

THE

DECEMBER 1990

56

MARLOW DONKEY

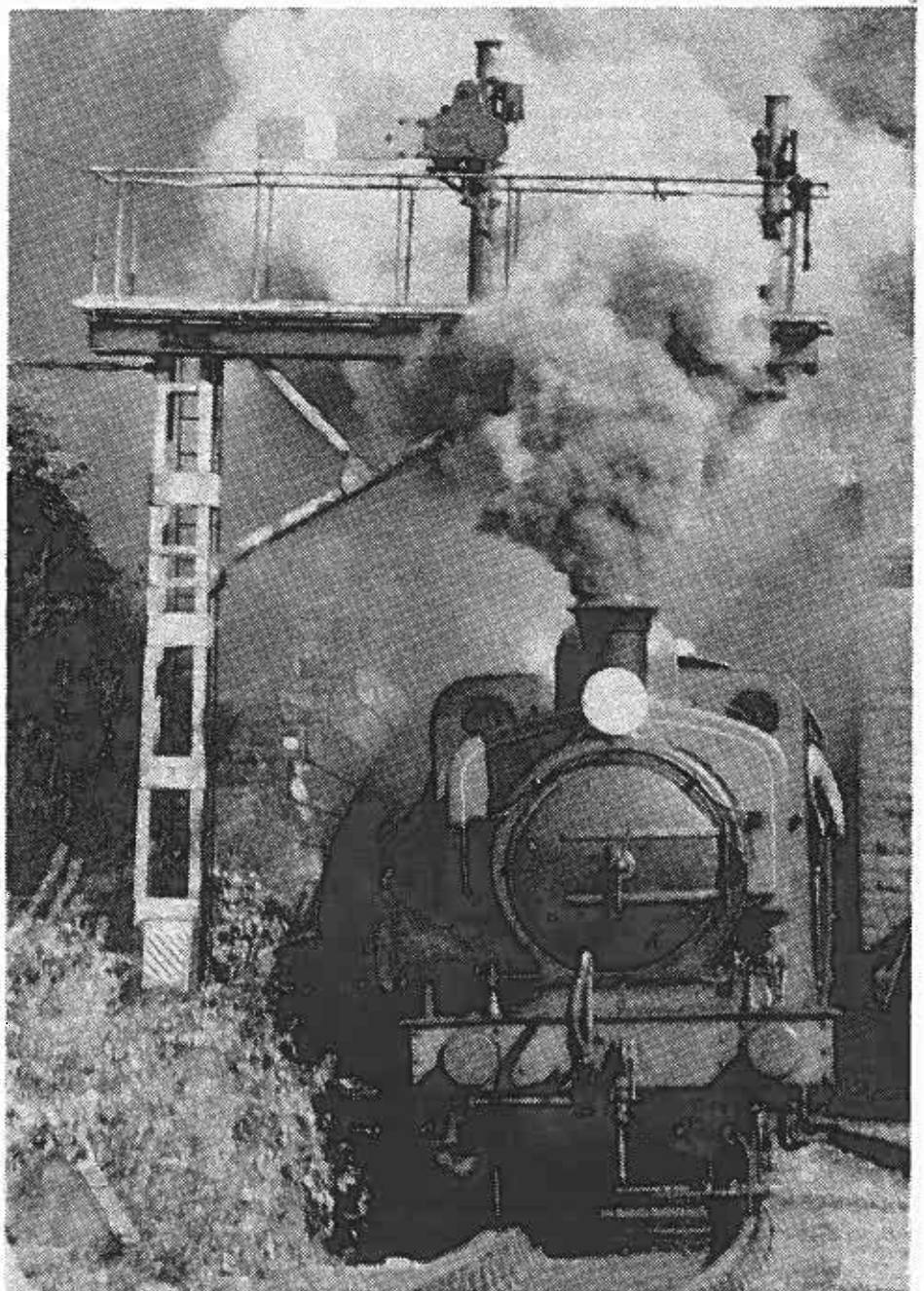


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VARIETY AT WYCOMBE

**MORE DORSET
MEMORIES**

EIRE TODAY



THE MARLOW DONKEY

Quarterly magazine of the
MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

No. 56 December 1990

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

In recent months the subject of trespass and access to railways, both BR and the private sector, has been well to the fore. BR are, understandably, concerned that an accident will occur such as a member of the public being run down; a worry shared by the private sector with the additional problem of alienating neighbouring landowners as "enthusiasts" trespass on private property for that lineside shot.

BR's initial response has been the 'Q-Train' loaded with police, an extremely expensive procedure but an indication of how seriously they view the problem. Although it now seems that most of those 'nicked' during this exercise were members of the general public, we enthusiasts should not be complacent. It only needs a single accident and that will be the end of steam and our enjoyment. Therefore we must do our best to ensure that we do not trespass and prevent others from doing so, after all there is no shortage of public access points, stations, bridges, roads and don't forget public footpaths.

Many of our preserved lines have made it a policy to grant lineside permits in exchange for a modest sum. Unfortunately the latter condition seems to put off many who prefer to trespass on private property, damaging fences and farm crops. I've even seen mature trees felled by these mindless morons because it gets in their way. An alternative and bold approach was tried by the Gloucester Warwickshire Railway for its GW powered extravaganza in October. Expecting large crowds and fearing a serious trespass problem upsetting neighbours; they identified several of the best lineside locations and allowed photographers access to these points. The normal lineside passes were withdrawn but the specified points were such that many photographers could get in good positions without getting in each others shots. On the Sunday an impromptu grandstand of sleepers was erected at the west end of Greet Tunnel. Free off road car parking was provided at each location where admission was free if you had a Toddington ticket, or for a small donation. Yet there were some who feared it might cost them, so they parked in the narrow lanes, trampled over crops, climbed fences and were a general pain in the backside. Fortunately, the local Constabulary rolled up and booked 'em all for obstruction. Well done lads!

At the end of October I attended the Didcot night photographic evening and quite frankly was disgusted by the total lack of organisation and preparation. Having spent half an hour and wasted half a roll of film without getting a single shot, I left and was so incensed I demanded a refund of the £4 admission, which I eventually got.

Here was an example of a preservation/enthusiast group completely taken over by commercial greed, getting so many bodies through the gate as possible and selling as much as film as possible for their sponsors, Kodak. The result was, it was impossible to take time exposures without being jostled, people walked in front of open shutters or wandered over to admire locos spotlighted at close quarters. Even HWS stewards took a perverse delight in strolling in front of cameras to ruin shots - one even saying out loud it helped sell more film for the sponsor! We also had to contend with those who insist on fitting flash guns to their cameras, these do not have the range to illuminate the subject and merely spoil the work of adjacent cameramen.

What made me even more incensed was that having attended several night shoots in the US I was able to make a comparison. There, admission is strictly limited and by advanced booking

only (yes, John Sears and Peter Greatorex, I remember Steam Expo but that was nothing compared to the chaos at Didcot), the public are excluded and the photolines are organised. You shoot how and when you're told - but the result is always successful and stunning. Perhaps we should get Jim Boyd over to show how it should be done - in fact at Steam Powered Video we're working on it!

Many of you will have heard of my unexpected encounter with "No.8" whilst in the USA in September and seen the report in November's 'Steam Railway' (if not, turn to page 5). Well, SR editor Nick Pigott confirms I was the first to introduce a note of blasphemy and, yes, he got at least one letter of complaint! As Nick says, my God this IS 1990! Anyway it makes a change from my usual references to breweries, pubs and alcoholic beverages. Incidentally during the move through Green Bay I was talking to a local gricer, sorry railfan, who declared he was a great admirer of Gresley's work - good grief Mike you're not alone! "Had I ever seen the working ones in Britain?" he asked. Well when I remarked that one day 4468 and 4498 followed each other through our local station and on another occasion 4472 and 4498 shared the honours, then all three posed at Marylebone shed, his jaw hit the deck with a resounding thud. Perhaps we all take what we've got too much for granted which, coming back to my opening comments, we mustn't throw away. Our US friend had of course seen a working Gresley pacific, Green Bay was on 4472's marathon itinerary.

Well another year draws to a close, twelve generally successful months for the Society with a balanced range of talks and visits, all generally well supported. As always there have been crisis both in public and behind the scenes. October's meeting was a classic, with a change of speaker, and double booking of the hall, we aged ten years overnight. Even on the night the gremlins continued their mischief, a slide tray which refused to index, a power lead which continually tripped the circuit breaker and even a video with a dodgy sound track! But, we saw it through to a successful conclusion thanks for your tolerance. Perhaps now I understand why so many are reluctant to serve on the committee, we must be masochists.

