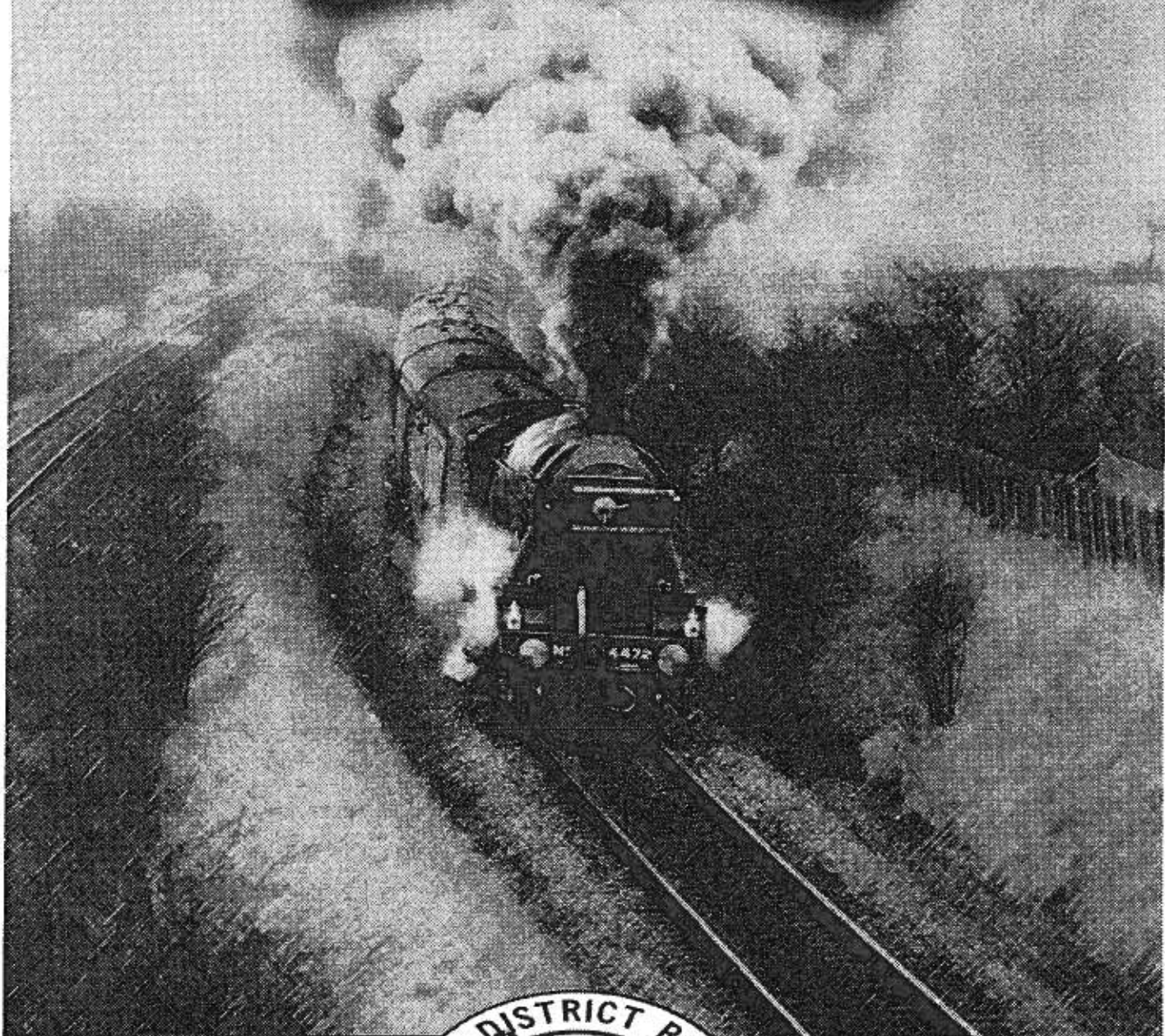


THE MARLOW DONKEY



Edition

89

June 1999



Contents:

A Shay in the Redwoods

The Tehachapi Loop

The Wymondham Willows

COMMITTEE

- President: Sir William McAlpine Bt
- Vice-President: Bas Woodward
- Chairman: Eddie Lewcock 27 Rupert Avenue, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP12 3NG
Tel: (01494) 525638
- Vice-Chairman/Treasurer: Peter Robins 95 Broome Hill, Cookham, Berks. SL6 9LJ
Tel: (01628) 527870
- Secretary: Roger Wallis 9 Bream Close, Marlow, Bucks SL7 2BB
Tel: (01628) 485463
- Publicity: Tim Speechley 11 Rydal Way, High Wycombe Bucks. HP12 4NS
Tel: (01494) 638090
- Outings Organisers:**
- Gordon Rippington: 95 Roberts Ride, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Bucks HP15 7AN
Tel: (01494) 711828
- Julian Heard: 58 Chalklands, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5TJ
Tel: (01628) 527005
- Mike Hyde: 11 Forty Green, Marlow SL7 2JX 01628 485474
- Donkey Editor: John Tuck 35A Danywern Drive, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks RG41 5NS
Tel: 0118 978 8225 E-mail: tuck@tesco.net

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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH: 4472 *Flying Scotsman* climbs Saunderton bank with the 'Shakespeare Limited' Sunday Lunch train during the second year of this very successful steam operation out of Marylebone. Tim Edmonds 9 March 1986. Effects created on Apple Mac™ using Photoshop™ software (100MB Ram allocated).

Latest Copy Date for next issue of The Marlow Donkey 20th August 1999

EDITORS DETAILS

Donkey Editor, John Tuck, 35A Danywern Drive, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks RG41 5NS

Tel: 0118 978 8225 Fax: 01628 485080 or E-mail: tuck@tesco.net

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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

1999

Thursday 15 July	STRATFORD SHED	Stan Hinbest
August	NO MEETING	
Thursday 16 September	ACCIDENTS & THEIR VALUE	Mike Hanscombe
Thursday 21 October	ASPECTS OF GWR	Peter Lugg
Thursday 18 November	COLORAIL/GREAT CENTRAL	Ron White
Thursday 16 December	CHRISTMAS GATHERING	

DAY TRIPS 1999

Sunday 18 July	Kent & East Sussex and Romney Hythe & Dymchurch	Coach
Sunday 8 August	FAWLEY Bring your own picnic - £3per.person	Car

2000 **Somme**

Please note: The above programme is subject to change

Please: NO TALKING DURING PRESENTATIONS

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

Some recently produced statistics issued by Heritage Railways make interesting reading. Our Preserved railways including the industrial lines, last year had 7.8 million visitors producing £43 million turnover.

