

FORWARD



Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

Nº 183

March 2015

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

www.gcrsociety.co.uk

Forward is the journal of the Great Central Railway Society and is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

The Society, founded in 1974, is open to all who are interested in any aspect of the Great Central Railway, its predecessors, successors and joint lines. For membership details contact the Membership Secretary or visit the website.

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Kevin Curran, Ken Grainger, Howard Turner.

Any views or opinions expressed in *Forward* are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor or Committee Members of the Great Central Railway Society. Contributions for the June 2015 issue (no. 184) must reach the Editor by 1st May 2015.

Front cover caption

BR class D11 4-4-0 no.62666 *Zeebrugge* approaching High Wycombe with the "Northern Rubber Special" on 6 June 1953. These specials were organised by Alan Pegler for his employees at the Retford factory. On this occasion the destination was Eton & Windsor Central. This photo appeared in the e-magazine *Railway Herald* no.438 (8th Jan.2015) as part of a photo feature on High Wycombe by Brian Morrison (www.railwayherald.com).

photo: Brian Morrison



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No. 183 ~ March 2015

Contents

Editorial <i>by Bob Gellatly</i>	2
Great Central Great War heroes - Part 9: The Cheshire Lines <i>by Ken Grainger</i>	4
Armistice day at Marylebone <i>by David Grainger</i>	9
More publications from the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway Society <i>by Phil Eldridge</i>	10
"The Master Cutler" <i>a painting by David Charlesworth</i>	11
Elsecar to Swinton walk <i>by Chris Booth</i>	13
The Woodford accident of 1935 <i>by David Reidy</i>	16
'Great British Locomotives Collection'	21
"Old soldiers never die they just fade away" <i>a colour photo by Bill Wright</i>	22/23
Recent auction items	24
An overview of developments in electric traction technology - Part 1 <i>by Ron Gee</i>	25
Model railway exhibition diary	31
On Great Central lines today <i>by Kim Collinson</i>	32
"Colourful class 60s" <i>photos by Alan Padley</i>	33
Michael Hayes obituary <i>by Ken Grainger</i>	34
Zeebrugge on mystery railtours <i>readers' responses</i>	35
The Readers' forum	38
An invitation from Adrian Shooter	43

Editorial

It was in 1996 that Ron Fareham stepped down as Chairman of the GCRS. Mike Hartley, who was the Sales Officer at the time, was nominated for the position and elected unopposed. Mike has guided the Society since that time with a steady hand. He has earned the respect of those he has worked with and the progress made by the Society in many different areas during his years of tenure are testimony to his leadership qualities. This may sound like a eulogy but don't be alarmed, Mike is still with us! He feels that the time is right to step down from the role of Chairman - he hinted at this at the 2014 AGM - and now he is keeping his word. This means that the members will need to elect a new Chairman at the 2015 AGM. The role of the Chair is to be the society's anchor and to keep everybody singing from the same hymnsheet, so we need someone with a bit of 'gravitas' who is respected by all.

With manual signal boxes fast disappearing from our railway network, Fred Hartley (p42) suggests that we should be doing more to preserve MS&L/GCR examples. English Heritage has identified those signal boxes that it deems worthy of saving as part of its Signal Box Project. The project's web page (<http://tinyurl.com/lwaenqo>) has a link to a pdf file listing the 48 selected signal boxes out of the 500 remaining. The only information given is the location so a good knowledge of railway geography is required to identify the railway companies involved. Glancing down the list I don't see any located in GC territory so it seems that Fred Hartley has a point. Once listed it is the role of The Railway Heritage Trust, founded in 1985 by the BRB, to provide funding, directly or indirectly, to repair and maintain railway buildings and structures and to explore new uses for them. A signal box (or any other railway structure) doesn't need to be 'officially' recognised to be saved. Any individual or group can offer to buy a signal box, usually for a token sum, but then there is the responsibility for removing it and finding it a new home. Some have been transferred to heritage railways or even back gardens. A few years ago now the GCRS did attempt to save a signal box. The intention was to move it to Ruddington and use it as an archive store. It finished up as firewood.

This issue of *Forward* is quite a mixed bag. There is a welcome return to Ken Grainger's never ending listing of Great Central Great War heroes. David Reidy recounts the story of another railway accident. And for something completely different Ron Gee surveys the development of electric traction (a topic that I must admit I know very little about). The Woodhead scheme will appear in Part 2. Since submitting this article, Ron has undergone major surgery and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Yet another improvement to *Forward* (if that were possible!) introduced with this issue is the doubling of the number of colour pages. I hope you will agree that this facility has been put to good use.

Finally please check out Adrian Shooter's invitation to GCRS members on page 43.

Bob Gellatly



Extraordinary General Meeting 2015

In accordance with Section 7(d) of the Society constitution, notice is hereby given that an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 16th May 2015 at Lovatt House, Loughborough** starting at **10.45am**.

This is to discuss a proposed change to the constitution amending Section 7(b) of the constitution:

b) The AGM shall be held at a suitable location which shall be chosen at the previous AGM which will enable the maximum number of members of the Society to attend. It will not be held in the same area of the country in consecutive years.

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b) The AGM shall be held at a suitable location selected on a show of hands at the previous AGM which will enable the maximum number of members of the Society to attend.

Annual General Meeting 2015

In accordance with Section 7(a) of the Society constitution, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 16th May 2015 at Lovatt House, Loughborough**, starting at **11.00am**.

Under Section 9 of the constitution proposals for changes to the constitution, properly signed by the proposer and seconder, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than Friday 3th April 2015.

Under Section 5(c) nominations for the committee, signed by the proposer and seconder and made with the agreement of the nominee, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than 24th April 2015.

Proposers and seconds must be paid up members of the Society.

Only proposals made in accordance with the constitution will be accepted for the Annual General Meeting.

Brian Slater, Secretary



Brian 'Nutty' Almond died on 9th Dec. 2014 aged 80. He was a long-standing member of the GCRS. He was also a friend of Geoff Royston and Peter Howard, both fellow railwaymen. Brian was a regular attender of meetings at Scunthorpe and Cleethorpes and on occasion contributed to *Forward*. In his working life he was a signalman at Barnsley, Penistone and Appleby (Lincs.). He had a vast knowledge of railway operation and although his health deteriorated in later years, he enjoyed nothing better than to sit and talk railways. His wife Doreen died earlier in the year.

Mike Hartley

Welcome to the following new members

Mr E.B.Cockerill, Market Harborough
Mr I.Bright, Pangbourne, Berkshire
Mr V.Lines, Doncaster
Mr J.Brierly, Neston, Cheshire
Mr R.Jamson, Grimsby
Mr M.Gordon, York
Mr R.Glenton, Sale, Cheshire

Mr D.Rustage, Mickle Trafford, Cheshire
Prof. D.Anderson, Bidford-on-Avon, Warks
Mr G.M.Whitchurch, Welwyn, Herts.
Mr P.Dickson, Aylesbury, Bucks.
Mr P.J.Higgins, South Hackney, London E9
Mr S.B.Raynor, Gainsborough, Lincs.
Mr A.J.Shenton, Woodlesford, Leeds

Subscription reminder

If you have not already done so please send your renewal (cheque made out to GCRS) to the Treasurer. Subscription rates are £16 (UK), £21 (Europe) and £24 (rest of world).

Great Central Great War heroes - Part 9: The Cheshire Lines by Ken Grainger

Along with our other major railway companies, a feature of the Great Central Railway was lines which were owned and operated jointly with its various neighbours, each administered by a "joint committee" representing the interests of the individual owning companies.

The largest of the joint concerns, jointly owned with the Great Northern and Midland Railways, was the Cheshire Lines Committee, with its lines from Godley Junction via Stockport, Altrincham, Knutsford and Northwich to Chester, and from Manchester via Warrington to Liverpool. With the MS&L / GCR always having provided the locomotive power for the CLC's internal traffic, those members of the Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Dept. who died in the Great War were considered Great Central comrades.

The first fatality was a former Liverpool Brunswick engine cleaner who never reached the firing line, Private Robert Percival Tinsley of the 4th Grenadier Guards. His regiment embarked for France in July, 1915, but he died of Spotted Fever on April 15th, 1915. Where he might have contracted the illness is unknown. He was laid to rest in Liverpool (Anfield) Cemetery's Grave I.C.E.403.

Another former Liverpool engine cleaner was the first battle casualty, Private W. Barnard of the 8th Kings (Liverpool) Regiment, the Liverpool Irish, which was then part of 154th Brigade in the 51st (Highland) Division. He died on September 2nd, 1915, and lies in Grave I.A.27 of the Corbie Communal Cemetery, east of Amiens.

Then on September 25th, 1915, in the 14th (Light) Division's attack on the Bellewaarde Ridge, Hooze (a vain attempt to distract attention from the Loos offensive to the south) 27 year old former Northwich fireman Sapper Thomas Moore of the 62nd Field Co., Royal Engineers was killed by shellfire. Along with his comrades who have no known grave, he is commemorated on Panel 9 of Ypres' Menin Gate Memorial. He was the son of Samuel and Fanny Moore of 10, Middlewich Road, Northwich.

Another from Northwich loco., former spare fireman Private Charles Hamlett, was killed instantly by a sniper's bullet to the head, when on trench repair fatigue, on October 31st, 1915. The son of Walter and Emma Hamlett of 38, Shipbrook Road, Northwich, 26 year old Private Hamlett was serving with the 10th Battalion, the Cheshire Regiment, which had only landed in France on September 26th. Perhaps he had not had time to learn the "don't move a muscle when flares illuminate no-man's land" rule. He lies in Grave IV.A.4 of the Rifle House Cemetery, south of Ypres.

Trafford Park's first casualty was in far off Gallipoli, where former spare driver Private Henry Duross, a reservist recalled to the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers, died on November 28th, 1915, and is commemorated on either panels 58-72 or 218-219 of the Helles Memorial. Liverpool's Walton-on-the-Hill shed's former spare fireman Private J. H. Walker also died in the Middle Eastern theatre. He was serving with the Royal Army Medical Corps at the



Sapper Thomas Moore

Private Charles Hamlett

27th General Hospital in Egypt. He died on March 21st, 1916, and lies in Grave F.10 of the Cairo War Memorial Cemetery.

Back on the Western Front it was Trafford Park's turn again on April 10th, 1916, with the death of 4th Grenadier Guards' Private T. Speakman. He lies in Grave D.7 of the Potijze Burial Ground Cemetery, to the north-east of Ypres. Also from Trafford Park, former spare fireman Gunner H. Johnson of the Royal Field Artillery died of wounds on June 27th, 1916, serving with the 31st Division Ammunition Column. He lies in Grave I.E.8 of the Bertrancourt Military Cemetery, south of Arras.

July 1st, 1916, was the opening day of the Somme offensive, when so many British soldiers lost their lives. Included amongst them was Heaton Mersey shed's 21 year old former cleaner Private John Aubrey Kendall, the son of Alice Maud Lamb (formerly Kendall) of 239, Lea Road, Wolverhampton, and the late Joseph Kendall. John Kendall was serving with the 1/5th (Earl of Chester's) Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment, part of the 56th (171st London) Division in its attack on Gommecourt, intended to divert attention away from the main assaults to their south. After initial success with the first two German lines taken, the division was cut off from reinforcement or resupply by a furious artillery barrage and the survivors could only filter back after nightfall. John Kendall was not one of them and after the Armistice was laid to rest in Grave III.E. 17 of the Gommecourt British Cemetery No. 2.

Contalmaison, half a mile south of Pozieres, had been one of the objectives set for July 1st but wasn't taken until the 10th, by 23rd Division. The dead included former Brunswick spare driver Sapper Matthew Wesley of the 101st Field Co., Royal Engineers but like so many others he has no known grave. He is commemorated on Pier and Face 8A and 8D of the Thiepval Memorial.

Private George Southern of the 10th Cheshires, formerly Foreman Cleaner at Northwich shed, died on July 14th, 1916, at the outset of the Battle of Bazentin, in 25th Division's attack towards Ovillers, on the Albert-Bapaume road. Their initial, daylight attack having been beaten off, the Cheshires renewed their assault at 11pm. This time they took their objective but George Southern was amongst losses so heavy that the position could not be held. He too is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, on Pier and Face 3C and 4A.

Ovillers was finally taken by 25th Division on the evening of July 16th, 1916, after a day of continuous fighting in which former Trafford Park spare fireman Sergeant E. F. Dorber of the 11th Lancashire Fusiliers was killed. After the Armistice his battlefield burial was removed to Grave VI. C. 8 of Serre Road Cemetery No. 1.

Private George Burgess of the 1710th Kings (Liverpool) Regiment, the Liverpool Scottish, the son of Charles Burgess of 134, Cockburn Street, Liverpool and formerly a cleaner at Brunswick shed died on August 9th, 1916, one of the many casualties suffered by 55th (West Lancs.) Division in its attacks on Guillemont. His is one more name on the Thiepval Memorial, on Pier and Face 1D, 8B and 8C.

