

THE MARLOW DONKEY



Edition

162

December 2018



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The Marlow Donkey

The Magazine of the Marlow & District Railway Society

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The contents of the *Marlow Donkey* represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Society

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Front Cover Photographs

*Top: Unidentified 'Duke' class 4-4-0 departing Machynlleth c1931.
Photo: Bernard Edmonds (Tim Edmonds collection). Article Page 8.*

*Bottom: Large Prairie 6128 at Ealing Broadway - April 1957.
Photo: D B Watkins (Mike Walker collection). Article Page 19.*

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings are held in the Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Rd, Bourne End at 7.15 for 7.30pm

Thursday 20 December

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Thursday 17 January

1968 THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS

Geoff Plumb

Master-photographer Geoff Plumb returns with another of his popular “annual” programmes this time featuring that most unforgettable of years which saw the end of scheduled BR steam.

Thursday 21 February

AGM AND PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

Mark Hopwood

Our famously brief Annual General Meeting will be followed by a presentation from our President, Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of Great Western Railway.

Thursday 21 March

UK STEAM PRESERVED 1968 TO THE PRESENT DAY

Ken Livermore

Following on from the dark days portrayed by Geoff in January, Ken Livermore looks at the resurgence of steam in the UK since and our world-leading heritage railways.

Thursday 18 April

8TH COLOUR RAIL JOURNEY

Paul Chancellor

Paul returns with a further selection of images from the Colour Rail collection which he now manages having taken over the business from Ron White.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I’m writing this at the very end of October and only now have we had the first really cold days of the coming winter, having had an exceptionally long and sunny summer and autumn. I wish I had taken more advantage of the excellent photographic conditions but there always seemed to be other things to do. In fact my railway activities seem to have reached an all-time low this year and I’m not sure quite why.

Gay and I had our first proper foreign holiday in many years at the beginning of October, with a trip to Sorrento. It was a bit of a disaster, with unseasonable weather (strong winds, rain, thunder storms and not that much sun) and then Gay got ill and spent two and a half days restricted to our room feeling absolutely lousy and I was relieved she recovered sufficiently to get home at the end of the week. On the plus side, I did manage to get to the Italian National Railway Museum at Pietrarsa, just south of Naples. I had known of its existence for many years and had always wanted to make a visit but was never really sure exactly where it was. I was impressed with what I saw and will be preparing an article for the *Donkey* in due course.

This edition contains a brief piece by me about the society’s visit to Searle’s in Horsham. Though non-rail steam it was an interesting destination, not normally accessible to the public and I’m grateful to Julian Heard, who organised the visit principally for the Fawley volunteers, for letting us join them for this fun day out. Only about seven MDRS members attended and it is becoming clear that support for trips is very much in decline, so much so that their future is in question. A society only exists if its members are willing to participate, so may I take this opportunity to stress again the need for all of you to contribute articles for the *Donkey* and to take part in visits, otherwise both will disappear.

I was very pleased to see in the October edition of *Steam Railway* a short piece about West Coast’s latest steam driver, Matthew Earnshaw, who at 30 has started driving the Jacobite trains from Fort William. We so need more young people like him to keep our heritage operations going and apparently for his first rostered turn on Black Five 44871 his fireman was just 19, giving a combined crew age of a mere 49 years. Let’s hope they are followed by many more enthusiastic youngsters, otherwise our preservation world is doomed. In the same magazine there was a picture of *Oliver Cromwell* at Fleetwood in April 1968 and it was nice for me to see a 16 year old Tim Speechley amongst the crowd of admiring photographers. How swiftly those 50 years have slipped by and this only goes to emphasise how old we steam-age people are getting and the desperate need for some regeneration.

As we approach another new year, you will be pleased to hear that the 2019 programme is complete with a great selection of speakers already booked to entertain you. There are several returnees but also some new people and some interesting subject matter. I suspect most of you don’t realise just how much effort goes into finding people to do presentations for us and Vincent is to be congratulated for organising this so early. More details will follow in due course.

Please may I extend my very best wishes to all of you and your families for a very Happy Christmas and New Year and I hope to see you at the January meeting.

Tim Speechley

SOCIETY AND LOCAL NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome two new members who have joined the Society in recent months, Tim Mugatroyd from Wokingham and David Pascall who lives in Marlow.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Our new season opened in September with a return visit from Bob Sweet who once more took us on a journey through his photo collection with images from the past and right up to the present.

For October we welcomed another popular regular presenter, Brian Stephenson. This time Brian showed images from his extensive archive featuring European Railways before 1947. In reality many shots were much older and the clarity outstanding even if some of the subjects did appear a little odd to our eyes!

Peter Groom returned in November with a photographic journey into Scotland starting from Carlisle and looking at the locomotives of both the former LMS and LNER. As usual with Peter, each was accompanied by detail descriptions.

We had only one outside visit during the autumn which was on 13th October when seven members joined a group from Fawley to visit the Searle company in Horsham. A full report follows

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions become due for renewal in January. The good news is that Peter Robins has once again decided to keep the rate unchanged for the coming year, that is £16.00. The reduced rate for those of you who live some distance away and therefore attend meetings only on rare occasions remains at £8.00 with a meeting attendance fee of £2.00.

Remember, the Society now has a bank account with Lloyds which has a number of advantages over the previous account for both members and the treasurer. If you have on-line banking, you may make bank transfers to the Society.

The sort code is 30-95-36

The account no. is 62236160

If you wish to pay your subs by this method, please put "SUBS" and your name (including initial) - e.g. "SUBS-J.BLOGGS" - in the reference, and MDRS in the "Pay" box if required.. You could also set up a Standing Order to pay MDRS every 1st January which would be most convenient for both parties.

If you wish to pay for anything else by this method, please reference accordingly - e.g. "XMAS-J.BLOGGS" (Xmas) or "DON-J.BLOGGS" (Donation) or as advised. If you have any issues with the reference, please drop an e-mail to pd.robins@btopenworld.com advising of the payment.

Of course you may still pay by cash or cheque. Please note that ONLY cheques made out to "MDRS" or "Marlow & District Railway Society" will be accepted by the bank.

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Visitors to the Society's meetings will be asked to pay a £3.00 admission fee although that will be reduced to £2 for our friends from the Maidenhead RCTS branch in a reciprocal arrangement.

Please use the form supplied with the AGM pack so we can ensure our records are kept fully up to date. We look forward to your continued support.

If you are renewing by post please send to Peter at:
1 Chalklands, Bourne End, Bucks., SL8 5TQ.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As in previous years, a pack containing all the reports and other documentation will be distributed to members in advance of February's AGM to enable us to keep the business part of the meeting to a minimum.

LOOKING AHEAD

A quick look at the forthcoming programme outlined on page 2 will show that we have some interesting and high quality speakers lined up for the coming year starting with another visit from a firm favourite, Geoff Plumb. who this time will be turning his attention to 1968.

Following our usual swift AGM, we are delighted to welcome our president, Mark Hopwood who will be bringing us up to date on the latest developments at Great Western Railway.

In the months that follow we have other leading names including Dick Fern who was the Thames & Chiltern sub-sector director at Network SouthEast and later route director in the north west for Network Rail before taking on the top job with CIE in Ireland. He is now chairman of the Great Western Advisory Board and Bluebell Railway.

Certainly an interesting programme awaits and proves that the society continues to "punch above its weight" in such matters. We look forward to your continuing support.

DONKEY CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

This issue has left my "pending" folder somewhat depleted so once again the editor is appealing for material for forthcoming issues.

RCTS MEETINGS

Our friends in the RCTS have the following meetings planned for the coming months.

