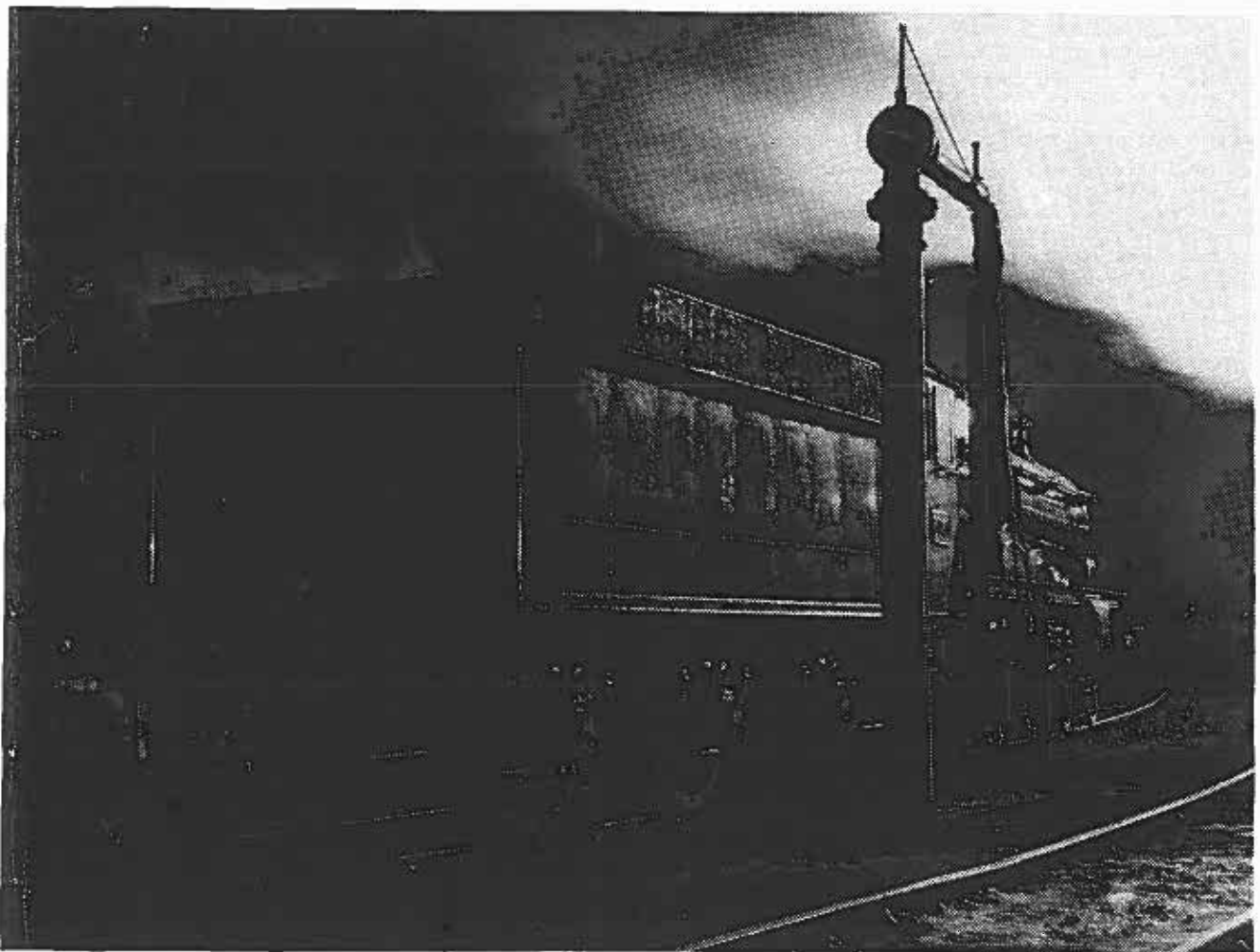


THE

JUNE 1991

58.

# MARLOW DONKEY



**IN THIS ISSUE... FUTURE & PAST      O FOR Q**  
**SWINDON - CAPITAL OF THE GWR**  
**SOUTH WALES REFLECTIONS**  
**NETWORK TURBO PROFILE**  
**MAIDENHEAD BOYN HILL**



# THE MARLOW DONKEY

Quarterly magazine of the  
MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

## IN THIS ISSUE...

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES	page 2
TIMETABLE Forthcoming Events/SOCIETY NEWS	3
RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT Notes & News	4
WESTERN DAILY LEFE Alan Wheeler	5
MAIDENHEAD BOYN HILL Mike Walker	5
FUTURE & PAST Mike Walker	6
ORGANISING FOR Quality John Sears	7
SOUTH WALES REFLECTIONS Phil Searle	3
NETWORK TURBO Mike Walker	10
BOOKSHELF Ron Brooks	12
TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO Roger Bowen	12
TEN YEARS AGO Roger Bowen	12
SWINDON - CAPITAL OF THE GWR Stan Verrinder	13

PRESIDENT: Sir William McAlpine	VICE-PRESIDENT Bas Woodward
CHAIRMAN: Mike Walker 'Solgarth', Little Marlow, Marlow, Bucks. SL7 3RS	Tel.: Marlow 483899
VICE-CHAIRMAN & SECRETARY: Eddie Lewcock 27 Rupert Avenue, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP12 3NG	Tel.: HW 25638
TREASURER: Peter Robins 95 Broom Hill, Cookham, Berks. SL6 9LJ.	Tel.: BE 27870
PUBLICITY: Martin Pink 'Greenend', Wards Cross, Hurst, Berks., RG10 0DS	Tel.: Reading 341012
SOCIAL SEC: Tony Caton 57 Hillside Road, Marlow, Bucks., SL7 3LA	Tel.: Marlow 473723
COMMITTEE: Dave Cooke John Sears Rob Young	Tel. 0869-247839 Tel: Reading 595476 Tel. Marlow 474649

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Once again summer is upon us and for many thoughts will be turning to rail expeditions, both day trips and longer holidays. For several of our members those trips will be overseas in search of the final outposts of steam. This is such a common practice for British enthusiasts that we seldom give such trips a second thought, for those fortunate to be able to afford such journeys it seems only natural, but is this globe trotting a particularly British pastime?

Peter Robins and I have recently been to California to attend Railfair. During the chasing of the main line steam specials to the fair we met up with Jim Boyd the editor of 'Railfan', Americas second enthusiast magazine. Over dinner one evening we were discussing attitudes to overseas railways and travel in our respective countries. Jim was somewhat taken aback when Peter ran through the countries he'd visited (now he's been to North America, only South America and Australia remain to be explored by our intrepid Treasurer). When we assured him Peter was far from unique among British "gricers" Jim observed that was no doubt why so many overseas articles appear in British magazines. By contrast when, on very rare occasions, Jim or his colleague David Ingles at "Trains" publish an article on railroading abroad, their postbags are swelled by masses of protesting letters, even Canada seems to get the cold shoulder. Jim was at a loss to explain the attitudes of his countrymen although, apart from one week in Britain, he has never been outside the US or Canada himself. Peter admits that on his travels he encounters only a few Americans, mostly fellow Brits and several Germans. Certainly some evidence of this lack of interest was to be seen at Railfair, the four British built locos were receiving little attention from the crowd.

As these notes are being prepared the breaking news story is Malcolm Rifkind's policy U turn to encourage passenger and freight traffic off the roads and back onto the railways. Whilst this change of heart is to be applauded, it is possibly too late and ill thought out. Let me explain. It comes at a time when Speedlink, the wagon load freight network, is being phased out because on its own it was unprofitable and thus to the previous management of UK plc it had to go. Speedlink customers who had made considerable investment in sidings, wagons and distribution centres (albeit with Government grants) are being forced to discard these and reinvest in yet more lorries. Is it really realistic to now expect these companies to re-invest yet again with no real assurance there will not be a further U turn a year from now? In any case, Mr. Rifkind says he intends to increase finance for and relax the regulations which surround these grants for NEW investment, no word about reactivating existing facilities.

He is also promoting the idea of intermodal, containers, swap bodies, piggyback etc. Again laudable; but. In North America, which has embraced inter-modal more enthusiastically than anywhere else, inter-modal is regarded as uneconomic for hauls under about 400 miles, which rules out most of Britain, and that in an environment where standard containers or trailers can be loaded upon standard flatcars whereas our tight clearances demand restricted size trailers (read reduced payload) on extremely complex and thus costly low-loading freight cars. Intermodal does have a future here, for international traffic via the Channel Tunnel provided the

necessary investment in regional terminals is made, so far this has been very slow in materialising.

As for increasing rail's share of the passenger business this also presents a number of problems. Whilst plenty of capacity exists for extra freight traffic, at night for example, many routes are already approaching capacity, either simply that the stock available, or worse, in the case of much of NSE the line capacity as well. Whilst modest investment could provide additional IC capacity, extra trains, vast sums will be required to increase NSE's capacity with more stock; longer platforms, thus revised signalling, and probably extra tracks. Surely it would be better to completely review the whole structure of the nation and offer incentives to companies to decentralise out of London to provincial centres where rail capacity is available for expansion. This has been going on for some time but the net growth has continued to be into London not out of it.

One thing is welcome however. For the first time in many, many years both political parties are singing from primarily the same song-sheet, so, we may get some longer term planning. But Mr. Rifkind has had to throw a crumb to the right wing of his party by promising to allow any competent body to operate trains on the BR network. This has got to be a joke. We are not talking about roads here, you cant just take a train and put it on the rails like adding a bus or lorry to the free for all of the M4. these private operators would be interested only in the trunk routes where BR is already at or near capacity. Who is going to agree the timetables? Who is going to regulate the trains? Who is going to pay what for maintenance of track, stations and signals? Enough argumental confusion exists between the sectors today, just imagine what a can of worms is being unleashed.

Before all this comes to bear, if ever, we can look forward to riding the Network Turbo from next month. This issue contains a full profile of the class and the editor makes no apology for returning to this subject. After all we only get a new generation of trains every thirty or so years, so it is quite an event.

*Mick*

COVER: DAVE LITTLE had considerable success in the 1991 photographic competition winning both print classes with night shots. Winning black and white class D was this atmospheric view of 5051 "Dryswyllyn Castle" at Didcot during the 1990 photographic evening.

# TIMETABLE

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS & EXCURSIONS

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

### MEETINGS

- Thurs 18 July CHINNOR & PRINCES RISBOROUGH RAILWAY  
An illustrated talk on progress towards creating our local public steam railway. The group will be bringing their sales stand so please support this good cause.
- Thurs 19 Sept CINE FROM THE FOOTPLATE Jim Gander  
Our speaker tonight had ample opportunity to record steam railways, many in this area, from the footplate during the last years of steam.
- Thurs 17 Oct REMINISCENCES OF A SHEDMASTER Dick Hardy  
Dick Hardy is a name which needs no explanation. Now chairman of SLOA he looks back at his days in charge of Eastern Region sheds, including Stratford.
- Thurs 21 Nov MORE FOOTPLATE MEMORIES Wally Richards  
A popular speaker, Wally returns with more stories of life on Western footplates from South Wales to Old Oak Common.
- Thurs 19 Dec CHRISTMAS BUFFET & SOCIAL EVENING  
Please bring your partners for an informal buffet and entertaining slide shows. See SOCIETY NEWS for more details.
- Thurs 16 Jan ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
- Thurs 20 Feb PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION
- Thurs 19 Mar WORLD STEAM ON CINE Frank Saunders
- Thurs 16 Apr NSE THAMES & CHILTERN - TODAY & TOMORROW  
R. Dodds

## SOCIETY NEWS

### PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The distant and mysterious railways of South America were the subject of an excellent talk by Jim Jarvis at the March meeting, the spotlight falling on Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Argentina. There was even a short diversion to look at the magnificent steamships which until recently plied Lake Titicaca.