Just when 23 year old Private James Kirby, formerly a Chester Northgate shed labourer became a casualty is not known. He was serving with the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers, part of the all-regular army 7th Division, rated "one of the greatest fighting formations Britain ever put into the field" and which had been in continuous action on the Somme, from the capture of Mametz, one of the few successes of July 1st, through the July and August Battles for the Bazentin Ridge, High Wood, Delville Wood and Guillemont, during any one of which he could have incurred his fatal injuries. Invalided home, he died on September 26th, 1916, and is buried in Chester General Cemetery (Old Cemetery 1168) where at least his grave could be tended by his mother, Mrs. Mary Kirby of 14, Corby's Entry, Foulag Street, Chester.

Private H. H. Clapson had been a spare fireman at Trafford Park before enlisting in the 9th Battalion, East Lancashire Regiment. As part of 65th Brigade, 22nd Division, the

battalion had briefly been posted to France, in September 1915, but quickly moved on to one of the Great War's lesser known theatres, Salonika, arriving on November 5th, 1915. Private Clapson was killed on September 13th, 1916, during the Battle of Machukovo, in which it was said "the East Lancs. advanced in the face of heavy enemy fire over open ground in formation as steadily as though they were on a parade ground". He is commemorated on the Doiran Memorial, Greece.

Back on the Somme, Private G. Clifford Sheldon, a former Heaton Mersey spare fireman and the 22 year old son of Mr and Mrs Sheldon of 2, Chestergate, Stockport died on October 14th, 1916. He was serving with the 1/6th Cheshires, part of 39th Division's 118th Brigade which, after protracted fighting throughout that day finally ejected the German defenders from their formidable Schwaben Redoubt strong point, north of Thiepval. His battlefield grave was removed after the Armistice to Grave XIII. F.6 of Thiepval's Mill Road Cemetery, created on the site of the Schwaben Redoubt.

The Somme battles petered out with the onset of winter in November, but there was no end to the dying. 22 year old former Chester Northgate cleaner Private Kenneth Warburton of the 8th Royal Berkshires, the son of Jane Hopley (formerly Warburton) of Yew Tree Cottage, The Smithy, Broxton, Chester, died on December 5th, 1916, and lies in Grave IV.D.13 of the Dernancourt Communal Cemetery Extension, south of Albert. 21 year old former Heaton Mersey shed labourer Private Samuel Ashton, the son of Sarah Ann and John Ashton of 51, School Street, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, had been serving with the 175th Cheshires, 56th (London) Division's pioneer battalion, which on the night of September 19th, 1916, were surreptitiously digging a new trench north east of Combles, on the Somme, forward of the Quadrilateral strong point which 6th Division had taken the previous day. Despite the proximity of the new German line, in nearby Bouleaux Wood, the work was completed with just one casualty, Samuel Ashton, who was wounded in the head. Invalided back to 'Blighty', he died on December 11th, 1916, at the Netley Hospital, near Southampton and was brought home to Grave P. 108 of the Cheadle and Gatley Cemetery.

Corporal James Steele, formerly a spare fireman at Liverpool (presumably Brunswick) and the 24 year old son of Ellison and Marion Steele of 20, Stamfordham Drive, Garston, Liverpool died on March 12th, 1917, and after the Armistice was reburied in Grave I.J.3 of the Queens Cemetery, Bucquoy (south of Arras, on the Amiens road). He was serving in 'D' Battery, 312th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, which at the time of his death was in action at Mailly-Maillet, near Beaumont Hamel. Corporal L. Blundell had been a cleaner at Walton-on-the-Hill shed before enlisting in the 277th Battalion of the Kings (Liverpool) Regiment, only formed in February 1917 to join the 171st Brigade, 57th (2nd West Lancs.) Division which went to France at the end of that month. He died on June 29th, 1917, and lies in the Cite Bonjean Military Cemetery, Armentieres, Grave VII.B.4.

Private Joseph Wild of the Transport section of the 176th Cheshires, formerly a Carriage Oiler at Stockport, had survived Stockport's bloodiest day of the war as the 176th Cheshires suffered severe casualties in their 31st July, 1917, capture of St. Julien on the opening day of the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, which launched the Passchendaele offensive. He died on the following day, August 1st, 1917, as, under intense fire, the remnants of the battalion consolidated their new line before being relieved that evening. He lies in Grave D.9 of the then newly created Track 'X' Cemetery, to the north east of Ypres.

Private Joseph Briggs had been a Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Dept. labourer at the CLC's Southport outpost before joining the 1st Loyal North Lancs., part of 2nd Brigade, 1st Division. The division suffered severely in Third Ypres, which ended on November 10th, 1917, but with desultory fighting continuing along the Passchendaele Ridge. Joseph Briggs was killed on November 15th, 1917, and along with all those who died in the Ypres Salient after August 16th, 1917, but have no known grave, he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, Panel 102-104.

Private William Bate, formerly shed shunter's mate at Northwich died on November 30th, 1917, in Mesopotamia, as Iraq was then known. He was serving with 8th Cheshires, part of the 15th (Western) Division which was the only wholly British formation in the largely Indian army campaign against the Turks along the Tigris and is buried in Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq, Grave XVI.G. 1.

Also from Northwich loco., former spare driver Sapper G. Heath of 96th Field Co. Royal Engineers, part of 20th (Light) Division, died on January 13th, 1918, from wounds probably incurred in the division's Nov/Dec 1917 involvement in the Battle of Cambrai. He lies in the Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, Ypres, Grave VII.N. 10.

Following Russia's late-1917 collapse into revolution, Germany was able to build a large numerical superiority on the Western Front. Well aware of this, the British knew that an onslaught was coming, but where, and when? Devastatingly, beginning on March 21st, 1918, the *kaiserschlacht* fell on the Somme front, where the severely overstretched 5th Army had just taken over an ill-prepared sector of the line from the French. On the fog-shrouded opening day of the offensive alone, nearly 15,000 British soldiers died, including former Trafford Park Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Dept. clerk Private Stanley Wilkins Clarke, of 18th (Lancashire Hussars) Battalion, Kings (Liverpool) Regiment, the 22 year old son of John and Mary Clarke of 40, Harcourt Street, Gorse Hill, Stretford, Manchester. Even by Great War standards the proportion of the dead from this battle with no known grave was abnormally high, Stanley Clarke among them. He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, Panel 21-23.

By March 27th, 1918, with casualties among his irreplaceable storm troopers mounting alarmingly, Ludendorff's offensive was meeting increasing resistance and on its northern flank was held short of Arras¹ vital communication hub by the British Third Army, including within the 99th Brigade, 2nd Division, the 23rd Royal Fusiliers - the 'Hard as Nails' Battalion. Among those who paid the ultimate price for their defiance was former Liverpool Locomotive, Carriage & Wagon Dept. fitters labourer Private G. H. Evans. He lies in Grave V.E.11 of Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No. 1 (north of Amiens, on the Arras road).

April 5th, 1918, was the day Ludendorff called off the German 'Michael' offensive, but was also the day another ex-Northwich loco. Royal Engineer, Sapper A. Senior of the 9th (Scottish) Division's 90th Field Co. died. Following the Armistice he was reburied in Grave V.A.15 of the Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery, which had been in German hands virtually until the end of the war and had formerly been used for German fallen.

Following the 'Michael' offensive, Ludendorff transferred his attentions to the British army in Flanders, with Operation 'Georgette', ultimately thwarted in the Battles of the Lys. On 14th April, in the 12th-15th April, 1918, Battle of Hazebrouck phase, Private Oliver Middleton of the 1st Somerset Light Infantry died. Formerly of Northwich loco., he was the 20 year old son of Oliver Middleton of 227, Green Lane, Walsall, and was killed in 4th Division's defence of Hinges Ridge. He lies in Grave I.B.3 of the Mont-Bernanchon British Cemetery, Gonnehem (NNW of Bethune), created in April, 1918 where the German advance on Hazebrouck had been brought to a halt.

Formerly of Heaton Mersey loco, Private Mornington Paley, born in Bramley, Yorkshire, served in the 1st Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derbyshire Regiment). The Foresters were part of 8th Division which, already seriously weakened by the March, 1918 'Michael' onslaught, bore the brunt of the German assault at the Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux phase of the Battle of the Lys, threatening Amiens. Mornington Paley was killed in a 1st Sherwood Foresters counter attack on April 25th, 1918, and lies in Grave II.D.8 of the Adelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux.

Private Herbert Jackson of the 176th Battalion, the Cheshire Regiment, had formerly been employed by the CLC at Cheadle Heath. The 25 year old son of William and the late Mary Jackson lived with his father and sister, Mrs. Anne Heard, at 568, Didsbury

Road, Heaton Mersey, Manchester. A keen musician with the Heaton Mersey Prize Band, he had planned to be married during an expected leave in the Spring of 1918, but that was destined never to happen. He died on April 27th, 1918, and is buried in Grave V.A.22 of Haringhe (Bandaghem) Military Cemetery, Poperinghe. Along with Dozinghem and Mendinghem, Bandaghem was one of the cemeteries created around local Casualty Clearing Stations, where Herbert Jackson had been brought after being wounded on 26th April, in 39th Division's involvement in the Second Battle of Kemmel phase of the Battles of the Lys.

Exhausted after constant action in the German 'Michael' offensive, the 9th Cheshires had been withdrawn to a supposedly quiet sector in Champagne, but following the failure of 'Georgette', that was where the next German assault fell, in the 3rd Battle of the Aisne. The Cheshires were rushed to the front over 29th/30th May and suffered heavy casualties as they covered the withdrawal, including on 31st May, 1918, Private Joseph Toft, formerly of Trafford Park loco. He is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial to those killed in the May-August 1918 battles of the Aisne and Marne who have no known grave.

Formerly of Northwich loco., the 19 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Southern of Northwich, Private Harold Southern of the 174th Kings Own (Royal Lancaster) died on June 26th, 1918. He lies in Grave II.E.8 of the Houchin British Cemetery, south of Bethune, which had been created in March, 1918, to serve the 6th Casualty Clearing Station, but between April and September, when the German advance had brought the front line close, was used by the 55th (West Lancs.) Division, of which 174th Kings Own was part.

The tide turned with a vengeance with the Second Battle of the Somme, presaging the final advance to victory, which opened with the Battle of Albert on 21st-22nd August, 1918. Albert, which had been overrun in the German Spring offensive, was retaken on August 22nd but not without cost, including 18 year old Rifleman William George Wood, formerly at Heaton Mersey loco., Stockport. The son of Mr. N. L. and Mrs. E. E. Wood of 10, Weston Place, Long Lane, Bermondsey, London, Rifleman Wood was serving with the 21st London (1st Surrey Rifles) in the 47th (2nd London) Division. After the Armistice his was one of many scattered battlefield burials brought into the Beacon Cemetery, Sailly-Laurette, south-west of Albert, to Grave VI.H.6.

In late September/early October the German army was also suffering a decisive reverse in Flanders, in the Fifth Battle of Ypres, continued by the Battle of Courtrai. They exacted though a high price, which included the death of Sergeant George Boden of the 174th Cheshire, formerly of Northwich loco., on October 7th, 1918. A holder of the Military Medal awarded for gallantry, 22 year old George Boden was the son of Charles and Annie Boden of 8, William Street, Northwich. He lies in Grave II.N.10 of Ypres' Menin Road South Military Cemetery.

The last Cheshire Lines engineman to be honoured didn't die until three months after the end of hostilities, on February 26th, 1919. Lance Corporal Isaac Field, formerly of Chester Northgate loco, was the 31 year old son of Robert and Esther Field and the husband of Winifred Green (formerly Field) of 8, The Pebbles, Upper Northgate Street, Chester. He had served in the 490th Field Co., Royal Engineers, part of the 8th Division which was on the Western Front throughout the war. He might possibly have been a victim of the Spanish flu epidemic which claimed so many lives in 1918 and 1919, but a significant number of the Great War burials in the Chester (Overleigh) Cemetery in which he lies are from the Chester War Hospital. Whichever, he could not be in better or more honourable company.



Armistice Day – Marylebone Tuesday November 11th 2014

by David Grainger

Over the last few years Ken and myself along with our wives have taken ourselves to the buffer stops at Marylebone for the Armistice Day Remembrance Ceremony – we can guarantee seeing a number of familiar faces – Richard Butler is always there and almost always Brian Holyland (depending on his voluntary work roster), Len Bunning and Donald Wilson the former Stationmaster at Marylebone.

We have tried a number of different route options in order to arrive at Marylebone on a Chiltern Railways service. We have travelled from Warwick and from Aylesbury in the past. At my suggestion we decided this time to travel from Birmingham Snow Hill and found a couple of really good advance ticket deals. Travelling on the 08:22 from Birmingham Snow Hill with our Railcards was less than £8 and returning on the 15:55 from Marylebone was less than £4.

However because of the horrendous traffic getting into Birmingham we missed our train by 15 minutes. Tuesdays are a little different from Sundays!

Nothing for it but rebook for the following train, the faster 'Chiltern Clubman' which gets to Marylebone only three minutes later than our booked train. The down side was it cost £32 for a single ticket even with the cards. I know that refunds are not normally available for advance tickets but, having spoken to the train manager and also Chiltern Railways Business Development Director and being advised to contact Customer Services, a few weeks later we received a refund.