The numbers of steam and diesel locomotives preserved (not all in working order), were almost identical at 1143 Steam and 1139 Diesels.

The Route miles of track in operation was 427 whilst the main workforce was 23,000 Volunteers backed up by 1016 paid employees. Hardly insignificant figures.

In view of the poor state of maintenance of a lot of track in Railtrack's case - who would ever think of a 20mph speed limit in the Severn Tunnel? - it is interesting to hear that ADTRANZ have developed a flexible framed bogie to improve riding and reduce running costs. Apparently in use some quantities on the District and Northern Lines following initial tests in 1994, over 2000 units have been made so far. Examples will probably be on view at the RAILEX 99 to be held at Earls Court from 30th November to 2nd December this year.

The Swiss have done it again. Having built several steam rack locomotives in recent years they have given a "kriegslok" a face lift incorporating oil firing and several modern ideas into the design which maybe used to operate the preserved Orient Express on part of its run. Talk is now of refurbishing one or two 1 - 4 - 1 -R locos that were supplied just after World War Two to the SNCF to help them out of a difficult motive power situation..

CHAIRMANS NOTE

There have been complaints after recent meetings about noise and conversation at the back of the hall during lectures. Not only does this cause annoyance to other members of the audience but it is also D....D RUDE to the Speaker. If members wish to talk amongst themselves during a lecture will they adjourn quietly to the other bar area please!

E.W. Lewcock Chairman.

RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT

continued...

Extract from STEAM ON issue No. 1 Spring 1999

SR Lord Nelson 850

Work has commenced on the boiler at Pridhams which has revealed some extra (and expensive!) work on the firebox is necessary. This work involves replacing over 300 Monel metal stays with larger diameter copper ones to compensate for wastage of the copper firebox. The steel roof stays also have to be replaced although this was foreseen. Once overhauled though the boiler should last the full seven Railtrack years and a further three on a preserved line.

For the benefit of our less technical members perhaps an explanation of what Monel metal is would not come amiss. It is a copper-nickel alloy with a trace of iron as the basic alloy. Other elements are also added and of course the proportions of copper and nickel vary. Interestingly the copper and nickel occur as a natural ore in the proportion of two parts nickel to one of copper in parts of Canada and it is one of the few ores actually smelted as a mixture. Although expensive it has exceedingly good corrosion resistance and high strength and hence was very popular for firebox stays. By the way the 'silver' in your pocket is a similar alloy!

The frames are good with minimal work required although the main and bogie bearings will need to be examined.

The tender is not so good with extensive corrosion in the plating, but most has already been replaced. The bogies require little work beyond normal wear and tear but otherwise satisfactory.

The NRM has authorised the necessary modifications to enable air brakes to be fitted although the detail design and approval by the Vehicle Acceptance Body has to be worked through.

The NRM has also stipulated 'Nelson's' final livery as Maunsell green. (Probably the best. Ed.)

There is still a shortage of manpower on Sundays so any further volunteers will be much appreciated.

RED FACES AT AMTRAK AND ALSTOM

Amtrak are currently taking delivery of twenty new eight-car high speed train sets to operate the line between Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, New Haven and on over the newly wired section to Boston. Designed for a top speed of 150mph and built by a consortium formed by Alstom and Bombardier, they are a derivative of the French TGV, and therefore also Eurostar, but are equipped with the tilting system developed by Bombardier for the Canadian LRC train bolted on.

Unfortunately this detail was overlooked at design stage and the finished prototype has been found to be 4" TOO WIDE at the upper part of the body so that it penetrates the structure gauge on full tilt! Alstom's answer is to tell Amtrak that it will have to slow its intended schedules so it does not need to corner so fast and thus tilt less. Amtrak is far from impressed and is demanding that the consortium modifies the design before series production gets underway this summer and has got its lawyers on the case.

Once the trains come into service under the title of Acela Express the New York - Washington time will be reduced to under 2 hr 30 min and 3 hours between New York and Boston instead of the present diesel time of nearly 5 hours. Provided they can use the full amount of tilt that is!

Mike Walker

Rewley Road Station, Oxford - A Future

This station attracted a lot of media interest last year. Now it is to have a new lease of life at Quainton Road, the home of the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. (BRC) The station was made for the LNWR and erected by Messrs Fox & Henderson who were responsible for the Crystal Palace erected in Hyde Park for the great Exhibition in 1851. For a while, the former was used as a departure point for trains to the latter.

The building was of longitudinal ridge and furrow style, fully glazed, but has suffered from lack of attention over the years and from squatters in recent times. GWR took it over from LNWR just before the last war but used it little for passengers until it closed in 1951. It has a direct (!) link with Quainton by virtue of the Buckinghamshire Railway (Oxford to Cambridge & the LNWR), and the Aylesbury Railway (Cheddington to Aylesbury), which gives rise to the Aylesbury & Buckinghamshire Railway (via Quainton Road to Clayton Junction). It was only when the LNWR gave up on a deal to run the A & B, that the GWR took over the working of the line, even though it was standard gauge as opposed to their then normal, Broad Gauge. Later, the Metropolitan Railway stepped in. Incidentally, did you know that the Wycombe Railway, from Maidenhead to Kennington Junction via High

Wycombe, was the first line in the country to be converted from BG to SG in 1877?

The Rewley Road station, when moved to Quainton Road, will be used as a Visitor Centre and administration hub. It will become the main entrance to the whole centre, being located at the new car park. There is a lot to be done and funds must be raised to complete the exterior and interior after it is handed over in October 1999. Terms require that it is not actually used as a station but it will be possible to display period rolling stock, etc. AVDC and English Heritage have been very supportive of this venture, as well as Oxford University who are funding the move of the building, but not the fitting out.