David Bames, a BR project manager, gave a refreshingly honest overview of the East Coast Electrification at the April Meeting. A typical promotional video was followed by a wider discussion, supported by slides, which focussed on some of the problems involved and the "cock-ups", of which there have been many!

A full report of the visit to the Channel Tunnel exhibition and the K&ESR on April 20th appears in this issue.

### CHRISTMAS BUFFET

It may be early to think of Christmas but following the request at the AGM the committee have made arrangements with the RBL for a buffet in conjunction with the December meeting.

A wide variety of cold meats, sandwiches, rolls, quiches, vol-au-vonts etc will be provided the cost being £3 per head. We invite members wives, girl friends etc to join us. It would help if you could let us know by early December how many will attend so the RBL can cater accordingly.

The "entertainment" is probably going to take the form of a couple of short slide shows depicting the lighter side of rail enthusiasm or trains in the scenery, i.e. shots with a wide appeal. If you can contribute let us know.

### MEMBERS WANTED

As always at this time of year when all membership renewals are in (in theory!) we find we have lost some members for various reasons. This year our numbers have dropped from the high to the low fifties. While this is not serious in isolation, we are anxious to recruit new members to swell our numbers once more. If you can introduce a new member, please do.

Mary Dove receives her bouquet from Wooburn Parish Councillor and local TUCC representative Elizabeth Smith.



### VISITS

- Sun 23 June STEAM DAY AT FAWLEY 12.00 to 5.00 pm  
Another of those enjoyable afternoons at our President's private garden railway. NOT to be missed.  
£1.50 per person, MAXIMUM 40 places.
- Sun 7 July FAMILY TRIP TO BUTTERLEY & CRICH  
Still some seats available for this super value visit to the Midland Railway Centre and the award winning National Tramway Museum, the latter is much more than just trams, its a social history.  
Fare: Adult £15.00 child £12.00 (includes both admissions)  
Coach leaves High Wycombe 7.45 am  
Marlow 8.00 am
- Sun 28 July GREAT COCKROW RAILWAY Chertsey  
A chance to view this unique 7½" gauge miniature railway system including the loco sheds and signal box. Admission £2.00.  
Make your own way to Chertsey for 1.30pm.
- Sat 10 Aug VISIT TO CHINNOR  
Following July's meeting a field trip to view Progress. Meet at Chinnor Cement Works at 2pm  
Provisional charge £1 per head.
- Sun 18 Aug OLD OAK COMMON OPEN DAY  
Possibly the last chance to visit this well known complex before parts of it are closed. Steam and the latest traction will be present.

Details and bookings from Tony Caton Tel: Marlow 473723.

### AWARD FOR ERNIE

As some members may know, member Ernie Dove and his wife Mary are the unofficial "staff" of Marlow station as members of the Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers Association. Ernie is often roused early in the morning by a phone call from BR when "there's trouble on line" and he goes to the station to keep the passengers informed. Mary visits the station at least once a day to sweep up the platform and clean the shelter, and answer passenger's queries.

In recognition of this superb volunteer effort the TUCC arranged a presentation to the Doves at the station on Tuesday 19th March. BR and TUCC representatives attended but nobody thought to tell Ernie and Mary! The ceremony was rearranged as part of the NMPA's AGM the following Friday.

In addition to the TUCC's presentation, Ernie and Mary were both presented with a first class return ticket from Marlow to anywhere on BR by retiring Area Manager Conrad Clark as a token of BR's gratitude for the couple's hard work.

Congratulations to you both.



# RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

## NOTES AND NEWS



### TURBO DEBUT AT BOURNE END

The first passenger carrying journeys by the new class 165 Network Turbo dmu's on "Thames" services will occur on Saturday 31st August when the entire service on the Maidenhead-Marlow branch will be provided by the new trains as part of a Network Day being held at Bourne End by NSE in conjunction with the MMPA. It is hoped to arrange a display of equipment for the day at Bourne End together with various stalls etc.

### CAR BITES DONKEY

There was another "one under" incident at Cookham level crossing on Monday 16th March - with a difference. A car was in collision with the 07.26 Bourne End to Maidenhead, ramming the SECOND car of the train broadside! Fortunately no one was hurt and the car driver received only minor injuries, emerging from his wrecked vehicle protesting as usual that the lights weren't working. They were.

### CROSSING TO BE IMPROVED

Meanwhile, BR have agreed to improve the signal lights at Wharf Lane Marine level crossing in Bourne End, scene of many accidents, fortunately none fatal, over recent years. All of these accidents have involved vehicles leaving the Marina and those who use it will know that the approach angle to the crossing make the existing lights, installed to DoT specifications, very difficult to see particularly in bright sunlight. The plan is to install additional flashing red lights to improve visibility.

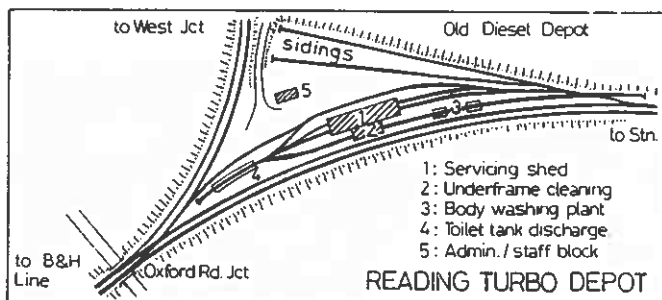
### ANYTHING GOES...

As the run down of the first generation T & C dmu fleet accelerates you can never be sure what will appear next. On 21 May the 16.20 Paddington - Maidenhead, which continues ecs to form the 17.31 Reading - Newbury, was formed not of its scheduled dmu but by a four car set of air conditioned Mk2 InterCity coaches, mostly firsts, headed by Railfreight's 56.050 complete with Coal markings. On a warm spring evening the lack of operating air conditioning or opening windows was doubtless not appreciated by the customers. The day before, 50.046 "Ajax" had charge of the same train. Several loco hauled substitutions have also been noted on the Chiltern Line, can any member give details?

Who says BR trains today are boring, predictable and the same?

### NOT ONLY NETWORKER BUT ALSO

In addition to the new Network Turbo trains costing £56 million, a major route modernisation programme is getting under way on the Thames line. Included is an £8 million depot to maintain the new trains at Reading built by Balfour Beatty and handed over in March, see diagram below. To come is a £7 million programme to equip the line to permit Driver Only Operation of the Turbos followed by station improvements including higher, longer platforms and improved lighting, parking and security costing £15 million, part sponsored by Berks County Council. A further £35 million will be spent on a re-signalling scheme based at Reading to replace the existing Old Oak, Slough and Reading PSB's. Much of this work is advanced preparation for the CrossRail project.



### HEATHROW BRANCH UPDATE

All being well, the Bill authorising the construction of the branch from Hayes to Heathrow Airport should receive the Royal Assent this summer. Work, which includes electrification and resignalling between Paddington and Hayes will commence "immediately". Target opening date is now May 1995, two years later than originally planned due to a redesign following objections to the proposed bridge over the M4. The line will now enter a tunnel north of the motorway to complete its journey to the terminals.

Once electrification work is complete, BR hopes the team will be able to continue to Reading as part of CrossRail, the Bill for which will be presented to Parliament this autumn. It's all go!

**STOP PRESS!** The announcement made on 6 June of a halt and review of all BR's capital investment plans by the DoT and Treasury may have a serious effect on this scheme. We hope to know for certain before the next issue.

### BR REORGANISED LOCALLY

BR's programme of "Organising For Quality", basically the abolition of Regions and supremacy of Sectors is due to take effect locally from 23rd June. From then the existing Western Region Paddington and Marylebone Area organisations will be replaced by the Thames & Chiltern Division of Network South-East with two subdivisions Chiltern and Thames. The latter will be responsible for all matters relating to services over and upkeep of the relief lines out of Paddington. The main lines will be the responsibility of the Great Western Inter-City Route Manager. A full description of the new set up and how it works (or is supposed to) by John Sears appears in this issue.

### BR PERSONEL CHANGES

With the reorganisation of BR's management structure eliminating the Regions a number of personnel changes have occurred locally. Overall responsibility for the local Network South-East operations is now with Richard Fern, Network Director - Thames & Chiltern, whilst day-to-day operating of the Thames Network is the responsibility of John Reeves, both are based at Reading. Mr. Reeves is no stranger to the area as he was Operations Manager at Slough in the late seventies, early eighties, since when his career has taken him elsewhere on BR.

A later, and popular, Slough Operations Manager, Wally Richards has announced he is to retire from BR in October. For the past 2½ years Wally has been seconded to the Hillingdon Enterprise Partnership a scheme to help underprivileged youngsters get a better start in life. Members will be pleased to hear that Wally is coming to speak to the Society in November with another of his excellent programmes of footplate life.

Also retiring this summer is Conrad Clark the often blunt speaking, long serving and cricket loving Area Manager at Paddington whose "patch" covered the main line out to Maidenhead and branches including Marlow.

### BRANCH GOES FOR QUALITY

The Marlow branch has been chosen as the guinea pig for assessment and hopefully eventual registration under the British Standards 5750 Quality Systems. To qualify each station along the line will be required to maintain a certain quality standard of maintenance, amenity and cleanliness. Whilst initially the scheme will cover only the stations it will later be extended to include all property within the BR boundary fence, including the track and trains.

Whilst BR already have several of their workshops registered this is the first time a line and service has been attempted, eventually it is hoped the whole BR network will be included. Our branch was chosen because of the commitment of the staff and local community.

### HOW TO MAKE THE RAILROADS PAY - AMERICAN STYLE

American Law, which has made an ass of itself over ladies cooking their dogs in microwave ovens by accident, has gone one stage further as outlined in the following incidents.

A drunk American on the New York subway fell down and lost an arm underneath a passing train. A court of law decided that as the transit authority had not "taken charge" of the man, they were responsible for his predicament and he was awarded nine million dollars!

In a second case, an unsuccessful attempt at suicide occurred when a person lost both legs when jumping in front of a train. Clearly not losing a head whilst losing the legs enabled the brain cells to continue working with the result that the railroad authorities had to stump up \$1.2 million!

A load of refuse left by down and outs on the trackside enabled a Harlem man to get a bonanza of \$8 million. The way he got it was a bit chancy. He fell on the live rail and survived. No jokes about bad conductors please.

Eddie Lewcock

Alan Wheeler

Activity on the Western, as viewed from my workplace opposite the site of the long gone White Waltham station during the last few months has seen various non-standard sights. Without doubt the high was on Feb 25th at 2pm when steam returned to the GWR, with the up relief working of TAW VALLEY with service coach, full steam and whistle blowing, a lovely sight for steam enthusiasts.