Monday 17th December Branch AGM

Monday 28th January

History of the London Underground Map John Dodd

Monday 25th February

Lynton & Barnstaple, Past Present & Future Peter Miles

Monday 25th March

an Evening with Mark Hopwood

Monday 15th April

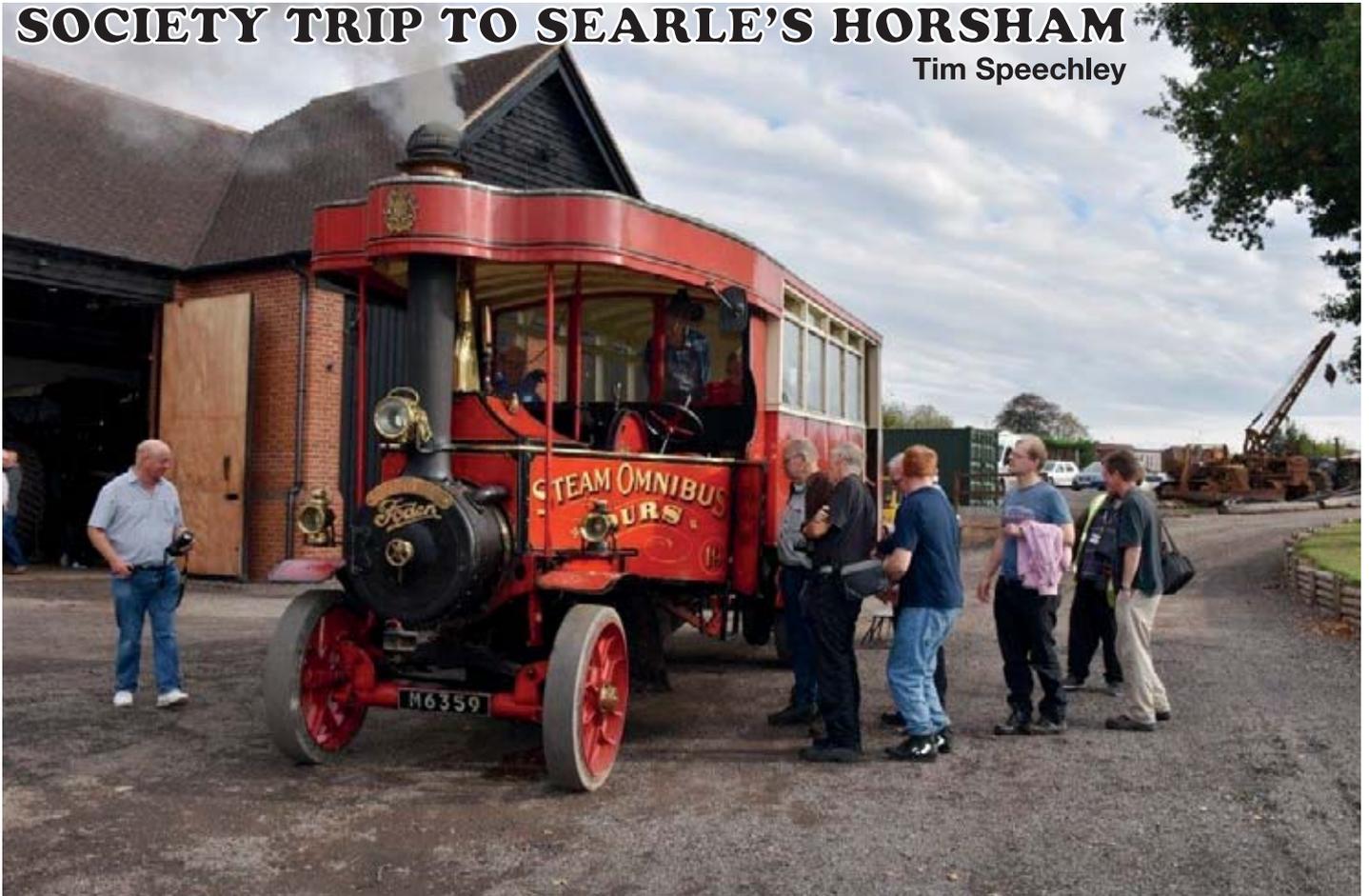
American wanderings - Heading West Gordon Davies

Meetings are held at the Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green, SL6 3AX starting at 19:30. MDRS members always welcome.

The Marlow Donkey

SOCIETY TRIP TO SEARLE'S HORSHAM

Tim Speechley



Eager potential passengers for the Foden Steam Bus loading ready for a trip round Horsham Town Centre.

Photos: Tim Speechley

The name Searle is very well known in traction engine circles and this Horsham based family take their road steam locomotives to many rallies every season. They are particularly noted for the amount of extreme “roading” they do – using the locos on the road, often in combinations and hauling big loads, just as they were built to do. The pinnacle was probably the 2011 Historic Commercial Vehicle Society’s Brighton Run, when they took three of their engines, hauling a huge transformer on a special trailer (118 tons in all), from London to Brighton (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnpLaEg1mLw>), though similar events have taken place since, including participation in the amazing military convoy recreated in 2018, which took a WW1 tank to the Great Dorset Steam Fair. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GMITokuHN4>)

This was a trip organised by Julian Heard on behalf of the Fawley volunteers and kindly offered to the MDRS as well. Take up from our society was pretty poor, possibly because it was non-rail steam, but fortunately around 30 people from Fawley attended, making the efforts of Les and Dee Searle, our hosts, and their helpers very worthwhile. For those of you who did not attend, you missed a treat.

Participants made their own ways to Horsham, mainly by car, and I drove down with Mike Cole from Maidenhead, encountering some delays due to traffic almost immediately we set off and then later on the M25, such that we were almost late for the nominal 14.00 start. On arrival we found a large site used by Searles for their earth moving and plant hire business, with many diggers, crawlers, scrapers, cranes and several heavy-duty low loaders used to move this equipment around the country spread about. Amidst all this there was a very nice house, presumably the original farmhouse for the farm that was once here, with a small private “pub” attached. Opposite was a large, purpose-built and sympathetically styled building used to store the several road steam engines that form the core of Les Searle’s collection and within tea, coffee and biscuits were available on a help yourself basis.

Outside we found the steam bus *Puffing Billy* (Foden 11340 of 1923) in steam and alongside a 1924 Reo Speedwagon bus (MR 3879), both awaiting patronage. The steamer had been a dray with Rock Ales in Brighton until the 1950’s when the body was fitted, supposedly a faithful recreation of the Foden Works’ Band bus. Further down the yard was a large McLaren road loco (1652 of 1919) that was built originally for the War Department and spent most of its life before and after preservation as a heavy haulage road loco named *Boadicea*, though it is currently in showman’s engine guise and also carries the name *Gigantic* on the front. We didn’t see this loco move but it was well and truly in steam and later in the afternoon was used to generate the electricity for the dodgems. Nearby were four interesting old vehicles on display, a very tuned Austin A35, a wartime Jeep that I incorrectly assumed was a Willys but was in fact a Ford, a



Les Searle giving his short welcome talk with the original Searle traction engine behind, under restoration.



The rather schitzophrenic Gigantic (or is it Boadicea) that until very recently has been in road loco form but now converted to a showman's engine.

very rudimentary Fiat 501SS sports car dating from the early 20's (somewhat before my time with the firm) and a 1903 Renault with bodywork by Clement-Rothschild of Paris. I also noticed Les's road car, a modern Ferrari, tucked in behind the house.

We assembled in one of the buildings and Les gave a very brief welcome, telling us that the family had first come to this site in 1913, at which time they were agricultural contractors and operated several traction engines and ancillary agricultural equipment for ploughing and threshing. With the coming of the second world war, the emphasis changed to earth moving in association with building airfields and that aspect of the business continues today, much of the work still related to the MoD and requiring up to 120 employees in the summer. Les recalled the firm's redundant traction engines languishing not far from where we were standing, ultimately all going for scrap except one small engine that was dumped out in the fields and was deemed too small to warrant the effort to scrap her. It was saved for preservation and Les managed to buy her about 5 years ago, though says it was in such appalling condition, had it not been a Searle machine originally he would never have touched it!