Details of next year are included in Timetable with more details being given at the AGM. For my part, my wish for 1991 (as in 1990, 1989...) is that more of you take a more active part in club business, tell us your ideas and views, and contribute to the Donkey.

Finally, best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you all and your families. I'm off for a seasonal noggin or two.

Mike

COVER

Former GNR J52 0-6-OST 1247 bursts out of Grosmont Tunnel in a determined attack on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's notorious bank in August 1975. This dramatic shot won Class D, Black & White prints, for DAVE LITTLE in our 1990 Photo Competition. Now's the time to sort your entries for next year.

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS & EXCURSIONS

All meetings held at the British Legion, Station Approach, Marlow, commencing at 7.45 for 8.00pm.

MEETINGS

Thurs. 17 Jan. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The formal business will be followed by a programme of short talks - see below.

Thurs. 21 Feb. ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Once again your entries please for the following classes.

- A : colour slide - UK
- B : COLOUR SLIDES - OVERSEAS
- C : COLOUR PRINTS
- D : B & W PRINTS

And remember the winners will illustrate the covers in '91.

Thurs. 21 Mar SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE Jim Jarvis

An evening exploring the highest railways in the world, still largely steam worked.

Thurs. 18 April EAST COAST ELECTRIFICATION D.W. Barnes, BR Project Director

With just a month to go before completion the full story of BR's biggest single electrification project to date, the renewed infrastructure and InterCity 225's.

Thurs. 16 May BUTTERLEY RAILWAY CENTRE Illustrated talk (provisional)

Thurs. 20 June WORLD STEAM Pete Greatorex Illustrated talk

Thurs. 18 July CHINNOR & PRINCES RISBOROUGH RAILWAY Illustrated talk

VISITS

Sat. 20 April CHANNEL TUNNEL (provisional)

Sun. 23 June STEAM DAY AT FAWLEY

Sun. 7 July CRICH TRAMWAY MUSEUM and BUTTERLEY RAILWAY CENTRE

SOCIETY NEWS

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Gresley and later Pacifics of the LNER came under the spotlight in September when our guest was Peter Townend, former Kings Cross shedmaster. Peter pulled no punches in defending his locomotives and explaining the reasoning behind LNER practice, it was obvious he was a North Eastern man to the core, even if he does live in Torquay.

Our meeting was a triumph of determination over adversity. First our advertised speaker, Mr. Dunlop, was unable to attend but arranged for an assistant, Ken Gibbs, to give his presentation on the Channel Tunnel. Then came the discovery of the double booking at the Legion only 72 hours before kick off! Attempts by the RBL to find us an alternative in Marlow proved fruitless as everywhere was booked, so we ended up at Little Marlow cricket pavilion. Despite some further technical gremlins, a good crowd turned out for an informative evening. Our apologies once again for the confusion.

There were no problems in November when Ron White of Colour Rail returned for another delve into his collection. This time the theme was railways in the Chilterns and a look at some of the recent additions to the catalogue, all narrated in Ron's unique style.

URGENTLY WANTED!!

ANYONE FOR A SHORT TALK?

The formal business of the AGM in January will be followed by a programme of short talks of 15-20 minutes by our members. We are therefore looking for volunteers. Your choice of subject, interested? Please contact Mike Walker or Eddie Lewcock.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Its that time again, subscriptions fall due on 1st January. The Treasurer reports a good year so the subscription will remain at £5.00 for 1991 with 80p meeting fees. We therefore invite you to submit your renewals.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 15th Annual General Meeting will be held at the British Legion, Station Approach, Marlow on Thursday 17th January 1991 starting at 8.00 pm. The agenda is as follows:-

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last AGM (see March '90 Donkey)
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Election of 1991 Committee
7. Any Other Business



COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Of the 1990 committee, Tony Caton, Martin Pink and Rob Young are standing down in accordance with the rules and offer themselves for re-election. We also invite others to stand if they wish. Nominations should be submitted to Eddie Lewcock by 10 January 1991.

NORMAN-ASTON SMITH TROPHY

During the AGM voting will take place for the highly sought after (?) trophy (a GW signal arm for those who dont know), awarded to the best article in the year's Donkey as selected by you.

ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

As usual this will be held in February and we invite ALL MEMBERS to participate to ensure a successful evening. Remember, voting is by our members based on what appeals to them not technical merit. Whether you shoot with a Box Brownie or several hundred pounds worth of Nikkon, at High Wycombe or Darjeeling, you have an equal chance of success, and even if you dont win you entertain your fellows. So come on, just for the hell of it - ENTER SOMETHING.

The classes this year are as follows:-

- A - Colour Slides - UK subjects
- B - Colour Slides - Overseas subjects
- C - Colour Prints - All subjects (10" x 8" max)
- D - Black & White Prints

There are a few simple rules:-

1. All entries must be the members own original work.
2. A maximum of 5 entries per class per member.
3. Slides should be marked by the entrant for easy identification - prints must be unmarked.
4. There is no time limit - shots taken in 1909 or 1989 are eligible.

Good Luck!

WEA BEACONSFIELD PRESENTS HISTORY OF RAILWAYS

Tutor: Roger Bowen

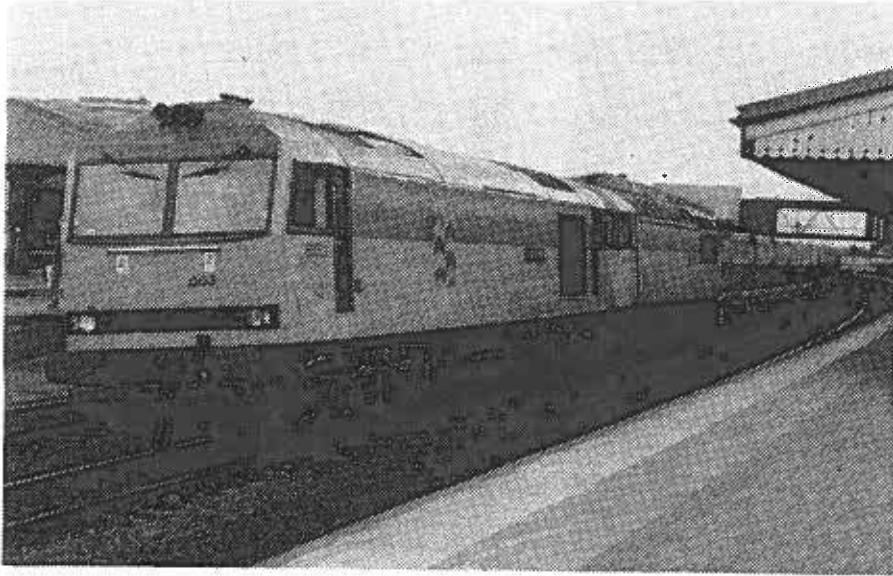
Programme of 10 lectures on Tuesdays, starting 8th January 1991, 8.00-9.30pm at Beaconsfield High School, Watlington Road, Beaconsfield.

Course Fee - £17.75

Further details contact Ann Barnard on 0494 674995

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

NOTES AND NEWS



60's INTO SERVICE

At last the first class 60 locomotives are entering revenue service. The original plan was that 60.001-60.010 would go to Thornaby for the Steel sub-sector but it was later decided to keep them at Toton, thus close to Derby and Loughborough, until they have proved themselves, then move them to Thornaby. 60.011-60.015 will go to Immingham and be shared between Steel and Petroleum whilst 60.016-60.020 will be allocated to Construction at Toton. Their first appearances locally are most likely to be on the trains to the Total Oil terminal at Langley. They are also often to be seen at Didcot.

The photograph shows 60.003 'Christopher Wren' piloting 56.039 and an empty stone train for Westbury through Reading General on 15 March 1990 whilst the locomotive was based at Old Oak Common for training purposes.

Photo: Alan Costello

NETWORKER TURBO PROGRESS

The prototype body shells duly emerged from BREL's York works in September. As predicted by the advanced publicity they are basically the same as the forthcoming 'Networker' emu and differ only in minor detail from the previous drawings in the Dec, '89 Marlow Donkey. These prototype shells will not be turned into complete vehicles as they will be destroyed in crash and fire tests. However, the first production shells should be nearing completion by the time you read these notes.

An interesting point concerning all 'Networker' derivatives is that the York built bodies will incorporate European made structural aluminium extrusions whilst GEC/Metro-Cammell will import complete bodysHELLS from Europe.

