which had caused what, today, would be regarded as terrorist damage to railway property. Some shorthand typists at Marylebone joined the RCA. They were asked to resign from the Association but refused. The typists were then moved to other work with a cut in pay. Fay denied victimisation. The RCA then had the matter raised in the Commons in 1915. Fay wrote to all MPs criticising the RCA for wasting time and energy that ought to have been devoted to the war. The RCA regarded the matter as one of principle affecting thousands whose promotional prospects might be affected. The ban was eventually lifted by the GC.

The second incident had a much sourer ending. A Manchester typist asked if women could obtain the war bonus paid to men. Albert Leigh, the Chief Assistant to the Audit Accountant told her that the men had agitated for the bonus. She retorted that women could agitate too whereupon she was told that the company did not want agitators and that women needed husbands, not bonuses. William Stott, writing in the RCA journal alleged bullying and intimidation by Leigh. The latter sued Stott, the RCA, the publisher and the printer for libel. The author says that the typist "possibly under threat of losing her job" swore that the conversation was "jocular". Leigh was awarded £600 in damages.

Fay also gains a mention on page 86 in relation to minimum pay rate compliance by companies which he represented.

The book is written in a scholarly yet readable style. Each chapter is supported by ample footnotes and statistical tables. There is a full bibliography although the index might seem to be on the thin side. This is because, comprehensive as it is, it does not refer to individual railway companies in the way that the railway enthusiast market would expect. Of course, this is not really a book for railway enthusiasts at all. Rather, it is a serious study of social inequality and injustice in a specific industry. Lest it be thought, though, that the book is no more than a feminist polemic, in the mind of this reviewer it is nothing of the sort. When reading the book there were three or four occasions when



the reviewer felt that on turning the page the argument would develop into a statement of hard line feminism. On each occasion, exactly the opposite occurred. The narrative continued as a balanced exposition of the subject matter. There is no doubt that the author prizes both scholarship and intellectual fairness. The book is a work of which she can be justly proud.

What is there in the book, then, for the Great Central enthusiast? As usual, it depends on one's taste. In addition to the entries referred to above there is an image on p59 of Edith Addison, the first woman on the GCR to receive a bravery award. On pp60 & 75 there are photographs of parcel porters using mechanical trolleys. The captions assert that they are GER employees but their cap badges seem to be of the GCR scroll type. There is the station mistress lighting a lamp at Beaconsfield Golf Links on the GWR/GCR joint line (p67), a points woman at Marylebone (p76), the drudgery of the clerk at Dinting (p84), a signalwoman flagging (p95) and another working a lever frame, (p96). On the front of the dust jacket is an image of class 11E no. 430 *Purdon Viccars* at Marylebone about 1916. The two footplatemen are looking down on the female number taker. Throughout the text there are various related references covering the GC territory in both pregrouping and postgrouping days. However, such specific references are likely to trivialise the work as a whole. It is important to remember that the Great Central was just one element in a nationwide transport industry. Women employed in it faced hostility from management, unions and male employees across the board from the beginning through to recent times. No doubt there are still pockets of such prejudice today.

This book ought to be essential reading for anyone seriously interest in the social impact of railways, not just the role of women in them. It is highly recommended.

Andrew West

"Great Central the Remains of a Railway"

Published by the University of Nottingham, Department of Adult Education, 1980. Paperback 169 pages.

This is a study of the remains of the GC London Extension from Robin Hoods Hill at Annesley Woodhouse to what was then the end of the preserved GC at Rothley. It was produced in a limited edition of 50 copies.

The 'authors' were a team of nine under the tutorship of Ian Duncan. I was lucky enough to be designated photographer (it was the whole thing in those days: buy bulk film, load cassettes, take photos, develop and print) and the book contains a note on the obverse of the title page giving me sole copyright to them. I was asked if I wanted the 'plates' as well but we decided to present them to Ian Duncan and their whereabouts now (if they have survived) is anyone's guess. Several of our team were elderly (as indeed I am now) and have sadly passed on.

I hold all the print negatives for this book and along with the text I have reproduced it digitally for anyone who is interested. I also hold the 'Engineers Day-Book' which was quoted extensively in the book. It was produced by (most likely) a junior engineer working for Logan and Hemingway during the building of the railway as far as Nottingham, obviously hand written with drawings and tracings. It was authenticated by Guy Hemingway at a meeting in 1980. Again this has been digitised. This book is, of course, unique and on my demise it will pass to the NRM.

Back in 1980 I was a member of the Nottingham branch of the GCRS and re-discovering this book and the work involved in digitising it has re-kindled my memories and fondness for the GCR.

I have not yet finalised the costs but if you are interested in having a copy of 'Great Central the Remains of a Railway' or the 'Engineer's Day Book' in digital form, then please contact me at brubaker45@gmail.com.