March saw a variety of passenger workings. the 13th and 14th saw a number of 47's working down fast, every half-hour, with 13 on heading for the Cheltenham Races. 19th March saw 47/50 combination working an up passenger, while later the same day a 47 passed hauling 3 dead class 50's. On the 21st a class 33 was spotted hauling empty passenger stock, also that day an ARC 59 + 2 class 56 + 36 bogie wagons (3600 tonnes).

April 3rd saw the first run of the Pullman Orient Express on the down relief. Also from the 3rd for a couple weeks, a 4 coach "Derby Test Train" hauled by various locos. About these dates a class 47 + coach + mystery wagon - something like a nuclear flask + coach. This train was seen for several days. Freight working in April saw an ECC Quarries train, the first seen by your scribe, hauled by a 56. The train consisted of short wheel base, blue wagons - very smart. The 19th saw a sight where a video camera was much desired - a Yeoman 59 with train on the up relief being overtaken by a class 37 + petrol wagons on the up fast! ARC got back a couple of days later by running ARC 59 + train down fast. Fuel trains are

generally 13 tankers hauled by a class 60, but 37's both single and double headed appear from time to time. The saddest sight in April was a 47 hauling 50.033 in a very tatty condition, this loco last summer was to be seen daily, in good condition running fast passenger.

And so to May. May opened on the 2nd with the passing of a 47 in old BR livery hauling the Royal Train! Those of you following the news on May 4th would have heard that the Royal Train broke down in service - up north. Again a video camera would be required to capture on the 3rd a class 56 with a loaded Brandon gravel train going like hell on the up fast, passing an English Heritage DMU on the up relief. Later the same day 2 Yeoman 59's double headed 21 empty wagons. The rare sight of 31 hauling a PW train was seen, together with 2 20's on the annual weed killing train. I believe I saw correctly on the 16th 50.046 running light engine up relief in good overall condition. The following day at 10.25am the 2 car NETWORK TURBO set passed-by on down relief, this timing is normally a DMU, was it on public service duties? No - 4 minutes later the elderly DMU trundled by. Yesterday (30th) a 7 car English Heritage DMU was running - 5 power cars, but as these notes are being written, all up traffic has been switched to up relief for the last hour or so.

Summing up the last quarter, everything from steam to Network Turbo. What will summer bring forth?

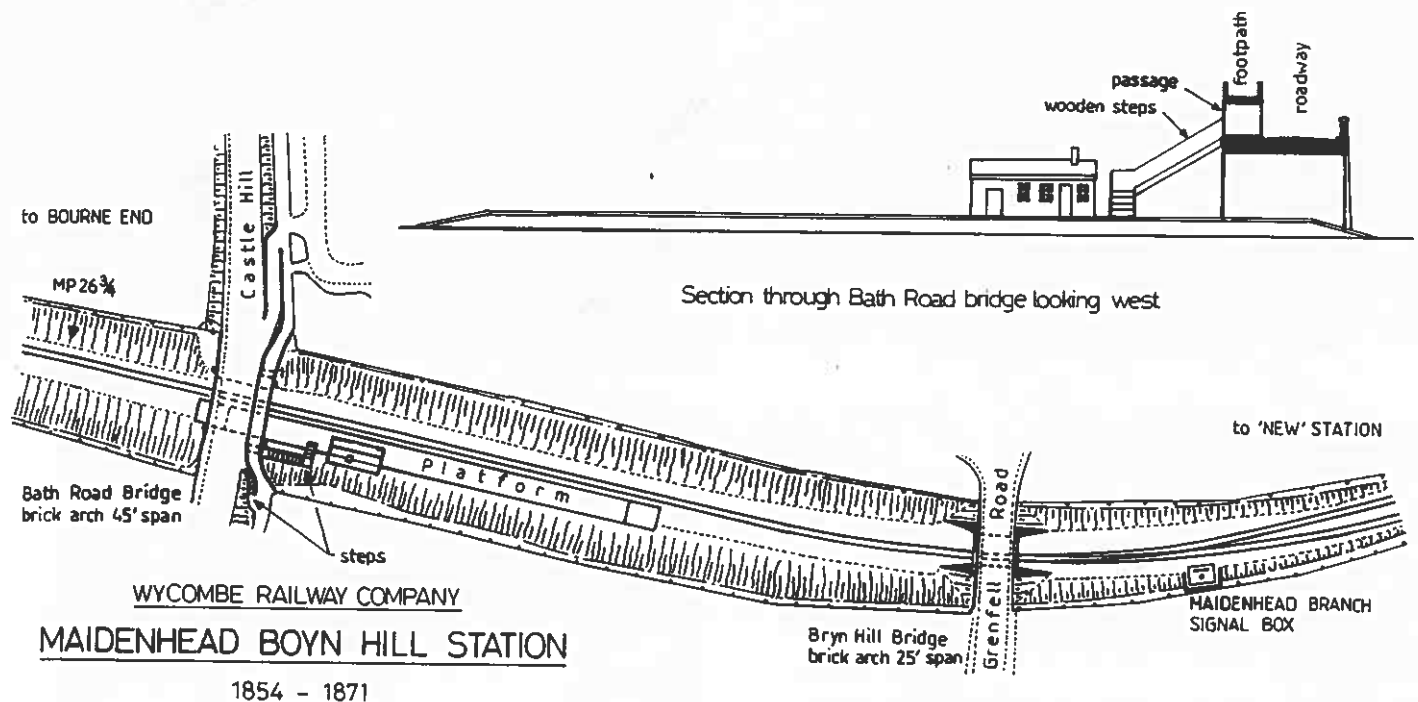
## MAIDENHEAD BOYN HILL

Mike Walker

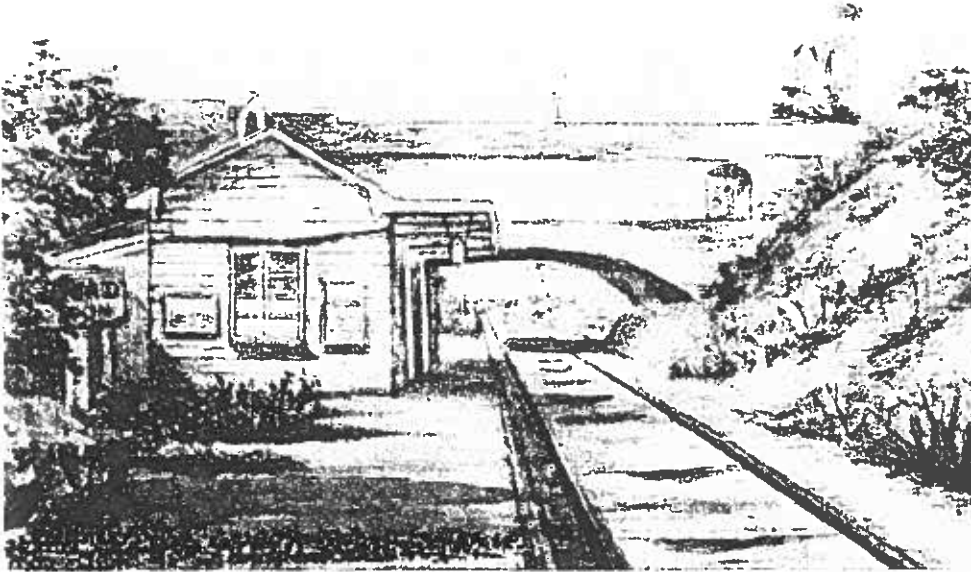
The excellent talk on the Wycombe Railway by David Lane and Francis Gomm in December once again brought up the mysterious subject of the bridge carrying Castle Hill (the A4) in Maidenhead across the branch and the WRC's temporary station below. Spurred by these comments further enquiries have been made and the following is the result.

It now seems that the bridge's current appearance is little changed from its "as built" condition. The footpath and roadway were always in their current positions, albeit not so well maintained. The openings through the structure, now

bricked up, were merely that, passageways. There were no offices etc inside, further evidence of this is that there is no sign of any bricked up window openings. Although it may seem odd that the station entrance opened onto the road whilst the footpath went above it must be remembered that in those days the service was aimed at the middle to upper classes who would arrive or leave by carriage, the lower orders would arrive on foot and could be expected to walk a bit further!



LEFT This well known drawing of Boyn Hill station is believed to have been made whilst that station was in use and is thought to be accurate.



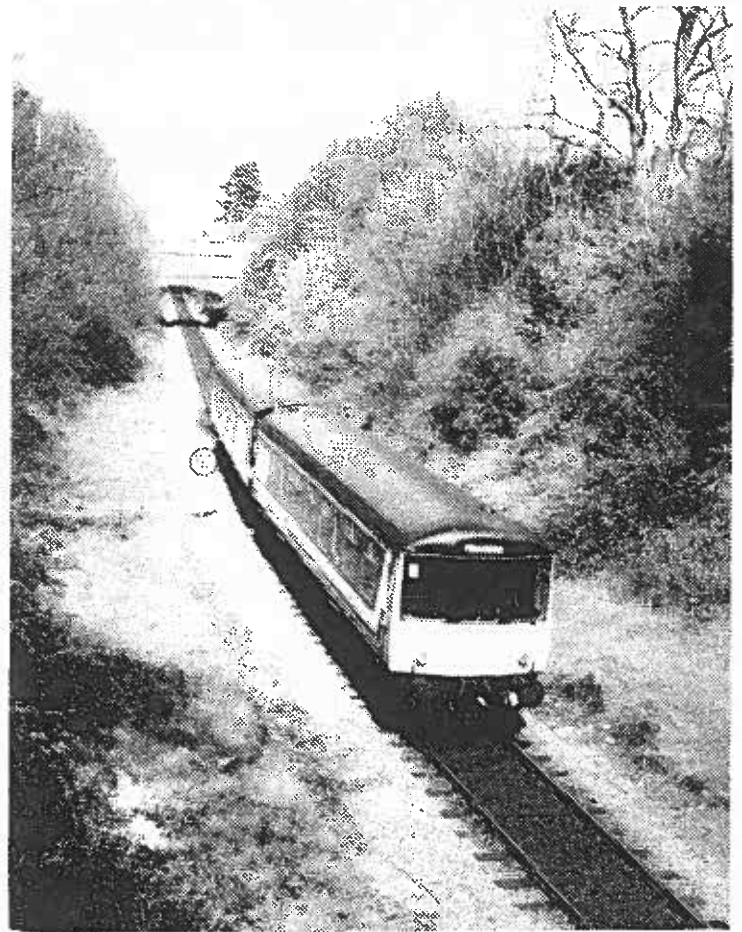
BELOW Today only the Castle Hill bridge remains as a landmark and that largely obscured by trees during the summer. Borrowed "Gospel Oak" class 104 dmu L701, 53479/53437, passes the site of Boyn Hill with the 13.30 Maidenhead-Marlow on 20th April 1989. Photo: Mike Walker

From the bridge a flight of wooden steps led down to the platform. Whilst the bridge was built with double line clearance only a single line was ever laid on what would become the up line if doubling occurred. The trackbed of the proposed down line was prepared and the temporary platform erected upon it. From this we can deduce it was a simple wooden structure, hence no evidence of foundations remain today. Because there was only one platform, only the western opening in the bridge led to a stairway. The well known contemporary engraving shows the eastern arch as an opening too, presumably fenced off as this would be highly dangerous.