As I noted in *Forward 182* we did not know what the content of the ceremony was going to be as we have a completely new set of personnel making the arrangements. We were pleased to discover that the arrangements worked really well and the ceremony was conducted by a member of the Railway Mission. In attendance were representatives of Chiltern Railways, British Transport Police, St. Edward's RC Primary School and the GCRS.

In the past, the school children had been involved in passing each wreath to the person who was laying it – this year the children, in pairs, laid wreaths themselves. One of these had been made in class with the traditional poppies replaced with red hand prints on individual pieces of paper spaced around the periphery.

Where Ken was standing prior to the wreath laying, he could not have observed the following which brings a lump to my throat even now. As the last post was being sounded, a train ran up to the buffers right alongside where we were. The engines were killed immediately and the doors opened to disgorge a large number of people. There can not have been more than a dozen or so people who carried on past us – the rest stood for the duration of the proceedings.



Replica Memorial Plaques

Ken has been in contact with Chiltern Railways on this matter and has been given a provisional date of Thursday April 16th for the unveiling and rededication at a concourse site which he feels is fitting and acceptable. Ken and I will be attending this and would you believe that the cheapest route for me in Chesterfield is via Doncaster and the ECML?

More publications from the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway Society by Phil Eldridge

Thank you to the Editor for featuring our 'Trains to the Lincolnshire Seaside' series of books by Alf Ludlum. Several people have ordered them after reading about them in *Forward*.

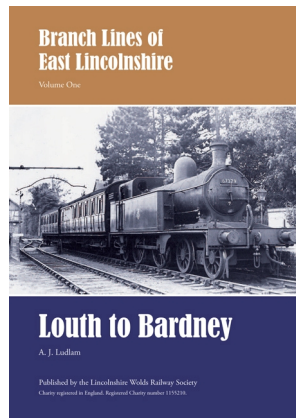
Alf Ludlum and I are working on another series of three books entitled 'The Branch Lines of East Lincolnshire'. The first, which covers the Louth to Bardney line, is due to be published at the end of February so should be available by the time the March issue of *Forward* appears.

The railway from Louth to Bardney was undoubtedly the most scenic branch line in Lincolnshire. This line wound its way from Louth through the Lincolnshire Wolds on its 21 mile route to Bardney. (*Can a branch line have junctions at both ends?* - Ed.)

Further volumes will be on the Woodhall Junction - Horncastle branch and the Firsby - Spilsby branch. They will be published later in 2015.

The first volume is priced £6.95 (plus £1.50 for UK postage and packing) and can be obtained from the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway Society's website www.lwrs.uk or from Phil Eldridge, LWRS Sales Officer, 3 Jacklin Crescent, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire LN12 1JH. All the proceeds from sales go to support the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway.

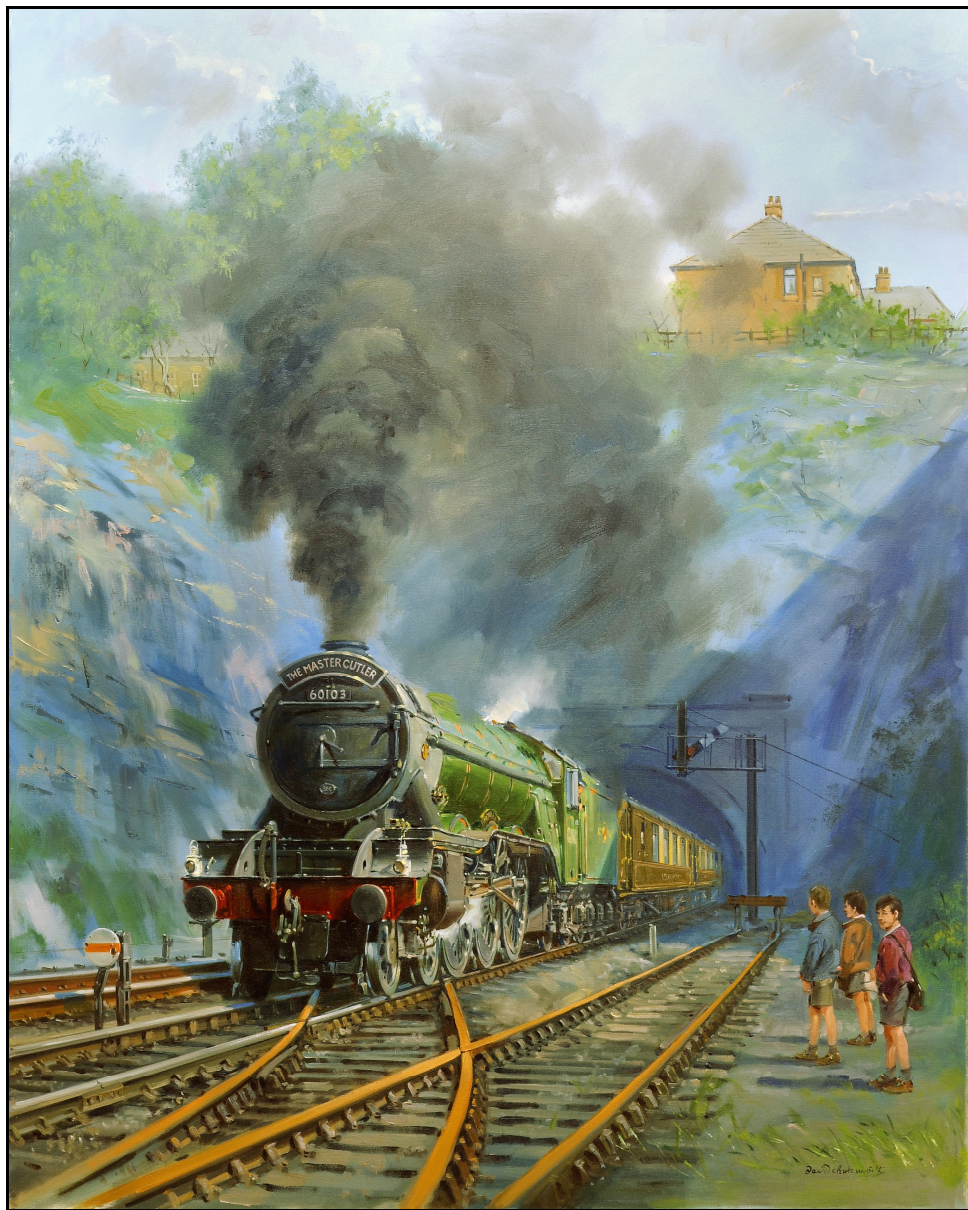
I have provided an image of the book's cover and a photo of class C12 4-4-2T no.67379 at Bardney. It was this loco that hauled the last passenger train over the line on 3rd November 1951.



BR class C12 4-4-2T no.67379 at Bardney with the train for Louth.

photo: M. Black

'The Master Cutler' - a painting by David Charlesworth



An immaculately turned-out class A3 Pacific no.60102 'Sir Frederick Banbury' (it must be artistic licence) emerges from Sherwood Rise tunnel with the 'The Master Cutler' consisting of a rake of Mk1 coaches in carmine and cream livery. The trespassing spotters add balance to the picture. Only in the mid-summer months would this scene be in daylight as departure of the down service from Nottingham Victoria was after 9pm (more artistic licence).

The same location was captured by Tom Boustead in his photo of 9F no.92072 on a 'runner'. (See 'The Great Central Then and Now' by Mac Hawkins, photo 50.)

For more information about the artist visit www.davidcharlesworthart.com.



above: Earl Fitzwilliam's station at the end of the Elsecar branch.

photo: Chris Booth

below: Mike Brearley (left) and Ken Wyatt (right) by the memorial to the Manvers accident.

photo: Mell Luff



Elsecar to Swinton walk by Chris Booth

On Saturday 20th December 2014 Stephen Gay hosted his 16th annual pre-Christmas ramble, this time between Elsecar and Swinton via Wath.

There was an excellent turnout of 31 walkers and one dog. The proceedings commenced with a short talk at Elsecar Station by Stephen, and the handing out of a sweet treat! After a group photo the walk commenced in earnest. The route began through the streets of Elsecar to the Elsecar Heritage Centre, where a stop was made at Earl Fitzwilliam's private railway station situated at the upper end of the Elsecar branch of the South Yorkshire Railway. The station was opened in 1870, after the line passed to the MS&LR and was used by the Earl's parties visiting for the St. Leger race meeting at Doncaster. The Earl's parties were conveyed by coach from his residence at Wentworth Woodhouse to the station to join these trains which were known, and shown in railway publications as "E.F.W. Specials". These trains ran until the early years of the 20th century. The MS&LR issued a 'Royal Standard' to the station to be flown when royalty was included in the party.

The station was also host to other trains not connected to the St. Leger race meeting or usage by Earl Fitzwilliam. These were the seaside excursions operated for the pleasure of the villagers which were a regular feature of the summers before the First World War. Cleethorpes was a popular destination. The building was of two storeys, the upper storey containing a waiting/drawing room where the Earl entertained his guests prior to departure. The station is now included within the site of the Elsecar Heritage Centre.



Walkers assemble for a group photo at Elsecar station.

photo: Chris Booth

Moving on, the group then crossed over the railway and got a view of the station where a Santa Special was being readied on the Elsecar Steam Railway. The next stop was to view the Newcomen Beam Engine in the Power House, which is one of South Yorkshire's finest surviving legacies of the Industrial Revolution. There was a short talk by Graham Hague, one of the walk participants, who told us that it is the only Newcomen – type atmospheric pressure beam engine in the world to have remained in its original location. Originally used to extract water from Elsecar New Colliery to allow the exploitation of deeper coal seams, it was built by John Bargh of Chesterfield in 1795 at a cost of £167 19s 3d. The incorrect date stone above the door reads 1787. The Beam Engine ran from 1795 until 1923 when it was replaced by electric pumps. It also ran briefly in 1928 when the electric pumps were overwhelmed by flooding. At its peak it could draw 600 gallons a minute. Scheduled as an Ancient Monument in 1972 the engine has recently been restored to enable it to work under electric power.

Moving on again, we followed the railway to the Elsecar Branch pound of the Dearne & Dove Canal, where Stephen read one of his excellent poems about the canal and

railway, which was added to by further information about the canal from Graham. The Dearne and Dove Canal ran for almost ten miles from Swinton to Barnsley through nineteen locks, rising 127 feet (39m). The canal also had two short branches, the Worsbrough branch and the Elsecar branch, both about two miles long with reservoirs at the head of each. The Elsecar branch also had another six locks. The only tunnel was opened out in 1840.

The canal was created mainly to carry cargo from the extensive coal mining industry in the area. Other cargo included pig iron, glass, lime, oil products and general merchandise. A combination of railway competition and subsidence, caused by the same mines it served, forced the canal into a gradual decline. Whilst the railway could just pack their rails back to level, that was not possible with the canal, and subsidence caused leaks in the canal. This saw it close completely in 1961. As the local coal industry also collapsed in the 1980s the canal was thrown a lifeline with the forming of the Barnsley Canal Group who are now attempting to restore the whole canal, an effort further boosted by the abandonment of the railway which replaced it.

On the Elsecar Branch the top two pounds and top lock have been restored and a launch ramp has been added in the top pound. Funding was obtained from the Yorkshire

European Community Trust, and the new lock gates were fitted in May 1999. A group photo was then taken at the first lock and we were to follow the route of the canal for most of the duration of the walk. Moving on once again the group followed the canal towpath, with the railway to our right, until a quick stop to view a canal basin built for the Hemmingfield Colliery in the 1840s and a few more words from Graham.

Continuing along the canal we then left the towpath for a short distance to view the new Tingle Bridge level crossing on the heritage railway, which is extending the line to the site of Cortonwood Colliery. Back on the towpath we then carried on until we came to the site of Cortonwood Colliery itself and the end of the new railway extension. Stephen pointed out that it was at this colliery that the infamous miners strike began. Leaving the railway, we then made our way to the Morrisons Store built on the site of the colliery for a much needed refreshment break.

Departing again prompt at 11.15, it was then back on to the former trackbed of the Elsecar Branch to follow the route of the line towards the site of the junction with the closed Wath to Penistone main line. Shortly after, Graham stopped us for a few words about the long gone Brampton lifting bridge over the canal. A short distance further and we came to the Transpennine Trail, once the GCR Wath to Penistone route, and we then stopped at the site of Elsecar Junction, once the start of Wath Marshalling Yard. Here Stephen read another poem, after which we diverted via the road to view another part of the canal, where Graham enlightened us further. Setting off again via the route of the now disappeared canal, we passed the site of Wath Marshalling Yard on our left, which is now just another area of industrial units and housing, a far cry from its heyday.

Continuing along the canal route, we came to one of the few relics on this section, that of a bridge. Here Graham said a few more words about the canal and we then carried on towards Wath-upon-Deerne. West of Station Road, Wath, the line of the canal has now become Biscay Way, which bypasses the town centre. The name comes from a very wide section of canal just ahead which was known as the "Bay of Biscay" where the canal crossed a valley on a very wide embankment. It has been infilled to the level of the towpath in conjunction with the reclamation of the nearby land. Graham pointed out the two tunnels under the canal route, known as "Double Culverts"; they took the Brook Dike and a public footpath under the "Bay of Biscay". It is still possible to walk through the footpath tunnel.