Bruce Baker-Johnson

Cleethorpes - A moneyspinner for the GCR

by Bryan Longbone

150 years back saw the arrival of the railway into Cleethorpes itself. Prior to this any trippers or excursionists walked, carted or trapped down from New Clee or Grimsby Docks station. In order to commemorate to some degree this event, I have selected certain times within the rail history of the resort prior to WW1, in the main, highlighting key areas, namely the "trippers" and was it "Sheffield-by-the-Sea"?

The following is more episodic than narrative but it emphasises the gains by the railway at the time, like many another railway seaside resort around these shores.

First a bit of background. The population of the place was 497 in 1831 which had increased to 803 ten years later including "a lodging house keeper and two innkeepers". Certainly not bustin' at the seams. A single line of rail was laid from Grimsby in 1863. From 1851 to 1861 the population went up by 47% and a further 43% in the following decade to 1871.

A brief outline of what the railway spent and built:

1872: Formation of Cleethorpes Pier Company. The pier was built soon after.

1873-4: The railway line doubled.

1881: MSLR Act of Parliament. A scheme of improvement included enlarging the passenger station, baths, waiting rooms and paying £1,670 for 17 acres of property in 1882.

1883 onwards: The sea defences were better secured, costing of the order of £33,000, some large stones and rocks coming out of the Frodingham iron ore mines to this effect.

1884: Act of Parliament. The MSLR bought the lease out on the pier

1904: The promenade was lit up, ornamental gardens were laid down, swimming baths, refreshment rooms, three colonnades of shops, restaurant and photo studio, with a figure quoted of about £10,000.

1885: Ross Castle, a sham ruin, built. Ross being the Secretary of the MSLR. Timber groynes and a pavilion built on the pier head were more additions to the river bank (which in reality is what it is).

1891: The extension to the sea wall was began this year.

1892: The MSLR invested £4 500 in 33 acres, being the remaining stretch of foreshore not owned by them between Cleethorpes and Grimsby.

By about 1900 the railway had spent more than £100,000 on the resort and 30,000 people had visited the resort in a single day. Ten years previously the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (which amalgamated with others to become the NUR during WW1), had a weekend event in Grimsby and Cleethorpes for fundraising, railway orphan and general recruiting purposes, which their journal reports that 41,000 attended over the weekend.

The GNR had come out with a guide to the resorts it served during the 1890s, "Few watering-places have made such rapid advances during later years, and the grand promenade of nearly a mile, partially overlooked by the beautifully laid out Cliff Gardens, the covered colonnade, fine refreshment-rooms, and last, but not least, its light and lengthy pier, with a spacious covered pavilion and refreshment-room at the pier head will doubtless tend to increase development of this favourite little resort". The description sounds a little like the present day Torquay!

For the following information I have accessed the MSLR files in the Public Records Office. It appears that the railway did a passenger/visitor analysis covering the period May to October, 1887, after money had been spent on developments.

To Cleethorpes from MSLR stations:

91,210 singles, 9,150 returns and 127,187 excursions = 227,547 total.

From Cleethorpes to MSLR stations:

111,760 singles, 3,224 returns and 574 excursions = 115,558 total.

Overall totals: 202,970 singles, 12,374 returns and 127,761 excursions. Grand total = 343,105

All of this would be the MSLR's own income, the gross receipts being £17 059. One can readily see the local Grimsby area folk using single fares for a quick trip to Cleethorpes.

Below are some details of total numbers of passengers from other railway companies:

MR	27,500
GNR(via Louth)	8,486
GNR(other routes)	8,422
LYR	3,192
CLC	2,108
LNW	103
NE	39
Others	6,783

The total foreign traffic then comes to 56,633 passengers bringing in gross receipts of £9,890 giving the MSLR a sum of £5,244 as its share.

Combining the above for the period of May to October, 1887:

Gross total number of passengers	399,738
Gross receipts	£26,949
MSLR proportion	£22,303

It was noted on this report that "Excursion and Return tickets (which include Tourists) are NOT doubled".



A Frith postcard of Cleethorpes Pier in 1906. Much longer than the present day structure.

Three years later in 1890 a similar exercise was done for the whole year. The results are given below:

Number of passengers to Cleethorpes;

137,878 singles, 14,971 returns and 264,556 excursionists = 417,405 total.

Gross receipts £37,242

Number of passengers from Cleethorpes:

180,591 singles, 4,509 returns and 3,209 excursions = 188,309 total.

Gross receipts £3,067

The low receipts for so many singles noted above appears to bear out that they were indeed "local", ie walking to Cleethorpes along the shore and then travelling back by train.

Grand totals: 318,469 singles, 19,480 returns and 267,765 excursionists = 605,714 total.