David Lane suggested that the building on the platform was similar to that at Tiddington, between Thame and Wheatley, if not the same building. Certainly the artist who drew the station rendered the bridge with great accuracy so we must assume his reproduction of the building was as good and, yes, there is a strong resemblance between the two. Boyn Hill predated Tiddington by 10 years and was in use for a further 3 years after the latter opened so it is unlikely to have been the actual same building. More likely the same set of drawings were used.

As stated the station was a temporary provision. The WRC obviously hoped traffic would grow to justify doubling, it didn't. Further when the line was built the GWR was still referring to the original Maidenhead station as temporary and coming under pressure from the town for relocation. This did not occur until 1871 when the present Maidenhead station opened, Boyn Hill, now redundant closed the next day and soon disappeared, few today realise it existed.

Another long gone structure nearby now almost forgotten, and unknown to David Lane, was Maidenhead Branch Signal Box. So obscure it doesn't even get mentioned in R.A. Cooke's "Atlas of the GWR", this stood on the down side just south of the Grenfell road bridge where the branch became a double line round the curve into the main station. I don't know when this box was taken out of use and the points it controlled removed. The old down line then became the branch main whilst the up became a carriage siding which remained until the late 70's. The box, long disused, was demolished in 1973.



## FUTURE & PAST

Mike Walker

The Society's first outing of the year, on Saturday 20th April, took us to Kent to visit the EuroTunnel Exhibition Centre and the K&ESR. Thirty-six members, wives, children etc joined the coach for an uneventful trip via the M25 and M20, with a short detour to the M2 for a "comfort stop" at Farthing Corner.

Nearing the coast the site of the new Dollands Moor complex could be clearly seen to the right of the motorway. It is here that the line to the tunnel will diverge from the Ashford - Dover main line and will also be the location for the

freight customs and security inspections as well as locomotive exchange. (Both BR and SNCF locos will haul freight through the tunnels but not go beyond the opposing terminals) The new line to the Channel Tunnel itself tunnels under the M20 to emerge at the EuroTunnel terminal north of the M20 at junction 12. The exhibition centre is on the other side of the motorway.

The exhibition covers the whole history of the project from the first diggings by pick and candlelight more than a century ago, through more recent aborted attempts to the current,

it seems successful, scheme. Some idea of the sheer scale of the work can be had from the short segment of "running tunnel" one passes through near the entrance. Graphics and models explain how the tunnel is being constructed, the trains that will be used and the services that will be provided.

A full size section of one of the double-deck car carriers for the EuroTunnel Shuttle leaves one in no doubt that these will indeed be the largest rail vehicles in the world. Up stairs is a huge N gauge model railway depicting the whole of the British and French terminal complexes. Currently this model is being upgraded to keep up with the latest changes "outside" but even so it is mighty impressive.

High point, literally, of the exhibition is the observation tower. From this vantage point the whole of the EuroTunnel terminal site can be viewed. At this time the loading platforms together with the four overbridges and ramps leading to them were largely complete. In the foreground the maintenance depot for the shuttle trains is starting to take shape. Again it is the sheer scale of the undertaking which impresses, the terminal is simply huge. But this is as nothing compared to the tunnelling operations now nearing completion out at sea. Away at the east end of the terminal could be seen the entrance to the tunnel. Despite the impression given, this is not THE tunnel but a short bore through a hill to be followed by a short open section before the main tunnel (rather like the appitzer before entering the Severn Tunnel). One of the TBM's, Tunnel Boring Machines, used to cut this short tunnel is now displayed outside the exhibition centre.

After two hours at the Tunnel we stepped from the future to the past with a brief visit to the Kent & East Sussex Railway at Tenterden. Once one of the Colonel Stephens railways, today's K&ESR retains much of its light railway charm and is based in an extremely attractive Kent market town. We were

just in time to join the 3.15 train for a round trip over the 6½ mile line which included the recently reopened section between Wittersham Road and Northiam.

Appropriately our train was hauled by No.25 "Northiam", an Austerity 0-6-0ST built in 1953 by Hunslet for the Army. Accommodation was provided by four BR Mk.I's. A second train was operating hauled by LBSC 'Terrier' 2650 "Sutton" and SECR 'P' 1556, a magnificent duo both in SR livery which we passed at Rolvendon in both directions.

Whilst 25 was running round at Northiam a steady drizzle of rain and sleet started, the first inclement weather of the day, in spite of a forecast which predicted rain and snow all day! Although much of the K&ESR is fairly level it has two hills, a summit near Wittersham Road and the notorious 1 in 50 climb up from Rolvendon which steepens to 1 in 37 briefly outside Tenterden. No.25 worked hard to keep its feet up the greasy, wet rails. A colossal column of clagg went skywards and hot cinders rained down on those of us leaning out of the windows. Forward visibility was almost nil because of escaping condensing steam. This was so bad that the crew had to shut off halfway up Tenterden bank to sight the home signal; the last thing you need in these conditions.

Our return journey was as uneventful as the outward and we finally returned to Marlow around 7.20 after a most enjoyable and contrasting day.

#### AND NEXT ... A DAY TRIP TO PARIS

Once the Channel Tunnel opens in May 1993 we intend organising a club trip to Paris for the day, all the way to and from Marlow by train. With a projected 3 hour journey time between London and Paris we should have 5 to 6 hours in the French capital. We'll let you know more when schedules and tariffs are published.

## O FOR Q ORGANISING FOR QUALITY

### JOHN SEARS looks at BR's latest reorganisation

"I normally hate re-organisations - they can too easily distract our attention from running the real railway". Gerard Fiennes in the 60's? No, Chris Green in 1991. Yet another, I am compelled to write, reorganisation is gripping BR. Is this one any better than those which have gone before, and why did Chris Green say "normally"?

For over a year now BR has been sending its staff on "quality courses" to try to engender a quality culture to change the way all staff approach their work. Improvements to the quality both of BR's product and of the way that product is created are expected to generate extra revenue to pay for more improvements. In short, to create a virtuous spiral of ever increasing gains. Your writer can remember past LDC (Local Departmental Committee) meetings, arguing with management that rather than just try to cut "costs" we should also try to increase revenue. Now that idea's time has come, we have another wonderful recession! BR's market-led approach is as subject to market forces as any other business and suffers Government and Civil Service meddling. Will this latest organising for quality provide the basic strength necessary?

It's the ultimate expression of the creation of the Sectors in the early 1980's. They were proclaimed as the sign of a streamlined management structure, but weren't. In place of the BRB -Region-Division-Area hierarchy, we had BRB - Region/Sector-Subsector-Area. It was a superimposed change: the regions were to run their railway with the sectors concerned with marketing, investment, resource and cost allocation. The gods had to be reassured about promotion/demotion worries. Bleasdale, for example, went from InterCity director to LM general manager to ScotRail director. As ScotRail is a part of Regional Railways which has its own director, one can only wonder who was fooling whom about rank.

The gradual nature of the change to a completely sectorised BR was in large part due to the revolt over the "Field" re-organisation proposed in the 70's. The management quite simply refused to move. A gradual whittling away over the years - the WR moving to Swindon shows what was achieved - means that this time the only main relocation will be Regional Railways moving their HQ from Euston to Birmingham. The long gestation period has meant a lot of confusion about who does what; who is responsible for what. Subsector business managers had contracts with regional functional managers and with area managers, creating a very complex relationship. Now they have a single minded approach to the vital issues of safety and quality. If sector directors really are to be in charge then

they must have a single business focus, with their own assets and having staff working directly for them.

One of the main advantages of the sector and profit centre organisation will be that the whole of a service will be under the control of one management. No longer will a service such as East Anglia to Birmingham have to contend with three regions - Anglia, Eastern and London Midland. The resources, human and mechanical, required for the service will be controlled by people directly charged with running the show, for the financial and quality results and for carrying the can. Just as importantly, the opportunities for taking a much more comprehensive over-view of problems and opportunities will be even better than they have been so far with sector management. The Thameslink project prodded into motion by the GLC - surely another over-seeing organisation? - has become one of the best examples of what central control can achieve.

The reorganising necessary to create the new structure will be done in phases. The first will be to set up the profit centres of the Businesses, as the sectors are now called. Network SouthEast's Thames and Chiltern Division and Inter-City's Great Western Main Line are due to be implemented on 24th June 1991. ScotRail was due to be reborn on 27th of May. The second phase will be to establish the headquarters of the businesses; Central Services who provide common user services such as ticketing systems, computer data-bases; and the Group HQ. Finally come the BR HQ functions and departments. Those involved here are Operations, Civil Engineering, Finance, Personnel, Architecture and Design. All their functional activities will be allocated to the businesses and Central Services. Aspects such as the Standards Units will go to the Group HQ.

When first set up Provincial had 150 staff, by April next year, when its O for Q has been fully implemented, Regional Railways will have 33,000 employees. Drivers, S & T, p. way, station staff, administration and civil engineers will all "belong" to one sector or another. The aim is to remove those ambiguous responsibilities and to identify exactly who is responsible. Vertical integration is the guiding principle. The sectors will be split into profit centres, responsible for meeting financial and quality objectives set by the sectors. The profit centres will control their own staff, traction, stock, track, signalling, terminals and maintenance. They will be accountable for the plan and performance set for them by the sectors.

When the London Midland has completed its reorganising the complete set-up will be: the Board, setting standards; policies which affect the whole railway, such as safety; and overall strategies. Oh, I've forgotten the Government (how could I?), giving directions and setting levels of support and investment. The Board will agree commercial objectives with the sectors, - sorry, businesses - who oversee the profit centres which go by various titles. InterCity's are called routes - East Coast Main Line, West Coast Main Line, Great Western Main Line, Midland Main Line & Cross Country, Anglia & Gatwick Express and Charters. Regional's are regions (what?!) - ScotRail, Northeast, Northwest, Central, Southwest and Wales. Those of Network SouthEast are divisions (bad idea I'd say, to perpetuate such a Southern title), so we're soon to be in the Thames and Chiltern Division! Could it be, Mr. Editor, that the Marlow branch will soon be known as the Marlow subdivision? Railfreight has Trainload, divided by commodities - Coal, Metals, Construction, Petroleum; whilst Distribution has European and UK profit centres. BR Telecoms and European Passenger Services are already wholly owned subsidiaries. To run the risk of oversimplifying (if he only would! groans Mr. Editor) the new Businesses are the old Regions redefined geographically, and in business terms, into single purpose railways with the ultimate responsibility for everything they do. Mr. Fiennes back in 1967 wrote "set people simple, understandable duties. Tell them to work their bit of railway safely, efficiently, profitably. Then set them free to get on with the job". Mr. Pettitt was quoted in Modern Railways for December 1990 as saying that Regional Railways has to become a quality business. I think that Mr. Fiennes and Mr. Pettitt are saying the same thing.

To achieve the clear-cut responsibilities for which O for Q was conceived will not always be easy. Let's follow through a couple of contrasting lines of route. Because the cartography department is on leave, the examples will be local ones. The hilly half of the Thames and Chiltern Division is a reasonably clear-cut route. Marylebone station, though with no booking office of its own (what a ridiculous idea!) has only one user, as do the tracks out to Neasden. However, Railfreight then appears with its depot there, further out on the GC/Met Joint the LT owns the track as far as Amersham and on the GC/GW Joint Railfreight appears again with one of its "binliner" services. At their extremities, both routes run onto other businesses' tracks, Railfreight beyond Aylesbury and InterCity at Aynho Junction. How did InterCity wriggle out of owning Banbury station? Such allocation of resources will surely continue to raise eyebrows.