There is much going on at Quainton and much more planned, from a revamp of the miniature track to the possible siting of a turntable, a new footbridge, and even a traverser at the Buffer Depot site. BRC celebrates the 30th anniversary of its first open day over the forthcoming August Bank holiday with re-enactments in addition to the popular Vintage Vehicle Day. See the Internet site - <http://home.clara.net/vickphil/>. With acknowledgments to 'QUAINTON NEWS'

Mike Hyde

A SHAY IN THE REDWOODS

by Mike Hyde

Even the name was sufficient for me to 'yes' to an invite from my friend and fellow railfan Dave Brunton. In his spare time Dave assists Dr Meecham with his private locos and rolling stock (Trans-Dynamic, I believe) used in the space shuttle business (Ed; now there's a probable story for you). Oh! The name? Yes, it's the Roaring Camp and Big Trees Narrow Gauge Railway.

Located at Felton, Santa Cruz County, California, it has almost everything for dad and the family. From the car park, a walk across the covered wooden bridge brings you to an extensive open area surrounded by magnificent trees. On the day of my visit there were tents and stalls selling everything from craftware to uniforms. We headed for the station buildings passing the General Store to reach the red Caboose first, for a cooling ice cream.

The site is set in a period typical of the 1880s and gives a wonderful atmosphere to the place. In the background you can here the engine returning from its previous 6 mile trip, letting off steam in the woods. And what woods. Beautiful and majestic redwoods soaring to the sky - hence part of the railroad name- you'd worked that out already!

The railroad traces its heritage back to 1857 when lumberjacks and other pioneers ventured into these parts and needed effective and gutsy transport to move their timber. It started its public operations in 1966 after a lot of hard preparatory work and whilst privately owned, it is worked by volunteers.

An hour long ride up through the trees takes you to places like Indian Creek, Grizzly Flats and Deer Valley. There was once a marvellous high trestle bridge which formed a spiral loop. However it was the victim of an arson attack a while ago and remains in part only as a reminder of the past, yet somehow appropriate to the scene. Others might have called it a day or curtailed the line at this point. But not to be outdone the spirited and resourceful RC&BT NGRR built an astonishing switchback via Spring Canyon and Hallelujah Junction. In my opinion this not only makes a talking point- incidentally the online commentary is very clear, stimulating and informative- but adds even more to the attraction of the ride. Furthermore, do not be too disappointed since back down the track you will have crossed over a well constructed curving wooden trestle to the pleasure of all aboard.

Arriving at the crest you can alight at Bear Mountain and take a hike or picnic in the forest before returning on a

later train. We were reliably informed that the entire route passes through the Welch Big Trees grove of redwoods and as such was the first forest of California coastal redwoods to be preserved for posterity as long ago as 1867. Now there was foresight and sensibility.

Forget the chuckwagon barbecues, the moonlight dinner parties or the chance to become an engineer for a day, I have not mentioned what I really came to see. It is so easy to be distracted by the things around you. Back to the hiss of steam in the forest. Eventually the Shay locomotive appeared from the trees in a cloud of white smoke shooting out in all directions, appropriately alongside the steam-powered sawmill. It eased its way into town to prepare for yet another haul to the top of Bear Mountain.

Because the uphill grade is so steep, about 8 percent, geared engines are necessary and there is none better for the task than the Shay. No 7 was in operation after recent overhaul and looking not only immaculate but eager for the fray. Some way off WMRLCo No 6 was awaiting attention in the yard where it kept other locos, including a baby center-cab switcher, company. A Heisler and possibly a Climax were said to be there, but I could not be sure as they would have been new 'cops' for me. But there was a very small 0-4-0 tank in pieces which I took to be a Baldwin.

Finally, if narrow gauge is not your style or the unique workings and sounds of a Shay do nothing for you (really, there are such people!) then literally turn your back on the RC&BT and look at the SC.BT&P. Its right alongside which must be one of the few places where NG and standard gauge operate together under one business. The Santa Cruz, Big Trees and Pacific which goes back to 1875 and the SC and Felton RR, then narrow gauge, runs down through forest and the San Lorenzo river gorge on its 14 mile, over 2 hour journey, to the Boardwalk at Santa Cruz. Here it travels down the sea front main street as it links up with the SP line. Rebuilt and recabbed exSF CF7 now numbered 2641 usually does the hauling but away in the yard sits sister loco exSP rail 600 (?).

If you happen to be in Santa Cruz you can join the train there and go up the line to Felton and there board the RC&BT, if it suits you, before returning to the coast. That's my plan if I get the chance of returning to this part of sunny California. Perhaps I will see there with Dave. Thanks for the intro, mate.

Mike

THE TEHACHAPI LOOP

by Mike Hyde

The LOOP is well known to all American railfans and so an opportunity to visit was not to be turned down. To put it in a geographical context Tehachapi lies roughly midway between the Mojave desert and the flat lands of mid California. It sits on the southerly tail of the Sierra Nevada range known as the Tehachapi Mountains with a nearby peak (Double Mountain) of 7988ft. Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean are some 80 miles due south by crowflight.

From the east the line rises quickly from Mojave through a 3793ft pass to arrive at the summit. Tehachapi at first appears to be a quiet onehorse town with a single main street paralleling the railway or was it vice versa. The town is slowly expanding residentially away from the railroad but is hot and dusty in summer. One expects to meet Clint Eastwood at any minute. A good place to eat is the Mountain Crossing Restaurant midtown near the old station. Here the food is good and reasonable in price. A view of the railway is afforded across the street sufficient to note train numbers. In the restaurant there is much memorabilia and the usual souvenirs plus a model of the famous loop in HO scale by the Tehachapi Loop Railroad Club who meet regularly on the premises (details available on request).

The line is two track at this point with passing/storage tracks. Often diesels sit here gurgling and hissing waiting for action. On my visit I saw NS 9214, BNSF 1052, BN 8086, 6925 and UP 6229 lazing in the hot dry climate. Slowly, at first, the line descends northwestwards like a gentle waterslide but soon begins to gather momentum out of town on its exciting run to Bakersfield. But I would rather we approach it from the other end which is what I did in July 1998.

It's a freight only line taking products to the coastal cities and produce from the fertile Californian valley to the midwest territories. The mountain range must have presented a formidable challenge to the railroad engineers and surveyors some one hundred years ago. They resolved the problem and the result attracts visitors from all over the world.

My morning began in the yard at Bakersfield near the Amtrak station. Two or three freight trains were being switched and assembled. In front of me stood SF 639 and BNSF 8208. They were to appear so often in my travels that day that I had the Engineers smiling and waving to camera on cue. Also in the 100 plus freightcar consist were SF 5086 and BN 8155. War bonnets and Pumpkins were the order of the day.