Meanwhile the two new maintenance bases for the trains are nearing completion; at Reading in the triangle alongside the Berks & Hants line between West ML and Oxford Rd. Junctions; and at Aylesbury on the up side of the London line east of Aylesbury South Junction.

The first train is due for delivery in the early summer and we hope to arrange an early inspection for members.

RARE MILEAGE OPPORTUNITY

With the relief lines closed at weekends between Ealing Broadway and Hanwell there is a special Saturday service between Paddington and Hayes via the Greenford Loop and calling at all stations between South Greenford and Hayes. This provides a rare chance to travel over the rarely used (for passenger trains) Hanwell west curve and chord line between Greenford East and South Junctions, but you'll have to be quick, 29th December is the last day of operation.

MARYLEBONE GOES LIVE

Following the total shutdown of the terminus for two weeks in late September for remodelling, Marylebone's new electronic control centre is now operational and has taken over from the manual boxes on the former GW/GC Joint and GC/Met Joint as far as Harrow. Aylesbury faced a two week remodelling blockade in December after which Marylebone would take control. The Harrow to Amersham section is controlled by LT.

You will search in vain for a new 'Panel' building at Marylebone. Such is the revolution in modern electronics that the panel is replaced by a couple of desk top VDU's and the interlocking housed in a single cupboard sized enclosure with slave units in the field. The whole control is housed in a single room in the station offices.

CROSS-LINK APPROVED

The much talked about Crosslink tunnel between Paddington and Liverpool St is finally to go ahead, but tunneling will not start for about three years with completion expected about 1998/9. Included in the project is electrification at 25kV of the Thames & Chiltern lines at least to Reading and Aylesbury.

An interesting point is that BR and LT trains will share the new line, presumably the latter will be a development of the existing Hammersmith & City services.

LAST JOINT LINE STEAM?

Flying Scotsman Services are hoping to operate a short season of 'William Shakespeare' trains between Marylebone and Stratford this winter, providing crews are available. The dates are Saturdays, 22 December, 12 January and 9 February, plus an additional trip on Thursday 27 December. The locomotives will be 4472 or 35028.

These are being advertised as possibly the LAST STEAM workings on the Joint Line so don't miss out!

NORTH POLE ITD TAKES SHAPE

The North Pole International Train Depot is starting to take shape alongside the WR down main opposite Old Oak Common. The site extends for nearly 2 miles on both sides of the West London Line overbridge and surrounds the OOC power box, yet it is only about 75 yards wide. When opened in 1993 it will service and stable the 'Three Capitals' TGV trains visiting London. They will enter the depot, which will not be connected to the WR lines, via North Pole Junction on the West London Line.

As a result the direct connection between OOC East Junc. (WR) and North Pole Junc. has been severed, trains are now routed via Acton Wells and Willesden Junc. (Low Level) the old connection through the yard at the latter having been upgraded.

NEWS FROM CHINNOR

Only a year after its founding, things are starting to happen on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway. Tidying up of the track has begun together with the restoration of Wainhill Level Crossing. The group has purchased Gerrards Cross Signal Box (minus lever frame) and a platform building from Okehampton in Devon, both of which will be dismantled and re-erected at Chinnor.

Rolling stock acquisition began with a Coles 51 ton self propelled rail crane and a LNWR brake coach has been offered. September saw the arrival of the first locomotive, a Bagley diesel-mechanical shunter originally built for the Double Diamond Brewery. Crew training can now commence, not that this stopped the group's members from coming second in the regional heat of Footplateman of the Year. Not bad for a group with no locomotive or track!

Although it will be some time before the line reopens, as our local public steam railway, it deserves our support. Thanks to Peter Bond for the above news.

SACRAMENTO SPECTACULAR - FACT & FICTION

Most members will have seen the press advertisements for the Steam Spectacular planned for the Sacramento California from 3 - 12 May 1991 and heard that 'Duke of Gloucester' together with just about every main line steam loco in North America will be attending. Having experienced the hype which preceded the SteamExpo flop at Vancouver in 1986; what is really happening?

At present only four main line locomotives are DEFINITELY ATTENDING, three 4-8-4's, Southern Pacific 4449, Spokane Port-

land & Seattle 700 and Union Pacific 844 together with Union Pacific 'Challenger' 4-6-6-4 3985. All will make their own way to the show, the UP double heading across the mountains and desert from Cheyenne, the other two from Portland, again through mountains. These moves will be chaseable and extremely photogenic.

Frantic efforts are being made in Oakland to complete restoration of SP heavy pacific 2472 in time, steam trials are hoped for early in 1991, while down in San Bernadino similar efforts are being applied to Santa Fe 4-8-4 3751 but completion by May in this case is unlikely, it may attend as a static exhibit. Suggestions that several eastern based locos, like Nickel Plate 765 or the Norfolk Southern locos are attending are almost certainly wishful thinking, the logistics of taking steam locos on 5000+ mile round trips make such excursions impractical. In any case coal burners are not welcome out west due to the fire risk. It is possible however that British Columbia's ex CPR 'Royal Hudson' or Alberta's ex-CN 4-8-2 may represent Canada. The California Museum's regular steam locos, SP and UP 0-6-0's will be operating as usual during the fair possibly assisted by visitors.

Whilst the Railfair itself will be the usual US Disneyland type jamboree the ferry moves will be one of the events of 1991. Your Chairman is in regular contact with the US for the latest news and will be taking a party to join in the fun, if you are interested speak up!

And the 'Duke'? Well believe it when you see it and don't plan to go specially!!

EXTENDING THE JUICE

Authorisation has been given to electrify the Reading-Guildford-Redhill-Tonbridge and Reading-Basingstoke lines with the SR 750V dc system. Included is the down main through Reading station (platform 4) for stock to be interchanged.

THE CHINESE ARE COMING

Having already built three new steam locomotives for the US, with another under construction, the Chinese are opening a steam locomotive sales and service office in New York! This is indeed good news for it had previously been reported that Tangshan works were to cease manufacture at the end of this year, the New York Susquehanna & Western loco was expected to be the last.

How about getting a quote for an A1? Sorry, it seems you can have anything you like as long as its an 'SY' 2-8-2 - painted black of course!

NEW AREA MANAGER

Chris Hogan has been appointed as the new Area Manager - Chiltern Lines based at Marylebone in succession to Peter Leppard. The change became effective in mid-November.

Green Bay & Western ALCo RS3 307 tows A4 pacific 60008 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' through the GB&W-Wisconsin Central interchange in Green Bay on 5th September 1990 followed by a WC locomotive for protection and under the gaze of two local schoolboys. One on the night "Wasn't Eisenhower a president?", his friend "Oh look, its come all the way from England!"

Photo: Mike Walker

The Editor makes no apology for featuring his favourite make of diesel so prominently.



MAILBAG

Member's Letters

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL LOCO NAMES

In answer to Martin Pink's query over the name of Ex. MSC 0-6-0T No.32 'Gothenburg' which he raised in the September issue of the Donkey, I thought that he and other M&DRS members might be interested in the following explanation.

Many of the locomotives used on the Manchester Ship Canal Railway were given names of famous seaports from around the

IN BRIEF

LONGFIELD JUNCTION, the DML-DRL crossover between Ealing Broadway and West Ealing and scene of the serious derailment in 1973, has been removed as has the shuttle turnback siding at EALING BROADWAY.

The old WYCOMBE RAILWAY viaduct over Temple End, north of Frogmoor in High Wycombe, was demolished during November to make way for a new relief road. It has been disused since 1905.

MARYLEBONE's newly renovated concourse was dedicated by the then Transport Secretary Cecil Parkinson on 21st October.

COOKHAM station building has been receiving a new roof recently, as at Bourne End traditional materials are being used

It is proposed to close WESTBOURNE PARK as the cost of replacement platforms when the track is realigned for greater speed cannot be justified in view of the small amount of traffic handled. The LT side is not affected.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER ATTENDS CENTENARY

The A4 Pacific 60008 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' was moved from its home at the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, Wisconsin, this autumn for the first time since its presentation to the USA 26 years ago.

Coupled to a Green Bay & Western ALCo RS3 diesel by way of a 4 wheeled coupling adaptor, it was moved across town to the GB&W's shops on September 5th, a move which made use of three railways, the Fox River Valley, Wisconsin Central and GB&W, each providing its own pilot locomotive for its segment of the short journey. The GB&W shops were then to repaint and externally restore the locomotive (previously in a strange brownish green with red lining) together with three Gresley coaches from the SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces) train which were moved previously.