## SOUTH WALES REFLECTIONS

Phil. Searle

One of my abiding memories from childhood and one perhaps, in some small way, may have contributed to my interest in railways, is of the trains which passed but a few yards away from my grandparents house in Pontllanfraith, Monmouthshire. That was back in the mid fifties but by the time I was able to recognise various loco types the line was in its final years.

This was the Sirhowy Valley line which had once belonged to the LNWR, and was in fact a branch from the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny railway beginning at Nantybwhc and running to Newport via Risca. Motive power was based at Tredegar shed and the line was for many years associated with the 0-6-2 coal tanks, 7F 0-8-0 tender engines and also the 0-8-4 side tank engines.

After 1948 much evidence of LNW & LMS ownership remained right up until closure but locos of LNW and LMS origin were gradually replaced by ex GWR types throughout the 50's, this process being completed in August 1959.

Tredegar's allocation at that time was seven pannier tanks, but the shed (coded 86K) was closed completely from 13th June 1960 when the passenger service was withdrawn, the remaining coal traffic being worked by panniers from Ebbw Junction shed and class 37 diesels in the last year or two of the lines existence.

After June 1954 passenger trains were worked by auto-fitted 64xx pannier tanks, services terminating at Risca (on the Western Valleys line), except for the first and last workings of the day.

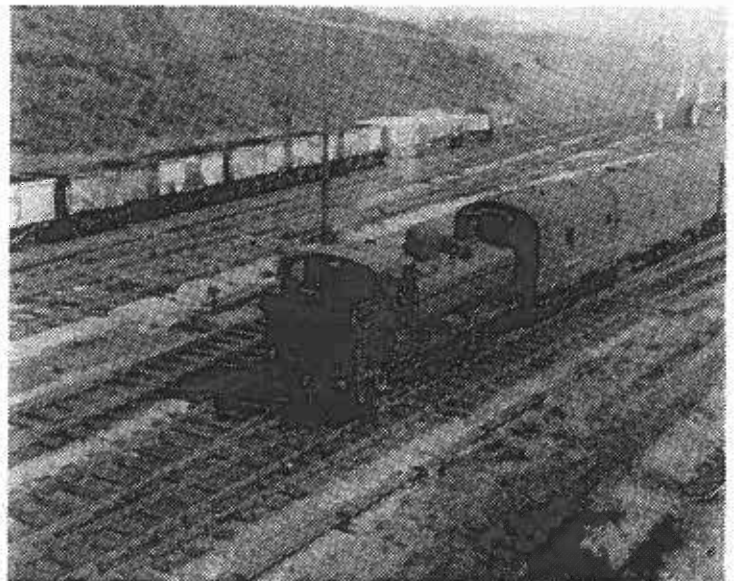
Summertime brought excursion traffic down the line, the destination more often than not being Barry Island. These heavy trains often consisting of any old stock that could be found was traditionally hauled by 7F 0-8-0's and by all accounts were well patronised!

Such problems abound on the river lines of our local Division. InterCity is "prime user" and so owns all the tracks on the main lines. However, it most certainly isn't prime user of all the stations and so Network SouthEast owns most of them. The demarcation can be easily seen at Slough where InterCity haven't followed Network SouthEast's example and rebuilt the mainline platforms. Other stations are even split down the middle by fences. ealing Broadway and Cholsey are the first examples. in Slough's case InterCity actually own the mainline platforms, in other cases Network SouthEast don't use the main line platforms enough to warrant rebuilding. Other facilities are also divided by sector use. Old Oak Common maintains stock for InterCity and Network SouthEast; other businesses' locos will need refuelling. Reading's station staff will be InterCity employees, but will also act as agents for Network SouthEast. All facilities and sites are allocated to their prime user and other users buy-in or lease their requirements. Railfreight are heavy users of Thames lines, but they also have their own tracks in places, for example at Theale, Didcot and Morris Cowley.

At first sight such a division of assets appears to be counter-productive, and an odd way to improve quality and effectiveness. Indeed, it can be taken to extremes. InterCity's Liverpool Street to Norwich service is in fact run for them by Network SouthEast, and Norwich station is owned by Regional Railways. As the service is very much a commuter route one can only wonder whether the profit it provides InterCity really is a worthwhile reason for such an odd set-up. Generally however, the division of resources and lines is clear-cut. Remember that joint lines abounded in the past and that the functions of the good old Railway Clearing House are very much more rapidly accomplished by computer and other electronic means.

Network SouthEast has produced a supplement to Rail News, BR's staff newspaper, describing its aims for what Chris Green has named Network 2,000. In it John Gough, a "railway writer" states that "the need for clear responsibility is carried further by the split between operations and retail. The former runs trains..."Oh, no, isn't this where we came in? Surely the two are inextricably linked? Will O for Q provide only some of the means for the end that Messrs Fiennes and Pettitt defined? Let's hope that Mr. Green's "normally" is justified this time.

The engine shed at Tredegar had stood empty up until about 12 years ago and the station is still to be seen today, but in a very dilapidated condition.

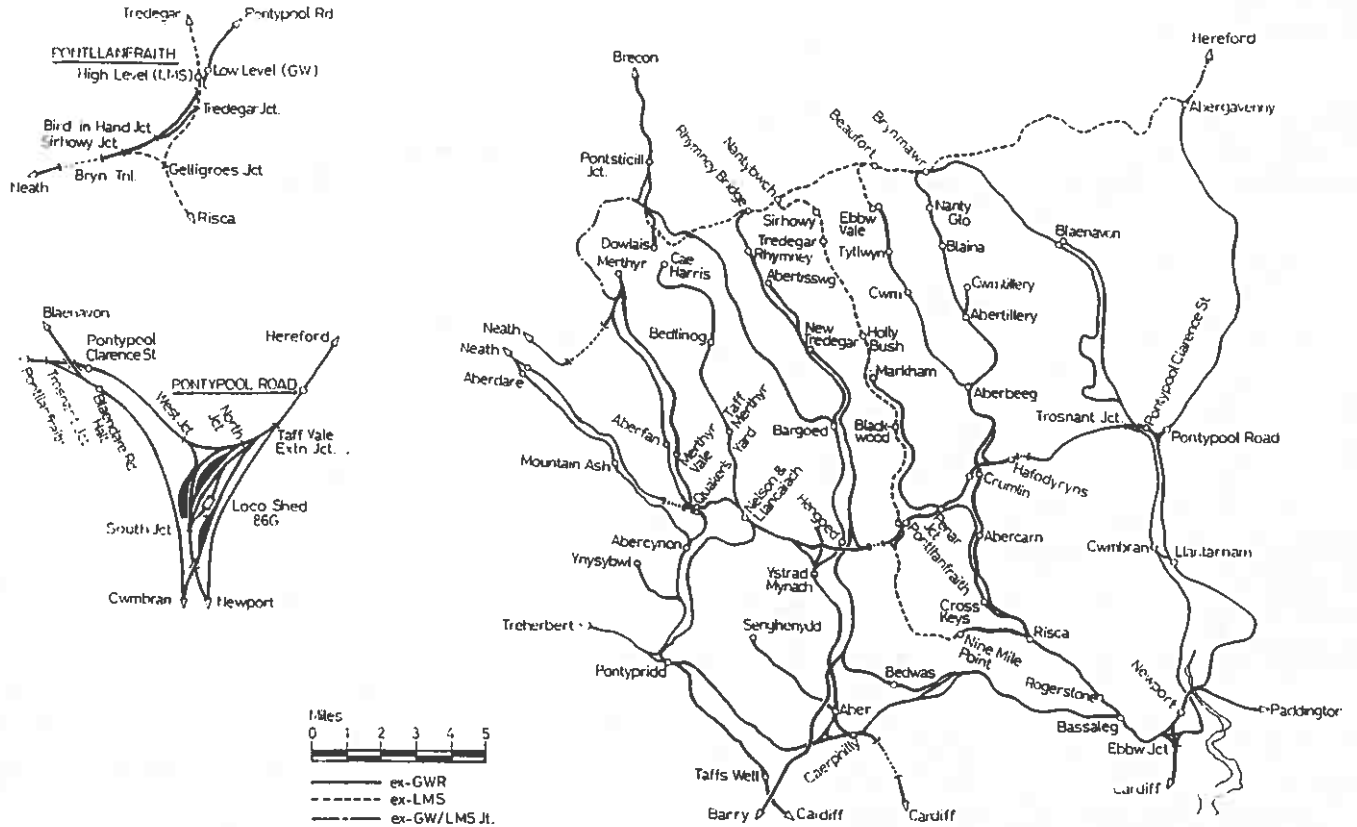


Class 8750 pannier tank 4639 drifts through the yards at Pontypool Road with a Mk.I BG in the autumn of 1964.

Two photographs Phil Searle



## RAILWAYS IN THE WELSH VALLEYS



During late 1963 a friend and I were invited to spend a week with my grandparents at Pontllanfraith and by this time railway matters were beginning to take up most of my spare time. Although by this time freight traffic on the LNW line was down to just one short coal train each weekday, there was still much activity to be seen a quarter of a mile or so down the road on the GWR Vale of Neath line which ran between Pontypool Road and Neath. Although the railway was also in its last years a fair amount of passenger and freight traffic was still in evidence.

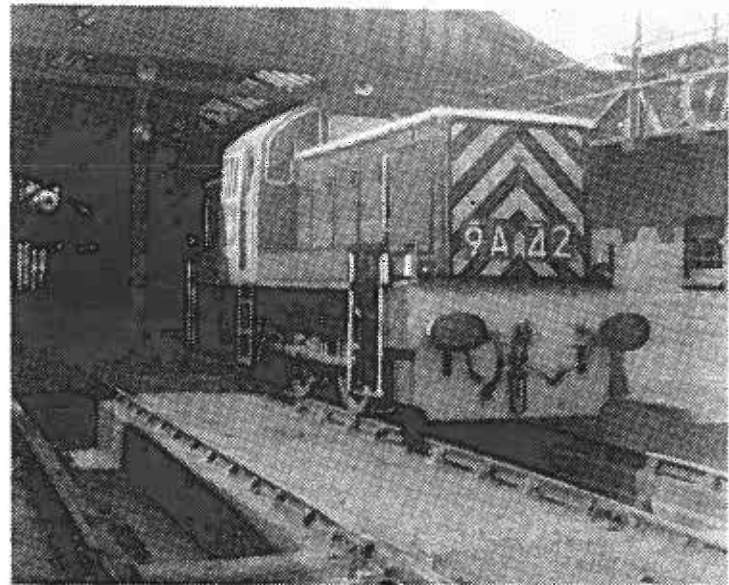
It was decided one morning that we would catch the train from Pontllanfraith (low level) station to Pontypool Road and with any luck bunk the shed (86G) there! So armed with sandwiches, notebooks etc we walked the short distance to the station to catch the mid-morning stopper from Neath. We purchased our two return tickets at the ticket office, noting the roaring fire in the waiting room on our way through to the platform.

Our train could be heard in the distance as we crossed the boarded tracks by the platform signal box and a minute or two later 6690 of Aberdare shed came clanking into the station pulling three maroon Collett coaches which sadly were almost empty. For two young lads from the then almost totally dieselised London end of the Western Region this was really something else!