Wagons rolled so we made our way to the mountains up the relatively new freeway. We turned off at the sign to Caliente over the crossing where there was a lot of inactivity in a large PW gang. Down in the valley there was much evidence of road repairs following serious flood damage. The one and only building was the Post Office, closed but not yet abandoned. This was not even a onehorse town and at any time I quite expected Indian arrows to pierce the side of my stagecoach. But our show of strength clearly held the natives at bay. Before we rode back up to the PW gang we watched UP 8764 and SP 3567 go through with its train curving up the increasing climb. At the road crossing we pulled over to take photos of the amazing range of equipment sitting there.

Soon we could hear our train working up the gradient and the UP/SP freight hove into view. Onward and upward almost relentlessly it thundered by the PW gang, or at least where they had left their equipment. We waved the engineer on and adjourned to our vehicle basking in the heat like a tethered horse. (thoughts of cowboys again, conjured up by the scenery and the nearby horse ranch).

Up the freeway a few more miles and we turned off for the LOOP.

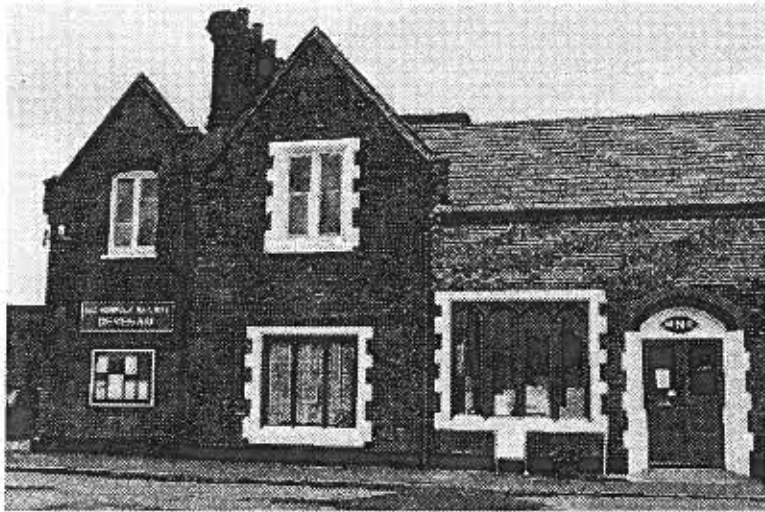
The old road over the mountain is rather enchanting with scrub, California oak trees and occasional farms or older residential property. You once in a while see the line through the vegetation although without trains thereon it is not too easy to spot until you turn off for the loop itself up a dirt track. There are several vantage points. Most photographers seem to favour a location over the portal of tunnel No 10 (one of 17) where one can see uphill trains emerging from tunnel No 9 near Walong and circling left to climb and cross over themselves if they have 85 or more boxcars - most are over 100 cars. The line is basically single track certainly in the tunnels but with long passing or holding loops all along its length.

You can cross over the tracks and park almost inside the loop in a dirt area. However I would recommend you park outside, ie, towards the road, for not only the best views but for safety and egress. A local couple we met who visit the Loop 20 or more times a year, told the tale of when a family crossed inside the tracks with their car one afternoon and a holdup (no, not cowboys) developed on the line. Trains were stacked all the way from one end to the other due to a breakdown. Consequently these poor people could not drive out for hours and had to sit it out until the line opened again and movements recommenced! You have been warned.

We spotted and photographed for quite a while - BN 6802,5144, UP 3408,3427, NS8174, SF 616,109,603,568,566,766, 764 and EMD 6348 - to mention a few. But with 4 or 5 locos up front and often 2 in the middle it was a feast day. We even saw our famed BN 8230 and SF639 again with their companions and train. It was their day to act the equivalent of bankers because later in the afternoon we travelled down the old road following their light engine movement back to Bakersfield. It really is a place to picnic all day but take plenty of water and eats as there is nothing for miles. We eventually went on to Tehachapi but I have already told you about that.

THE WYMONDHAM WILLOWS

By Alan Costello

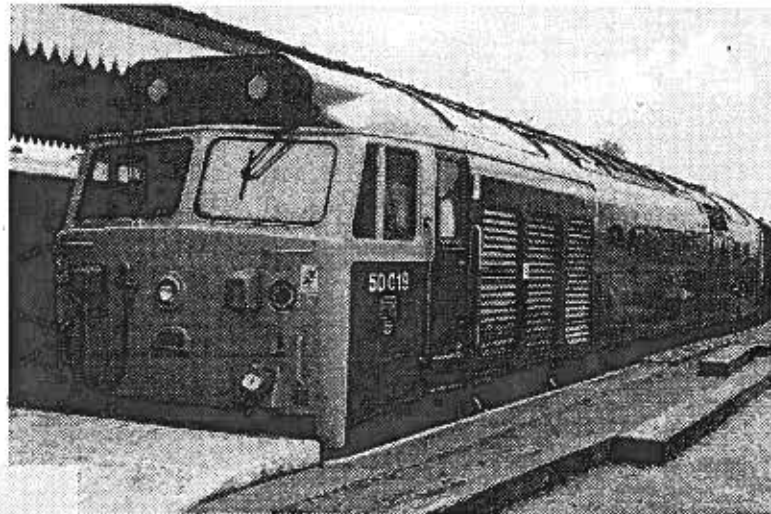


In the sidings to the right of the train were a number of DMU's undergoing restoration whilst in the bay platform on the left were the Railway's two mainline diesels. Next to the buffers was Class 50 50019 Ramillies with Class 20 20069 just off the platform. Probably because the track had to be fit enough to carry the M.o.D. traffic it appeared to be in good condition apart from a short stretch just outside Dereham station, which was distinctly rough. Future plans include a passing loop at Hardingham and an extension of the line a further 5 miles to North Elmham. If a large amount of money miraculously appears they will go even further to Fakenham. They are also hoping to acquire a steam engine.