So, after this it was into Wath-upon-Deerne for a well-earned lunch at the Wetherspoons Church House. After lunch, one member bade his farewells but we were joined by 3 more members boosting the party to 33 and the group congregated outside

the pub where a group photo was taken by a reporter from the Dearne Valley Weekender. There was also a short talk by Graham about the Dearne District Light Railway a tramway linking Barnsley with the towns of Wombwell, Wath, Bolton on Dearne and Thurnscoe. Opened on 12 July 1924, it was the last street tramway to be built in the UK and one of the first to shut, lasting just over 10 years the last tram journey reached the end of the line on 30 September 1933.

Setting off again at 14.00 we then tramped through the streets until coming to another remaining bridge over the former canal route at Old Doncaster Road. Here Graham pointed out the remains of a post which possibly once supported the overhead wires of the tramway. Ever onwards and following Old Doncaster Road, the new A road alongside being built on the canal route, we came to the former Lord Nelson pub that served the Tramway, now in use as a printers premises. A few yards further on we passed the site of Wath Staith Crossing, where there were once four tracks to cross, now it's just a green area on one side of the road and on the other a large building.

A few yards from the site of the crossing, we were met by our special guests for the day, author and GCRS member Mike Brearley along with Councillor Ken Wyatt. They were standing in front of a monument to the Wath Manvers Rail Disaster of 1948, and we were regaled by the tale of this disaster by Mike, who has written a short book about the event. Ken had been one of the instigators of the erection of the monument in 1997, this being carved from a single piece of Cadeby Limestone. The disaster involved the 11.45 London St Pancras to Bradford Forster Square express hauled by "Jubilee" 4-6-0s 5606 *Cyprus* and 5609 *Gilbert and Ellice Islands*. Approaching Manvers the train was derailed due to a track distortion and the train rolled down the embankment. Sadly 6 passengers lost their lives in the accident, and one more died in hospital along with the train engine driver, Bertie Edwin Wilshire. The first people on site to help with the rescue were miners from the adjacent Manvers Main Colliery. A short film about this disaster can be found on the British Pathe website www.britishpathe.com/video/yorkshire-train-disaster.

After a few photos were taken we bade farewell to Ken and Mike and continued our walk along the route of the canal, passing the call centres and office buildings built on the site of Manvers Main Colliery, until we came to the site of Wath Road Junction, where the GCR and MR lines once crossed. Wath Road Junction was on the MR Sheffield-Leeds via Cudworth route and was where the Swinton & Knottingley Railway joined. The MR line curved off left whilst the S&K went straight on. Passing beneath was the four track line between Mexborough and Wath. Today the only track remaining is the former S&K line, between Sheffield & Leeds and looking at the area now the line appears to cross what looks like a canal, but is in fact the remains of the flooded former GCR cutting.

After a few words of explanation about the area Stephen produced a bottle of sherry and all were offered a festive drink. Toasts to the GCR, the MR and S&K were made, after which the walk continued. Still following the route of the canal, which once paralleled the railway, we came to a spot where there was once a canal tunnel and locks, and a short explanation was given by Graham. Moving on along the now filled in canal, as the light was fading we passed beneath the railway through a newly built bridge. This was once a canal bridge but has recently been fully replaced by Network Rail as a walking route, and a fine job they have made of it. At the other side of the bridge, the remaining section of the canal is still in water.

The remaining section of canal to Swinton Locks is now used for recreation. The canal walk terminated at the Swinton locks and after retracing our steps for a few yards, we left the canal and headed to the Station Inn, where the walk ended. After thanking all the participants, and inviting them to partake in the 2015 walk which will be on Saturday 19th December, Stephen bade us all well, and invited anyone interested to accompany him to the pub. All in all a very good and informative day was had by all, and Stephen must be thanked for his organisation.

The Woodford accident of 1935

by David Reidy

At about 7.45pm on Thursday 19th December 1935 a through carriage to Stratford on Avon, which was attached to the rear of the 6.20pm restaurant car express from London Marylebone to Bradford Exchange, was slipped at Woodford & Hinton. Shortly after this carriage had been detached, the main portion of the train stopped unexpectedly. The driver, feeling the brakes come on, assumed that the guard had applied them and that the slip had not been made. He looked back for the slip coach guard's hand signal to confirm that the slip had taken place or to see the white headlight carried at the front of the coasting slip coach, but his view was obscured by smoke drifting back from the engine. It was his duty to make sure whether or not the slip had actually taken place and he had not done this. He decided to stop the train at Woodford in order for the slip coach (which had already been detached) to be uncoupled. The smoke which had obscured his view also made it impossible for the slip coach guard to see that the main train was braking hard to make an unscheduled stop at Woodford.

The inevitable happened near the Eydon Road bridge, some half a mile from Woodford & Hinton Station. The main portion of the train stopped unexpectedly and the slip carriage, travelling at a speed of approximately 20mph, collided with it. The underframe of the slip carriage overrode that of the rear coach of the train and the two vehicles were telescoped for a distance of some four feet. The line ran in a deep cutting at the scene of the crash and, had it not been for the high bank at the site of the cutting, the slip coach would probably have toppled over. It was also fortunate that the collision was not an exceptionally violent one as the vehicle was rather more crowded than usual with Christmas shoppers who had spent the day in London.

It was fortunate that the collision was not an exceptionally violent one as the vehicle was rather more crowded than usual with Christmas shoppers who had spent the day in London. Eleven passengers, including the butler to the MP for Rugby and the son and daughter of the MP for Wellingborough, sustained shock or slight injuries, but the two guards, travelling respectively at the rear end of the train and at the leading end of the slip carriage, were more seriously injured. The casualty list would probably have been smaller had the several passengers ready to alight from the slip coach not been standing up at the moment of impact. The weather was fine at the time and, although there had been fog earlier in the day, this had cleared before the accident occurred.

Another danger became apparent when the slip coach fouled the down line, for at that time a southbound fish express, travelling to Marshgate, was due, and only the quick action of signalman Dale averted a second collision. He rushed to put the signals to danger, and the fish train stopped a little north of the scene of the crash. The injured were attended at the scene by a local doctor and by another doctor on the train. First aid was also given by members of the Woodford St John Ambulance Brigade. Guard Bonnett, who had a cut head and an injury to his arm, was taken to Leicester Royal Infirmary and allowed home after further treatment. The main portion of the train pulled up promptly after the crash and, after the two damaged coaches had been detached, proceeded with the injured passengers from the slip coach to Woodford Station, from where it resumed its journey north after a delay of some forty minutes.

The down main line remained blocked. A good deal of broken glass was scattered about the line after the collision. A breakdown train with crane was quickly despatched under the direction of loco supervisor Pollock and the men worked hard to clear the wreckage. Single line working was necessary and the collision caused a great deal of delay to train traffic. The circumstances of the accident were investigated by railway officials from Nottingham, in conjunction with the Woodford stationmaster, Mr H. Gardiner, at Woodford station on the following day.

The line, which was part of the former Great Central Railway London Extension which was closed to passengers south of Rugby on 5th September 1966 (the northern portion

surviving until 5th May 1969), ran approximately north - south through Woodford & Hinton station. South of the station it was on a gentle curve, right-handed for down trains, and passed through a deep cutting about half a mile in length. The down line fell on a gradient of 1 in 176 to Culworth Junction signal box, about 1¾ miles south of Woodford & Hinton. North of Culworth Junction the line was level for about three furlongs and then rose for nearly a mile, first at 1 in 176 (three furlongs) and then at 1 in 475 (¼ mile) and finally at 1 in 176 (3 furlongs) to a level stretch on which Woodford & Hinton station lay. The down distant signal for Woodford Central box was situated about midway along the 1 in 475 rising gradient and was close to the south end of the cutting.

The train was drawn by class C4 Atlantic no.6086 from Leicester shed with six-wheeled tender, driven from the right-hand side of the footplate, and consisted of seven corridor bogie coaches, its total length being approximately 506 feet. This load was somewhat above average for the time, and considerably so by the standards of early LNER days when GCR expresses had often comprised only five coaches or fewer. Including the engine, its total weight was about 370 tons. The slip carriage was a non-corridor bogie composite, with a brake compartment and slipping gear at both ends, having an overall length of 63 feet 7 inches and a tare weight of 37 tons 1 cwt.



LNER class C4 4-4-2 no.6086, the locomotive involved in the Woodford accident, with an up express near Loughborough on 12th May 1927.
photo: Real Photographs

The 6.20pm train had no booked stop between London Marylebone and Leicester Central. The engine and crew, Driver Ernie Cawkell and Fireman R.W.Elliott, both of the Leicester Top Link, had worked into Marylebone in the usual way on the 3pm arrival from Bradford, which they had taken over at Leicester. A generous turn-round time was allowed on this diagram so that the engine could be thoroughly prepared for the very testing return trip. The two slip coaches, which had also been carefully checked under cover at Marylebone before being attached to the main train, were protected by white and red lamps. The main train guard was Dick Bonnett of Leicester, with Charles Robertson in the Woodford slip. It left London conveying the two slip coaches, one of which had already been slipped at Finmere, some fourteen miles south of Woodford. This was then worked forward to Brackley. When approaching Woodford the train would be travelling at speeds as high as 70mph and it was customary to slip at the station distant

signal near the former Woodford & Hinton South Box, near the site of the former south curve junction which had been taken out before the 1923 Grouping. On arrival at Woodford the coach would be attached to the 6.30pm Blisworth-Stratford service which had made a detour from Byfield in order to collect it.

To establish the cause of the accident, tests with a special train were required, and these took place on Thursday 2nd January 1936 as part of the Ministry of Transport enquiry, with the same crew in charge of the engine. Publication of the MOT report was delayed until March because the two guards were not sufficiently recovered to give evidence.

The Ministry of Transport's Inspecting Officer, Lt Col. E. Woodhouse, was told by the Woodford stationmaster, Mr H. Gardner, that the weather was not such as to make it unsafe to slip there. He stated that during the 4½ years he had held that post he had only found it necessary to prevent the slip taking place on account of fog on two occasions - once by warning Marylebone before the train departed and once by stopping it specially at Culworth Junction. Mr Gardner said he could clearly see the down main line home signal, 150 yards from his box, when the train passed at 7.43pm, and said that its tail lights were visible for sixty yards or more. The signalman at Woodford Central, Mr H. S. Dale, had not found it necessary to call out the fogmen during the afternoon and was able to see his up starting signal, 430 yards from the box, at the time of the accident. He had all his signals off for the train, for which he received *train entering section* from Culworth Junction at 7.43pm.

Driver Cawkwell said that he had been working the train in rotation for about seven years. He estimated that his speed when passing Woodford Central distant signal was about 70mph, and added that the scheduled timing of the train necessitated an average speed of 60mph from Princes Risborough to Woodford. He said that shortly after he had passed the distant signal the vacuum brake was applied with full force and that, although he kept the large ejector working, he was unable to create more than seven inches of vacuum in the train pipe and that consequently the train came to a stand. The instructions for working slip coaches laid down that a hand signal was to be given by the guard to the driver after slipping to indicate when the coach had been detached, but the driver said he had not seen this hand signal. Driver Cawkwell said that there was usually some difficulty in seeing it at Woodford, unless there was a fairly strong cross wind blowing, due to steam and smoke concealing the train whilst in the cutting. He added that often he was unaware the slip had been made until he saw the coach, or its headlight, following the train when rounding the curve near the down home signals. The driver also said that on two occasions during the previous six months, when driving the same train, he had had to stop at Finmere after the slip coach had been detached there owing to an unexpected brake application. He added that since the accident other drivers working the same route as himself had told him that they had had similar experiences. Fireman Elliott gave evidence supporting his driver.

Leicester Guard Bonnett, travelling at the rear of the main portion of the train, said that, after seeing that the Woodford Central down distant signal was off from the left-hand window of the brake compartment, he crossed to the other window and, as was usual, showed a green light towards the driver as soon as the slip coach left the train. He was certain he heard the van valve in the compartment open as soon as the slip coach was detached. As regards previous irregularities, Guard Bonnett said that he had been working the train about one week in fourteen for the past thirteen years and that he had known it to stop unexpectedly at Woodford after slipping there on one occasion owing to the cock of the brake coupling not closing properly.