The complete "train" was then to be towed at 25mph some 1200 miles to Abilene, Kansas, Eisenhower's home town, where it was to take part in celebrations during October marking the Centenary of the soldier/president's birth attended by current US President George Bush.

The locomotive and cars are expected to return to Green Bay by Christmas. There are no plans to restore the A4 to working order although it is judged to be a simple task.

During the Green Bay move the FRV dispatcher enquired of his locomotive crew if that Eisenhower locomotive had a number. When told it was 60008 he replied "Jesus, they must have had a lot of them! "



world. The first locomotives to carry such names were a class of 0-6-0T built by Hunslet of Leeds from 1898 onwards. Incidentally, one of these early locomotives (MSC No.14 'St. John') has survived and is now preserved at Bridgenorth on the Severn Valley Railway. (By co-incidence I just happen to be the Chairman and Secretary of WILPG - the Group which owns this locomotive).

Later, slightly larger but otherwise similar locomotives were built by the rival Leeds Company of Hudswell Clarke (from 1902) and these also carried the names of famous seaports. Remarkably, four examples of these well proportioned tank locomotives are also preserved, two on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (No.31 'Hamburg' and No.67 which did not have a name), and a further two on the East Lancashire Railway (No.32 'Gothenburg' and No.70 also nameless).

When new the above mentioned locomotives of both makes had nameplates attached to both side tanks but from 1914 onwards the nameplates were replaced by cast brass numberplates, but rather strangely one nameplate was retained and attached to the inside of the rear plate of the cab. Many locomotives also had the name painted on the large wooden toolbox located on the footplate (behind the leading sandbox).

Finally, on a technical note, both Hunslet and Hudswell Clarke locomotives were specifically designed for the MSC Railway and had some rather interesting features such as Cartazzi leading axleboxes, vertical knuckle pins in coupling rods and flangeless centre driving wheels. All these features were to allow working over short radius curves which abounded within the system.

Best Regards

D.N. Cooke

PS Brief details of preserved Ex. MSC Rly Loco's are attached.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL RAILWAY Locomotives Preserved

No.	Name	Maker	Works No.	Date	Notes
14	St John	HE	686	1898	A
31	Hamburg	HC	679	1903	B
32	Gothenburg	HC	680	1903	C
67		HC	1369	1919	B
70		HC	1464	1921	D

Notes:

- A Purchased by ICI Blackley (Manchester) repainted cherry red and given a new name 'The Lady Armaghdale'. Withdrawn again in 1968 and purchased for preservation by WILPG and moved to Bridgnorth in July 1969.
- B Purchased by R. Greenwood Esq. for use on the K&WVRLy. Moved to Haworth in June 1967.
- C Purchased by the East Lancashire Preservation Society and moved to the Bury Transport Museum (now part of East Lancs Rly) in February 1973.
- D Purchased by the East Lancashire Preservation Society and moved to the Bury Transport Museum in June 1973.

WILPG - Warwickshire Industrial Locomotive Preservation Group.

BR TODAY IS INTERESTING

The Chairman's Notes in the June issue of The Marlow Donkey were an eye opener to many I expect but I at least can claim to spend time looking at our modern railways at work. In my present job I have a good view of the main London to Bristol line here at Chippenham, and apart from the common or garden HST which, believe it or not, aren't all the same, there are several loco hauled expresses alas all now 47 hauled but interesting all the same. Most freight trains are in the hands of powerful 56 class and the sound of one of these heading towards Bath is music to the ears. There are Yeoman 59's

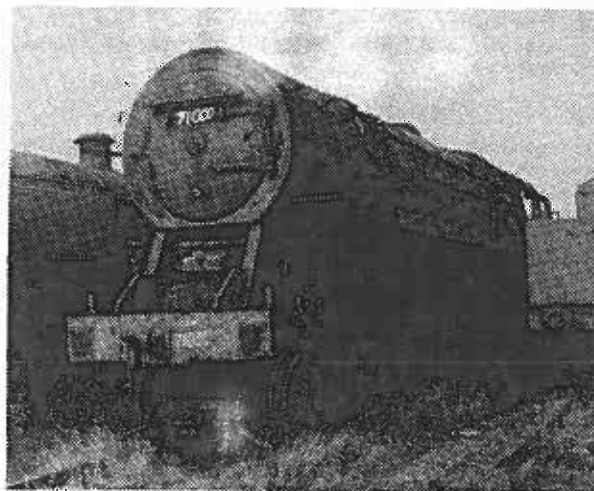
aplenty, the occasional 37's appear and then more often than not in pairs. 31's have also made brief appearances. Sprinters appear on a couple of morning and evening runs now and there is also the odd dmu which is about the only local service we have as they are usually short distance trains starting or terminating at Swindon. During the last few months I have seen several PW department trains with brake vans at the rear, the Orient express once, the Royal Train twice (although the second time was admittedly at Salisbury, and double headed at that). The weedkilling train spent several weeks in the area and passed my viewpoint 3 times with the two class 20's, one at each end. Parcels trains are very colourful with mixtures of blue, blue/grey and PO red, and red 47's to boot. Over the recent Bank Holiday I visited Didcot and grouped outside the station were a class 60, 47976 'Aviemore Centre', two class 37's, one being 37235 'The Coal Merchant Association of Scotland', how's that for a name? Then into the platform came single railcar class 121 No.55020, an ex-Marlow branch unit. What's more, in the yard was an LTE underground set, and all this before I'd even stepped inside the Steam Centre. On my return journey I spotted an NSE liveried class 50 at Swindon, though whether it had been used on a special or not I have no idea.

Light engine movement is now very frequent and this is often where unusual loco types turn up. Yes Mike our railways are worth watching but more so worth travelling on as well, even if they aren't a patch on what they were 30 years or so ago.

Regards.

David Gardner

SLEEPING PHEONIX



Bereft of buffers, cylinders, valve gear and a multitude of other items 71000 'Duke of Gloucester' awaits its fate in Barry scrapyard in October 1971. Who would have guessed? It is hard to believe that this and the superb machine on page 4 of the June 1990 'Donkey' are the same locomotive.

Photo: Alan Costello

MORE DORSET MEMORIES

Alan Costello

Although the mileage from Waterloo to Weymouth is 142½ miles and from Paddington to Weymouth is 154½ miles, half a mile outside Weymouth station the milepost reads 160. This is because the mileage shown is the original distance from Paddington. The line was built via Swindon and Chippenham, but after the Patney and Chirton to Westbury line was opened in 1900, the distance was reduced by about 14 miles which accounts for the jump in mileage from Westbury. Another curiosity about this post is the ½ mile is given in chains (20) instead of the usual 1 or ¼. This is a recent change looking at the state of the paintwork.

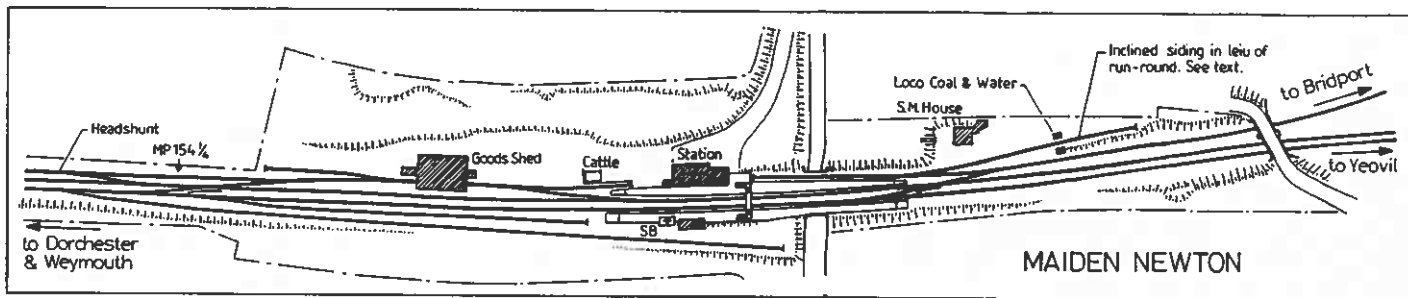
The mail train Stan Varrinder referred to in his letter ran from 1961 until the start of the electrified service in May 1988. It left around 2215 and consisted of 3 Royal Mail coaches and 3 passenger coaches to take anyone who wanted to get to Waterloo at 3.50 in the morning. A similar train left Waterloo to arrive at Weymouth at 0330.