After a stop of 13/4 hours, the train returned to the mainline and carried on to Norwich, passing Crown Point shed where two preserved Class 50 diesels 50002 and

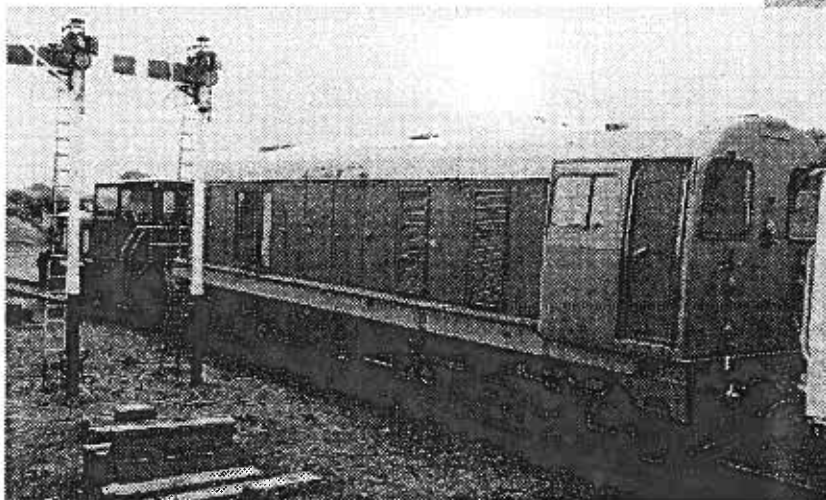
On 8th May 1999, Hertfordshire Rail Tours ran the first loco hauled passenger train along the Mid Norfolk Railway (MNR) for over 10 years, although the preservation group ran its first passenger train (a DMU the previous weekend. The line reopened in 1998 to carry vehicles for the M.o.D.

It left Kings Cross hauled by Class 47 47747 Res Publica with another RES 47 47772 at the rear. After picking up passengers at Potters Bar and Stevenage, the train travelled to Wymondham via Cambridge and Ely. After a short stop the train reversed and left the mainline to join the MNR. With a commentary by one of the members, the train soon passed the one platformed halt of Wymondham Abbey. After crossing the River Tiffey, we climbed upto



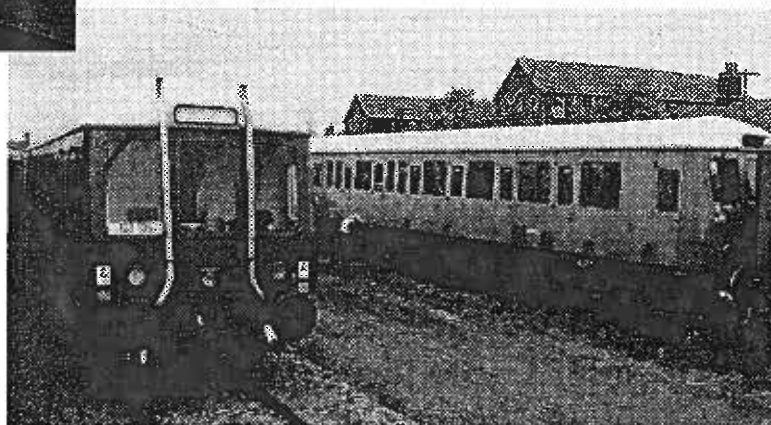
Class 50 50019 Ramillies in blue livery at Dereham

50050 could be seen at the back of the shed. In one of the side platforms at Norwich the green 4 car Hastings unit number 1001 was stabled waiting for its next trip. After a nearly 3 hour stop to let people look round Norwich the train retraced its route back to Kings Cross. By the way the forecourt of Norwich station is being rebuilt and some of the round stones balls from Wycombe seem to have turned up there!



Class 20 20069 (in undercoat) at Dereham

the privately owned station at Kimberly Park before descending to Hardingham. In the yard could be seen a number of diesel shunters being restored, including one numbered 11103 which had been restored to look like one of the Class 04 diesels that used to work the Wisbech and Upwell line and Ipswich Docks with a 'skirt' covering the driving wheels. After crossing the River Yare, the railway climbed again to Thuxton before descending to Yaxton (both stations again privately owned). At the latter the goods shed and signal box could be seen together with a 2-foot gauge railway. Eventually after 11 miles the train arrived at the present terminus at Dereham.



'Bubble' cars 55006 (left) and 55009 in the yard at Dereham

REPORT OF VISIT TO SICILY AND SOUTHERN ITALY

Sept 1998

By Mike Hyde.

It would appear that Italy is not the easiest place to make or keep to arrangements. More particularly the South does present even more problems. The people are friendly enough but bureaucracy does appear to rule. Furthermore the plan or timetable you have may not be the one they have or are working to, and you can guess which one will be followed in spite of your representations.

Nevertheless there is a lively interest in developing tourism and retaining some steam. But it is a race against time and money is not readily available for this task. Certainly finance has been found and spent on transport, but it is road traffic that has benefited. New roads with magnificent viaducts and tunnels are to be found in the most out of the way areas and linking the smallest of communities. These often new roads help to significantly cut travel times between centres and thus accelerate the demise of branch lines in particular. Only a determined effort to attract visitors especially from abroad can hope to save some of the lines that remain which are absolute gems.

Our visit in September 98 highlighted all the above points as well as several others. It was a good trip overall, but a bit like the curate's egg. It had high spots and low occasions, enough to enlighten or dampen the spirits of some passengers. For example, the FCE line, in Sicily, had no Sunday trains followed by a staff strike on the Monday. This prevented us riding on the railcars around Mount Etna but did give us an opportunity to visit a newly set up railway museum at Villa Rosa near the hilltop town of Enna. It was rather lightweight as museums go, having no locomotive, just one wheel-less FS Ral.n.60 Railcar No.6012 and a few wagons. A very well produced slide show of the Etna railway was well worth seeing but there were no souvenirs available in any form, not even a postcard, for interested purchasers. Surprising for an area that is trying to devote a lot of energy to tourists.

Moving to the mainland by coach we were able to see at first hand how much quicker and easier is road travel. Incidentally our outward journey had been from Roma to Taormina by rail. This included a crossing of the straits of

Messina, one of the few rail ferries left in the world, but possibly time-limited, as there is talk of a bridge. In all, from arrival at the port station to departure on the other side it took some two hours. The coach crossing was completed in less than 40 minutes! Soon we were on the highway in the sky climbing ever upwards to the top of the cliff at Palmi. After a civic reception (we were to have a number of these ranging from meeting the mayor and listening to children's' bands to a handshake with an invite to the nearest bar) we headed for the station where a single coach railcar, M2.216, waited exclusively for our party.