Marylebone Guard Robertson, travelling in the slip coach, said that he had worked as a slip guard for two weeks out of every five for the previous thirty years (except during the Great War, when the running of slip coaches was suspended) and that he had charge of the Finmere and Woodford slip coaches alternately during that period. He

remembered the train being pulled up at Finmere on two occasions during the previous two years owing to incomplete closing of the slip cock and had heard of other similar occurrences. He said that on the night of the accident the steam restricted visibility in the cutting to about twenty yards. Guard Robertson added that he could not see the distant signal until he was close to it. Then, finding it off, he closed the cocks of the brake pipe coupling. After detaching the coach he checked it by a full application of the brake, reducing the train pipe vacuum to zero in order to keep well clear of the rear of the train. He was standing by the vacuum brake valve, looking out of the left-hand end window of the coach, all the time slipping, but said that because of the steam in the

**SLIP COACH ACCIDENT AT WOODFORD & HINTON LNER
on 19-12-35**

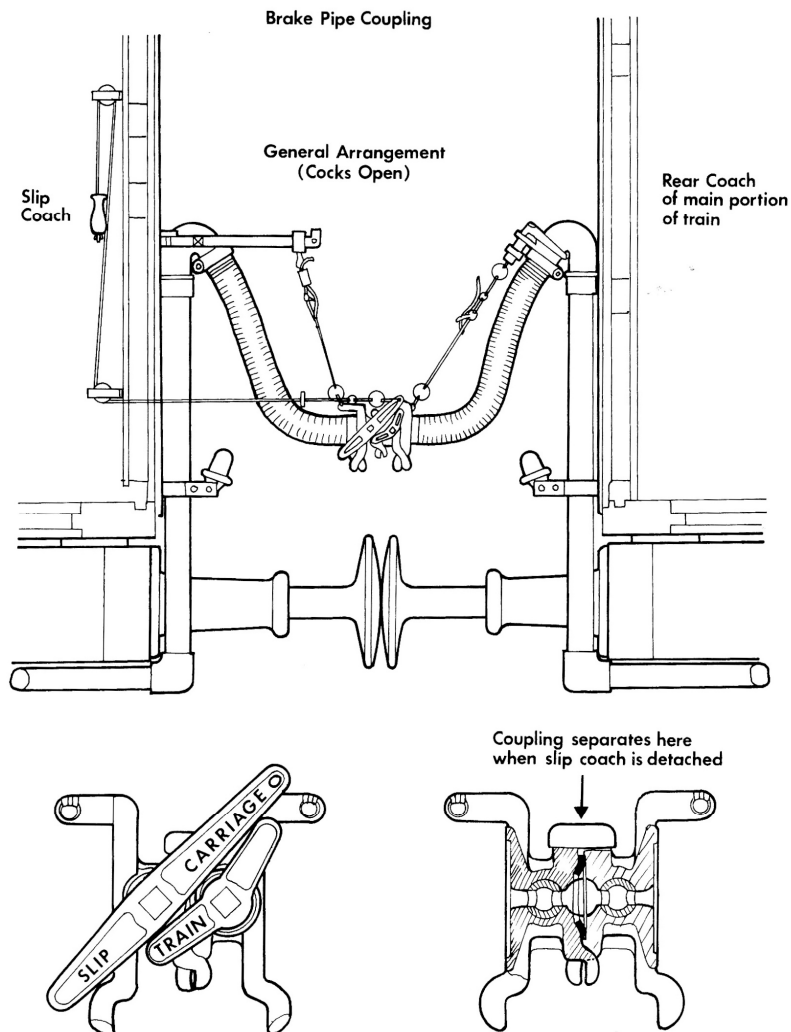


Diagram of slip coach brake coupling as published in an official report.

cutting he saw nothing of the rear of the train, or its tail light, until the collision occurred. Guard Robertson thought this might have been as much as a minute and a half after slipping, and was unable to say how fast the slip coach was travelling after slipping, but he did not think its speed was as high as 20mph. Passengers were thrown against the bulkheads and were lucky to escape with minor injuries and shock. However, Guards Robertson and Bonnett were both badly hurt as the two brake compartments came into direct contact, taking the full force of the impact. The underframe of the slip carriage overrode that of the train vehicle by several feet and both coaches suffered extensive damage.

The brake pipe couplings were examined by a carriage and wagon foreman T.W. Shaw after the accident. He found the cock of the slip portion of the coupling properly closed and locked, but that the train portion had been damaged. The locking sleeve and part of the plug of its cock were missing. The former was found in ballast at the site of the accident a couple of days later, indicating that the cock was complete when the accident occurred.

The Inspecting Officer concluded that the primary cause of the accident was the faulty action of the brake pipe coupling. Since the brake application occurred at the moment of slipping, it was, he stated, due to the cock in the brake coupling at the rear of the train being completely closed and therefore not locked. Its locking sleeve was not missing at the time. As Driver Cawkwell was unable to maintain sufficient vacuum to keep the train moving, and as Guard Bonnett heard his van valve lift, the cock was evidently fairly wide open. However, he added: *Though it cannot be said with certainty that if Driver Cawkwell had sounded the whistle in the prescribed manner when he found he could not keep the train moving, the warning would have been heard by Guard Robertson (in the slip coach) above the noise of the train, and interpreted correctly, and though I accept Cawkwell's statement that he thought that the slip coach had not been detached, I nevertheless regard his omission as an unfortunate one and am of the opinion that he cannot be entirely relieved of responsibility for the accident. There is nothing to indicate that Guard Robertson was not keeping a good look-out, and I think that his failure to notice that the train was being overtaken by the slip coach may fairly be ascribed to its tail light being obscured by steam, for, although the regulator of the engine was closed before the train stopped, the large ejector was in use.*

The Inspector was critical of the brake-pipe equipment, especially as similar though less serious failures were found to have occurred previously, and he had no option but to make unfavourable comparisons between the GCR pattern of brake cock and the improved type then in use on the GWR. He suggested that, in view of the excellent GWR safety record, the LNER should make use of apparatus similar to that used by the GWR. He also remarked that, whilst the number of slip portions detached daily totalled over 150 before the Great War, the number had since diminished considerably and were mainly confined to the GWR (some twenty per day) and the LNER. In fact, according to official sources, as a result of this accident both of the slip coaches formerly attached to the 6.20pm train from Marylebone were discontinued as from the 1st February 1936, and replaced by booked stops at both Finnerley and Woodford. The Stratford through coach service continued for a short while, but was soon withdrawn altogether. However, slipping may well in fact have been suspended before this date.

The Inspector concluded that, *since the evidence in this case suggests that local conditions at Woodford are apt to be such that slipping there is attended with some risk, it is satisfactory to record this alteration.* The termination of the archaic, labour-intensive and potentially dangerous practice of slipping meant that the 6.20pm service was considerably slowed down at a time when many services elsewhere were being accelerated, and so it hardly constituted good publicity for the LNER.

I am grateful for the assistance of the British Library Newspaper Collection in writing this article.

Great British Locomotives Collection

If you are in the habit of visiting WHSmith or a similar shop you will have noticed an interesting newcomer to the bulky magazine storage racks. The **Great British Locomotive Collection** is a fortnightly issue that provides a 00 scale plinthed locomotive with a descriptive 16-page magazine. At the time of writing there have been 27 issues. If you look at these models you will be surprised at the quality. As well as making an eye-catching display they can be easily removed from the plinth and placed on a railway layout as static models. The purchase price is £8.99 per issue. Past issues sell on ebay at much higher prices although you can phone 01895 433600 and order back issues at the original price, presumably while stocks last.

The cover of the magazine features a large photograph of a green steam locomotive, numbered 506, pulling a train of passenger coaches across a stone bridge over a river. The locomotive is emitting a plume of white smoke. The magazine title 'GREAT BRITISH LOCOMOTIVES COLLECTION' is prominently displayed in a red and black banner. The issue number '16' is shown in a gold oval. The text 'BUTLER-HENDERSON AND THE 'DIRECTOR' CLASS' is at the top. In the bottom left corner, there is a small inset image of the locomotive model on its plinth, with the text 'AUTHENTIC 'OO' SCALE MODEL'. The National Railway Museum logo is in the bottom right corner.

ISSUE 16

BUTLER-HENDERSON AND THE 'DIRECTOR' CLASS

GREAT BRITISH
LOCOMOTIVES
COLLECTION

506

AUTHENTIC
'OO' SCALE MODEL

National
Railway
Museum



"Old soldiers never die they just fade away." This well-known phrase was used by General Douglas MacArthur in his farewell speech in 1951. He was in fact quoting from a song popular with soldiers in the 1st World War, itself a parody of a song "Kind Words Never Die". It could well refer to BR class O1 2-8-0 no.63786 languishing in the desolate wastes behind Staveley shed on 28th March 1965. The loco was originally a Robinson GCR Class 8K built by the NB Loco Co. in June 1918 for the ROD (Works no.21861, ROD no.1884) and taken into LNER stock in October 1925 (LNER class O4 no.6515). It was then rebuilt by Thompson with a 100A boiler to become class O1 in Nov. 1944. Renumbered 3786 in July 1946 and by BR to 63786 in Feb 1949, it was withdrawn in September 1964. Although scrapping already appears to have started with the removal of a pair of drivers and the connecting rod, someone has repainted the smokebox numberplate - not normally done until after removal by a collector!

photo: Bill Wright

Some recent items from Great Central Railwayana Auctions

Auctions will take place at Stoneleigh Park on 6th June and 5th Sept. 2015.

See www.gcrauctions.com for further details.



A 12" dial roundhead wall clock taken out of use from Barnby Dun signal box in 1986. A pre-Grouping example repainted BR(E) 11665. Sold for **£520**.



An LNER, Great Central pattern, three aspect handlamp with a brass plate, LNE-C 10865, KIRKBY & PINXTON, complete with LNER-C vessel and LNER burner and repainted. Station renamed Kirkby Bentinck in 1925 and closed in 1963. Sold for **£420**.



Nameplate, BIRLEY No 5, from 0-4-0ST, Peckett works no.1454. New in 1914 to the Sheffield Coal Co Ltd, which had pits at Birley, Woodhouse and Brookhouse. It transferred to the NCB on 1 January 1947 when it was located at Brookhouse and then moved around several pits in the early 1950s. In November 1955 it could be found at Waleswood Coking Plant. Its last move was in January 1956 to Shireoaks Colliery and it was sold for scrap in 1967. Cast brass, 40" long, the front repainted. Sold for **£500**.



An LNER worksplate from Gorton Works 1923. Could be from a B7 or an A5. Sold for **£1150**.



An LNER worksplate from Gorton Works 1923. From A5 no.69820. Sold for **£640**. (How can an LNER plate carry a BR number? - Ed.)

An overview of developments in electric traction technology - Part 1

by Ron Gee

The initial pacemaker for electric traction on rails was not the railways, but the tramways of this world. By the start of the 20th Century, many of the cities and towns of this world had changed or were changing from hayburners to electricity for their tramway fleet traction. At this time, the electricity supply was usually of DC (direct current) type - the term used for electric current supplied from a constant, plateau-like source of electromotive force (emf), usually from a power station. Inevitably, as distance from a power station increased, so the voltage available for traction would fall due to the resistance of the conductors used for the transmission. Hence measures would have to be taken to provide sufficient voltage to power a system's trams - eg more power stations or adequate conductors en route to reduce ohmic loss. By the early 1900s, AC (alternating sinusoidal) current supplies were a proven art. These enabled the option of transmitting electrical power from power stations to substations at a higher voltage. As power equals the product of emf (voltage) multiplied by current (amps), a lower current was possible and therefore the ohmic loss was reduced. In the substations of the early 1900s, the electricity supply would usually be transformed to a lower voltage and used to power an electric motor, which would then drive a DC dynamo. Thus powering of electrical traction became possible at a greater distance from a system's power station. The distance between substations could typically be about five miles, less for a hilly district or for busy tramways.

A logical step was to use AC for the actual traction as well as the power supply. At a first glance, it is possible for a DC commutator motor to run from a single-phase AC supply because, for such a motor, the direction of rotation of the armature is independent of the polarity of the supply (Fleming's Left Hand Rule). However an unadapted commutator motor will incur energy loss due to eddy currents which would flow in the solid masses of iron in the motor due to reversals of magnetic flux that are occasioned by the use of an AC supply. One development in order to counter such loss of energy in a commutator type motor was to construct the motor using laminated field cores, yoke and armature core. Also to use a compensating or neutralising winding which is distributed in slots located in the pole faces. The current circulates in the compensating winding in a direction opposite to that of the adjacent armature conductors. Thus eddy currents are reduced. This type of motor is usually termed an "alternating-current series motor". It was first developed by Westinghouse in 1902 but was subsequently also manufactured by other firms.^{1,2}

A second type of commutator motor, called a compensated repulsion motor, was manufactured by Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) in Germany. In this motor (the Winter-Eichberg motor) a single winding on the stator produces a magnetic field directed so that the field passes through the armature and sets up an alternating emf in the armature coils through which it passes. Furthermore, current is induced in the armature coils by mutual induction from the field coils and the main motor field is produced by another current flowing in the armature superposed on the induced current. Both this type of motor and alternating-current series motor require a single-phase supply at a lower frequency than the 50Hz or 60Hz "industrial frequency" supplies employed respectively in Europe or North America.

A third type of AC motor is the induction motor, which is often called a squirrel cage motor because of its construction, and which requires a 3 phase supply. The deployment of this type of motor for traction purposes offers the tempting goal of a motor which is cheaper to manufacture, easier and simpler to maintain (ie no brushes or commutator), and requires less space for a given power. The snag with this type of motor is that it rotates at a frequency which closely matches the supply frequency. Therefore starting from rest is difficult and until recently, took a lot of design effort to achieve. Furthermore the supply of power required two or more overhead catenary wires. Nevertheless, use of this type of motor preceded that of the single-phase motor. Messrs Brown-Boveri & Co of Switzerland was able to deliver a working system using 3 phase motors as long ago as 1898.