We then headed outside again and onto the buses. My first ride was on the Reo, which Les drove with some gusto. It certainly performed far better than I was expecting, being quite sprightly for such an old machine and even fairly comfortable, thanks to

well-padded seating. Later I got to ride in the steam bus, which took us on quite a long journey into the centre of Horsham, past the railway station and then alongside the bus station prior to heading along what looked like a semi-pedestrianised zone before regaining conventional roads (and traffic) and a return to the yard. The looks on the faces of the general public alone made this visit worthwhile and I have to say everybody on board had a big grin on their faces too. Even the steam bus made quite adequate progress and I was particularly surprised how easily it seemed to steer. Despite the length of the trip I didn't notice any coal being put on the fire en-route but when we returned the driver did tell me he had well filled the firebox before departure.

Upon our return we were surprised to be greeted by hot food, followed by some excellent desserts, all of which was very welcome. Then, though perhaps not the best timing, the dodgems were put into action and many of the visitors took advantage, including Luke Ripley, who always seems to eschew the car and this was the first time I'd ever seen him behind the wheel.

We visitors were allowed to roam about at will and the yard contained all sorts of old machinery, including tractors and crawlers, a Euclid earth scraper, a National stationary gas engine, a Ford Consul Classic car (that I saw from the Reo) plus a whole gaggle of living vans.

Other road steam engines from the Searle collection in their purpose-built storage facility with the mezzanine area above.



The Reo and Foden buses await patronage outside the engine storage building.



Within the traction engine storage building there were the other members of the Searle Collection lined up:

AH054 Burrell Tractor 3245/1910 named *End 2 End*.

PB9687 Burrell Road Loco/Crane engine 3829/1920 *His Majesty* (jib removed to fit into the building?)

SG4713 Fowler Crane Engine 8920/1901 (also without the crane jib)

CL4483 Burrell Showman's Engine 3847/1920 *Princess Marina*

Also present was a Sentinel Steam waggon under restoration, the identity of which I did not ascertain and the original Searle engine, mentioned earlier, AA5014 that I think is a Wallis and Stevens Tractor 7289/1912.

Above the traction engines there was a mezzanine floor, accessed by a very narrow spiral staircase. Here there were several old motorcycles including a wartime military Harley Davidson, a number of miniature traction engines, including a pair of ploughing engines complete with their ancillary kit and a

half size (?) Alfa Romeo sports car from the 1930's. Back downstairs and surrounded by "stuff" there was also a 1920's American La France fire engine (one of those with the extremely long bonnet to house the huge engine).

Another opportunity was taken to sample the steam bus, which retraced its earlier journey but this time actually entered the bus station so we could drop off new member, Timothy Murgatroyd, who was returning home by bus from Horsham. Then back to the yard, where I made a short visit to *Boadicea's* footplate. I was impressed by how smoothly she was running with 135 psi on the gauge and the dynamo producing over 150 amps. I couldn't resist any longer and took my opportunity to have a go on the dodgems. Such fun !

By now, Mike and I were amongst the last visitors left, so we bade our farewells and headed for home. It is so nice when individuals like Les allow the general public to share his wonderful collection and we had had a most interesting visit.



Something you don't see every day, Luke Ripley driving and doing battle on the dodgem track.

GLIMPSES OF THE GWR FROM THE 1920s AND 1930s

Tim Edmonds

My father, Bernard Edmonds, was born in 1910 and brought up in the Birmingham area. From his mid-teens he possessed a camera and, having an interest in railways, he started recording the local railway scene. The family regularly had holidays in mid-Wales at Arthog and Fairbourne and Bernard became particularly interested in the history of the Cambrian Railways and the various Welsh narrow gauge lines. After graduating from Cambridge University he trained as a teacher then, after a brief teaching career, he was ordained in the Anglican church and in 1937 became curate of a church at Kenton in north west London.

Many of those early photographic efforts are of poor quality. I don't know what cameras he used, but it is clear that getting sharp pictures of moving trains was difficult and focussing was also a problem. During WW2 he was an Air Raid Protection

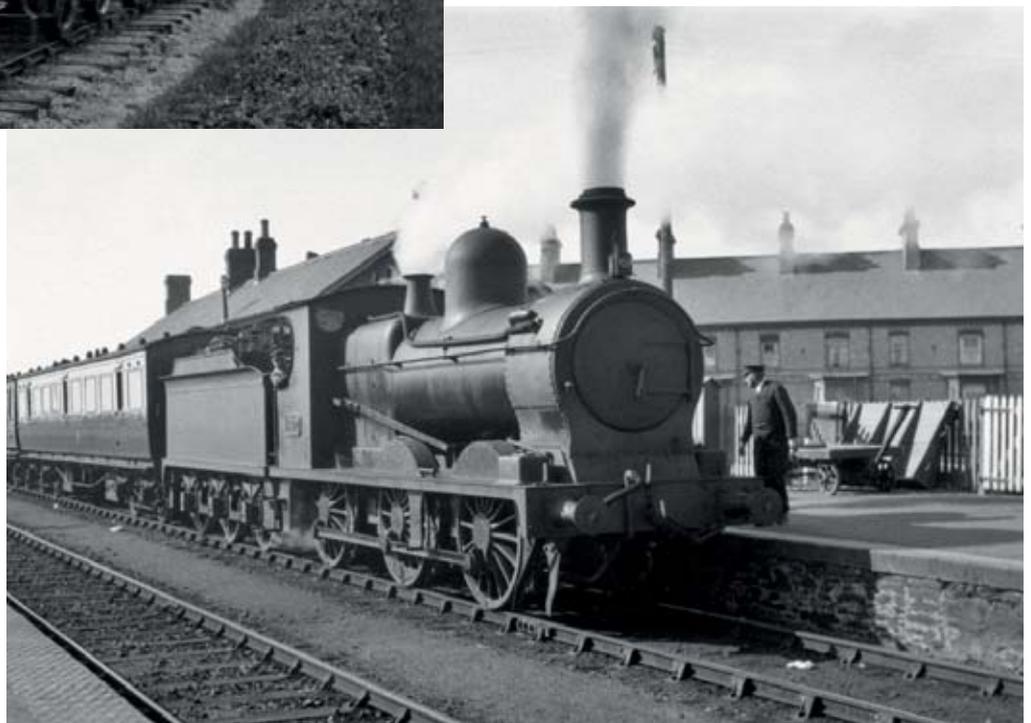
warden and experienced destruction at first hand when part of the roof of the house where he lived collapsed during a bombing raid. Alas the damage affected where his photographs, negatives and notes were stored. He salvaged much, but one consequence was that the details of many surviving negatives and prints were lost. Over the years he had tried to sort them out, but on his death I inherited a cardboard box containing a mass of envelopes with negatives and prints in them, many unlabelled, plus odd bits of paper with notes on. Recently I have been attempting to catalogue these and keep what was worth keeping. Here I have selected a few shots of GWR subjects chosen for their interest rather than their quality. For many I do not know the precise year that they were taken, but all date from the mid 1920s to the late 1930s and the majority were taken in his beloved Mid-Wales.