I was able to sit in the rear cab for the 12-minute journey to Gioia Tauro, a line that is now closed to public service. At GT we took the reverse fork to Cinquefrondi (32kms) which line we had been advised was now closed beyond Citanova. This proved to be untrue which was lucky for me as I travelled in the front cab of the FC's Breda railcar 216, both ways. The return leg was run in the quickly fading light and it was an unusual experience to be watching the train's headlights down the narrow gauge track at 70 kph, especially approaching unguarded level crossings. At GT we were able to make a brief visit to the shed. There we saw FCL 188, Breda 2-6-0T, waiting overhaul but with no completion date due to missing parts and lack of funds. Also seen were M2.228 and other railcars in various stages of repair or rebuild.

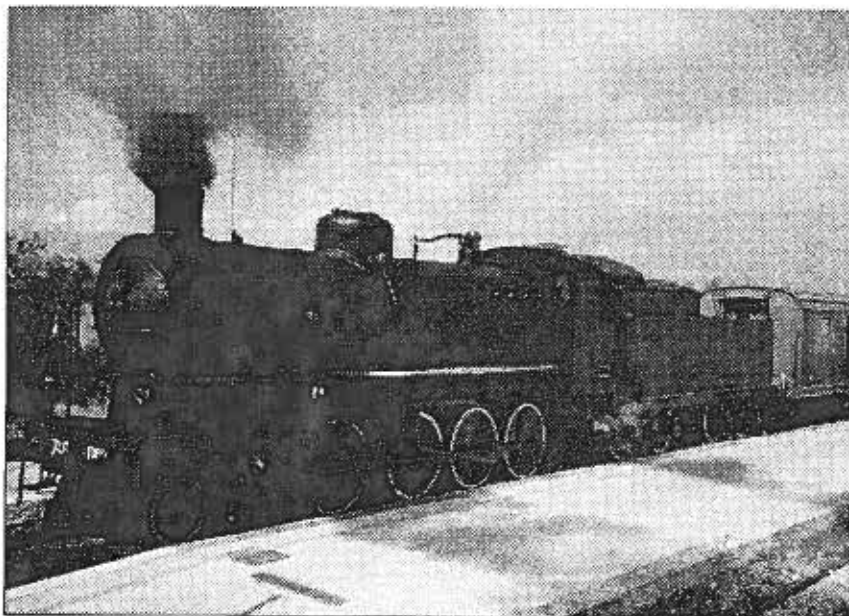
The next day saw us at Reggio for our steam train ride around the toe of Italy. A well turned out FS 2-8-0 tendered loco, 740.009, was to be our power and it performed very well until later in the day. After a lunch stop with FS officials near Condofuri, a picturesque rural location where Bergamotto oil was manufactured, followed by a mainline run-by, we were due to reach Roccella Jonica. However we only made Siderno before failure but where we were able to transfer to a scheduled FS railcar class AL.668. Thence by coach to our overnight stop at Catanzaro Lido. The following morning we boarded FC railcar M2.212 with diesel LM2.703 as our pushing engine up the narrow gauge racktrack to the Citta station. There we moved to steam but not until after the civic formalities were completed.

Our loco was to be FC's Borsig 0-8-0T No. 353, which stayed with us for three days. En route to Cosenza, we stopped for lunch at San Bernardo with our friends from FS. Subsequently we prepared for departure but the loco needed coaling (by hand from a following Diesel LM4.601 hauled goods van) and watering (from a one inch hosepipe!). Then the crew wanted their lunch break!! After much argument we eventually learnt why we had an operating problem - the crew had a different timetable to the one we had, but both tables had originated from the same source - such is Italy. The train duly got to Cosenza on (its) scheduled time but some passengers detained at Rogliano, an hour short of the terminus, and were

*FC.M2.226 (Breda) at Palmi.
Typical Calabrian railcar.*

coached to the overnight stop at Magara up in the Sila





FS. 740.009. 2-8-0. Entour - main line at Reggio.

Mountains.

A slight mix up the next morning saw the party at the Centrale station only to find the steam train at the Centro station. A quick bus trip rectified this and so we rejoined No. 353 to get to San Giovanni In Fiore on the FC narrow gauge line up through the mountains. This line has four scheduled trains per day, but not this day as we had sole use of the single track after Padace. At San Pietro in G. we rested at the top of a 1in6 climb. There we enjoyed the marvellous location overlooking the town and sited by a curving stone viaduct. Not only did we get a run-by over the bridge but also in the shed we were invited to see the expensive new snowplough purchased for the line. It made a wonderful comparison with the old snow unit which looked like a rotor on the front of a FIAT 500! Much later, at San G in Fiore, we watched the loco being turned in the evening mist - very atmospheric but dull for photos-ready for the next day. It only just fitted the turntable with cm's to spare.

We now had a choice, the following day, of riding the train back to Camigliatello or utilising the coach as a chase vehicle. I chose the latter and enjoyed seeing 353 in full steam racing across the beautiful countryside or pounding up some of the hills through the low cloud. Not a time for the video battery to go dead, which it did, but a few still photos rescued the event. That afternoon we embarked on our coach for a trip to Cosenza station to visit the FS shed. In the gloom we saw 981.005, a 0-6-0 rack tank, and could make out sister locos in the distance (I was advised these were 001, 006, 008 all 1922 Breda engines). The staff had kindly put a small fire in 005 that gave a good appearance but she was far from usable. There were rows of brown Overhead Electric E626 class, plus class 225, 214, 216. Also in the sidings were sealed up railcars which I had been informed, when seeing pairs