Total receipts £40,309

MSLR share £32,872

The origins of passengers were also covered:

MSLR to Cleethorpes

<i>From</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>MSLR receipts</i>
Manchester	9,551	£1,970
Sheffield	43,260	£6,172
Barnsley	2,608	£384
Doncaster	3,071	£339
Rotherham	5,738	£785
Worksop	3,761	£425
Retford	3,250	£401
Gainsborough	5,321	£537
Lincoln (Mid)	12,070	£1,204
Hull(Pier)	41,095	£2,239
Grimsby	32,627	£483
Grimsby Docks	46,887	£412
New Clew	61,642	£399
other MSLR	60,453	£7,035
Total	331,334	£22,785

To complete this survey, "from other co's are noted ":

<i>Company</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Gross receipts</i>	<i>MSL share</i>
LNW	75	£29	£7
MR	42,037	£7,392	£3,764
LYR	3,189	£598	£352
NE	215	£40	£27
GN (via Louth)	15,890	£2,171	£203
GN (other routes)	11,782	£1,720	£915
CLC	3,905	£1,598	£1,387
Total	86,071	£14,457	£7,358
Gross totals:	417,405	£37,242	£30,143

Again "Note, Excursion and Return tickets (which include Tourists) are NOT doubled".

Basically, the 605,714 total number of passengers brought in receipts to the MSLR of £32,872 for the year 1890.

I have not shortened the detail given as examination shows certain features of Cleethorpes clientele. Hull, the urban areas of Grimsby, the Midland through Lincoln (from Nottinghamshire etc) and from Lincoln itself. These themselves are not cash-rich in terms of receipts given the relative short travelling distances, but as to the business

derived from such passengers the resort of Cleethorpes would be onto a winner year in, year out.

Putting this into present-day money (using the www.measuringworth.com website), it gives approx;

In terms of "labour" £32,872 would be £13 million today.

In terms of "prices" £32,872 would be £3 million today.

It must be borne in mind that over long periods of time "prices of goods" have been declining in real terms with "labour or incomes" increasing. So I suppose the income to the MSLR could be the order of £5 million in today's money for the year 1890.

Switching to the more prosaic *Grimsby News* that I sourced in Grimsby Local Studies Library. In this paper, for the summer visitors season, it lists once a week "who is staying at what B&B in Cleethorpes and where they were from". Now not all people gave their details to the paper (Data Protection Act eat your heart out here!) but by quantifying a 12 week period for 1910 a good indication could be had. I used two basic assumptions; where it said "and family" I assumed 2 children - this could be on the low side - and where no indication is given then the numbers and origins were taken as listed - no reason to assume any different.

The Visitors List for the week of Tuesday 2nd August 1910 gives as places from:

Unknown	621
Sheffield	278
Leicester	147
Nottingham	142
Lincoln	50
Rotherham	47
Leeds	43
Chesterfield	35
Manchester	31
Long Eaton	26
Gainsborough	21
Hull	19
London	18
Doncaster	18
Attercliffe	14

and another 50 or so places were represented, with obviously one family being the only unit in the lower down categories. One instance shows a certain "Flannigan" with family and domestics staying for some 3 weeks or so from India.

And so on for many other places, usually north of England but definitely NOT north of York, the NER was very strong on protecting its power base. Lincolnshire was strong in terms of places but not numbers. The London Extension locations are obviously strong. One can see readily that the GCR was using its publicity to target its towns on GCR rail routes, naturally so of course. It must be borne in mind though that these are people who could take time off work for holidays, who today would be described as "small and medium sized business people and their families". No doubt some "workers" would also have been able to put aside a week for a holiday, but that didn't really happen until the 'works weeks' of later years.

It was noted also that one could see a "Mrs, Master and Misses" staying at the residence but without "his nibs". Also interesting are the opposite sex groups staying near to each other but from the same town. Hopefully everybody had a good time!

For the 12 week period, 24th May to 9th August, 1910, I crunched the numbers and the results are given below:

The total occupancies were 9,480 of which visitors from Sheffield were 1,424 (15%) and including all South Yorkshire locations 2,611 (27½%). The 'Unknowns' were 2,314 (24½%).

As I mentioned earlier one could assume the same ratio for the "unknown" category. I broadened it out to include what I term "South Yorkshire". Two reasons, places such as Darnall, Attercliffe, Meadowbank, Wadlsey etc were given as separate locations, not Sheffield (this reflects the limited spread of the city itself at this time) and secondly, I added to Sheffield roughly what is now called South Yorkshire as the GCR's rail links were strongly evident there. In theory then it was really "South Yorkshire-by-the-Sea" rather than just "Sheffield-by-the-Sea" as it is more commonly described. For certain periods the occupancies for Sheffield and South Yorkshire were over 40%.



Day trippers arriving at Cleethorpes in 1911 on an excursion special. The train has arrived behind a GC 0-6-0 goods engine (looks like a J13) and the fireman is already moving the coal forward in the tender. Compare the fashions with today's T-shirts and shorts. Not much chance of sunburn then.

Moving on to other aspects revealed in *The Grimsby News* paper. It gave lists under "The Weekly Trips" - where from, numbers on each trip and what entertainment the trippers indulged in. In fact a great deal was revealed about the resort of Cleethorpes particularly in relation to its railways.

Extracts follow that illuminate these and other features. The dates given, all in 1910, are a mixture of dates of the activity or the publication dates of the newspaper.