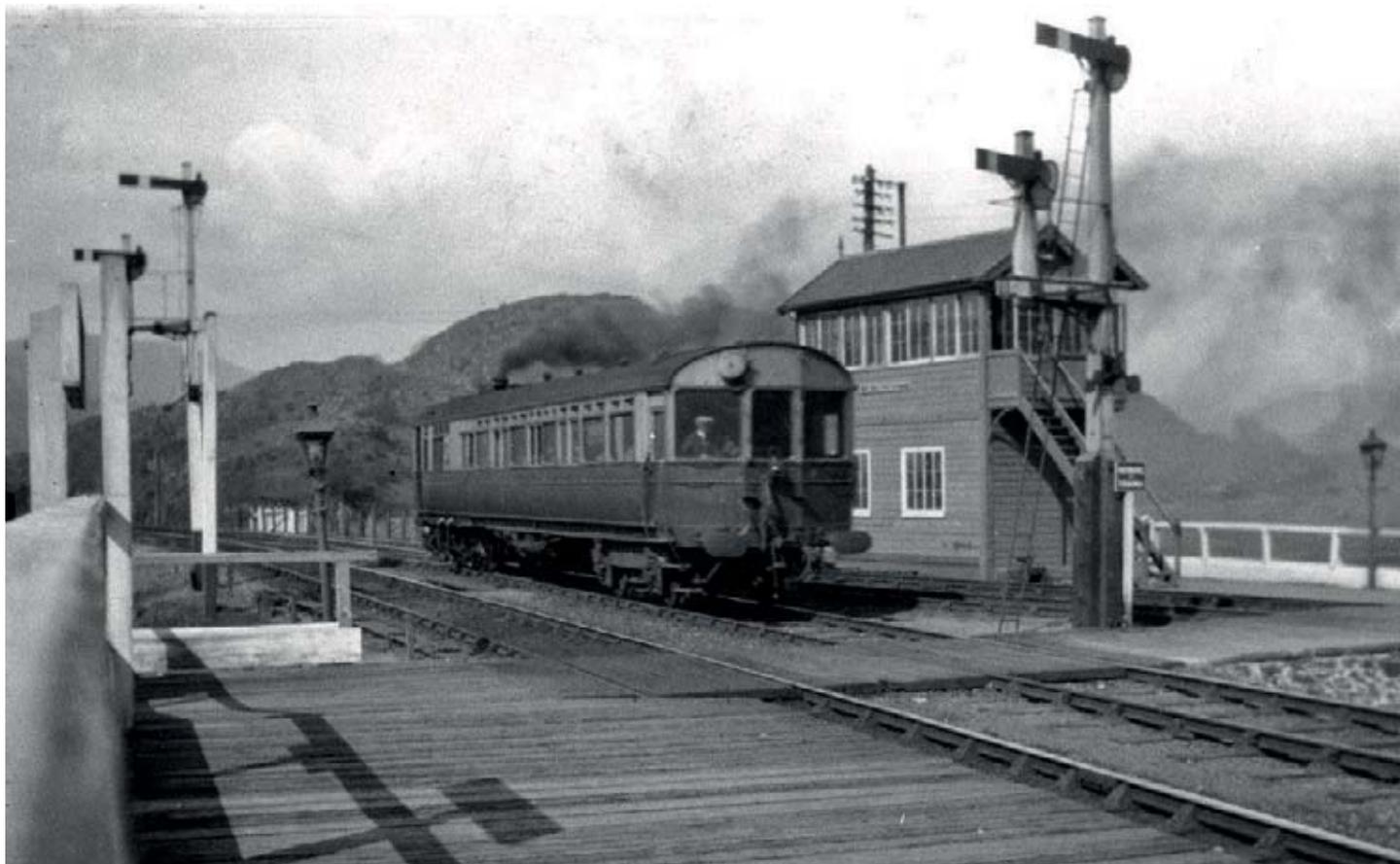


This rare picture shows a train of two carriages and a goods brake van on the branch from Cemmes Road to Dinas Mawddwy. It was taken in about 1926 and from the lie of the land I have been able to locate the train as being at the Cemmes Road end of the line, where it was fairly close to the main road. This was formerly the Mawddwy Railway, which was opened in 1867 and never paid a dividend, with passenger service being withdrawn in 1901 and goods services lasting only until 1908. It was resuscitated in 1910 under a Light Railway Order with the Cambrian working the trains. From 1922 the regular branch loco was '517' class 0-4-2T 846, seen here. Designed by George Armstrong it was built at Wolverhampton Works as part of a batch ordered in 1874-5. Passenger services were withdrawn by the GWR from 1st January 1931 but goods lingered on until 1950.

All photographs taken by Bernard Edmonds and currently in the Tim Edmonds collection.

With the driver watching the photographer, an up passenger train waits for the off at Towyn station. The 0-6-0 loco is GWR 892, formerly Cambrian Railways 93 (Robert Stephenson 3093/1903).





This is a grubby negative but the subject is of great interest. It shows 1905-built GWR steam railmotor 30 passing Barmouth Junction North signal box with a service for Aberdovey and about to make its call at Barmouth Junction station (now Morfa Mawddach). This was a favourite haunt of the photographer and the picture dates from the late 1920s.

A down passenger train leaving Machynlleth c1931 behind an unidentified 'Duke' class 4-4-0. Near the end of their lives several of these locos had been transferred to the Cambrian line, where their light weight suited permanent way restrictions. A few years later, of course, the boilers of some were fitted to the stronger frames from the 'Bulldog' class to form the hybrid 'Dukedog' class which continued to work on the Cambrian long enough for me to see them on my early family holidays in the 1950s.





Here's a great action shot of an unidentified 43xx Mogul working an up goods on the Dolgellley to Ruabon line in the early 1930s. It is seen crossing the Afon Wnion on the approach to Drws-y-Nant – a section where the trackbed is now occupied by the A494.

An unidentified King 602x waits in Platform 2 at Paddington with a down express in the early 1930s.





Finally, I've included two pictures taken at Birmingham Snow Hill which, although not sharp, have a particular interest. The first shows 6000 *King George V*, complete with the bell from its 1927 trip to the USA, arriving with an up express. My father had a date of '1928?' against this. The second shot is from two or three years later and is a topical one in view of the new-build

project for a County class GWR 4-4-0. The picture shows a County bringing in an up train past another member of the class. Both locos are from the early batches, with straight framing; the later ones had running plates that curved under the cab and in front of the cylinders. The identity of both is unclear since numbers and names cannot be made out.



COMMUTING TO SCHOOL ON THE DONKEY

Extracts from a Young Schoolboy's Diary 1967-1974

Martin Stoolman



The news of the planned closure of the Wycombe line rather spurred me on to make regular trips to Cores End level crossing on my bike, whenever I had a few spare moments (or needed an excuse not to do my homework!). I often went to view the evening through train from Paddington going across, which always looked impressive with its 7 carriages. On Monday 10th February 1969 I recorded that it was tonight formed of 8 carriages! Unfortunately I did not record the exact formation, but it will have hung out of the down platform at Bourne End even more than that train normally did, the platform only having sufficient room for four DMU cars. And even more curiously on another evening some two weeks earlier, Wednesday 23rd January 1969, I witnessed a Swindon 2-car Cross Country unit going over. Now that I don't remember at all! Nor do I remember a few weeks later, on Wednesday 2nd April 1969, the first three coaches of the through train from Paddington being formed of a Swindon 3-car Cross Country unit - not what these low density units were designed for, and certainly none were ever based at Southall to my knowledge. (Some of the Mark I "lookalike" Swindon Inter-City DMUs were of course used for the through services to/from Henley for a while around this time). You wouldn't get that kind of diesel unit variety at Bourne End these days - but then again maybe we will if current plans come to fruition!

I was obviously getting myself known to at least one of the crossing keepers at Cores End, as on the evening of Tuesday 25th March 1969 I was invited into his hut, and was allowed to push the button which operated the flashing lights, bells and barriers for the passage of the down Paddington through train. Being a young schoolboy I will never forget the sense of power that pushing that button gave me, as all the traffic stopped at my behest! That was the one and only occasion that I was asked in however; was it something I said? I quietly hoped it would happen again, but I certainly wasn't about to push myself forward at the tender age of 12!

The forays to Cores End were generally made in the evenings after school. However I did sometimes go at lunchtime during
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For a short period in the early 1970s, Park Royal Class 103 units transferred from the LMR were used on the branch. One such formed of W50413 and W56168 arrives at Bourne End from Maidenhead on 20th May 1972.

Photo: Mike Walker

the school holidays in the hopes of seeing that elusive timber train. One successful mission came at the end of the Christmas hols on Friday 3rd January 1969 when my diary entry simply says: "Went to Cores End twice....saw timber going across the first time".

I tried again in the half term hols, on Thursday 13th February 1969, but to my undoubted astonishment it wasn't the timber train I saw but a northbound parcels train hauled by a Hymek! It was the "early afternoon" according to my diary, so it was possibly running late (as subsequent observations suggest). Could this be the same working that I had become accustomed to seeing at the station on my way to school, only now re-timed? The formation of vans was the same so I suspect that it was. Something else to look out for on a free day in the school holidays, but what were its official timings?