We passed a few freights along the way, one being behind a Mogul at Penar Junction, but the highlight of the journey was crossing over the viaduct at Crumlin at the statutory five miles per hour, with its fine view up the Western Valley towards Aberbeeg. The recently modernised Hafodyrnyns colliery was passed, its little green Austerity tank just nosing out of its shed building. Pontypool Clarence Street (mirroring the Vale of Neath architectural features of Pontllanfraith station) was the last stop before Pontypool Road, a connection for the Blaenavon branch having forked at nearby Trosnant Junction.

On arrival at Pontypool Road we attached our locomotive uncouple and head off in the direction of the depot for servicing, whilst Hymek D7085 headed away towards the north with a parcels train. Pontypool Road at that time was still a very busy junction, being a reception point for much of the coal traffic originating in the valleys, and also a stop on the west to north routes' fast passenger services.

Careful inspection of the shed revealed about forty locos in various states of repair, ranging from condemned 4937, 7809, 6335 to 48000 (the first Stannier 8F no less) and 5029 on the ash pit road, an engine that is familiar to us today! Prairie tank No.6115 was in steam at the front of the shed, a long



It's a fair bet that few members have photographs of the ill-fated and short lived class 14's actually in BR service in their collections but Phil Searle caught D9538 at the soon to be closed Pontypool Road (86G) shed in the summer of 1965.

way from its remaining classmates in the London suburbs. In fact 6115 was to be our train engine for the return journey back to Pontllanfraith, certainly the last time I would be hauled by a 61 (we didn't dream that there would ever be a Didcot in those days).

There isn't much around Pontllanfraith today that would ever suggest that there had been railways in the area, a road widening scheme has removed any trace of the low level station, the high level (LNW) station and crossing signal box has disappeared in a similar way. A happy survivor or the line is the impressive viaduct at Hengoed which hopefully will continue to dominate the area for years to come, unlike the viaduct at Crumlin which was dismantled in 1965.

the nameboard from the low level signal box still survives on my garage wall and the smoke box numberplate from 6690 is to be found on my landing wall, oh yes, and there's the memories as well, isn't there!

# Network TURBO



LEFT Soon to be a familiar sight 165.001 comprising DMOS 58834 and DMOCA 58801 stands at the refurbished Marylebone station. It is good to see a suburban train which looks as if it has been designed to be attractive to the customer not just a box full of seats and a few windows.

BELOW The stylish front end incorporates a BSI autocoupler and "spoiler" to deflect objects on the track. A dot matrix destination indicator is fitted behind the left hand side of the windscreen.

Within the next few weeks the first of the new Class 165 Network Turbo diesel units will commence revenue earning service on the Chiltern Line. By May 1993 when the entire 180 car fleet and the 65 car higher specification Class 166 have been delivered all of NSE's Thames & Chiltern Division services will be operated by the stylish new trains.

They are, of course, the first of a whole family of basically similar trains (The remainder will be emu's) which will be NSE's standard for many years to come. All will have a common body style with structure fabricated from welded aluminium extrusions. However the 165's are longer at 23m (75' 5") than the electrics which are to be 20m (65' 6"). To enable standard jigs and fixtures to be used in all construction, the extra length on the 165 is gained by an additional half bay and window at the outer ends of each car. All Networker family vehicles are 2.81m (9' 2 1/4") wide. Unlike previous sliding door stock they have sliding / plug doors, that is doors which move out from the car before sliding. There are a number of advantages; first, it produces a smooth side which is easier to clean mechanically; second, it is less prone to freezing up and lastly it avoids the need for door pockets thus providing more window space - on the 165 virtually every passenger has a view out, unlike the previous two generations of suburban stock!

Below the floor the 165 owes much to the proven Sprinter equipment except that the usual Cummins NT855R engine is replaced by the Perkins 2006-TWH a 6 cylinder turbocharged and intercooled unit developing 350bhp @ 2100rpm. All cars are powered with one engine driving both axles of the inner end bogie through a Voith T21r hydraulic transmission and Gmeinder final drives geared to give the 165/0 a top speed of 75mph for the hilly Chiltern Line and 90 mph for the 165/1's of the flatter Thames Line.

The units ride on BREL Series 3 bogies with air suspension and have electro-pneumatically controlled disc brakes. They can work in multiple in trains of up to 4 units and may be mu'd with the Sprinters if required, although in all mu couplings only units of the same top speed may work together.



LEFT The drivers cab is radically different from the old dmu's. Out goes the desk and in comes the console style layout similar to recent locomotive designs. A combined power throttle and brake controller is located on the drivers left (out of the picture). The twin handsets are for the train to shore radio and public address, as an alternative the stick microphone may be used for the latter.

ABOVE Standard class features 2+3 and 2+2 seating and is bright and attractive. Plenty of luggage space and 4 dot matrix signs per car are provided. The interior is designed to eliminate dirt traps and allow easy cleaning. Seats have removeable covers and the floor is rubber covered. First class has wider 2+2 seating. Smoking is to be banned throughout the new trains.

The fleet will be made up of four car designs, see below, a Driving Motor Open Standard DMOS, a Non-Driving Motor Open Standard MOS, and two types of Driving Motor Open Composite Lavatory DMOCLA or DMOCLB. These share a common body with differing interiors, 16 first class seats for 2 car units or 24 firsts for 3 car units. On the Chiltern Line the 3 car units will be used exclusively on the line through High Wycombe as they will not have trip cocks to operate on LT's train stops between Harrow and Amersham. 2 car 165/0's will be so equipped.

On the subject of train control, the 165/0's will be the first BR trains in service with Automatic Train Protection (ATP). The workings of this will be explained in a later issue but 165.008 is the first unit equipped and after trials this autumn all 165/0's will be retrofitted, 165/1's will get the production ATP in due course. All 165's will, of course, have the traditional AWS and "Black Box" event recorders. All are radio equipped as it is intended to work them Driver Only from the outset.

NETWORK TURBO SET FORMATIONS

Class 165/0 2 car

165.001 - 165.022 : 58801/58834 - 58822/58855  
 165.034 - 165.039 : 58873/58867 - 58878/58872

Class 165/0 3 car

165.023 - 165.033 : 58823/55404/58856 - 58833/55414/58866

Class 165/1 2 car

165.118 - 165.137 : 58879/58933 - 58898/58952

Class 165/1 3 car

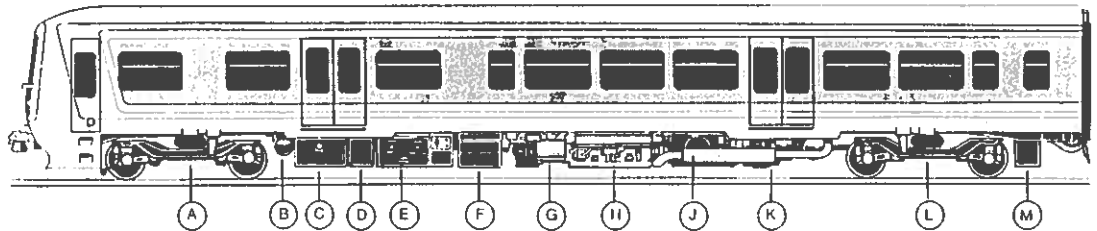
165.101 - 165.117 : 58953/55415/58916 - 58969/55431/58932

DRIVING MOTOR OPEN COMPOSITE LAVATORY DMOCL

DMOCL A Seats 16F 72S

165/0 : 58801 - 58822  
 58873 - 58878

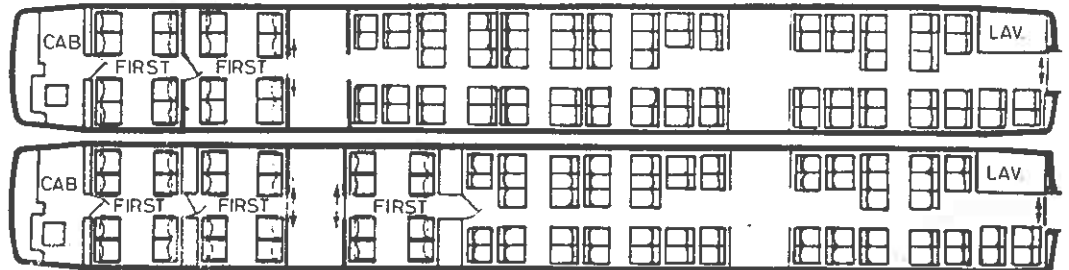
165/1 : 58879 - 58898



DMOCL B Seats 24F 58S

165/0 : 58823 - 58833

165/1 : 58953 - 58969

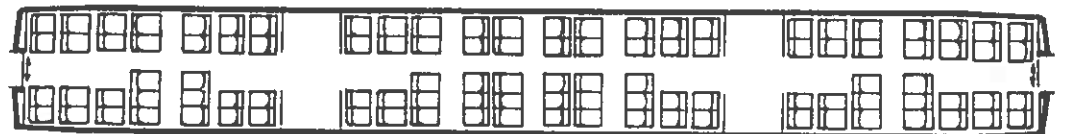
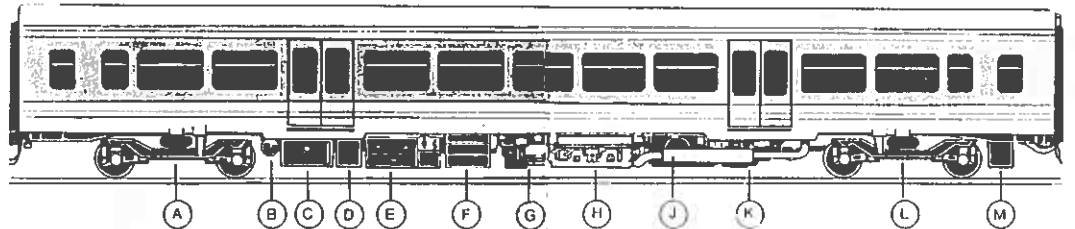


NON-DRIVING MOTOR OPEN STANDARD MOS

Seats 98S

165/0 : 55404 - 55414

165/1 : 55415 - 55431

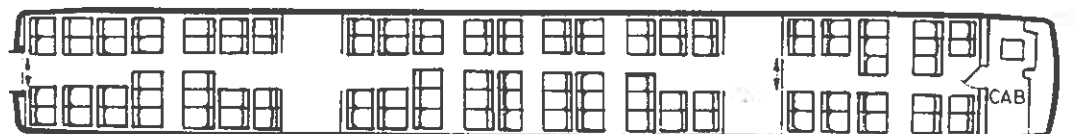
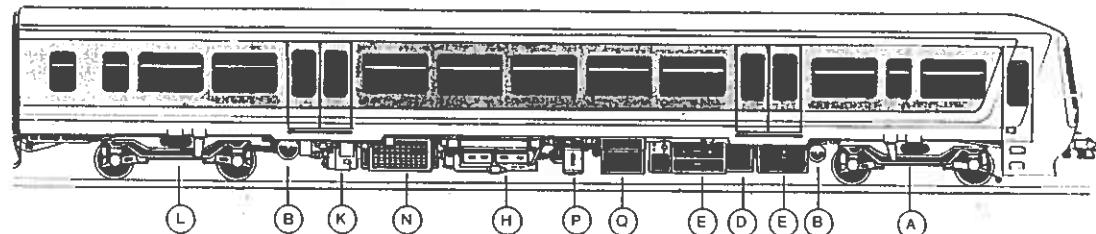


DRIVING MOTOR OPEN STANDARD DMOS

Seats 90S

165/0 : 58834 - 58872

165/1 : 58916 - 58952



KEY

- A: Non-powered bogie
- B: Air suspension surge reservoir
- C: Fuel Tank 1500 gal
- D: Electronics case
- E: Battery box

- F: Air reservoir
- G: Engine air filter
- H: Perkins diesel engine 2006TW-H
- J: Exhaust silencer
- K: Voith automatic transmission

- L: Driving bogie with final drives
- M: Toilet retention tank
- N: Radiator
- P: Hydrostatic oil tank
- Q: Brake module

# BOOKSHELF

Ron Brooks



When our national bard was writing his contribution (to a PR job, not the DONKEY) he wrote "now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer". How appropriate to this present set of reviews which hopefully should persuade everyone to rush off to see the model exhibitions, museums and industrial archeology which can still recall our steam heritage, and a touch of the electrics too.