Friday 13th May

"There are 30 trips booked for Whit Monday...five from Leicester, one from Rugby and Leicester, three from Sheffield and others are Deepcar, Sheffield, Rotherham etc., Liverpool, Wigan, St. Helens, Retford, Gainsborough, Waleswood, Manchester and Sheffield...three from Nottingham, Wombwell Ryhill, Attercliffe...

Tuesday: Several trips are announced, one of 500 guaranteed from Rotherham & Sheffield Specialised Independent Druids.

Sat 21st June

On Sunday 9 specials in...

On Monday 12 specials in ...Wombwell Band of Hope guaranteed 1200 visitors.

Music Festival, for which several specials ran.

"Next week, Mr Charles Copyers, late originator and producer with Mr Wilson James, will bring his costume comedy company The Go-Bangs, also the Wellow Glee Singers.

Friday 8th July

Saturday: Shireoaks & Carlton Sunday Schools 60 adults, 300 children arr 3.10pm and dep 6.10pm.

Clowne & Barlborough Sunday Schools arr 8.15am and 8.32am and dep 7.15pm and 7.25pm.

Mansfield St Marks 450 guaranteed arr 9.06am and dep 7.40pm.

Friday: Mansfield United Sunday School 300 adults and 800 children arr 7.37am, 7.44am, 7.57am and 8.14am and dep 8.17pm, 8.24pm, 8.30pm and 8.40pm.

(Four trains involved here which says a lot about the carriage stock and also the length of time spent in Cleethorpes itself - a very long day out from leaving home in the early morning to getting home late at night.)

Friday 15th July

Wednesday: Frodingham Parish Church 474 guaranteed arr 10.03am and dep 7.53pm.

New Holland United Schools 400 guaranteed arr 10.13am and dep 7.35pm.

Thursday: Worksop Church Schools 524 guaranteed arr 9.00am and dep 6.15pm.

Friday 29th July

Saturday: Sheffield Bessemer's Excursion arr 6.38am and 6.45am and dep 8.30pm and 9.05pm

Sunday: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Retford etc arr 6.57am and dep unknown.
(Another long day for some!)

This report appeared in the newspaper dated Tuesday 2nd August

"The resort has been called the "Trippers Paradise" and whether that description is true ...we will not venture to discuss, but it cannot be gainsaid that there are few resorts more popular with trippers than Cleethorpes. Even on Friday a large number of trippers arrived by rail from Sheffield and other contiguous places ...Yesterday morning the Sheffield trip that arrived shortly before 9 o'clock was packed with people. We have heard it claimed that Sheffield has made Cleethorpes what it is today. How far the "Meggies" (*residents of Cleethorpes*) will agree with or discuss the claims of the "Blades" (*residents of Sheffield*) in that respect...but this can be safely said that the Sheffield people are ahead of all other in their patronage to the local resort..."

Saturday 6th August

Elsecar Band of Hope 1000 adults 1000 children arr 8.03am, 9.06am and 9.45am and dep unknown, 7.01pm and 7.05pm.

Tuesday 9th August

Whitwell Sunday School guaranteed 474 adults and 400 children arr 8.20am and dep 7.52pm.

Frodingham & Scunthorpe arr 9.27am and dep 7.15pm.

Other organisations crop up without train times, for example:

Rotherham Main and Carr House Collieries 1200

Frodingham & Scunthorpe Primitive Methodist Band of Hope

Worksop St Johns Sunday School 1600

Lincoln Juvenile Order of Druids (The mind boggles but there were many such organisations formed as friendly societies before the arrival of the Welfare State.)

Low Stubbins Colliery 700

Hayle Hill Club (Barnsley area) 700

Haugh Central Club (Barnsley area) 700
Derby Midland Oddfellows

In addition, three separate excursions came from Lincoln, and another day saw two separate excursions from Gainsborough all with "workmen".

Summarising, it seems that most of these excursions could be regarded as the one day of the year when many children and families got a day out anywhere away from their locality. The role of religious organisations such as Sunday Schools and the Band of Hope was very important in those days and much of the welfare that we take for granted today was provided by these and other church societies.

Being the only day in the year that workers got away from the industrial environments of their everyday jobs may explain their willingness to subject themselves to such long days out as well as getting value for money. Try that with the kids of today!

A final point and one mentioned above, is that each and every visitor no doubt spent some cash in Cleethorpes. Now use a multiplier to get a year after year total all the way up to Beeching's time, after which many rail excursions ceased for a variety of reasons, and you get some idea of how dependent Cleethorpes was on its railway.

From the railway operations side, the GCR and other companies had to provide large numbers of carriages for the excursions. The humble 0-6-0 goods engines, such as Jumbo, Claddie or Pom-Pom, were frequently used to provide the motive power and speed was not a priority! And railway staff were stretched throughout the summer season. However, having seen the income generated both for the railway companies and the town, it seems it was a very worthwhile exercise for a railway company to promote, construct, develop or whatever, its own resort on the coast (or in Cleethorpes case on the river bank!).

As a final aside, the affinity of the mining community in South Yorkshire with Cleethorpes nose-dived when Cleethorpes Council permitted the Beachcomber establishment to house some of the many police drafted into this area during the miners strike of 1984.