My brother and I belatedly cracked it at the end of the Easter holidays on Wednesday 16th April 1969, which was the only occasion that I ever saw the parcels train and the timber train at Bourne End on the same day. I took him for a spotting session at Reading in the early morning, and when we arrived back at Maidenhead just before 11, there was the parcels train sitting at the east end of platform 5, waiting to follow our 11.01 departure for Marlow. As soon as we arrived at Bourne End at 11.13 the parcels will have been given the road, the driver of the Hymek exchanging tokens with the Bourne End signaller at around 11.30 as it came trundling through and headed north, just before the DMU returned from Marlow. According to a retired Guard who used to work the parcels, it originated from West Drayton and, having deposited the vans, the Hymek then ran light engine straight up the GW/GC line to Old Oak. "Lovely little turn" was his comment!an a month later, I was in for a surprise!

The Marlow Donkey

Likely as not the timber train will have been at High Wycombe waiting for the parcels to clear the section. The timber train's path on the branch was tight! It was booked to arrive at the Up Outer Home junction bracket at Cores End then wait. As soon as the 12.26 Marlow to Maidenhead had departed Bourne End at 12.35 the barriers would lower, the junction signal into the Down Loop would clear and the Brush Type 2 (which it was on this particular day) would heave its load across the crossing and away towards the station and the divergence for Marlow.

Although there were no passenger movements to/from Marlow at 13.xx, to allow time for the timber train to deliver its loaded wagons and assemble its train of returning empties, it still had to arrive back at Bourne End by 13.40 or so, to be sure of reaching High Wycombe before the 14.00 DMU departure from there to Marlow. All in all though it is amazing to reflect that three loco hauled trains were scheduled through Bourne End in little more than two hours, as late on as 1969!

But the best was yet to come with the timber train..... The Whit-sun half term arrived, and on Thursday 29th May 1969 my brother and I had obviously got wind that the timber train was about. We probably heard it, for you could hear the unmistakable Eastern Region diesel electric loco growl, along with the screeching of the wagons, for miles around! We therefore determined to get down to the station to see the returning empties and duly arrived there in good time. After a while we could hear the sound of the approaching train, and as it came squealing round the corner we gasped in amazement because it was being double-headed by two locos of a type that neither of us ever saw again, for they were all withdrawn not long after..... two British Thomson-Houston Type 1s, numbers D8211 and D8222. It was one of those "spotting" moments that you talk about for years after. We still talk about it now! So here is a question for you, was there ever another recorded occasion of a double-headed train (steam or diesel) traversing the branch line to Marlow? And from the Eastern Region? I will leave it with you!

And while we're on the subject of questions here is another one for you. My entry for Sunday 2nd March 1969 reads: "Making a film at Bourne End station. All the name boards had been changed to Tilfield (West)". I certainly don't ever remember seeing a film with a station called Tilfield (West) so perhaps it was a box office flop! Any thoughts? Another entry around that time might amuse some of you, for its local history at least. It was for Saturday 17th May and it reads: "Mummy and Joanna" (my sister) "went to see the Miss Bourne End 1969 contest at Deyncourt School in the evening". I haven't been living in Bourne End for a quite a while but I bet they don't hold that particular competition anymore!

Anyway, enough of all that excitement and back to the more mundane business of journeying to school. The new May 1969 timetable came as quite a shock to us Borlase boys, particularly the less keen ones, because the later of the two alternative trains on the branch was retimed from 08.39 to 08.47. Those eight minutes were enough to scupper any chance of making it to school by 09.10 unless you fancied an early morning run through the streets of Marlow which none of us did. Sometimes if you overslept of course that mad dash became unavoidable! (The service was subsequently put back to 08.40 in the May 1970 timetable so half an hour's extra sleep and half an hour less hanging around at school once again became an option).

The other change from May 1969 was that, on Mondays to Fridays at least, all services (excluding the through Paddington trains) on the Maidenhead/Marlow/High Wycombe route were strengthened with an extra carriage. So our single unit had a driving trailer added to it, while the trains that had previously been so formed became full 3-car sets. This was very welcome of course as several of the trains, especially at the shoulders of the peaks, were actually very full. However it did seem a strange thing to do, with the intention to close the section to High

Wycombe already made known and, one can imagine, longer term intentions to get rid of the branch line altogether. But then again, as history has recounted, many odd and seemingly contradictory decisions about the railways were made in those days. So our Pressed Steel single car taking us to school became a 2-car, although more often than not the Driving Trailer was locked out of use anyway, rendering the whole exercise pretty pointless! Worse still was the fact that, for those of us (mainly me!) who enjoyed sitting in the seat behind the driver, the chances of that being available were greatly reduced because if the brake van of the single car wasn't in the way then the locked out Driving Trailer probably was!

Anyway, briefly and for the last time, back to the timber train. The summer holidays had arrived so, on one of my few spare days, I tried my luck at spotting it. I duly arrived at Cores End level crossing at 12.15 and sure enough there, chuntering away in front of the up bracket signal was a Brush Type 2 (class 31). Eventually the signal dropped and it moved off across the crossing, but to my puzzlement it had no train behind it; it was merely a light engine. I decided to return an hour later to see its return, and there it was hauling a mere half a dozen or so empty wagons, presumably all that remained in the yard at Marlow. Had I just observed the "last rites"? I rather think I had. I didn't note the loco's number, and I didn't record any detail in my diary, so I cannot be sure of the date; however Tuesday 5th August 1969 was the last day on which I made reference to seeing the timber train, so we can probably assume this was it. I can remember that feeling of knowing what I had seen did not bode well, firstly because I enjoyed seeing it and would, likely as not, never see it again. Secondly however I harboured the vague hope that at least if passenger services were withdrawn to High Wycombe, they would have to keep it open for freight, with both the timber train and the parcels train using it. Now it seemed only the parcels train was going to keep that hope alive for me.

I determined to look out for the parcels on as many days as I could during the school holidays from then on, and my diary records me seeing it a further six times during the remainder of 1969. That includes one term day, Thursday 20th November 1969, when my diary recalls: "Still away from school with this sinus trouble but felt well enough to see the parcels train at midday". You've done it again you naughty boy! Finally, with the Wycombe line's days possibly numbered, I decided to make a real effort during the Easter holidays of 1970, and saw it several times in April prior to going back to school. On Thursday 2nd April D7007 had charge, on Monday 6th it was D7030, on Tuesday 7th D7096, on Wednesday 8th D7016, and finally Thursday 9th it was D7044. That was the last time I was to see it.

My dad and I made a last desperate effort to capture some cine-film of the line, but this had to happen on Saturdays when Dad wasn't working and nothing more than the inevitable single "bubble" car was about. We did unfortunately miss an enthusiasts' excursion on Saturday 18th April which, according to my diary, was formed of a 9-car DMU. Then four days later on the following Wednesday "we heard confirmed plans that the Wycombe line will close on May 4th". On that sad day the service was formed of a 3-car unit, and I took the opportunity to ride on it twice. As I remember, the whole family came for the very last train, the 20.57 from Bourne End and 21.20 return.

The following morning I cycled to Cores End in the vague hope that I might see some sign that, even though the passenger service had been withdrawn, the line would not only remain open for the parcels train but also because it formed part of a seemingly important through route. Wrong! The signal arms had already been dismantled, while a length of rail had been removed just south of the crossing and buffer stops erected. The lines between the two level crossings remained, and indeed did

Not the greatest of photographs but it does depict the last day of services between Bourne End and High Wycombe. Although the official closure was with effect from Monday 4th May, there being no Sunday services, the last trains ran on Saturday 2nd May with Pressed Steel 3-car set L409 seen at Bourne End after working the 11:00 train from High Wycombe.

Photo: Mike` Walker



so for the best part of a year. But the through route had been well and truly severed, for ever it seems.....

The demise of the Wycombe line from Monday 4th May 1970 had no direct impact on my commute to school of course, except that at some point (I can't remember if it was immediately) our train began to depart from the former down platform at Bourne End rather than the bay. The connecting services (including the 7-car through train to Paddington) continued to much the same pattern, but of course arrived and departed from/to Maidenhead still using the former up platform. Our shuttle continued to be formed of a Pressed Steel 2-car unit with the driving trailer invariably and frustratingly locked out of use. There was very little else of interest to the railway enthusiast going on, and very little prospect of there being any with the through link to Wycombe gone. I resigned myself to this being the order of the day from then on..... and yet, less than a month later, I was in for a surprise!