To summarise, by the early 1900s electric traction from AC supplies was practical as far as tramways, interurbans and railways were concerned. Later in the 20th Century most development took place in the world of railways rather than tramways. Both run on rails. In the UK the only difference was a legal one in that railways ran on private right of way, whereas by law tramways were allowed to travel along the public highway. Whilst the differences in legislation and customer usage led, for the majority of cases in each mode, to the deployment of different types of traction and vehicles, it should be remembered that there were minority exceptions to each type, eg the tramway to Weymouth Harbour featured steam and diesel locomotive haulage of the ten coach boat trains which ran along the tramway. In contrast the horse drawn, tram type double-deck vehicle used on the Fintona branch in Ireland ran along a railway and not a tramway. Therefore if much of the development in the use of AC supplies for traction in the later years of the 20th Century took place with respect to railways, it could have been applicable to tramways if the case arose. Until almost the end of the century, such applications on tramways did not arise. Some of the reasons were:-

1. If a tramway company or municipality had commenced operations using DC power, then a change to AC power would involve converting what was already there, and therefore expenditure of capital. Whereas most tramways operated as single units or in units of 2, 3, or 4 carriages, railways operated by means of lengthy trains hauled by a single locomotive. If part of a railway was electrified, then it was quite simple to change the locomotive, if and when a change of power was needed as a consequence of electrification of only part of the route.
2. The railway companies had, in the long run, a vested interest in changing from manpower-expensive operation of steam haulage to the more cost-effective means of traction enabled by electricity. Hence there was an incentive for railway companies to develop new and better means of electric traction such as AC supply. Conversely in the case of an urban tramway extending just a few miles from the town centre, there would be little benefit in changing from DC to AC traction just to extend the system a few miles.

Continental Europe

Nevertheless in continental Europe, the attraction of using AC led to the construction of an 18km long, metre-gauge railway in Austria running from the suburbs of Innsbruck along the Stubai Valley to Fulmes. Although conceived in 1897 as a line using steam haulage, the promoters chose to seek a tender from AEG, who first offered and then provided an unproven system using the Winter-Eichenberg motor. To operate the line, which was built on private right of way, a new company, the Aktiengesellschaft Stubaitalbahn, was formed on 8th November 1903. Although the line was a railway and not a tramway, the metre gauge system operated with tramway type vehicles.

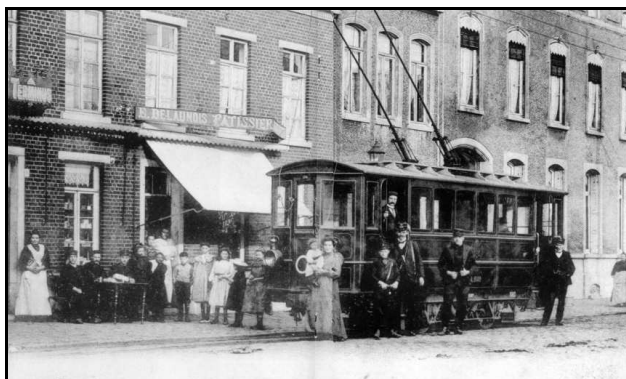
The electricity was supplied from the overhead at a magnitude of 2.5kV and a frequency of 42.5Hz. The line opened on the 31st July 1904. In 1926, the Stubaitalbahn power supply was changed to 3kV, 50Hz. Thus the line continued to use AC supply for some 80 years after the line opened until 23rd June 1983. Two of the original 1903 motor cars saw service on the final day of AC supply. Eight days later the line was converted to DC supply. Ref 4 shows that the original cars were equipped with transformers to reduce the supply voltage to a lower magnitude and were fitted with additional transformers equipped with taps, which provided an alternative to a controller.^{3,4}



Preserved stock from the Aktiengesellschaft Stubaitalbahn at Innsbruck.

In the 1900s, the Vicinal, whilst it was engaged in expanding its electrified system throughout the country of Belgium, also chose to experiment with AC traction. It elected to construct a small, pioneer network some 20km in length in the Borinage, South West of Mons, and it chose to electrify this network using single-phase supply (or monophasé as it was termed at the time). Its contractor to build and equip the system was the *Société Intercommunale Belge d'Électricité* (SIBE), which subcontracted the task to the Berlin firm *Union Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft* (UEG) which in turn was a German subsidiary of the US parent company General Electric. UEG chose to provide a system using a supply consisting of 6.6kV at 40Hz transformed to a single-phase 600V supply through various substations. Shortly after the contract was placed, the UEG amalgamated with the AEG in 1904. Thus it might have been possible for the new AC cars to utilise the Winter-Eichberg design of single-phase motor. However ref 4 does not specify the type of motor used in the Borinage cars. In 1905, UEG completed the AC electrification of the line between Quaregnon and Eugies, which opened on the 6th April. 26 new cars for this line were provided by UEG. The design was similar to other cars procured by the Vicinal for use in the Charleroi area, but were fitted with two 40hp UEG-built AC motors. There were 20 longitudinal seats in two saloons. For some reason the overhead had two wires, as current return to earth was not permitted because of the possibility of interference with buried telephone lines.

In the next three years small extensions were added to the system bringing it to an overall length of 20km. There were five substations - at Eugies, Frameries, Hornu, Wasnes and Quaregnon. It crossed two DC lines at Quaregnon and Hornu. Details are not available as to the overhead wiring at these crossings. In July 1914, a further extension was opened from Frameries to Mons (Ave de Berlaumont) and in December 1915 an extension to Mons Grand Place was opened, despite the outbreak of World War 1. This brought the total single-phase trackage up to a total of 26.5km.

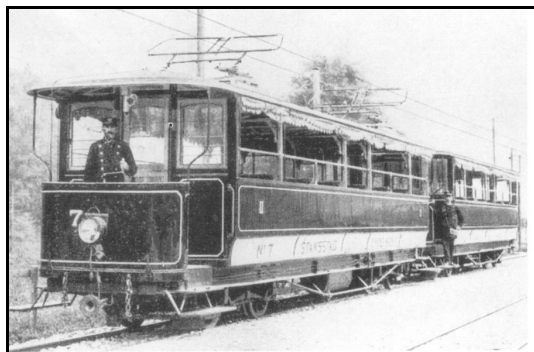


Borinage tram at Eugies, Belgium.

photo: www.leborinage.be

It was not long before the ravages of WW1 led to the closure of all the mono-phase lines in the Borinage. After the war the system reopened in October 1921, but this time with direct administration by the SNCV (as the Vicinal was then officially titled) instead of by a concessionaire as previously. At this juncture, SIBE was having difficulty in providing a reliable AC supply for the system. Furthermore, the 600V DC system was fully established by now, so in 1921, the Borinage system was converted in stages to 600V DC. Fifteen "Tashkent" cars were available to initially operate the DC service. Use of these cars enabled the original cars to be retrofitted with DC motors and controllers. As DC cars on the Vicinal were permitted to use an earth return, only one overhead wire was needed. This was relocated so as to be aligned centrally, and the cars were fitted with a bow collector as part of the change from AC to DC. Thus ended the AC experiment on a street tramway in Belgium.^{5,6}

Even earlier and before the end of the 19th Century, Messrs Brown Boveri (BB) were able to deliver a 3 phase AC traction system to the Stansstad-Engleberg Bahn (length 22km, gauge 1000mm, 15kV, 16²/₃ Hz. (in 1898 according to a Wikipedia file). Then in 1899 BB delivered a similar system to the Burgdorf-Thun 3 phase railway (length 40km, gauge 1435mm, 750V, 40Hz). The substations of the latter railway were supplied at a voltage of 16kV. Both refs 1 and 7 credit the Burdorf line as being the first main line to operate using 3 phase locomotives as well as units. It may be that as Mr Haut has written in



Stansstad-Engelberg tram.

photo: www.suter-meggen.ch

ref 7, he did not include single or multiple units as being within the terms of reference in his definitive tome about electric locomotives. Hence he did not include reference to the Stansstad line in his book. Alternatively it may be that the Wikipedia reference is incorrect in stating that the Stansstad line opened in 1898. Whichever is the case, there is no doubt that the Swiss firm was the first in the world to deliver a working AC traction system. Ref 1 provides more details of this pioneering 3 phase line. There were two trolley

wires, the third conductor being provided by the rails. Starting from rest was enabled using rheostats in series with the rotors of the squirrel cage motors.^{1,7}

In recent times, ref 8 reports the use of AC supplies on the following light railways in Switzerland:-

Gornergratbahn (GGB)	15kV, 50Hz, 3 phase
Jungfraubahn (JB)	1,125V, 50Hz, 3 phase
Bière - Apples - Morges (BAM)	15kV, $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz.
Luzern - Stan - Engelberg (LSE)	15kV, $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz
Yverdon - Ste-Croix (Ystec)	15kV, $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz.

The firm of Ganz in Hungary was also noteworthy in the development of AC traction. Under the guidance of its Chief Engineer it built a 3 phase locomotive in 1896, together with a 1.5 mile long test line. Following the tests, in 1902, it was awarded a contract to electrify some mountain lines in north Italy. This finally culminated in the electrification of the Simplon line (3kV, $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz, 3 phase), which opened in 1906.

In the early 1900s, an interesting series of experiments took place in Germany at the 5 mile long Marienfelde-Zossen test line near Berlin. The supply used was 10kV, 50Hz 3 phase. During some tests the cars reached 135mph.

As far as the electrification of railways in Europe was concerned, the compensated series of AC type, single-phase motor was adopted as standard for the State-owned railways in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. In these countries, the frequency was chosen to be $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz, and this supply frequency is still the adopted standard. Parts of Scandinavia also chose to use $16\frac{2}{3}$ Hz. The use of such a frequency offered the advantage of reducing inductive currents, together with the lower frequency being a one-third fraction of 50 Hz, which was advantageous with respect to change of frequency from the National supply standard of 50 Hz.²

North America

Across the Atlantic, electrical engineers were often ahead of Europe in developing AC traction. The author is grateful to Henry (Hank) Raudenbush for supplying the following information.

George Westinghouse became interested in the development of alternating current systems for utilities, industries, and railways in the early 1890s. There were some experiments in that period with a 2-axle streetcar, which were not successful, because the conventional DC motors worked poorly on AC. But on September 26, 1902, Benjamin G. Lamme, a Westinghouse engineer published a paper reporting on the development of a successful traction motor for operation on a single-phase AC line. *"Westinghouse Electric installed AC catenary on their Interworks Railway (between the*

Westinghouse. Electric plant in East Pittsburgh and the Westinghouse Air Brake works in Swissvale - 5 or 6 miles), and operated a locomotive there. Westinghouse had a contract at that time to install an AC system on a proposed interurban between Washington DC, Annapolis and Baltimore".

Quite a number of interurbans were attracted to the elimination of a lot of substations along a longer line, and installed an AC system. Most of them found two major disadvantages - the presence of a transformer made the cars much heavier, and the more complex motors and the transformer resulted in higher maintenance costs. Several lines that could afford it, especially if there were complications of compatibility with adjoining lines, switched to DC after only a short period. Others stayed with the AC until they were forced to quit for other reasons. About the time that systems were becoming disenchanted with AC, General Electric developed the 1200 volt DC system, which provided some of the advantages and none of the disadvantages of the AC system. Many of the lines that changed over, chose the 1200 volt DC system.

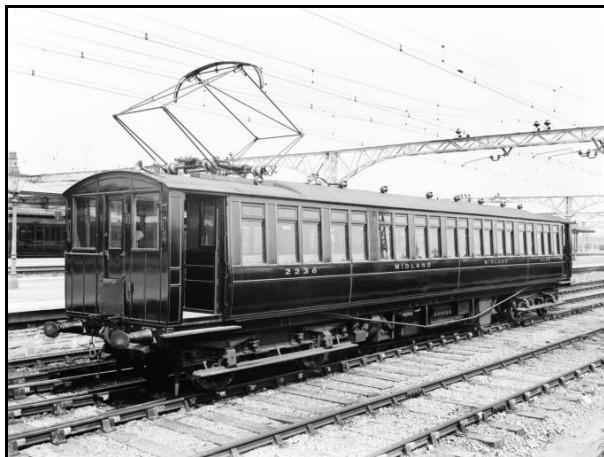
Most interurbans had to use the tracks of street railways to enter larger towns, and these were usually electrified with 600 volts DC, so the interurban cars had to be able to operate on that system as well as on their own. This was easier to do on a 1200 volt system.

With respect to major trunk line railroad electrifications of US railways, some pioneers were the New York, New Haven & Hartford (1907), Pennsylvania (1915), Norfolk & Western (1915), Virginian (1925) and Great Northern (1927) - all at 11,000V 25 cycles. In Canada (and crossing the border to the US), the St Clair Tunnel of the Grand Trunk (later CNR) was electrified with 3300V AC in 1907.