The old station buildings at Cleethorpes were listed as Grade II in 1980. This view of the frontage was taken in 2010. A view of the platform side can be found on p170 of Dow vol.2. The new Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group will be meeting here. photo: Richard Croft

The Pollard family railway history - Part 18

by John E. Pollard

This is the last part of this long-running series - part 1 appeared back in Dec.2008.

John continues to recount memories of his brother Les Pollard after he left Annesley mpd and adds an epilogue.

Towards the end Annesley had two Staveley jobs transferred to them, one of which was an all-stations passenger run from Nottingham Vic to Sheffield Vic with a two hour stop at Chesterfield Central. On arrival at Chesterfield, when the passengers had got off, the train drew forward and then set back into the down side bay platform. It then waited there until departing for Sheffield.

Les was working this turn when on arrival at Sheffield he told his fireman, "Put a lamp on the tender but leave the lamp on the smoke box!" When they had uncoupled and drawn forward, they set back to go to the loco where they were to change engines. They were stopped at the signal box and the signalman asked, "Are you going to drop that lamp off the smokebox?"

Les said, "No."

So the signalman replied, "Then you will stop where you are until you do!"

Les told him, "We can stand here as long as you like."

The signalman went back into his box. A light engine should have a light back and front in the middle of the buffer beam. After ten minutes the signalman came to the window and called out, "Are you going to move that lamp?"

Again the reply was, "No." The window banged shut and they stood there another twenty minutes. Again the signalman came to the window. "Will you move that lamp?" he asked again.

"No," was Len's reply.

"Why are you being so awkward?" the signalman asked.

Les asked him if he had got an Electric Lines Rule Book. When the answer was yes, Les told him to go and have a look at it. The signalman went to his desk, lifted the lid and got out his red rule book and started reading it. He then slammed the lid shut, turned round, and started pulling the levers. They left for Darnall loco.

The rule states that where an engine had a lamp on the top bracket when under overhead electric lines the lamp must not under any circumstances be lifted off the lamp bracket, as it was possible that a flashover could occur and the person lifting the lamp could be killed. Once again our Dad's insistence on knowing your rules and regulations had paid off.

After the runners were finished and Annesley yard and wagon shops were shut down, they also shut all three yard signal boxes and Annesley South Junction box which meant that engines leaving the shed had to phone Annesley North box, wait until North box was ready, then go all the way up to North box, then cross over to the up main line to go to Nottingham.

At this time Les was put back to firing, but as he was a regular driver he was paid the driving rate. He was firing for an old Annesley driver, Ted Everley, when the typical Midland way of working showed its stupidity. There were sixteen drivers and sixteen firemen for sixteen passenger turns. No provision was made for rest days so these had to be worked. Then they realised that no thought had been given to holidays and sickness, so the shed gaffer, a Midland man, said, "We will have to get a Kirkby driver to cover."

There was an uproar and the union man said, "No way."

"Why?" he asked.

He was told, "You have thirty two Annesley drivers here, sixteen of them are working as firemen but as they are all put-back drivers you are paying them driver's rates so all you will get sent here are firemen, not drivers."

Les was back driving again until shortly before Annesley closed. Les was successful, along with Brian Wheatcroft, when applying for vacancies at Derby Midland and was transferred on 11 October 1965. When Annesley closed on 3 January 1966 they moved the engines and men to Nottingham Midland. To work their turns, they took the engines into Nottingham Victoria via London Road Low Level and Weekday Cross. This arrangement lasted until the through services finished on 3 September 1966 and the diesel car service between Arkwright Street and Rugby started.

While Les was at Derby he was on a 7.50am spare turn. He signed on and went to the mess room. Brian Wheatcroft was there and he had just mashed. At the bottom of the mess room were the men from Derby works. They used to come in for large orders for the other men in the works but loco men had priority, so Les was able to go to the front of the queue. He got a bacon sandwich and sat down with his cup of tea with Brian.

The foreman Fred West came in, looked round the mess room and called out, "You." Les turned round and asked, "Who?"

"You," said the foreman, "there's been a derailment."

"What's that's got to do with me," said Les, looking around at all the other loco men in the mess room.

"You're the only man who has signed the road to Burton via Eggington, so go to the station and pilot 'The Cornishman' to Burton."

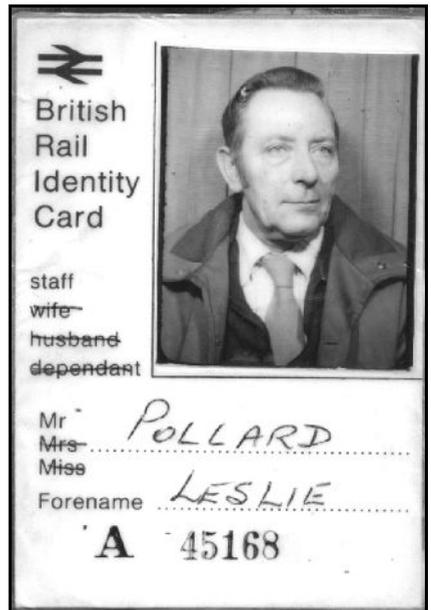
Brian Wheatcroft asked, "Can I go as well I haven't got a job?" The foreman agreed so they went to the station. The train came in with a Class 47 on the front. The driver was an ex-Westhouses man. They set off and took the North Staffs line at Willington Junction. Passing through Eggington, Rolleston-on-Dove and Horninglow, they regained the main line at North Staffs Junction just before Burton station.