Monday 1st June 1970 dawned, the start of another boring week at school, and so there we were standing on the platform at Bourne End. But what on earth was this coming round the corner? Certainly not the expected Pressed Steel unit; this thing had high front windows at the cab end with just a two-character headcode panel lower down, and the passenger accommodation had sliding ventilation louvres above the windows, with only four passenger doors in each of its two coaches. I noted down the numbers, M50414 and M56169, so this was certainly not of Western pedigree! However the impressions on boarding were really good; for a start both the coaches were in use, the seats seemed comfy and there was an overall impression of space. When I got home that evening I rushed straight to my Ian Allen Combined Volume. This told me this was the last of a class of twenty Park Royal twin units, each with a Motor Brake Second and a Driving Trailer Composite, and all officially allocated to the London Midland Region. They were not new either, having been introduced in 1957, three years earlier than the Pressed Steel units. What on earth was going on? Was this just a one off or was this a sign of things to come?

Well M50414/M56169 worked the branch for all five days of that week. So what would Monday 8th June bring? Another week of the same unit or a return to the Pressed Steels? The answer was neither, for drawing up in the platform was M50413/M56168, and this then worked the branch for the whole of that week. So there were two of them, and it was beginning to look like this really was part of a structured plan!

And so it proved, with one of these two units almost invariably turning up throughout that Summer and on into the Autumn term. We loved them, not least because they provided an almost full proof opportunity to sit behind the driver. I say "almost" because at the leading end of the Driving Trailer there was a small first class section. The services were advertised as second class only so us schoolboys used this as our excuse to sit in there. Some guards simply ignored us, some made a remark but let us carry on sitting there, and some threw us out! But we tended to take our chances.

And so, with what were apparently its own dedicated units appearing most of the time, things seemed to be looking up a bit for the Marlow branch. Timekeeping was becoming exemplary, and, in comparison with today, it is extraordinary that I did not record any cancellations and just one 15 minute delay on my trains to school for the remainder of 1970. This was most certainly not the case on the buses, with more breakdowns, single decker buses being sent out vice deckers, and worst of all a great deal of industrial unrest. There had already been an all out strike from Monday 9th February to Wednesday 11th February 1970, but then, right the way through from Monday 14th September to Friday 9th October, while bus workers were embarking on a "work to rule", we had a fleet of Carter's coaches supposedly looking after us. I recall hanging around in Quoiting Square waiting for something to appear on numerous occasions during this period.

By contrast, on the railway, the staff all seemed reasonably happy! A Guard from the time has since confirmed to me that they locked the Driving Trailers on the Pressed Steel units out because the Guards could not otherwise get through the train, so he loved the Park Royal units for that. Although common in all other regions on B.R., the Western otherwise possessed no gangwayed twin units, hence the reason these were brought in.

The Western Region authorities at the time were also clearly happy with how things were going with the two Park Royals because, quite out of the blue, a third set appeared nearly six months after the introduction of the first two. On Monday 23rd November 1970 W50412/W56166 worked the branch for the first time, fully refurbished, and with unit number 112 displayed on the front end and 'W' prefixes to the coach numbers. (The original two units retained their 'M' prefixes for now).

Despite there now being three units, there were still occasional appearances from the "old order" in various forms and not always as a 2-car with the driving trailer locked out. On

Despite there now being three units, there were still occasional appearances from the "old order" in various forms and not always as a 2-car with the driving trailer locked out. On Wednesday 23rd December 1970 (having broken up for the Christmas hols) I travelled to Maidenhead on W51369/W50411, a 3-car minus its centre trailer which was another way of providing a 2-car gangwayed set! Then in the new Spring term, on Tuesday 12th January 1971, a full Birmingham RCW class 118 3-car turned up.

Being a bit of a number cruncher at the time, I was naturally curious as to what had happened to 56167 as the number sequence on the Park Royals seemed to have been broken. However on Monday 2nd February 1971 my question was answered with the appearance of a fourth unit, W50411/W56167, again newly refurbished and with 'W' number prefixes. (According to my brother it had actually made its first run the previous Saturday when he caught it to Maidenhead). Things however had not yet entirely settled down, with substitutions by Pressed Steel vehicles still happening. This was because the two original units had now been dispatched for overhaul and official Westernisation. And so it was that, more than three months after it had last been seen when still in its Midland guise, W50413/W56168 appeared on Monday 26th April 1971, with W50414/W56169 following the very next day.

The Western's Park Royal 2-car fleet was now at full strength! There were one or two further Pressed Steel substitutions in May, but after that the Park Royals' dominance on the Marlow branch became almost total. Indeed on every single day of the Autumn Term 1971 I recorded a Park Royal unit on my run to school. With four units in traffic they could spread their wings a bit too, and were frequently employed on the Greenford and Henley branches as well as, albeit less often, between Slough and Windsor. I even saw one at Paddington, being used to strengthen a rush hour Pressed Steel formation! (Being "Blue Square" coded, they could be used coupled to most other DMU classes). And which was my favourite one? Probably W50412/W56166 because for whatever reason when it was refurbished (it was the first one so treated) its aluminium window surrounds were left unpainted, whereas the others all had theirs painted blue. It was therefore easy to spot from a distance.

As I said previously, what we schoolboys liked most about the Park Royals was the fact that we could nearly always ride in the front seats. We often had a bit of banter with the drivers too, sometimes over how near they could get to the bufferstops at Marlow without actually hitting them! (I can only recall one time when that actually happened). Then there was the famous occasion when we were in the front seats playing cards. The driver was being funny, turning round and pointing at cards that he thought we ought to play, and generally making faces when we played what he thought was the wrong one. In other words he was paying little or no attention to the road ahead. We had gone passed Spade Oak and were approaching Calcot Crossing at full speed when I noticed to my horror a herd of cows being led across right in front of us. I banged on the window and pointed, but by the time the driver had reached across for the vacuum brake we were pretty much at the crossing. We missed the last cow by inches, and there was an exchange of clenched fists between the farmer and our driver! There was no question of stopping of course in spite of the incident (I'm not sure what the driver might have put down in any report!) and we proceeded on as normal into Marlow station.

I noted just three occasions in my diaries where a Park Royal unit came a cropper. The second one was on Thursday 30th March 1972 in the Easter holidays when

W50411/W56167 broke down while working the 09.16 from Bourne End. I only know because my mum and my sister were off to Reading on a shopping trip and ended up being delayed for an hour. Some other family members might say that them having less time to spend their money in Reading's shops was a good thing! A Pressed Steel 3-car unit replaced the Park Royal for the remainder of that day.

However the first incident was back on Wednesday 30th December 1970, again during school holidays. I turned up at the station to find that at some point in the early morning M50413/M56168 had run out of fuel and had had to be rescued by a Pressed Steel 3-car unit. Luckily this was during the period that the track layout beyond the signalbox to Cores End remained in situ after the closure to Wycombe, and the errant Park Royal had been dumped out of the way on this section. By the time I returned from Maidenhead having tried unsuccessfully to buy a couple of LPs (remember them?), another scratch 3-car set comprising a variety of vehicles was working the branch. At Bourne End I found that the original 3-car rescue unit had gone across the crossing and coupled up to the Park Royal. After the departure of my train on to Marlow I then had the pleasure of watching the barriers come down and a 5-car DMU cross the road and away to Maidenhead. It would have got there just in time to clear the line before the service unit had returned from Marlow to Bourne End and needed the road to Maidenhead. There was still full signalling then and therefore no further delays!

This was of course the last time I ever saw passenger stock (albeit ECS) traverse the level crossing at Bourne End station. As a quick aside I did see a couple more trains go across the crossing before the concrete buffers of today (well those that haven't been run into and had to be replaced!) finally went up at the end of June 1971. These were two lengthy p-way trains on Sunday 30th May which arrived from Maidenhead and needed nearly all the track length up to Cores End before they could reverse up the line to Marlow. Both were in the charge of Hymeeks, numbers 7027 and 7032. Clearly the operators were taking late advantage of the long headshunt, a facility that, of their own making, they were shortly to no longer have! Well, the branch wasn't going to be around for much longer was it?