Great Britain in the first half of the 20th Century

The author is unaware of any street tramway in Britain, that for traction purposes, uses or has used AC current drawn from overhead or live rail. However this was not the case for the railways. The first of such electrifications was the Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham line.

In 1904 the Midland Railway opened a new harbour at Heysham and better railway facilities were needed. In 1907 the Board sanctioned the placing of contracts to electrify a route mileage around Heysham of 9 miles. The relevant engineer at the time was Richard Deeley, whose electrical assistant was James Dalziel. The electrification of the relevant lines was carried out using single-phase at 6.6 kV, 25Hz. The power was supplied from a power house already built in the new harbour. By January 1908, trial runs were possible, and passenger train services commenced on the 13th April,



The Westinghouse power car built for the Midland Railway's Lancaster-Morcambe-Heysham scheme. photo: www.nrm.org.uk

1908. Three trains, each of three carriages, were provided. Each end car was a driving trailer with the middle carriage being the power car. The electrical equipment for one of the power cars was manufactured by Westinghouse, and for the other two cars by Siemens. Once forced draughting was introduced, the Westinghouse car could provide 195hp and the Siemens cars 210hp. The Westinghouse car drew power by means of a diamond pantograph, whereas the Siemens cars had two bow collectors, one at each end. The cars ran successfully until 1951, although inevitably by then they were life expired and withdrawn.



A Siemens set at Morecambe in 1964.

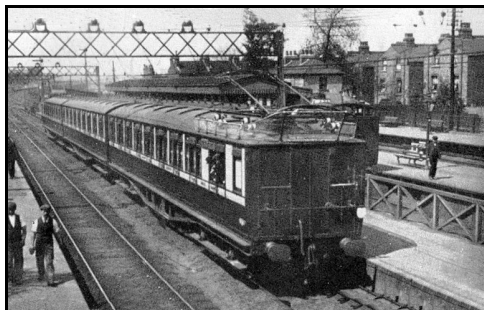
photo: Martin Bairstow

By this time, the nationalised British Railways needed to take stock of the latest benefits of electrification, so the opportunity was taken to gain experience of developments in electrification, especially AC electrification, which was now more feasible at the 50Hz industrial frequency than previously. Thus expenditure was authorised to re-electrify the Heysham line. This included the provision of three multiple units known as Siemens sets, which were originally built for the Willesden to Earls Court service, but which were rendered redundant due to wartime

damage of the line's tracks. The emus were rebuilt to operate using AC supplies. Such supply was provided at 6.6kV, 50Hz, which was transformed down to 1500V or less and then rectified to feed four 215hp motors, ie two motors per bogie connected in series. At first all three sets used mercury arc rectifiers. In 1955 set no.19 had the rectifiers changed for single-anode, mercury arc, vacuum sealed exitronic type rectifiers. At the same time set no.20 was fitted with a germanium rectifier made by BTH and rated at 750 amps. It was the first car in the World to be fitted with such a rectifier. In 1957, a fourth unit arrived. It was fitted with electrical equipment by Metropolitan-Vickers, including four single-anode ignitron mercury arc rectifiers. The line and its equipment including a new station en route, continued in use until 1st January 1966, when the Beeching cuts brought an end to the line. During its lifetime, it demonstrated the feasibility of AC traction utilising the use of industrial frequency motors and semi-conductor rectifiers.

One year after the opening of the Heysham line, the LB&SCR opened, on the 1st December 1909, a second AC supplied line in the suburbs of South London. By this time, the newly electrified tramways of the London County Council were successfully haemorrhaging passengers away from rival railway companies. So in 1906, the LB&SCR placed a contract with AEG to supply a single phase AC system. The new system was unsurprisingly based on the use of Winter-Eichberg motors. The Company chose supply at an overhead line voltage of 6.6kV, 25Hz to 3-car multiple units composed of a third class driving motor coach at each end and a first class trailer coach in the middle. Each motor coach was equipped with four motors. Each pair of motors was served by a 220kW transformer which reduced the voltage to a maximum of 750V. Taps on the secondary enabled current to be supplied to the motors at voltages of 450, 580, 640 and 750V. At the driving ends, the roof was lowered in order to mount two current collecting bows (one for each direction of running) raised or lowered by compressed air. The system was a success and was gradually expanded up to a mileage of 126 miles. However in 1923, the LB&SCR was amalgamated with other companies to form the Southern Railway. As more of the new railway's trackage had been electrified at 660V DC third rail, a decision was made to abandon and convert the AC overhead, even though it was operating successfully.⁹

During the remainder of the first half of the twentieth century no significant new developments arose with respect to AC traction in Britain.



LB&SCR type SL set at Wandsworth in 1909.

photo: www.semgonline.com

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 7. *The History of the Electric Railway Locomotive* by F. J. G. Haut. Published by Allen and Unwin 1969.
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 9. *London Brighton and South Coast Railway* by C. Ellis. Published by Ian Allan 1970.
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Model railway exhibition diary

Some events that may interest our readers

Sat 28th Feb & Sun 1st March: Lincoln & District MRC at the Lincoln Showground, Lincoln LN2 2NA. <http://ladmrc.wix.com/ladmrc>

Sat 7th March: The Gauge 0 Guild Spring Show at Kettering Leisure Village, Thurston Drive, Kettering NN15 6PB. www.gauge0guild.com

Sat 7th & Sun 8th March: Mansfield St Peter's MRG at St Peter's Church Centre, Church Side, Mansfield NG18 1AP. www.mansfieldmodelrailway.co.uk

Sun 8th March: Chesham MRC at White Hill Centre, Chesham HP5 1AG.

Sat 14th & Sun 15th March: Macclesfield MRG at Tytherington High School, Manchester Road, Macclesfield SK10 2EE.

Sat 21st & Sun 22nd March: Nottingham MRC at Hadden Park High School, Harvey Road, Nottingham NG8 3BB. www.nottingham-modelrailway.org.uk

Sat 4th - Mon 6th April: York MRS at York Racecourse YO23 1EX. www.yorkshow.org.uk

Sat 9th & Sun 10th May: Leicester MRG at Humphrey Perkins High School, Cotes Road, Barrow-upon-Soar, Leicestershire LE12 8JU.

Sat 9th & Sun 10th May: Cleethorpes MRS at The Memorial Hall, Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes DN35 8AH. www.cmrs.club

Sat 9th & Sun 10th May: Mickleover MRG at The Roundhouse, Pride Park, Derby DE24 8JE. www.mmrg.org.uk

Sat 16th May: Lutterworth RS at Lutterworth Sports Centre, Coventry Road, Lutterworth LE17 4RB.

Sat 23rd & Sun 24th May: Risborough & District MRC at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury HP21 9PP. www.railex.org.uk

Sat 6th & Sun 7th June: Chesterfield RM at Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell DE45 1AH. www.chesterfieldrailwaymodellervers.co.uk

Sat 13th June: Hazel Grove & District MRS at Hazel Grove Methodist Church Hall, Wesley Street, Stockport SK3 9RH. www.hgdms.org.uk

Fri 19th - Sun 21st June: Great Central Railway Model Event at Quorn & Woodhouse station LE12 8AG. www.gcrrailway.co.uk

The Gainsborough Model Railway, at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough DN21 1BE, is open to the public (1.30pm-6.00pm) on Sat 4th, Sun 5th and Mon 6th April (open from 10.30am), and Sat 20th June.

Visit www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk for more information.

On Great Central lines today

by Kim Collinson

The first working of the new class 68 locos on Chiltern Line services occurred on the 15th December when 68012 worked the 07:44 Banbury to Marylebone. By early in the New Year they will have ousted all the class 67s from Chiltern Line passenger services. However class 67s have started working a new service from Manchester Piccadilly to Holyhead and Llandudno, the first part of the journey being over the former MSJ&A as far as Deansgate, Castlefield Jn. There are two return workings Monday to Friday, the first day of operation was the 15th December when 67001 worked the services, the formation consisting of four coaches and a DVT.

Since the commissioning of the waste energy plant at Runcorn in 2014, there has been an increase in freight traffic over the CLC route via Northwich as all the GMC binliner services from the four terminals are now routed over this line. There is still a daily waste train to Scunthorpe which now originates from Acton in West London and is worked by DBS.

There have been several changes of freight operators from the beginning of 2015. GBRf who have had a monopoly of the LD&EC coal workings, have had the coal train movements from Thoresby Colliery taken over by Freightliner. The last GBRf working from the mine was on the 1st January when 66705 worked to Cottam departing at 00:05. The following day 66620 was employed since when all the workings have operated to West Burton instead. There have been up to five services daily during the month, which is the final year of the mine's life.

Colas Rail have taken over the Lindsey to Preston bitumen tank working from DBS using Class 60s (*see photo*). 60075 and 60087 have been observed on the workings. Finally the aggregate industry workings from Bardon Hill/Croft to Tinsley are now worked by GBRf instead of Freightliner.

On Monday 9th January the HST Measurement Train was replaced by a pair of class 67 locos on its working from Heaton to Manchester Piccadilly and return via Guide Bridge with 67012/67027 top and tailing a 3 coach formation.

Friday 23rd January saw class 20 locos 20308/09 along with 66301 work through Guide Bridge at 22:31 en route from Crewe to York. The same locos returned on Tuesday 27th at 11:13 after being used on weekend engineering work.

The first observation of class 37 locos on GC lines in 2015 was on the 9th January when 97301/03 worked a test train from Derby to Immingham via Lincoln, the Grimsby Light Railway and back to Doncaster via Stainforth.

The irregular workings between Crewe and Leeds continue to produce some interesting combinations as on the 23rd January when three class 66/5s and a class 70 worked four MGR wagons through Guide Bridge at 17:55. This was then followed on the 28th with a five loco consist of 66506/16/90/99 and 70006 which passed Guide Bridge at 11:48.

As the Chiltern services from Marylebone to the West Midlands are being taken over by class 68 locos in the near future, it is interesting to report some of the class 67 workings during January as follows. On the 12th January, 67010/67013/67014 and 67020 were all in use, with 67020 still in EWS livery. Also one of the coaching sets is short of a buffet/business coach. On the 21st January, 68012 was at Marylebone on a set of blue/grey stock for use on a Banbury working. It is noteworthy that when the class 68s take over the workings they will be the first new traction to have operated express services out of Marylebone since the BR Standard 5MTs nos.73155 to 73159 were allocated new to Neasden in December and January 1956/57.

If you have any news of current activity on ex-GC lines please let me know - Kim Collinson, 18 Close Hill Lane, Newsome, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD4 6LE or by e-mail : kim.collinson@btinternet.com.

Colourful 60s in the landscape

photos by Alan Padley



above: Colas Rail Freight 60087 'CLIC Sargent' passing Hatfield Colliery, the site of last year's landslide, with 6E32 Preston Docks - Lindsey oil refinery empty tanks on 7 January 2015. This was the first day that Colas Rail had taken over this working.

below: DB Shenker 60001 heads the 6E51 Peak Forest - Selby loaded aggregate along the former GC line alongside the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation at Swinton. The derelict site on the other side of the canal was once Croda Chemicals which closed in 1997. It had a railway siding connected to the former North Midland line. Tar distillers have occupied the site since 1886 prompting an industrial archaeological assessment to be carried out prior to residential development by Gleeson.



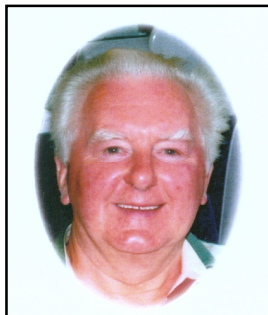
Michael Hayes 1938-2014 an appreciation by Ken Grainger

On Friday, 28th November 2014, the Rotherham Crematorium chapel was filled to capacity as friends and family were joined by GCRS members and his former railway colleagues to bid farewell to GCRS stalwart Mick Hayes, who passed away, aged 76, on November 16th 2014. He had spent most of 2014 fighting cancer.

Mick was one of a dwindling band, the final generation of steam railwaymen. He was proud of having driven the Royal Train, and also of having been at the controls of 'Jubilee' no.45562 *Alberta* to take the very last scheduled steam train out of Sheffield. A smile would spread across his face though, when recalling another occasion when driving *Alberta*, of passengers hurriedly stepping back from the platform edge as he stormed nonstop through Chesterfield station before starting numerous lineside fires up the bank to Bradway. On the other hand, he grumbled at not having personally appeared on screen when having been the driver of the train in the film "When Saturday Comes" starring Sean Bean!

After retirement, Mick took great pleasure in railway outings with his former colleagues and supporting Rotherham United, and will be remembered for organising GCRS branch meetings in Rotherham at various venues, latterly at The Three Horseshoes in Wickersley. Mick also gave presentations himself, progressing from 35 mm slide presentations of the Somerset and Dorset Joint - a line he loved, nurtured by a friendship with the celebrated Ivo Peters - to 'Classic Film Nights' with immaculately timed selections from his large collection of DVDs.

It was on 21st July last summer that Mick made the journey from his Brinsworth home to present one of his 'Classic Film Nights' at the Killamarsh branch meeting. Despite by then being very frail, it was a commitment he kept. That was typical of Mick. He will be missed by his many friends.