The driver said, "I've been on the railway for over forty years yet I've never been over this section."

Brian Wheatcroft said, "I haven't either."

I was surprised that Les had signed for the road as I didn't think we had any Burton jobs left when Les came to Annesley. At one time we used to go regularly on the GN line from Basford to Eggington and then into Hawkins Lane sidings. Later we used to go through Horninglow and onto the Midland main line to get to Wichnor Sidings. It was there I first saw *Evening Star*, the last of the 9Fs. She was dumped in a siding after having broken down.

Les was sent with Brian to learn the Class 47s. They had instruction first, then went to Derby station where they got on 'The Cornishman' to have practical experience. Les was first to take a turn at driving. An inspector and the regular driver were with them. Les set off and had got the train up to 90mph when in the distance he saw a home signal at danger. He shut off power and slammed the brake on. The inspector said, "Let her go! That box is closed and the signal should have been removed. But I'm pleased you didn't hesitate when you saw that signal."



They carried on and came to the Lickey incline. Les said the speed limit was 30mph. They were doing 30mph when they started down the bank. He had the brake down to five percent and they were picking up speed. He put the brake right down and they were still doing 40mph at the bottom. He said he knew now why the old freight trains in steam days used to run away.

Les was transferred to Toton on 13 March 1967. He signed on one day and was told to take a Class 45. He was given the engine number 45054 and told which road it was on. After checking the notices he picked his bag up and walked to the engine. When he climbed up into the cab he put his bag away and his mashing can on the heater. You had to do the important things first! He then turned to check the engine.



45054 at Toton mpd on 29 July 1978.

photo: Paul Bettany

Riveted to the dash board was a notice stating 'No. 2 traction motor isolated. Engine to remain in traffic until repaired.' Les went back to the foreman and said, "This engine is no good for this job."

The foreman said, "The load has been arranged." So Les took it off shed. This was when they had guards on the train. The guard rode in the rear cab of the loco. When they backed up in the yard, the shunter tied them on and the guard went back to check the train. Les blew the brake up. When the guard got to the last wagon he released the brake then shut the valve. Les saw the brake drop then rise again so he knew all the wagons were piped up.

When the guard got back he climbed up into the cab and told Les, "Forty three merry go round wagons on."

Les said to the guard, "I want a reduced load."

The guard told the shunter who then contacted the yard inspector. The inspector came to Les and said, "You've got to take them." Les refused and was ordered back to the inspector's cabin.

The inspector got on the phone to the traffic controller. The controller said, "He's got to take them."

Les said to the inspector, "Not unless I have a written note of authority." The inspector passed on the request to the controller who told the inspector to write out a note authorizing the move.

Les said, "You're not going to do that are you?"

The inspector replied, "I have to" and proceeded to write out the order and gave it to Les.

Les read it and then handed it back, saying, "That's not worth the paper it's written on."

"Why, what's wrong with it?" asked the inspector.

"It's not signed," said Les, who gave it back to the inspector who then signed it. Les looked on in amazement as the Inspector signed the order. It was a genuine signature so he folded it and put it in his rule book. He then told the inspector, "You know you've

just put your head in a noose and that controller is going to kick the stool from under you and leave you hanging." He then went back to the loco, climbed aboard and set off.

It took some time to get the train moving. They crawled out of the yard onto the main line and it took quite a while to get the train up to speed. The engine was being worked with the handle wide open and she was screaming. The first climb they came to Les thought she was going to blow up. They eventually came down to 3mph before crawling over the top. Les took full advantage of all the downhill and flat sections but any rising gradient caused problems.

When they finally arrived at Wellingborough they were relieved and Les told the Wellingborough driver what the problem was and handed over the signed order saying, "Keep that safe as I reckon you'll not get home with this engine tonight. I don't know how I got this far." Then Les and the guard went for their back working to Toton and signed off.

As Les was signing on next day he was greeted with, "You're in trouble. John Scattergood is taking your job and the inspector wants to see you." He left the signing on point and headed for the mess room. On the way he met John Scattergood. Les asked if he would let him know if he went over the eight hours so he could claim the overtime, to which he agreed. Les went into the mess room, made a cup of tea and sat down to have a smoke. Eventually the inspector came looking for him. He was a rather obnoxious person whom Les had crossed swords with before. He looked round, saw Les and said, "Right, the shed manager's office, now!" Les got up and went with him to the manager's office.

The inspector started with, "You're in trouble. That engine you took out last night blew up and stopped the Midland main line for three hours at Sharnbrook. What have you got to say about that?"