To be continued.



A Class 103 unit formed of W50414 and W56169 sits in the old Marlow bay at Bourne End on 21st May 1970.

Photo: Mike Walker

THE WESTERN RAILBUSES

MIKE WALKER recalls a short-lived experiment



W79977, in original condition, sits at Tetbury in May 1962. The driver waits for customers who seem short in supply.

Colour-Rail DE1188

As part of the 1955 modernisation plan British Railways experimented with a fleet of small, four-wheeled diesel railbuses aimed at finding a more economical way of operating branch lines. Twenty-two cars were ordered from five builders, five each from AC Cars, Park Royal, Wickham and German builder Waggon und Maschinenbau plus two from Bristol-Eastern Coach Works. Four of the AC Cars examples were allocated to the Western Region.

These weren't the first such vehicles. In 1952 Associated Commercial Vehicles (AEC and Park Royal) supplied a 3-car set of boxy 4-wheelers as a demonstration train. Nicknamed 'Flying Bricks', they were initially trialled in passenger service running two round trips a day between High Wycombe and Princes Risborough. They were followed by eight production vehicles in 1955-7 and were usually to be found on the Watford Junction - St. Albans Abbey or Harrow - Belmont branches. They were not of the true branch line style of the units under consideration here and were not a success being withdrawn by 1960.

AC Cars were based in Thames Ditton, Surrey and were best known for the three-wheeled invalid carriages of the 1950's and 60's and the iconic Cobra sports car but they had some rail experience having built the trains for the Southend Pier Railway in 1949. Initially it was proposed that the firm would supply seven cars, four for the Scottish Region and three for the Western but the eventual order from the BTC was for five only one of which was destined for Scotland the rest to the Western. They were allocated the numbers 79975-79979 under lot number 30749 and cost a little over £14,000 each.

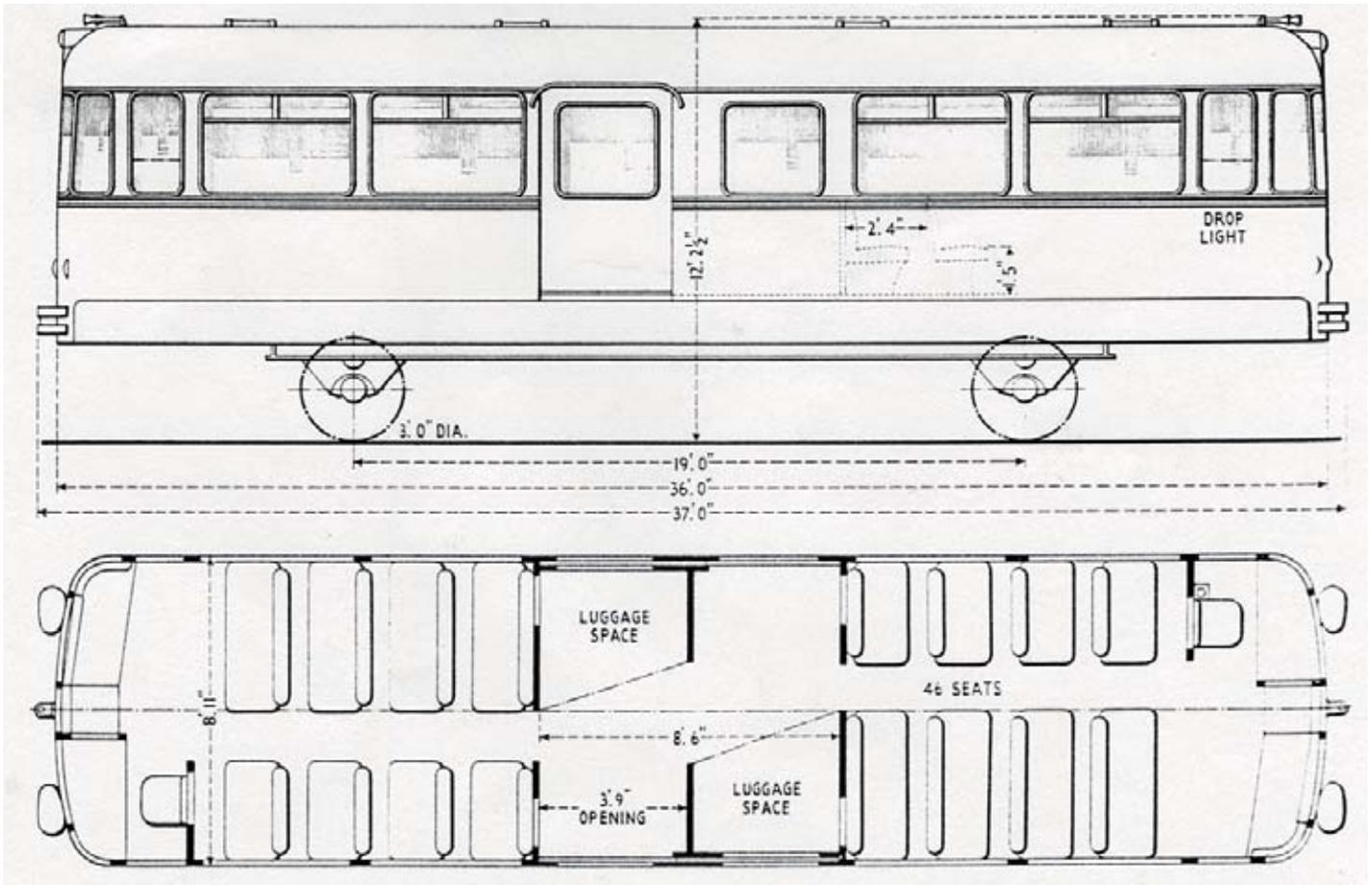
The AC Cars were the smallest of those ordered under the 1955 scheme, just 36' 0" long by 8' 11" wide and with a wheelbase of 19' 0" and seating 46 in two saloons accessed from a central vestibule with sliding exterior doors. Power came from a BUT AEC 220AJ 6-cylinder 11.3 litre 150hp horizontal engine driving through a fluid flywheel and a Self Changing Gears R14 four-speed semi-automatic gearbox to a single axle. This was basically the same as used in pairs on the full-size DMUs.

The bodies were constructed from lightweight steel framing with aluminium panelling and roofs. The centrally positioned sliding doors were power operated by the driver whose cab was simply part-partitioned although a simple folding door was added before they entered service. The seats were standard bus type arranged 2+3 all facing in one direction outwards from the vestibule plus a triple rearward-facing seat set into the front of the car opposite the drivers cab.

Like all the railbuses (except the WuM examples) they were not intended to haul tail traffic and consequently lacked conventional buffers and drawgear. Instead, simple coiled steel bumpers were provided along with a simple drawbar attachment for use in emergencies. Along with other 1955 plan railbuses, they were equipped with retractable steps and handrails below the passenger doors to allow them to use simple ground level halts.

They were all finished in the lighter, Malachite shade of green as used on the early Derby lightweight DMUs with red buffer beams and grey roofs although the portion over the cabs was green. Cream "speed whiskers" were applied to each end (in the case of 79979 after delivery) below a polished alloy waistband. The standard round BR carriage crest was applied on each side next to the door with the running number towards the right hand end. The data panel was at the right hand end under the droplight.

Perversely, the first to be completed was the highest numbered, Sc79979, in January 1958. The Thames Ditton plant was not rail connected and the doors were too small to permit the completed railbuses to pass therefore they left the works as separate chassis and body which were assembled outside. Following an initial test run it was displayed at Paddington on 19th February 1958 and, following some further test runs and modifications, was sent to Scotland entering service between Gleneagles and Crieff on 15th September 1958.



A fire at the AC Cars factory delayed the completion of the four Western Region examples with the official delivery dates being recorded as: W79975, August 1958; W79976, September 1958; W79977, October 1958 and finally W79978 in December 1958. All were allocated to Swindon and received modifications before entering service including the fitting of folding doors to the driver's compartments and power operation of the steps.