BRIDPORT BRANCH

The Maiden Newton to Bridport branch was usually worked by Weymouth allocated 45XX Prairie tank and one coach. At Maiden Newton the train used a bay platform and there was no run round facility apart from using the main line, so to run round the coach an inclined siding was used. The engine pushed the coach up the slope, the coach was then securely braked and the engine then ran back and crossed back onto the branch line. The coach was then allowed to run slowly down the incline into the bay and the engine would couple up ready for the next trip.

Because of the 4 mile climb out of Weymouth it was necessary for heavy trains to receive assistance. In the working manual the maximum load of an engine plus coaches for classes Castle, County, Merchant Navy and Lord Nelson was 324 tons. This limit was not often reached in winter but summer weekends most trains required assistance. Because the Southern Region trains stopped at Dorchester South the train was double headed to



Dorchester and the engine would be removed before the train reversed into the platform.

Western Region trains were normally banked as far as the north end of Bincombe North tunnel where they would drop behind and cross over to a holding siding between the up and down lines. The engine would then return to Weymouth or, if the line was busy, sometimes waited for next banker and return together.

Any class of engine from 57XX Pannier tanks upto Merchant Navy's were used running boiler or tender first. Some engines could cope on their own but had to take a banker because of the regulations. When A4 Nigel Gresley returned on a special in June 1967, it passed Radipole Halt with the banking engine about 10 yards behind the last coach. This was by no means exceptional.

As I mentioned the summer weekends were very busy. Apart from the normal traffic a large number of day excursions would arrive. The local trainspotters looked forward to this as they would bring some good 'cops'.

The trains came from London, Swindon, Gloucester, the Midlands and South Wales. From 11.30 onwards they would arrive together with up to 3 boat trains. To cope with the demand for platforms the first station on the Portland line-Melcombe Regis - was used as an overflow after the line was closed to passengers in 1952.

Melcombe Regis station had a wooden hoarding placed in front of the station buildings. This was erected at the beginning of the war to prevent the German planes seeing the lights of the station. It was never taken away and remained until the station was demolished.

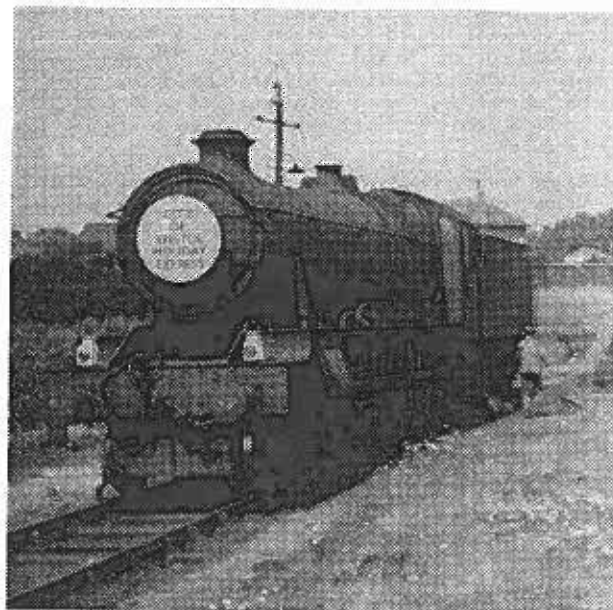
By about 1400 the carriage sidings would be full of coaches. Before the coaches left the station the shunter would chalk on the end of the last coach the time of return and the destination so that the right set would be used in the evening.

These trains would bring Granges from Villages in the Welsh Valleys and Manors from the Gloucester area. The trains would return one after another from about 6 in the evening. Each one required a banker, so the evening was filled by the sound of whistles, as each engine called to let the other driver know it was ready to go.

Another type of train that appeared was the pigeon special. This would consist of about 10 parcel coaches filled with baskets of racing pigeons sent down overnight from areas such



West Country pacific 34091 'Weymouth' arrives, appropriately, at its namesake town on 5th September 1964.



Summer Saturdays would bring a variety of visiting locomotives to Weymouth shed. Above 1028 'County of Warwick' stands on the turntable lead track on a summer day in 1967 wearing a 'City of Bristol Holiday Express' headboard. From further afield, left, is 45595 'Southern Rhodesia' an ex-LMS Jubilee which had arrived with an excursion on 5th September 1964. The diagonal cab stripe indicated the locomotive was barred from working under the WCML wires south of Crewe.

Three photos: Alan Costello



as Shropshire. On the morning of the race the baskets would be unloaded and at the appropriate time the birds would be released. It was advisable not to be too close when the pigeons left as the trainspotter would get spotted himself as they flew overhead.

During the fifties the fastest train from Waterloo to Weymouth was the 10.30am, which took 3 hours for the journey. The fastest from Paddington took 3 hours 20 minutes. This was done by travelling in a slip coach attached to the 3.30pm to Plymouth. The coach was slipped at Fairwood Junction at Westbury and attached to the next train to Weymouth getting there by 6.50pm. The slip coach ceased in January 1959 and the train made an additional stop at Westbury. Until September 1958 it was also possible to use a slip coach attached to the Cornish Riviera Express. Again slipped at Westbury, it would be added to the stopping train to Weymouth. In contrast to the nonstop run to Westbury, this train stopped at every halt and station arriving at Weymouth just before 3pm a journey of about 4½ hours.

Some of the trains from Waterloo stopped at a large number of stations as well. For example if you missed the 11.30am you could go over to Paddington, catch the 12.30pm, arrive at Weymouth at 4.25pm, and see the 11.30am in the next platform, as it was due to arrive only 8 minutes before.

The arrival of the Wessex Electrics in 1988 was not the first Electrical multiple Units seen at Weymouth. In December 1971 12 2BIL and 2HAL units were stored in the sidings after withdrawal until they were taken to scrapyards (most of them went

to Glasgow). Their numbers were 2016, 2104, 2123, 2135, 2610, 2623, 2627, 2628, 2679, 1694, 2698, 2699. The shed at Weymouth was also used for storing withdrawn engines from about 1965 culminating in a collection of various standard classes and Bulleid Pacifics on withdrawal of Southern steam in July 1967.

In 1950 the shed at Weymouth was still under Western Region control and had the code 82F. It had an allocation of 31 engines. They included 1 Saint, 1 Castle, 9 Halls and the three '1366' panier tanks for working the harbour tramway. In 1958 Weymouth came under Southern control and the shed code became 71G. Allocations in 1959 were still largely ex GWR locos but most of the Halls had been replaced by Standard Class 5.

In 1963 the shed code was changed again, this time to 70G. By then all the ex GWR locos has gone to be replaced by ex LMS 2MT 2-6-2 tanks and class O3 diesel shunters. At the end of 1964 Weymouth acquired its first allocation of Southern engines since it became a Southern shed. 14 Merchant Navies arrived and were to stay there until they were withdrawn at various times during the next 2½ years. The shed closed to steam in July 1967 (the last ex GWR shed to be closed) and was used to store various Standard classes and Bulleid Pacifics until the last three left in January 1968. (73092, 34093 and 34095).

The shed remained as a signing on point until October 1970, was then demolished, and the area is now covered with houses.

EIRE TODAY

Dave Little

A family holiday in Southern Ireland in August 1990 did not seem a very promising prospect from the railway point of view, but I was pleasantly surprised by what I found. We arrived at Rosslaire, courtesy of B & I Ferries, and spent two weeks touring around Cork, County Kerry in the west and finally several days in Dublin, managing to visit most stations on the way and discovering that, as with other aspects of Ireland, its railways exhibit great contrasts.

Dublin itself displays most in terms of modernisation and investment with full colour light signalling, modernised stations and, of course, the overhead electric DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) system which covers the local commuter area. The Irish Railways system is worked by only four classes of locomotive. General Motors EMD double ended Co-Co model JT22CW providing 2250 hp, and Bo-Bo's model JL8 at 875 hp and single ended Bo-Bo's model GL8 also at 875 hp, all dating from the sixties and seventies, plus a dwindling number of Metropolitan Vickers Bo-Bo's from the fifties, some of which are looking decidedly scruffy.