BR ELECTRIC LOCO's in 4mm scale Ian Allen  
R.S. Carter ISBN 0 7110 1501 5

This is a ring bound book with pages roughly A4 size but bound on the small side. It has diagrams for 15 classes of BR Electric Locomotives together with two more veterans from the former NE Rly. A biography is included. Each class has a half page of informative notes plus excellent 4mm/ft line diagrams with dimensions. This is backed up by pictures, so essential for modelling, each of which has a substantial informative caption. Although primarily aimed at modellers it has much of interest to the railway student.

LONDON'S FIRST RAILWAY Batsford  
P.H.G. Thomas ISBN 0 7134 5414 8

This is a comprehensive volume on the London and Greenwich Rly covering every aspect of its formation, building, running and vicissitudes. There are many black and white prints and a section of photographic reproductions of early material. Having built probably the longest bridge in the world the directors intended to hire out the arches as des. res., warehouses etc. They were wrong but the railway fulfilled a very necessary need for the area which it served.

VINTAGE ENGINES New English Library  
L. Adams & P. Whitehouse 4500 2593 3

This is an album of over 200 black and white photographs of engines in use during the period 1875-1950. Each picture has an informative caption, and is found within one of five groups, LMS, LNER, GWR, SR and miscellaneous; and few railways were more miscellaneous than Col. Stephens! There is even a picture of the BUG in action slightly disguised as

No.58S but present in all its glory! These, like many other early photographs, were laboriously captured on large format negatives in large cameras and therefore reproduce with great clarity. Unfortunately the very skill of these early photographers enabled them to exclude much background material which would now have a fascination of its own. Nice for a browse and later for reference. An index would have been useful, but you could always make your own.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SEVERN BRIDGE RAILWAY Alan Sutton and  
Ron Huxley Gloucestershires  
County Library

This Railway was built to get coal out of the Forest of Dean to lucrative markets on the other side of the River Severn. Its few ups and many downs culminated in the rbridge being demolished by a runaway ship. When the railway worked the miners stopped; and when the coal was available there was trouble on the track. The book is very well produced and well illustrated with a beautifully readable type. The whole story reads like a Greek tragedy and no wonder - no sacrifices were made to the river god! It is hard to think of any area not covered. A very interesting and worthwhile read.

STEAM IN THE COALFIELDS David and Charles  
G.T. Heavyside ISBN 0 7153 7323 4

This is a book of very fine black and white prints of hard working industrial engines working in and around coalfields. Most of the pictures have interesting backgrounds which, in view of their job, is not surprising. The illustrations are arranged by areas corresponding to coalfields and, where appropriate a map is provided showing how the system fits into the landscape. There is a generous historical introduction and an ample caption to each picture. How can accounting make operating these simple and rugged machines more expensive than a diesel, especially in a coal mine?

PS Recent government statements lead me to believe that a copy of the 'DONKEY' and its erudite book review comments have been noted in high places.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

The summer of 1966 saw the announcement of the most powerful diesel locomotive to be built in Britain - the prototype Brush "Kestrel".

Following the need of the Western Region to provide two type "3" locomotives for its new high speed locomotives, a general requirement was issued by British Railways for a 4,000 hp locomotive.

To meet this requirement Brush proposed its "Kestrel" project. Based on the BR type "4" Co-Co 2,750 hp locomotive Kestrel was to be powered by a single Sulzer 16 cylinder LVA24 engine of 4,000 hp.

Closures were still making big news. On 26th June Glasgow St Enoch station closed, its 250 trains and 23,000 passengers a day diverted to Glasgow Central.

Another closure of a different type was the decision of the directors of Beyer Peacock to cease building locomotives of all types, thus the closure of the Gorton Foundry brought to an end over a century of locomotive construction by a famous company.

## TEN YEARS AGO

Roger Bowen

From the Marlow Donkey No.19 - June 1981

Two articles on trips attended by members dominated the June 1981 "Donkey". One was a visit to BREL Derby courtesy of Chiltern Trains. A fascinating visit which featured new Mk.3 sleeping cars, prototype class 210 commuter stock and Tanzanian narrow gauge stock, not forgetting the third prototype Leyland National Railbus. Other features of the tour were a visit to Derby Museum to see a gauge 'O' MR railway layout, and a visit to the BR training school.

Another article featured a Chiltern Trains outing - this time a weekend trip to Skye. Leaving on Friday night the passengers

20th May 1966 saw the closure of the Wisbech and Upwell Tramway, part of the Eastern Region. The last roadside tramway in the BR network the line was latterly worked by 0-6-0 diesel shunters with enclosed wheels, the last train being hauled by No.D2201.

British Railways last shunting horse "Charlie" was pensioned off. He worked in the yard at Newmarket in Suffolk where the goods yard had been closed.

A study was announced of various forms of rapid transit, including monorail for Manchester, was announced by the Ministry of Transport. It will form a comparative study of the costs and environmental considerations in building and operating each of the several possible "rapid transit" systems. The monorail proposed by Manchester Corporation was to be compared with a lightweight electric railway of the conventional "steel on steel" type and with a "busway" or special track reserved for buses, possibly incorporating an automatic vehicle guidance system.

Thus were some of the events of the summer of 1966.



breakfasted in Inverness before travelling on the Kyle of Lochalsh. A tour of Skye followed (by road motor) and a return by train to overnight in Inverness. Out of Inverness on the Sunday morning, a bonus, routed via the Tay and Forth Bridges. Finally our arrival at High Wycombe at 22.38 after 1331 miles of rail travel.

The annual family tour in July visited the Neme Valley railway the "Donkey" also featured rail excursions in the summer by Marlow & Maidenhead Passengers Association, Chiltern Trains and British Railways "Merrymakers".

A busy summer for Society members.

# SWINDON - CAPITAL OF THE GWR

Stan Verrinder

In 1839, little did the inhabitants of the sleepy Wiltshire agricultural market town of Swindon, dream what was to happen to their peace and quiet, when they saw the new railway, from London to Bristol being built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, some two miles away down in the valley. It then had a population of nearly 2500, and the numbers had barely doubled in the last two hundred years. The nearest town, Oxford, was 30 miles away, and a day's trip there and back, but few went. But all that was soon to change, and the town was to join in the industrial revolution.

The letter that was to change its fate still exists, and is dated 13th September 1840, it is from Daniel Gooch, appointed Locomotive Superintendent in 1837 at the tender age of 21, addressed to Brunel. (Gooch was not the youngest Superintendent, that honour goes to Richard Peacock of Beyer Peacock fame, who was only 18 when appointed to the Leeds and Selby Railway in 1838). One of the reasons that Swindon would be the best place for "our principal engine establishment", was that it was where the "gradients change, the differing gradients require a different class of engine, requiring for the Bristol end a more powerful one than for the London end". It was also at the junction of the line to Cheltenham, and on the route of the Wiltshire and Berkshire canal, which would be a useful source of water and carrier of materials. Brunel agreed, and building started the following year.

The decision of the GWR to build its own works and not rely on the locomotives, coaches and wagons of the existing manufacturers, such as Stephenson and Hackworth, was not unique among the new railway companies. A number of railway towns were created, among them large ones, such as Crewe, and more modest ones like Wolverton. The works at Brighton for the London Brighton and South Coast Railway, built in 1852 and later enlarged, were comparatively small and reflected the size of the LB&SCR, and was swamped by the already existing large resort town.

Among the first buildings were 300 houses for workers, built to the plans of Brunel, and these still exist, with the smoke laden grime of the years scrubbed off them. They have been described by Pevsner as "One of the few planned Victorian estates, small and modest and laid out without ingenuity but planned all the same, and architecturally as orderly as the design of the streets." They were constructed in stone, because this was cheaper than brick, until the removal of the brick tax in 1850. The only water was from standpipes, but there was an earth privy to each house, a comparative luxury then. Needless to say, artificial lighting would have been by candle or tapers. The houses were not owned by the GWR but by J & C Rigby, building contractors, who agreed to build them and the refreshment rooms at the station in return for paying only a nominal ground rent, and the stopping of all trains at Swindon for ten minutes. The company decided on this unusual arrangement because they were running out of money. They were to regret the ten minute delay as speeds went up, and eventually bought the lease back in 1895 for the enormous sum of £100,000 (about £10 million of today's money).

There was a shortage of houses from the start, and speculative builders stepped in and, no matter the shortcomings of the company houses, the houses the speculators built were completely inferior, of the worst working class type being thrown up in all the industrial towns. Back to back, mean in appearance, often in courts, with an inadequate water supply and minimal unhealthy sanitation. The company had a conscience about this, allied with the fact that it is a very sensible policy to have a reasonably housed work force. As a result the company started building its own houses again for its employees. But in the latter part of the century there grew up a powerful building society movement, with a policy of loaning up to 90% of value, compared with the usual 60%. The result was Swindon became unique in this country by having a predominance of owner-occupier houses. In 1900 the proportion was 60% of housing stock, compared with below 10% for the rest of the country. The level that Swindon achieved in 1900 was not reached by the rest of the country until 1980.

Nevertheless, except for the first houses, you could still tell the grade of the employee by the type of house and the street. The labourer had the terraced house which opened straight onto the street. The skilled worker was in the house with the 6 foot front garden; the foreman, the one with the bay window; the more senior usually lived in Old Town, except for the chief mechanical engineer, who lived near the works so that he could keep an eye on it and the men. The late John Betjeman, in a 1937 wireless broadcast said of Swindon "the streets of the pre-war [1914] are depressing rows ... houses packed closely together and hardly any trees

... speculators have thought of their money before other people's health and happiness". However, Board of Trade report of 1908 comments that the houses are in "rows of uniform character", but overcrowding (a feature of all towns in the period) was rare.

Despite working class housing shortages, Swindon was lucky that it was a "green field" site, and that development took place after the railway line was built, and no new ones were built after the original. When building in built up areas, the railway companies preferred poor class housing areas for their routes. It was the cheapest built up land, possession was easily obtained, the tenants having no security, and usually it was held in large blocks reducing negotiating time. Unfortunately, for the displaced tenants no one was interested in building alternative housing, except in a few cases, as the rents of new, even poor class houses, were usually beyond their means. The result was that the existing crowded, dilapidated housing became even more crowded.