The Western intended to use them on the two branches from Kemble; to Cirencester Town and Tetbury. One car would be used on each with the other two held at Swindon in reserve. In an effort to increase patronage on both branches three new Halts were opened, Chesterton Lane on the Cirencester branch and Church's Hill and Trouble House on the Tetbury branch. Taking advantage of the retracting steps, all these halts were simple ground level affairs. In addition, Culker-ton station on the Tetbury branch which had closed in March 1956 was reopened as an unstaffed halt but Jackaments Bridge Halt on the same line closed in 1948, did not reopen.

Following the usual training, the railbuses entered service from Monday 2nd February 1959 with W79976 on the Cirencester branch and W79978 on the Tetbury replacing pannier tanks and coaches on both. In addition to the additional halts, both branches saw a much more frequent timetable. Whilst the stations at Kemble, Cirencester and Tetbury remained fully manned, the guards sold tickets from the Halts using

W79978, almost brand new, outside the locomotive shed at Swindon in 1959.

Colour-Rail DE1536

Setright machines familiar to bus users for journeys within the branches and hand-written tickets from a pad for journeys beyond Kemble to Swindon, Stroud, Gloucester or further afield. Special reduced fares for journeys confined to the branches were also offered.

The new cars proved popular despite their somewhat lively ride on jointed track - they were officially limited to 55mph - and there were soon reports of standing passengers. On the first Saturday it was reported that one journey on the Cirencester branch carried a total of 97 passengers which must have cosy to say the least!

This increase in patronage was despite connections at Kemble with main line services being poor as they often were in those days. It had been intended to offer through services to Swindon



*Railbus W79978 at Ches-
terton Lane Halt forming
the 12:45 Kemble to
Cirencester Town service
in August 1963.*

*This shows the basic
nature of these halts
consisting of no more than
a few sleepers laid on the
ground and a simple name
board, no lighting was
provided.*

*In addition, despite having
electric marker lights, oil
tail lamps were employed.*

Colour-Rail DE416



from both branches but this was abandoned when it was discovered the cars were too light to operate track circuits reliably, although this did not prevent each car making a daily light move to Swindon for refuelling.

Regarding the connections at Kemble, noted author and modeller Chris Leigh recalls a trip on the Tetbury branch: "The timetable showed one of those pre-Beeching classics where the branch train just missed a connection with the up main line train, leaving passengers with a two-hour wait for the next one. Knowing full well that the timing missed the connection, I asked the driver, 'Do you connect with the x.xxpm to Swindon?'

'No,' he replied, 'but if you want to catch that train, we will.' And we did!

The ride round the Tetbury branch's 'threepenny bit' curves with the railbus flat-out at 55mph was like a bucking bronco! There was no one at the intermediate halts, so we just went straight through. The railbus control desk merely had a sign to the effect that it was limited to 55mph. I don't think there was any physical limitation, as the speed restriction on the cars was an afterthought."

An additional halt was provided on the Cirencester branch at Park Leaze which opened on 4th January 1960 and loadings on this branch were so successful that consideration was given to replacing the railbus with a larger single unit railcar (Bubble car) but this would have required the provision of raised platforms at the two halts.

At some point during their time on the Kemble branches, W79977 appears to have been involved in a heavy shunt or some other incident which required it to receive repairs at Swindon Works. At this time, thought to be in 1961, it was repainted in standard DMU dark green with white cab roofs and small yellow warning panels on the ends in place of the speed whiskers and was the only Western railbus so treated. However, there are reports that one or two others might have been hand painted dark green around the original markings but this has not been proved either way - contemporary colour photographs are inconclusive.

Despite the increased patronage on both branches, the overall reduction in operating costs was insufficient for them to avoid being included in the list slated for closure in the infamous Beeching report. As a result, both lines closed on 6th April 1964 and all four cars were placed in storage at Swindon.

This was to be brief as it was decided to redeploy the four cars on the branches in the west recently inherited from the Southern Region.

Consequently, W79975 and W79976 were sent to Yeovil to work the shuttle between the Junction and Town stations in place of 64xx panniers and autocaches which had themselves only recently replaced SR M7s on push-pull.

This view shows the retractable steps in use on W79977 at Boscarne Junction in July 1964. If they weren't a sufficient obstacle for able-bodied passengers, imagine those of 'persons of reduced mobility' or, as can be seen here, the loading of pushchairs or prams.

Colour-Rail DE2184

The Marlow Donkey



W79978 waits at Yeovil Town ready to make the short trip up to Yeovil Junction in July 1965. At this time the shuttle was the only service to the Town station yet it was still fully staffed with track-work intact, fully signalled.

Colour-Rail DE707



They started on this service on 28th December 1964 and following the closure of Yeovil Town on 3rd October 1966 they ran between the Junction and Pen Mill stations for a brief period.

The other two, W79977 and W79978, went to St. Blazey where they were put to work on a shuttle service between Bodmin North (the former SR station) and Boscarne Junction replacing the former steam-hauled SR service between Bodmin North and Padstow. A new Exchange Platform was opened at the previously station less Boscarne Junction comprising a ground level "platform" for the railbus and a short normal height platform facing the former GWR line down from Bodmin General which was served by a Bubble Car working between Bodmin Road and Padstow.

Initially, the shuttle ran seven times daily but the requirement to change wasn't popular (probably the idea!) but worse was to come. From April 1966 the service to Bodmin North was reduced to just two trains daily, worked by the through service reversing twice at Boscarne Junction (having also done so at Bodmin General of course). This was to be short-lived and the whole network from Bodmin Road through to Padstow closed to passengers on 28th January 1967.

With no further work for them on the Western, all four were sent to Scotland, the last bastion of railbus operation, in February 1967 where they worked on various branches until being withdrawn at the end of January 1968. Three were preserved; W79976 is currently at the Great Central and W79978 at the Colne Valley but neither is serviceable and in poor shape. Sc79979 was even less lucky, having initially been saved it was cut up in 1992, a fate which may yet befall the other two.

The railbuses were not a success due to poor reliability, poor ride quality and they did not contribute as much to the reduction in operating costs as was hoped. This latter point was not entirely the vehicles' fault. BR failed to grasp the nettle and continued to operate the branches in the traditional manner. Stations remained fully manned and signalling was maintained. Take Bodmin North as an example. The station remained staffed until January 1966 whilst the signal box remained open until closure for TWO trains a day, goods services having ceased in November 1965. Had BR adopted what we now know as a "basic railway" things may have been different.



In its final form, W79977 rests in the ample platform at Bodmin North and will form the 13:30 to Boscarne Junction, meantime we can admire the gaol and send a card saying "wish you were here". July 1964.

Colour-Rail DE2350

THEN AND NOW: EALING BROADWAY

This time we look at the evolution of Ealing Broadway, the important interchange station between the national network and London Underground in west London.

In April 1957 Large Prairie 6128 called at the station in the condition it had existed in since quadrupling of the main lines and the opening of the District Railway.

A Central Line train formed of Standard tube stock gets into the view.

*Photo: D B Watkins/
Mike Walker collection*



The station was extensively rebuilt in the mid-1960s with the original separate footbridge and road bridge carrying the Broadway being replaced by a new combined structure which included a glass-fronted station building serving both BR and LT replacing the previous GWR building which was also part of the road bridge. The rebuild also included a major office building, Villiers House, which dominated the scene and was occupied for many years by the BBC.

These can be seen here as W51392 heads away from Ealing Broadway with the 12:22 Reading - Paddington on 22nd March 1980.

Photo: Peter Robins

Coming up to the present there are more changes with Villiers House obviously having been refurbished although no longer occupied by the BBC, more of the cutting west of the station built over and electrification added for the Heathrow services in the early nineties to say nothing of changes to the platform surfaces and LU stock.

On 3rd August 2018 Heathrow Connect 360205, originally used for the inter-terminal shuttle, calls with 2Y22, the 10:52 Heathrow Terminal 4 to Paddington.

Photo: Peter Robins