All passenger trains appear to use standard Mk.III coaches, with suburban trains in the Dublin area being push-pull sets with Mk.III driving trailer conversions at one end and a class GL8 Bo-Bo at the other. The Dublin to Cork line maintains this modern air (with the exception of the large brass bell outside Mallow box which the signalman manually rang whenever a train approached) but the further you venture from this main line the more interesting, in my opinion, IR becomes. Head east towards Wexford and Rosslaire or more especially west to Killarney and Tralee and the atmosphere is more like BR in the fifties. Stations are almost exactly as built, are very well staffed and even have goods yards which are used. Almost all of the signalling on these lines is done by means of traditional boxes and some very old semaphores, typically, the starter at the end of the platform at Killarney was pure Great Southern and Western Railway complete with cast iron trespass notice. All of this, coupled with the fact that many crossings still have traditional wooden gates and a gate keeper in a hut makes for a very labour intensive method of operation, which I suspect may not exist for much longer.

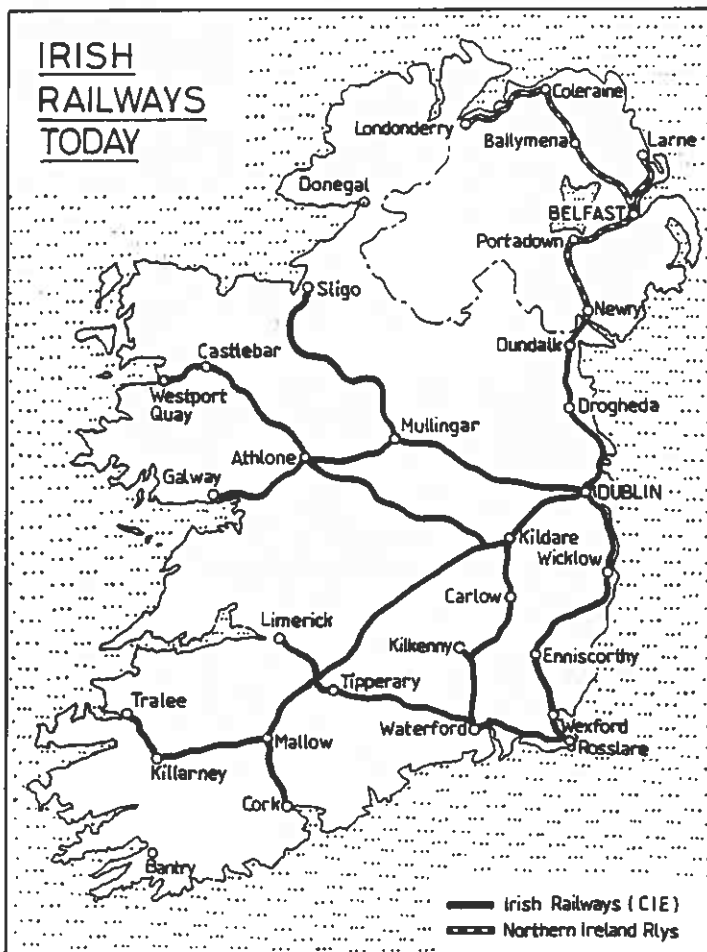
I was rather intrigued by Irish Railways attitude to disused lines. The single track line north of Tralee was closed in the sixties and yet still remains untouched by the scrapman. Listowel station for instance was a very attractive stone built station and apart from the fact that the kids from the local housing estate had wrecked the station building and signal box, the overall layout was complete with all trackwork, goods yard and shed, crossing gates and signals.

One method of operating which I found fascinating was in Dublin's extensive docks area. Thirty minutes of exploring the docks revealed a double track "main line" down the centre of the public access road, feeding dozens of sidings in secure



compounds, mostly housing four wheeled and bogie oil tankers. I was about to leave when an EMD Co-Co pushed a few oil tankers from the IR exchange sidings up to the docks entrance and from nowhere appeared a large tractor with a wooden buffer beam bolted to each end and a shunter riding behind the cab.

The shunter threw a chain over the coupling hook of the first tanker and with orange light flashing the "train" drove into the docks at about 15 mph amidst all the other road traffic. Having disposed of these empties the tractor then collected

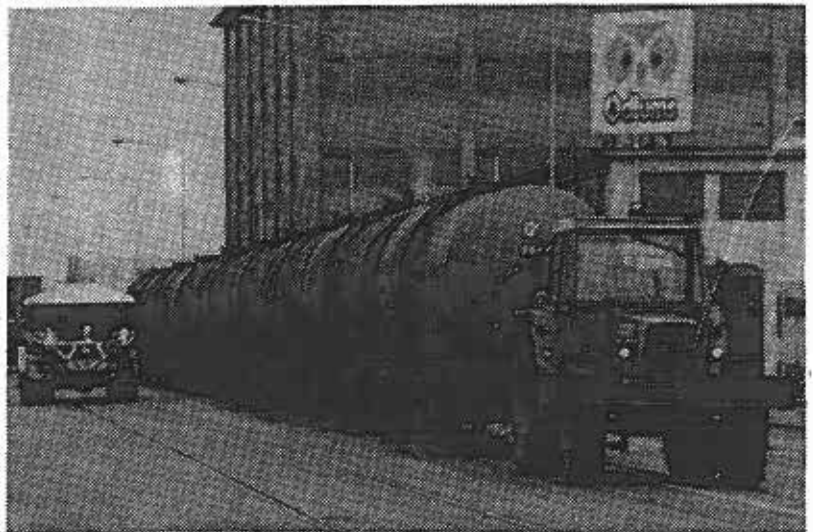




full tankers and headed back towards the waiting EMD. It was the method of stopping which was rather worrying. The driver decelerated allowing the tankers, still doing about 10 mph, to catch up. The slackened towing chain was detached by the shunter who then leapt from his perch behind the tractor cab to apply the handbrake on the leading wagon, whilst the driver pulled smartly to one side and the train ground to a halt a few feet away from the waiting diesel.

Time warp. The country station at Enniscorthy has a working goods yard, complete with shed and crane; and a full compliment of semaphore signals operated from the platform mounted box. The signalman prepares to exchange tokens with the driver of Metro-Vickers Bo-Bo 017 arriving with a Dublin-Rosslaire train. The date is August 1990 not 1960 and this photograph captures the quaint timelessness of the Irish railway system.

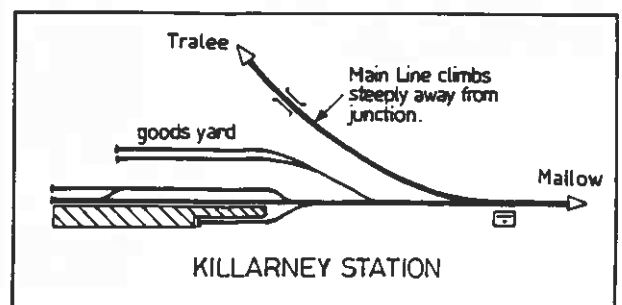
A 'Fenot' tractor acting as the Dublin docks shunter makes its way down a public street en route from the docks with loaded oil tankers bound for interchange with a waiting EMD. The method of stopping this train is described in the text. Would this "locomotive" be classed as a 2-2-0 or 1-A?



Three photos: Dave Little



A Tralee to Mallow train departs from the terminal at Killarney behind EMD JT22CW Co-Co 076. The arrangement here is rather like the old Dorchester South layout, trains reverse into or out of the terminal platforms, only at Killarney they do it in both directions. Again notice the fine array of semaphores.



VARIETY AT WYCOMBE

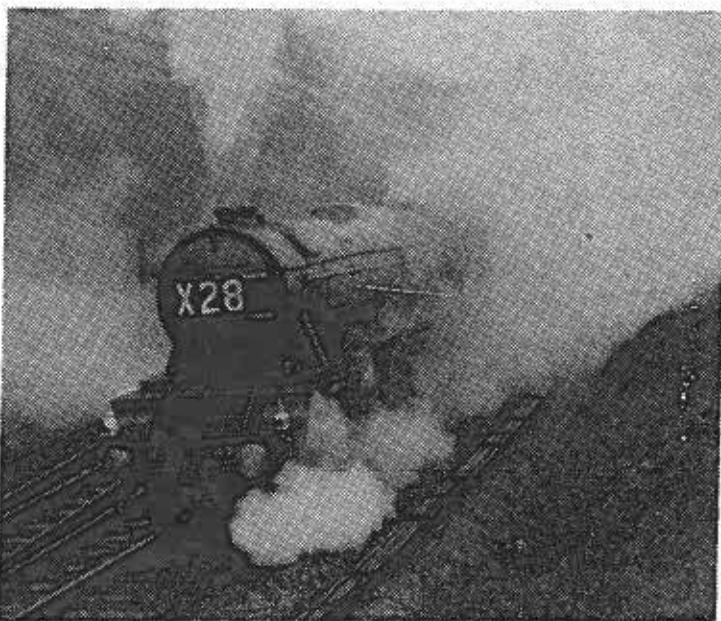
David Gardner

When I started serious train spotting in 1959, Wycombe was a magnet for any local lad as the station was busy in those days and well into the 1960's, with summer Saturdays providing the most extensive mainline service. Of named trains the 'Cambrian Coast Express' ran through but the 'Intercity' stopped, and both were almost always 'King' hauled. On other trains Castles Halls and 28XX's were always around though almost any GW type might be seen. However, it was the ex-GC line which provided the most traffic with nearly all local trains using Marylebone as a starting point. Although LNER articulated coaches and ER locos gave way to LMS types when the LMR took control in 1958 and the same time 'The Master Cutler' often A3 hauled left the Joint Line for good, the service was still brisk.