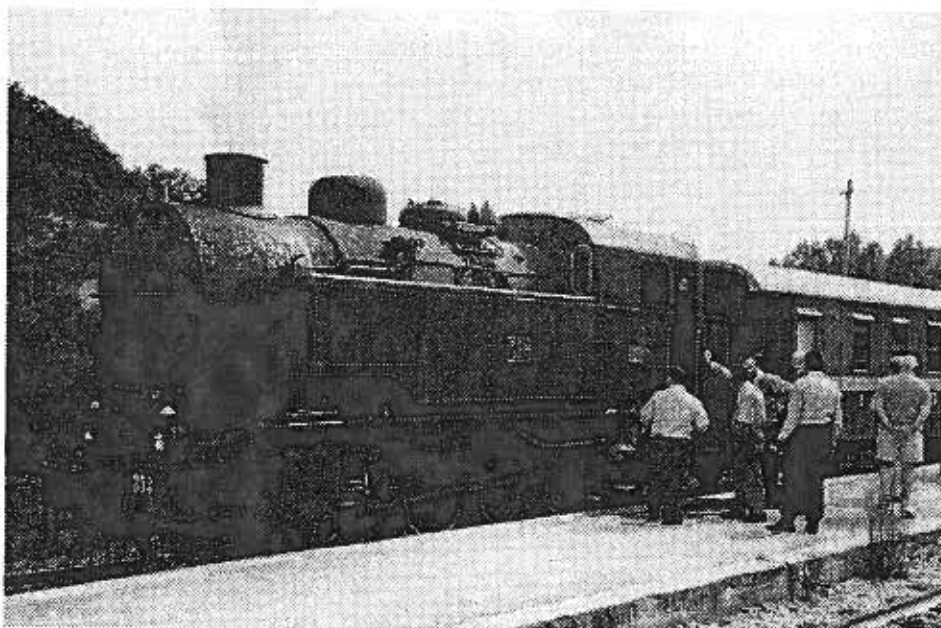
of these grey units sidelined at stations in the hills, were fitted with asbestos and awaiting specialist disposal.

Next day a long drive to the east brought us to Matera where, at the Centrale station, we joined the narrow gauge to Bari. Unfortunately the FAL did not have a workable steam train so our traction for the three-hour 'Treno Speciale TV 800/802' trip was detailed to diesel LM4.602. I had a brief ride in the cab which swayed about quite a bit until we reached Altamura where it briefly joined the standard gauge. It did so again at Grumo Appula before once again parting company until near Bari. The passing countryside at first was open farmland reminiscent of central Spain then it became groves of olive and fruit trees before industrial and residential property took over. At Bari Centrale the FAL crosses the main line

to arrive at first floor level overlooking the Bari Nord FS platforms where the next day we were to take the Pendolino to Rome. Thence home via FS night sleeper and later Eurostar.

The only further points to record were the insistence of all staff to watch our pockets in Bari (!), and the Mercure hotel for our last night with the attractive restaurant at the Villa Romanazzi (located at the level crossing where the standard track branches off from the mainline north, and goes to Grumo Appula and beyond). Finally the torrential rain storm that hit Rome just as we arrived and knocked out all power, including overhead, for half an hour. We were yards short of our platform and also just short of being able to make a claim on FS for the delay! The start of each day with steam was a highlight for me, as were the railcar cab rides, and the scenery. The only disappointments were not riding the FCE, not spending more time in Naxos Beach, and finding the model train shop in Rome station, where I had mentally chosen on my outward journey souvenirs to purchase on my return, to be the only shop closed on a Sunday! Buy when you see.

Go to Calabria, enjoy the food and wine, love the scenery and the people, but do be patient... and a bit more.



FC. 353. Borsig 0-8-0T. Entour at Gimigliano

THE PLATES THAT NEVER APPEARED

Alan Costello's book reviews have in the past directed me to the library to borrow a copy of a title that I considered interesting enough. However, his review of Encyclopaedia of Modern Traction Names in the March 1999 edition of the Donkey prompted me to go one step further and I sent away for my own copy. I found this a most interesting read but what prompted me to pen this article was to pass on to you a selection of the names that were never carried on the sides of modern diesels for one reason or another.

Various errors were made when lists of names were drawn up and these errors were even perpetuated when orders were placed with the nameplate manufacturers. Plates would have been cast for a class 86/2 City of Preston but it was later realised that Preston was not a city. To compensate for this error Preston Guild was substituted in honour of the town's merchant's charter of 1179. An HST power car ran for a month in 1993 with a Highland Chieftan plate until it was discovered that Chieftain had been spelt incorrectly. Likewise, one of the class 47's dedicated to the then Shell Petroleum traffic ran for a week with a Stombidae plate until a student who knew about the Latin names for shells pointed out that Strombidae was the correct spelling.

Having had the plates cast and arranged a date for the naming ceremony did not necessarily mean the event would take place. On the 4th October 1990 a class 90 was to have been named Penny Red but an announcement of a rise in postage rates a few days previously put paid to that event. Southsider was to have been the name of a class 56 working in the North East of England in recognition of a coal loading point but the site was found to have closed by the time of the planned ceremony in September 1984. For the GWR 150 celebrations another HST power car was to have been named Swindon Enterprise on 31st July 1985 but closure notices for the works scuppered that event.

As you well know Rail Express Systems adopted a theme of naming many of their class 47's with names commencing Res... There was to have been a Research, Reseize, Restyled, and a Resolven Grange. The latter encroaching on GWR theme names I hear you say. What did get adopted was Restless, given to 47760. No doubt many passengers /customers were restless when their train arrived late. Having exhausted the Res... theme they then selected a batch of Saints names. Among these there was to have been a Saint Chad of Lichfield, Saint Hilda of Whitby, and Saint Edward the Confessor. These I am pleased to say never saw the light of day.

Rail Charters came up with Sir Cliff Richard and a Sir Jimmy Savile for 47710 and 47712 but these were vetoed before the plates were cast.

Waterman Railways actually had plates cast for a number of their class 47's. Among them were Lady Macbeth, Lorna Doone, Rob Roy and Alecto. The definition of the latter is 'a hideous creature with the body of a dog, with bat's wings and snakes for hair'. It was just as well these were never displayed.

National Power had originally planned to name 59206 Vale of Belvoir until an in house competition plumped for Pride of Ferrybridge instead. Names had also been selected for another six of this class in the Vale of series for 59207-12 but these machines were never built.

Our friends at Virgin Railways ordered a plate depicting their telephone ticket booking number 0345 000 666. This was dispensed with in favour of Mission Impossible for class 90 loco 90002 at the naming on 10th March 1997 for the launch of their IC West Coast franchise. Did Virgin have an insight in to the frequent changes in telephone numbers that British Telecom seems to have delight in making or did Virgin have a premonition that they were embarking on an impossible mission?

The Goddess of the Earth, GAIA was selected by EWS for a naming of a class 58 to announce their relationship with the waste transport industry. An appropriate name, but this has not yet been affixed.

Freightliner had plates cast for a class 47 to be named EacBen to announce the amalgamation of the shipping companies East Asiatic Company and the Ben Line. These too were never applied.