In the first decade Swindon's population doubled from 2500 to 5000, and the speculative houses which were built created insanitary conditions. The death rate went up alarmingly, the average age at death went down from 36 to 26 years, typical of some of the worst of the industrial towns. This was not properly brought under control until Boards of Health were set up in the two towns, in 1864, and sewers built and water closets installed. The railway company, in the meantime, set up medical facilities in 1847, and went on to found a hospital. All this being partly funded by compulsory deductions from wages, and the facilities lasted, with improvements, until 1947 when the NHS came into being. A Mechanic's Institute, one of the self help education features of the mid Victorian town was established in 1844, with the help of the company, who had a self interest because skills were needed. To help with the spiritual welfare in 1845 a church was erected, and the company also built an elementary school in 1850 with others to follow, until the state took over after the Education Act 1870.

After the initial railway surge of the 1840's, when the total railway mileage of Great Britain went up by a factor of six, activity slowed down a little at Swindon, and the world of railways generally, in the 1850's. The population only went up from 5000 to 7000, but the growing town needed more housing. In 1853 the new Swindon Improvement Company was founded to provide cultural and recreational facilities and with the financial assistance of the GWR they came.

The 1860's saw major additions to the works, which up until now had been mainly building locomotives. A rolling mill for rails was built, and a carriage works. All this activity caused a greater influx of migrants, who had usually been from the north, but the rolling mill especially attracted the Welsh, from the iron works of the Welsh valleys. This activity ceased when steel was introduced for rails, instead of iron.

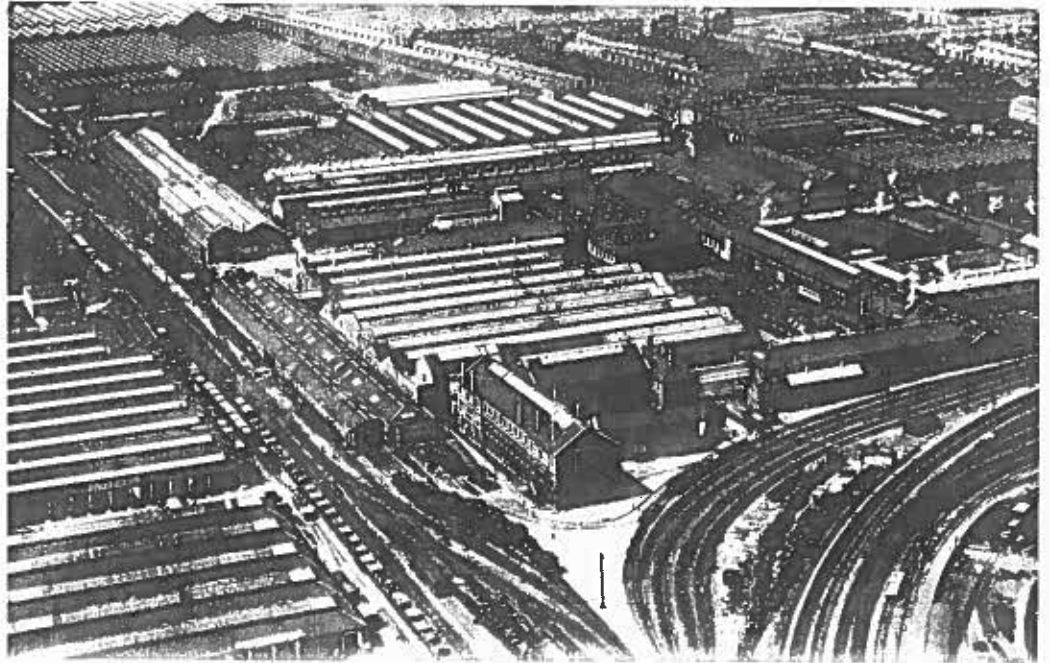
Up went the population in 1870 to nearly 12000, followed by 20000 in 1880, 33000 in 1890 and at the turn of the century it had reached 45000. So in the space of only 60 years it had gone up by a factor of 18. That the population increased by only 5000 in the next ten years to 1911, was a sign that the railways were at their zenith, as indeed they were.

The railway line was always a barrier to free ranging development and broke towns up into segments, with a tendency to encourage dereliction at the boundaries, especially if it was on a viaduct or embankment. At Swindon the obstacle was a combination of the line and the works, including the locomotive sheds. It became a slab of buildings and associated activities, stretching for three miles, with a maximum width of half a mile, along both sides of the railway line, in places. There were only three road breaks in the barrier, and they were narrow. As a consequence, nearly all development took place to the south. The New Town marched steadily up the hill to the Old Town until in about 1890 they became fused.

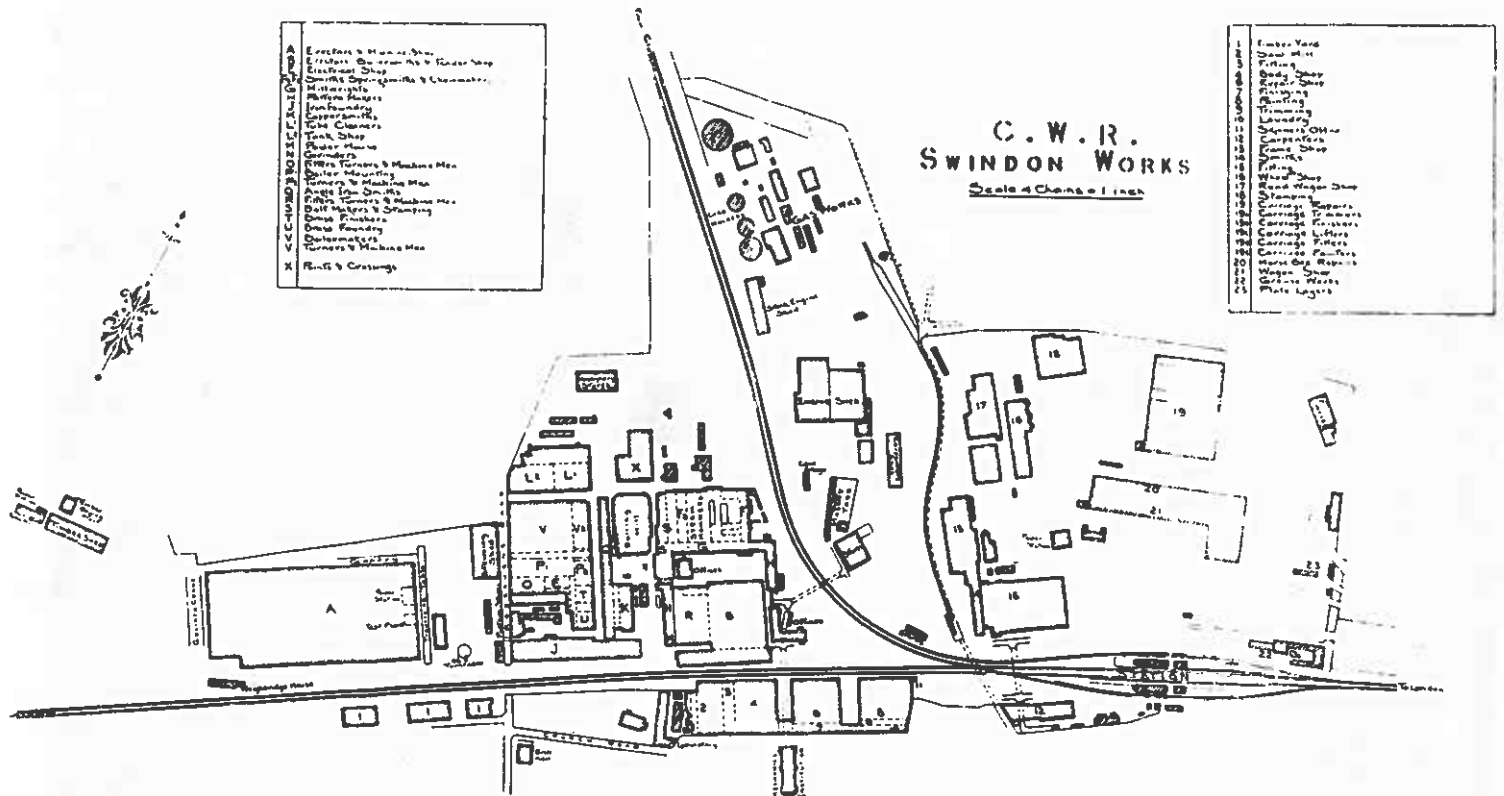
In 1900 it was the biggest single industrial complex in the country, and possibly Europe. Practically everything for running a railway was made there. The workforce, at its peak, reached 16000 with well over half skilled men, including the clerical and managerial staffs, and those at the locomotive depot. From the statistics of the 1911 census, the total employed number of males in the town was 21000, so it can fairly be said that they were either employed by the GWR, or relied upon it.

To get to their work the men walked, as did most of the working class (and some middle class) elsewhere, as the many photographs of the period testify. Commuting, whether by tram

This aerial view of Swindon Works looking NW from the station was taken in the thirties. In the foreground between the Bristol and Gloucester lines is the loco drawing office and behind that the fitting and machine shops, R & B; foundry, J, and boiler shops, P & V, and at top left the famous erecting shop, A. At bottom left are the wagon shops with the millwrights shop on the extreme right. Out of picture are the carriage shops, bottom right, and the "village" extreme left.



The diagram below shows the Works circa 1924.



or train was for the minority, but was growing at the latter end of the nineteenth century, as fares became cheaper and relative affluence grew. The horse was the power of the trams except late in the period when electricity started to be used. For the carriage of goods within towns, and to railheads, the horse was the only means of power, and Swindon was no exception. The railway age was in fact the greatest age of the horse. The threat of redundancy turned out to be unreal, the new technology substantially increased the demand for horse labour.

The town was never large enough in its early stages to become a borough under the 1835 Act and the Old Towns achieved Urban District status in 1894, having previously been Sanitary Authorities under the 1872 Public Health Act, and became a Borough in 1900, the first mayor being the Chief Locomotive Superintendent, George Jackson Churchward. This choice was not surprising as, inevitably, the Great Western dominated local government, but never provoked the antagonism that occurred at Crewe.

What did the worker think of his conditions? Alfred Williams, who worked in the foundry, gave this account in 1914, "There is not a vestige of colour. The sky, roofs, walls, the engines moving to and fro, the rolling stock, the stocks of plates and ingots of iron and steel, the sleepers for the

rails, the ground beneath - everything is dark, sombre and repellent. Not a glint on the steel lines. Not a refraction of light from the slates on the roof. Everything is dingy, dark and drab. And drab is the mind of the toiler all the time, drab as the skies above and the walls beneath. Doomed to confinement from which there is no escape, he accepts the conditions and is swallowed up in his environment." To give this a balance, it has to be remembered that Williams was a poet and writer of some note, in his day, and his writings were greeted with derision in the works' magazine. On the other side of the scales was the fact that the publication was partly funded by the company, and no trade union activity was allowed within the works until the 1920's. Despite this many workers spoke with pride, that they worked for the GWR, and three generations from the same family working at the same time were frequent.

In September 1990 Channel 4 TV ran a series of films and documentaries in celebration of the era of steam. Naturally there was coverage of Swindon, where the last BR steam locomotive "Evening Star" was outshopped in 1960. All three documentaries about it were made around 1986, and although there were shots of the great days, they were really a farewell to an era, and a way of life, that will never be seen again.