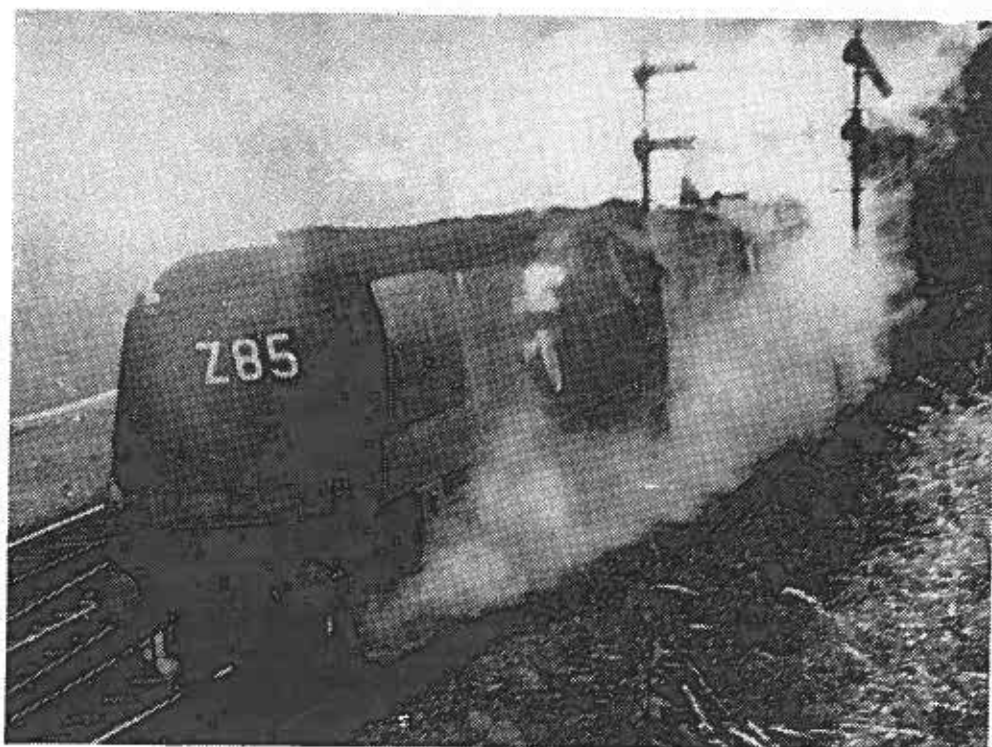
When I started taking photos at Wycombe my favourite spot was the footbridge just north of the station. As there is a steep climb out of the down platform, most engines had to work hard to get a train away with good effect if you happened to be taking photos. On 2nd August 1963 double chimneyed 5098 Clifford Castle had more than enough steam in hand.

Replacement locos were mainly Stanier and Fairburn class 4's and these became the mainstay until dmu's arrived in 1961. Freight trains were numerous, as well as GWR types trundling through, "Dub-Dees," various LMS and BR types, B1's and V2's could come along. The WR worked branchline services to Maidenhead, Aylesbury and Oxford via Thame, and these were mainly a 61XX tank stronghold, although 94XX and 57XX class panniers could be seen on passenger as well as pick up goods. Even the Marlow Donkey made a daily trip to Wycombe. A train I found most interesting was the stopper from Banbury. An autotrailer worked by a 54XX, 64XX or 14XX, although the larger tanks were sometimes used including ex LMS class 2's in later years. With two busy goods yards and private sidings at E. Gomme Ltd and Broome & Wade, Wycombe had all the variety any railway buff could wish for.



Soon after 'Flying Scotsman' was restored and purchased by Alan Peglar it was used on a Ffestiniog Railway Special. This took place on Saturday 20th April 1963 with the train making an advertised stop at Wycombe. A lot of people turned up and every available space was taken but as 4472 pulled away it was enveloped in steam. I was extremely lucky to get this shot.

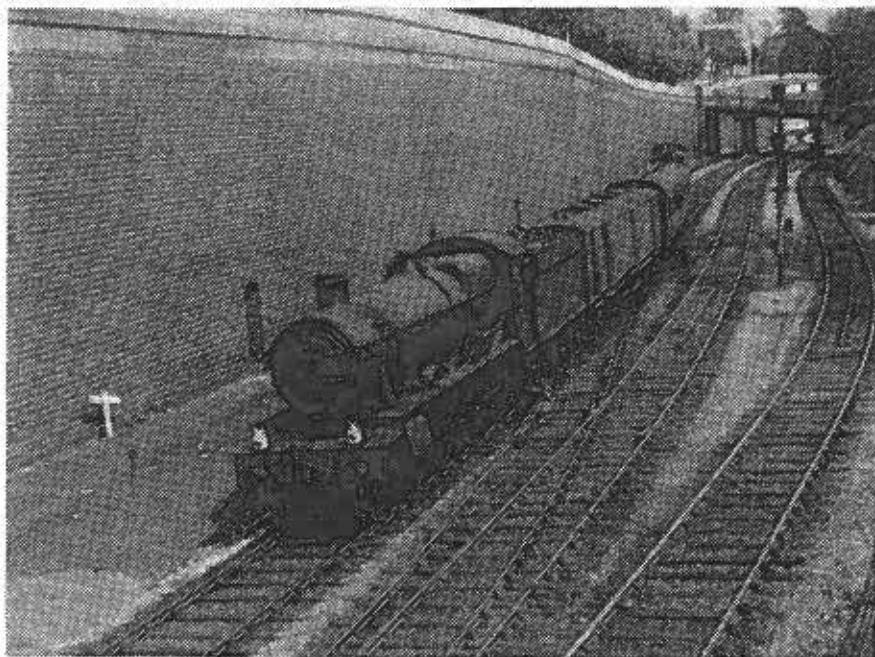
Although it was quite common to see trains composed of SR stock passing through High Wycombe it was rare, at least in the mid 1960's to see a Southern engine. Battle of Britain class 34064 '229 Squadron' was a very rare sight indeed as it was the only Bulleid pacific to be fitted with a Giesel ejector. On 28th Sept 1963 I photographed it leaving the station with a down Tal-y-Llyn Railway Special. Like that other 4-6-2 '4472' it was carpeted in steam on drawing away which only began to clear as it approached the Middle Signal Box footbridge, where I was standing. Notice how the vegetation on the embankment had sprung up in the few months since the earlier picture.



The sight of a Breakdown Van train was unusual even in the 1960's when Wycombe was far busier than it is now, so I was fortunate to be there when this train came along.

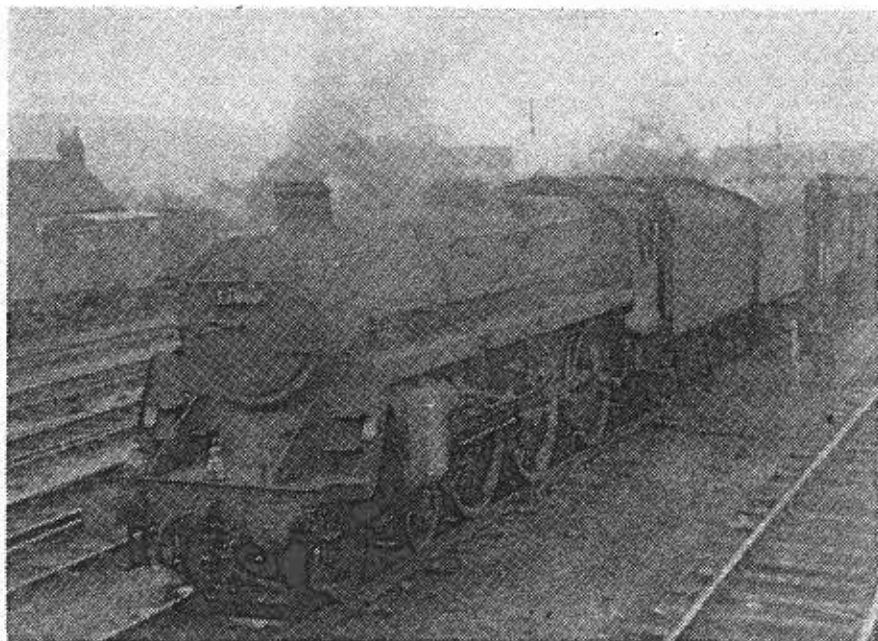
It was obviously going to clear an obstruction as it carried the Express headlamp code and it was working the wrong line, so the derailment or whatever must have been on the down line. 4932 'Haydon Hall' had just crossed over from the up slow, so may have been standing in the up platform line previously. Behind the engine was a toolvan, then a mess coach, followed by the breakdown crane and brake van.