The following locomotives were named for one day only. Class 92, 92039 displayed the plates J. G. Tidmarsh on the 30th June 1995. This gentleman was the senior project director for the class 60's and class 92's and were applied at a ceremony to mark his retirement. An HST power car was named Right of the Line for a day in April 1983 to honour the Royal Scots regiment's 350th anniversary. On the 19th October 1991 the founder of the Stephenson Locomotive Society had his name, W.A. Camwell displayed on the sides of class 47, 47222 at the Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster depot to honour his 85th birthday.

Keith Brown.

MDRS MEMBER WINS DAY AT SVR STEAM SCHOOL

Tim Edmonds won first prize in the Friends of the Main Line Steam Locomotive Operators (FSLOA) membership prize draw. Congratulations to Tim, I am sure he had a wonderful day.



2-6-0 46521 and SR 20 ton brake van 55577 at Bewdley, Severn Valley Railway. This pair were in use for the Introductory Footplate course, as the headboard shows. 20 March 1999. Tim Edmonds



Steam on the Great Western main line, as 6024 'King Edward 1' makes a scheduled stop at Slough with the Past Time Paddington - Salisbury railtour 'The Valentine's Express'. Photo: Tim Edmonds, 14 February 1999

BOOKSHELF

Alan Costello

Spotlight on British Railways 1948-1998

C.Boocock

Atlantic Publishing

ISBN 0 906899 98 2

The sub title is Success or Disaster and the author looks at the progress of BR upto privatisation. He is well qualified as he worked as an engineer and manager on the six regions. He describes how BR became more efficient after the Beeching Report, and the end of steam and the streamlining of the sheds and works. He includes a number of graphs to illustrate his view that BR reached its peak of efficiency in the late 1980's and early 1990's. One error I noticed is that he gives the ownership of Freightliner to EWS. Ed. hasn't got everything yet! There is a good selection of black and white and colour photographs.

Odd Corners of the GWR From the Days of Steam

K. Robertson

Sutton Publishing

ISBN 0 7509 1940 X

This book looks back at various subjects to do with the GWR (mostly pre-war). Items looked at include signals and signal boxes, stations and their furniture, trackwork, camping coaches, rail motors and sheds. It is well illustrated with previously unpublished photos. An interesting read and I found a number of facts about the GWR that I never knew. There is a similar book that looks at the Southern Region.

Trains Annual 1966

Ian Allan

This year there are only ten articles but still covering a variety of subjects. There are two contrasting cab rides. The first is from Edinburgh to Mallaig via Glasgow in the cab of a Class 25. The other one starts from Penzance and covers part of the route of a broccoli train as far as Saltley Depot. It was hauled by a Grange and took 14 hours overnight to reach Birmingham. Derek Cross reports how the Duchess 6233 was moved from Crewe to the Butlins holiday camp at Heads of Ayr. Other articles look at the Settle and Carlisle and Isle of Wight lines. On the Continent there are chapters about narrow gauge railways in Greece, oil burning locos in Germany and comparing dining on European trains.

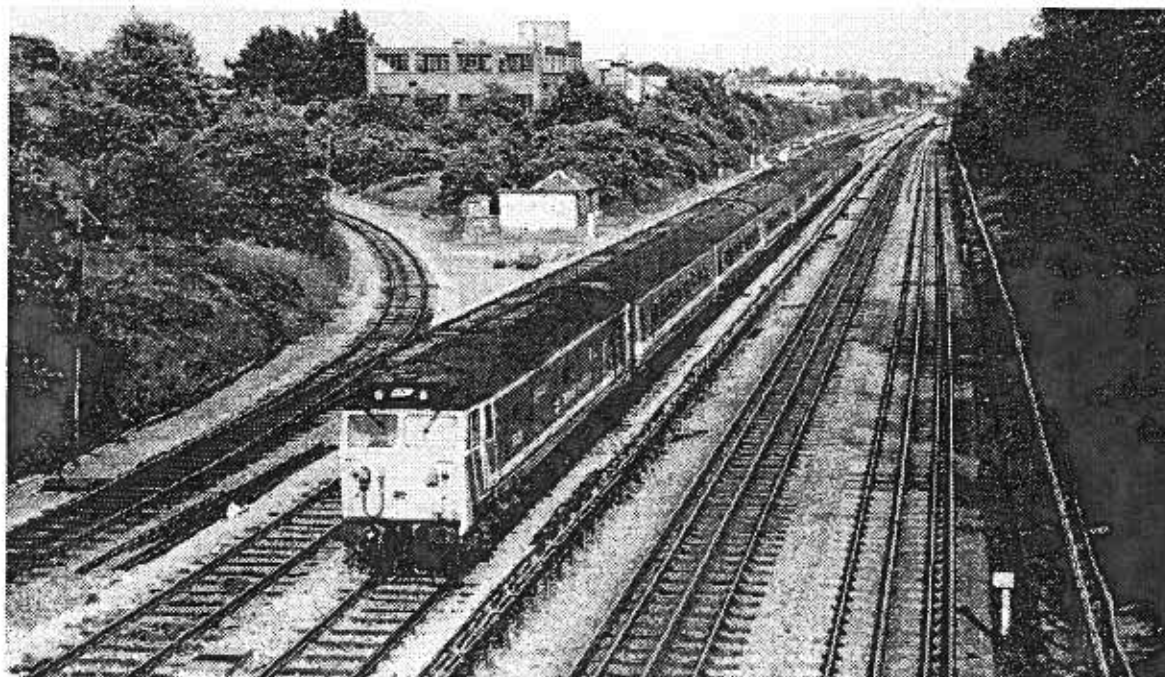
Britain's Railways 1948-1998

G. Morrison

Ian Allan Ltd

ISBN 0-7110-262 7

This is a look, year by year, at the 40 years since nationalisation as seen by the author. Each year there is a summary of the main events followed by a selection of his photos. As he has always lived in the Yorkshire area the majority of the photos are taken in the north of England or Scotland. Less than 100 of the 500 plus photos feature subjects on the Southern or Western regions. He made numerous shed visits in steam days including one trip in 1953 to Crewe and Toton areas where he recorded 980 numbers – those were the days! I found the size of the captions too small although they were very descriptive. I see no reason for this, as there is enough space to use a larger typeface. The black and white photos are of good quality -not surprising as he takes an average of 1200 pictures a year.



50 026 Indomitable passing Park Royal Branch Junction with the 17.47 Paddington - Banbury via High Wycombe. The line on the left served the Guinness brewery. Central line tracks are on the right.

Photo: Tim Edmonds, 25 May 1988