"Simple," said Les, "ask the foreman. I told him the loco was not up to the job but he said the load had been arranged. Then both the yard inspector and the traffic controller refused my request to reduce the load."

The inspector continued, "The engine is being taken to Crewe and there will be an inquiry."

"Good," said Les, "I'll be happy to attend and when I do the foreman and the fitting staff at this depot will wonder what has hit them."

"Why is that?" asked the inspector, "There was a notice in the cab stating that No.2 traction motor was blown".

"That's right," said Les, "but tell me what two other items were missing?"

"I don't know, what were they?" asked the Inspector.

"You should know," said Les, "you're supposed to be the man who knows it all. What was missing was a plate limiting the engine to a class 25 load and a stop on the power handle to prevent it being fully opened."

"Go on, get out!" was all the inspector could say.

Les went back to the mess room. After waiting about for three hours he went to the foreman and said, "I haven't got a job." So the foreman told him to go home. The next day, when he signed on, there was a note waiting for him from John Scattergood, the man who had taken his job the day before, to tell him that he had made eighteen hours for which Les could claim the overtime. So Les finished up with eighteen hours pay for four hours at work. Nothing was said again about the incident involving 45054.

On another occasion Les was working steel empties from Toton to York. His guard wanted an early finish as it was a Friday. Les had got it down to a fine art and could run the train, if they got the right signals, to York in one hour and forty minutes. They had a good run but approaching York they got a yellow and then a red. The indicator came off for inside. Les got on the phone and asked the signalman why they were being shunted.

The signalman told him, "I set the road, you just follow the signals." So Les set off, slowly turned in and rolled down the siding. Looking ahead he suddenly got a shock, slowed the train down and stopped. He had run out off track! There were no more rails in front of him, only damaged track and a pile of ballast. As he had following the signalman's instructions, he shut the engine down and just quietly stood there waiting to see what would happen next.

After a while a traffic inspector came into view and asked, "What the blazes are you doing here?"

"Waiting until someone puts the rails back," said Les.

"You shouldn't be here," said the inspector.

"You'd better tell the signalman that in York power box," Les told him, "he insisted we follow his signals and here I am."

"You will have to set back," Les was told.

"Not on your life," said Les, "this train is over a quarter mile long and there is no way I can see where I'm going. I want some assurance before I move."

The inspector got his radio out and then found it wouldn't work. He set off to check the points to the siding. When he came back he said, "The road is set. You can move now."

Les started up and then slowly moved back propelling the train out onto the main line facing road. When clear of the signal the points altered, the signal came off, and he set off main line again. As he neared York he came up to the relief cabin. A set of Thornaby men were coming out. "Where have you come from?" asked the driver. "I've just been on to the power box and they said you weren't even in the district yet."

Les said, "It's a long story."

One day Les was assigned to take an experimental engine for a run. There was a technician in the cab when Les climbed in. "What are you doing?" Les asked.

"Trying out a new style of driver's seat," was the reply.

Les looked at it and said, "That's no good. It's too low."

"You just sit on it and wind this handle," he was told.

So he sat down and started winding the handle. Nothing happened. The technician came over and started winding. Still nothing happened. Les got hold of the seat and lifted it up, then let it go and it slipped back down with a bang. Les told the technician, "Whoever assembled this contraption forgot to put the mechanism in it! I'm failing this engine."

"Why?" the technician asked.

"Because," said Les, "if you sit in this seat as it is you can't see out of the windscreen. It's too dangerous to drive. Take it back to Derby and try again."

Then Les went to the foreman and told him he had failed the engine and it had to go back to Derby to be rectified.

Les was on the transfer tripper one day. He had a guard on this job. They made a trip to Stanton sidings and brought a load into Toton sidings then picked a load up to transfer to the down sidings. The guard came up and told Les the load and that there was a tail lamp on the last wagon. Eventually they went across the road and backed the train up onto the bank. The guard pinned the train down and brought his tail lamp. Les told him to put the lamp on a front bracket then come in the cab. When the guard was aboard they set off for the signal box where a red flag was put out. A senior signal inspector came to the window and called out, "Take that lamp off and put it in the cab."

"Not likely," said Les, "it stays where it is."

"Until you move it," said the inspector, "you stay where you are."

They stood fifteen minutes - time to mash and have a cup of tea and start their snap time."

The window opened again. "Are you moving that lamp into the cab?" asked the inspector.

"No," was the answer. Bang went the window. They had another twenty minutes time to finish their food and have a smoke. Then there was a tap on the door. Les opened the window and looked down. The signalman was stood there a smile on his face.

"Right," he said, "the inspector has had a look at the rule book and you can go across the road now." In the rule book it stated that lighted oil lamps must not be carried in the cab or engine compartments of any diesel locomotive. Knowing the rules had paid off again.

Les and another ex-Annesley driver and a young Midland driver were taken by a loco inspector to pass out on a Class 08 diesel. The inspector did not like ex-LNER men. He asked Les, "How many cylinders has this engine got?"