For some unexplained reason I never recorded the exact date I took the photo but it was between mid May and the end of June 1963. The scene from the footbridge looking towards the station hardly altered over the years but more recently all that has changed. Although Wycombe lost its goods yard and branch line years ago the most dramatic change must be the almost complete lack of mainline passenger and freight services. Today only dmu's remain.



On the morning of 30th July 1963 I was waiting for the up Paddington express which was due in about 11am. By that time most of the mainline and local passenger service trains had been dieselised so I wasn't expecting anything more exciting than a Western. The minutes ticked by and soon an announcement advised passengers to use the dmu service to Marylebone. Realising that when the express did arrive it might just be steam hauled I stayed put. In the event, that morning express was 1 hour 20 minutes late but I never imagined 48387 an LMS standard 8F would be in charge. The diesel had failed at or near Princes Risborough and the Woodford Halse engine deputised. Whilst the ride behind the 8F wasn't very fast it was far more exciting than I had expected when I first set out that day. Of passing interest, although I wouldn't have given it a second glance then, is the dmu standing in the bay platform which was part of a 3 car Maidenhead branch set.

The only standard engine design in this little group of photos, 73069 was a class 5 of Neasden Shed and was waiting for the boards to come off when I took this snap on 6th July 1963. It was in rather grubby condition and was on a parcels train, probably destined for Marylebone. I have often wished that I'd started taking railway photos earlier as a couple of incidents I missed snapping happened on consecutive evenings in the summer of 1961 and both involved the up 'Intercity' express. On the first occasion the train made its scheduled stop at Wycombe with the loco motive apparently short of steam. It was decided that the engine should be removed and replaced by a 61XX tank which happened to be in the goods yard. After coupling up the headboard was removed from the disgraced King and fixed to the 61 and away it went. The next day a similar thing happened but this time only a 36XX tank could come to the rescue and once again the headboard was fitted to the front of the relief engine. Watching that little pannier pulling away from Wycombe station with the crack 'Intercity' is a sight I shall never forget.



BOOKSHELF

Ron Brooks



When Noah emerged from the Ark he was assured that "Summer and winter, day and night, shall never cease". This, together with spring and autumn, supplies almost as well to the Donkey and Bookshelf - or so it seems. This contribution to the collective learning of the Marlow and District is an armchair exercise; mostly history, but very readable, with a dash of anticipation for next years explorations.

THE RAILWAYS OF BRITAIN Paper mac
Jack Simmons ISBN 0-333-41990-1

I was so taken with "The Railway in Town and Country", reviewed last time, that I treated myself to this volume by the same author. Whereas the last volume could perhaps be labelled "influence" this volume charts "history and development" under such headings as "Building the System", "Rolling Stock", "Running the System" among others. There is a wealth of first class illustrations, many in colour, and all contributing to the surrounding text. If your letter to Father Christmas is, as yet, unopened, put this book at the head of your list. It is just not possible for it to fail to compete with the tele, even if that feat does get easier every year. The fact that Jack Simmons is a professor adds authenticity to pleasure.

THE LONDON & BIRMINGHAM Capital Transport
David Jenkinson ISBN 185414 102 3

This is a nicely produced slim paperback but the quality of the pictures is very high although all black and white, other than the cover. The scope is very similar to that covered by the previous volume, but in this case the spotlight is focused on one line in its various guises. Some super scenes of London for expatriates.

THE SOMERSET & DORSET RAILWAY David & Charles
Robin Athill ISBN 0 7153 8692 1

This is a comprehensive history which is, of course, what one would expect from the title. It is very evident from the large

number of quotations from, and illustrations of, old documents that a great deal of research has gone into this book. The text, as well as being informative, is easy to read, and the dozen or so colour pictures add even more to an already excellent volume. As a bonus there are two chapters on the Slow and Dirty's locos (a calumny!) by O.S. Nock. In all a book to read even if the S & D is not your first interest.

THE BROAD GAUGE HM Stationery Office
Lance Day ISBN 0 11 2904378 8

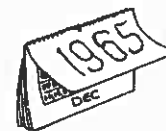
This little volume is illustrated with contemporary pictures and the text is well up to Science Museum Standards. The print is clear and the narrative well told. The front cover is magnificent with a vast single driver simmering at a station. Notes and references are provided and this could well be the start of a new interest - assuming that any more interest is possible in the GWR!

BRITISH RAILWAY JOURNEYS English Tourist Board
Caroline Dakers ISBN 0 947795-31-6

This is a book that poses the question that might well have occurred to Hamlet - why hasn't it appeared before?. It is designed to be travelled with and it must be appropriate also to armchair travelling with a video - presuming appropriate runs have been encapsulated. It describes four journeys:- Paddington west; Kings Cross north; Victoria/Waterloo south; Euston midlands and northwest. Each journey is described in some detail as seen from the train and a comprehensive strip map is provided, with keys to the text. The major difficulty is that there is an almost irresistible desire to make the journey! The information provided is of epic proportions, passing Pirbright Camp elicits the composition of the Guards Division, can such nuggets of information be resisted? Primrose Hill tunnel is 1182 yards long, You could impress fellow travellers so much they might mistake you for Jack Simmons.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen



The turn of 1965 into 1966 witnessed two contrasting events. On 27th November 1965 the official last steam hauled train left Paddington headed by 'Clun Castle' the last operative castle class locomotive. In contrast on 22nd November 1965 the first electrically hauled train left Euston headed by AL6 class loco No.E3171 as the 08.35 to Liverpool. By the 3rd January 1966 all passenger trains at Euston were electrically hauled.

Other news: The last steam hauled train on the North Eastern Region was on 31st December a 16.08 enthusiasts special from York to Newcastle via Sunderland hauled by an A1 class Pacific.

The 27th November saw the closure of the Lyme Regis branch. At one time the home of the ex LSWR Adams 4-4-2 tanks, at the end the branch was being operated by a single unit rail car, No.W55016.

From 3rd January 1966 passenger services were withdrawn between Cheltenham Spa, Malvern Road and St James. From the same date services were withdrawn between Lancaster Castle and Heysham harbour.

News of preservation schemes kept coming in, the Hayling Light Railway Society proposed to convert the Hayling branch line from Havant to light railway operation, using modern large capacity railcoaches with overhead catenaries supplying 550 Volts dc from an automatic rectifier sub-station at Langston. All the year round services were to be provided varying from quarter-hourly at peak periods to hourly on winter Sundays.

On the Bluebell Railway more than 200,000 passengers had been carried in 1965, a 10% increase on the previous year.

The Westerham Valley Railway Association, prevented from its original aims, amalgamated with the Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society. The aim of the latter was to reopen and operate the 13½ mile long line from Robertsbridge to Tenterden.

Thus the turn of the year 1965/66 was one of great contrasts, the last steam from Paddington, electrics from Euston, more branch line closures and preservation contrasts too.

TEN YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

The December 1980 issue of the "Marlow Donkey" was issue No.17

The "Donkey" listed the autumn programme as an autumn film show in September, Keith Catchpole on the Khaki Railway - about army use of railways in Kent during the war and members talks in November.

Articles in the Donkey included "Fawley notes" by Steve Med-

way - listing the work that had gone on in the first few months of the Society's involvement at Fawley. An item on a "Midland Railtour" by Roger Bowen. An interesting article was "A woman's view of Old Oak Common Diesel Depot" by Dee Medway - perhaps the editor could reprint it sometime? The bulk of the "Donkey" was however taken up by part 9 of Mike Walker's "Wycombe Railway" - a fascinating story of our local lines.