"Eight," said Les. He asked the other ex-Annesley man who gave the same answer. The Inspector then asked the Midland driver who said, "Six."

The inspector then turned to Les and said, "Right mastermind, where are the other two cylinders?"

"Under the cab," Les told him, "air brake cylinder and vacuum brake cylinder. Two there and six in the engine. That adds up to eight doesn't it?"

"You two get off back to the mess room," he said, while the Midland driver stayed in the cab. When Les asked at the office later he was told the inspector had passed them both!

Les, like myself, was having trouble with arthritis in his knees, probably due to working on steam engines. Being over sixty and his wife very ill, he applied for early retirement. Unfortunately he lost his wife just before his retirement came through. Les's retirement on 19 September 1987 marked the end of the Pollard family railway history.

These articles are just two old men reliving memories over a pint in the pub. It's the same pub we remember going to before the war with our parents and grandparents. On summer Sunday evenings they used to take us for a walk and we would stop at this pub, 'The Duke Of Wellington' in old Kirkby, for a drink. We got lemonade and a bag of crisps. Dad always used to time it so that after we left the pub to walk back across the field behind St. Wilfred's church we would reach the footbridge over the GC main line just in time to see the Manchester to Marylebone express go through. It always had a 'Footballer' on the front and it made our day.

As I come to the end of this story I was taken by the thought that coal has played such a prominent part in my life. As a fireman, I started with burning it on steam locomotives in order to transport it around the country in wagons. Then I was digging it for the time I worked in the mines. Then as a guard I was dragged around behind lines of coal wagons. Because I had worked for the Coal Board, I received an allowance of coal after retirement. So I was still shovelling coal (into the coalhouse) and still transporting it (into the house in a bucket) and still burning it to heat water (for washing and for the radiators). Finally though, in my seventies, I have said goodbye to coal and turned over to gas. After fifty seven years of working with coal I am finally free of it.

Editor's note: Les Pollard died on 2 September 2007 aged 80 and John Pollard died on 21 April 2011 also aged 80. May they both rest in peace.

Loose coupled

The Gainsborough Model Railway, at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough DN21 1BE, is open to the public (1.30pm-6.00pm) on Sun 6th Oct, Sun 8th, Sat 28th and Sun 29th Dec. Visit www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk for more information.

<http://signalboxes.com> was brought to the attention of the 'sheffieldrailways' Yahoo Group by Nick Wheat. This website has photos and information about signal boxes located in Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire put together by a Network Rail employee based at Retford.

Addition to the archive. 'Metropolitan & GCR Joint Track Plans' donated by the David Clarke Railway Trust.

Readers' forum

from Chris Booth, Worksop

Forward 176 p33: Location of 41712.

In the piece about the PR Video Collection the reviewer asks 'which colliery?' regarding the clip featuring 41712. Although I have not seen the DVD, I can suggest that it was Warsop Colliery as I have a photo of the loco on hire there. Apparently there was an agreement between the colliery owners and the Midland for the hire of a locomotive that went on well into BR days. The colliery was connected to the Midland's Nottingham-Worksop line at Shirebrook and to the LD&ECR between Shirebrook and Warsop.

from Allan Sibley, March

Forward 176 p44: Manchester Docks photo.

May I correct Neil Robinson's description of the Great Central vessel in view. It is not a "barge" which is a term generally applied to vessels having a beam of more than 7ft. This is a "narrow boat" with a beam of (nominally) 7ft and a maximum length of (nominally) 70ft, for use on the inland canal system including the narrow canals. The name on the stern bend appears to begin "GNA ...", possibly GNAT? From the shape of the stern and the substantial rudder post it appears to be a towed boat (or "butty") but has a large cabin normally found on motor powered narrow boats. The lettering above the company name is "Registered in Manchester", then a number - this was for the purposes of health inspection. It would be interesting to know what type(s) of traffic the GCR conveyed to or from Manchester Docks by the narrow canal network and the other location(s) involved.

Adjacent to it can be seen the tiller and rudder post of a Leeds & Liverpool Canal Company wide-beam horse or motor towed barge, possibly numbered 638, well away from its home waterway.

from Will Adams, Kettering

Forward 176 p22/23: Photo of East Leake.

The caption to the very poignant picture of East Leake in its dying days mentions the buffer stops placed on both tracks south of Rugby station after the closure of the GC as a through route in September 1966. I photographed those buffer stops, looking south, on 1st July 1969, a couple of months after final closure, and I wondered if readers would be interested to see the picture. A friend and I visited the station several times between closure and demolition - I'm not sure whether the broken wheel-set was already on the line or whether we placed it there for dramatic effect! The bridge in the distance is No.457.



Rear cover caption

The GCR class 8G 4-6-0 was designed by J.G. Robinson and built by Beyer Peacock in 1906. The ten members of the class were numbered 1105 to 1114. The photo is of no. 1113 at Gorton. The driving wheels were only 5ft 4in, the smallest of all Robinson's 4-6-0 classes. They were used for fast goods traffic, particularly overnight. They became class B9 and were withdrawn 1947-49. *photo: NRM*