BR 'Jubilee' 4-6-0 no.45562 'Alberta' at Sheffield Midland in May 1967.

photo: Phil Sangwell

'Zeebrugge' on mystery railtours

The two photos that appeared on page 38 in the last issue of *Forward* (and reproduced below) have prompted the following replies from readers.

from Bill Taylor, Sutton-in-Ashfield

Reference the illustrations of 62666 in *Forward* 182, I can give some details of the workings.

The upper photo shows the "Farnborough Flyer" organised by Alan Pegler halted at Basingstoke on 11th September 1955. The route from Retford was via Tuxford Central, Mansfield Central and Banbury. I have photographs of the train at Mansfield Central (J. Cupit) and approaching Kirkby South Jn (F. Ashley). The ensign on the headboard is that of the Royal Observer Corps, and the wording is "Forewarned is Forearmed".

The "Farnborough Flyer" also ran the previous year on 12th September 1954 via Mansfield Central, where it stopped for water, hauled by GN Atlantic no.251 and no.62663, the latter being the train engine. The last time I saw the "Flyer" it came through Mansfield behind an EE Type 4 diesel, D201 if memory serves me correctly, in September 1958.

The lower photograph of a "Northern Rubber Special" is correctly captioned as to the date and details of the train, but I cannot assist with the location. I do not recall it working via Mansfield Central so it either went up the GN main line or via Worksop and Staveley.

from John Hitchens, Kirkby-in-Ashfield

In the upper photo the headboard shows a crown at the top, as part of the badge of the Royal Observer Corp, with which Alan Peglar was associated. There is a photograph of this train on page 78 of *The Great Northern Railway in the East Midlands* by Alfred Henshaw (RCTS, 2000). It was taken by the late Frank Ashley and shows the train on the Mansfield line approaching Kirkby South Jn. The date is given as September 1955. I believe it was a Northern Rubber Co. special run in connection with the Farnborough Air Show, so the actual date could be established. From Retford it ran up the ECML to Dukeries Junction and then via the LD&ECR to the Mansfield Railway to join the GC main line at Kirkby South Junction.

Editor's note: The public days for the airshow were Sat & Sun 10th & 11th September.

from Michael Reade, Pinner

With reference to the lower photo on p38 of *Forward* 182, I can confirm that the date was 6th June 1953 as I took a photo of the train waiting to leave Windsor & Eton Central. I cannot be sure about the location but it could be on the branch from Slough to Windsor & Eton Central - the branch was double track throughout then - but there were no intermediate sidings on the branch as in the photo that I was aware of. I don't think the adjacent track in the photo has been severed as there is no protection and the hand operated points appear to be set for the movement of the GWR tank. I suggest the view of the nearside rail is obscured by a ramp in the cinder path. However, the position of both signals on the same side of the track is a possible clue - was this section operated as bi-directional? The leading Gresley brake vehicle in carmine and cream is in both pictures but there could well have been another similar one at the other end so it is difficult to say if the photo shows the down or up journey. Presumably *Zeebrugge* was released at Windsor to turn at Slough on the Royal Curve or went to Southall as I don't remember a turntable at Slough m.p.d with its allocation of only tank locos.



from John Bennett, Guildford

The upper photograph of *Zeebrugge*, taken at Basingstoke, relates to an excursion on 11th September 1955 arranged by Alan Pegler for the Royal Observer Corps to the Farnborough Air Display. The train ran from Leeds to Basingstoke via Tuxford, the Mansfield line, Woodford and Oxford. The apparent 'SPAD' can be explained by the fact that Basingstoke was one of the locations where the LSWR had installed power signalling and as on the GC line out of Manchester London Road the signal returned to danger automatically after part of the train had passed it.

The lower photograph was taken at Bourne End on the one time GW branch between High Wycombe and Maidenhead. This was a chartered train arranged by Alan Pegler for employees of the Northern Rubber Company which ran on 6th June 1953 from Retford via the same route as the later Basingstoke excursion and then from High Wycombe on the GW & GC Joint Line to Bourne End. From Bourne End the staff enjoyed a river cruise to Windsor where they rejoined the train. After time spent in London the train returned from King's Cross. The Western Region loco on the right of the photograph is standing in the Up sidings which despite appearances were connected with the Up Loop through Bourne End station. This excursion is mentioned on page 96 of Volume 3B of the RCTS series *Locomotives of the LNER*.

from David Anderson, Bidford-on-Avon

The upper photo shows 'The Farnborough Flyer' of Sunday 11 September 1955. This was arranged by Alan Pegler and ran from Leeds Central to the air display at Farnborough. The special was previewed in *Trains Illustrated* for July 1955, as part of the Editor's section 'Talking of Trains'. An account of the running of the train was given by P.W.B. Semmens in *Trains Illustrated* for November 1955, page 456.

The D11s hauled the train between Doncaster and Basingstoke and return. The load was 14 coaches, made up of a composite sleeping car, eight cars of tourist open stock, two kitchen cars, a buffet car, a bar-lounge car from 'The Elizabethan' and a beaver-tail observation car. The train reversed at Basingstoke and the observation car did not run between Basingstoke and Farnborough. According to the preview, the train was to leave Leeds at 6am and was scheduled to arrive back at 1.10am on Monday 12 September. For those prepared to pay extra, the sleeping car was available for use at Leeds Central from 10.30pm on the Saturday night and could be occupied until 7.30am on Monday!

The route was via Doncaster, Tuxford, Mansfield Central, Leicester Central and Banbury. Various engineering works hindered progress. The last pick-up point was Leicester Central. Semmens records that the locomotives "showed a good turn of speed; on the 7 miles ascent of 1 in 176 south of Leicester the train was worked up to 47 mph, requiring ... all but 1,700 hp from the two four-coupled locomotives". On the return "70 mph, the fastest speed of the day, was reached just before Leicester". Both Retford and Doncaster were setting-down points. "Right until the end of their 18-hour day, the two 4-4-0s kept hard at it, finally running the 17.4 miles from Retford to Doncaster ... in 21 min. 29 sec."

The previous year 'The Farnborough Special' had run on 12 September using, between Doncaster and Basingstoke, the preserved GNR Atlantic 251 and D11 62663 *Prince Albert*. The load was 9 coaches. A detailed log of the southbound run between these stations is given by O.S. Nock in *British Railways in Action*, chapter 13 'A Miscellany of Specials' (Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1956). It is worth adding that chapter 12 gives an account of a return footplate ride between Wath and Dunford Bridge on EM1 electric locos. Towards the end of the book (pages 200-201), the author gives three detailed logs of express running between Marylebone and Leicester Central via Aylesbury; 60108 on the 10am and two runs on the 4.50pm behind 60103 and 60049.

Now for the 'Northern Rubber Special' shown in the lower picture. The train did run on 6 June 1953 as captioned. In *Trains Illustrated* for August 1953, page 318, there is a photo of this train passing High Wycombe. As for the location of the photo in *Forward*, the GW features, the open countryside and the style of suburban house suggest somewhere on the GW & GC Joint. These features and the track layout suggest that it

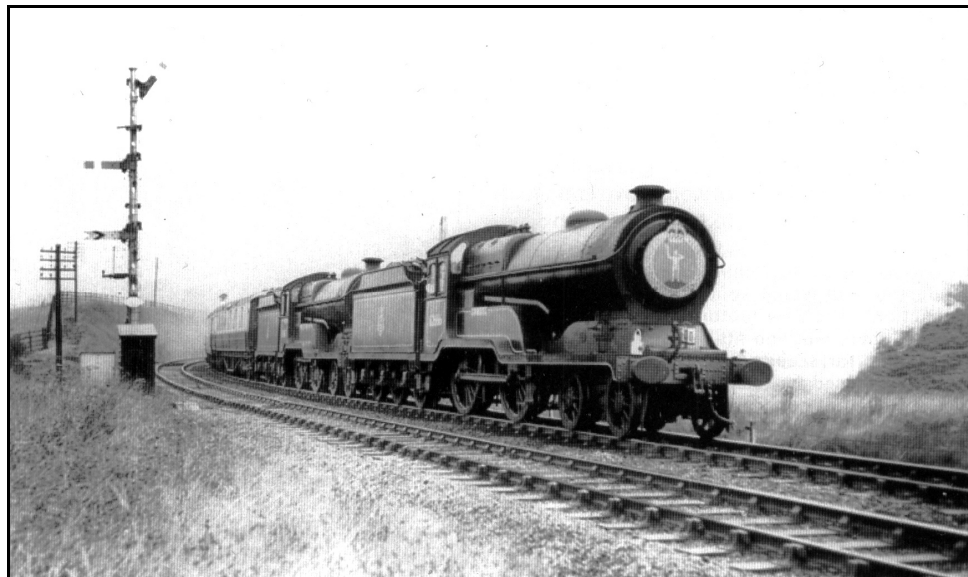
could well be on the northern approach to Princes Risborough, with the train yet to pass Princes Risborough North signal box – see page 27 of The Signalling Record Society's Volume 3 in the John Swift Collection of signalling diagrams.

Further details of the Special are given in *Railway Magazine* for June 1953, 'Notes and News' page 425. The train was the annual outing for staff of the Northern Rubber Company and scheduled to leave Retford at 7.15am. The route was to be via Mansfield Central, Nottingham Victoria and High Wycombe to Bourne End, due at 11.30am. A river trip followed and the train was to be re-joined at Windsor & Eton Central, departing at 4.25pm for King's Cross. The route was to be via Acton and the North London Line to Canonbury, where the D11 was to be detached. King's Cross was to be reached via Finsbury Park and the return to Retford was expected to be behind an Easter Region Pacific. 'Motive Power Miscellany' in *Trains Illustrated* for August 1953 reported that the train was seen passing Willesden High Level with a Stratford J19, 64665, piloting *Zeebrugge*.

Editor's summary of the information supplied

The upper photo: This is a "Farnborough Flyer" organised by Alan Pegler for the Royal Observer Corps to the Farnborough Air Show on Sunday 11th Sept. 1955. Starting from Leeds Central at 6am, the route was via Leicester Central, Banbury, Oxford and Reading followed by a reversal at Basingstoke before heading towards London on the L&SWR main line. Quite a journey with an arrival back at Leeds Central at 1.10am on the Monday! There was sleeping accommodation available on the train for use on the Sat. and Sun. nights.

The lower photo: Taken at Bourne End on the GWR line between High Wycombe and Maidenhead. On the outward journey passengers disembarked at Bourne End for a Thames cruise and rejoined the train at Windsor & Eton Central. The return journey was via King's Cross and the ECML, with a Pacific providing the motive power from King's Cross. From the position of the sun I would suggest that the photo shows the return journey with the train heading north. The siding to the right is not severed as I thought, but only obscured by the raised level of the cinder path alongside.



62666 'Zeebrugge' and 62667 'Somme' approaching Kirkby South Jn with the 'Farnborough Flyer' on 11th Sept 1955. This photo appeared in 'The Great Northern Railway in the East Midlands' by Alfred Henshaw (RCTS, 2000).
photo: F.Ashley

The Readers' forum

from Paul Greenwood, Delph, Oldham

Forward 182 p6: 'A letter to Ray Webster from William Bradshaw'.

My attention was immediately drawn to the letter to Ray Webster from William Bradshaw, written in 1950, in which he refers to engine No 361.

I have a photograph of this engine, in workshop grey, signed by no less a person than J.G.Robinson himself. The framed photo was given to me by an elderly friend who lived in Audenshaw, not too far from Gorton, in the 1990s. He has inscribed the back of the photo with the following: "This engine (No 361) was Mr G. Bagnall's with which he drove the King in the Royal Train from Banbury to Worksop in 1912".

He goes on to say that he was a life-long friend of Mr Bagnall's son and that Mr Bagnall was a top-link driver, eventually transferring from Gorton to King's Lynn "where working conditions were much easier".

This probably answers Mr Bradshaw's question about the engine's crew. I treasure this photo, recognising its significance, even if only amongst other like-minded GCR enthusiasts.

from John Quick, Oughtibridge, Sheffield

Forward 182 p5: 'Some notes on Atlantic no.1090' by Mike Kinder.

I was interested in Mike Kinder's article about Atlantic no. 1090. I suspect that the engine would have been at Gorton when new, although this is not shown on the record card that I have seen. Here are the allocations that I noted.

Nottingham 4.4.1907	Neasden 13.4.1907	Gorton 24.5.1907
Neasden 28.8.1907	Gorton 25.10.1907	Nottingham 19.4.1908
Leicester 1.7.1908	Gorton 30.1.1909	Sheffield 5.4.1913
Gorton 23.5.1914	Sheffield 11.11.1921	Leicester 15.12.1922

Forward 182 p22/23: 'A GCR Ambulance Train'.

The coloured view on the centre pages is highly appropriate for the centenary of the beginning of World War One, but the engine is a class 11E 4-4-0 'Director' not a class 1 4-6-0.

Editor's note: I am also indebted to Michael Reade for pointing out the caption error.

from John Greaves, Bucknall, Shropshire

Forward 182 p29: statue of Sir Nigel Gresley.

With reference to the proposed statue of Sir Nigel Gresley, you ask "Who should be the subject of a statue at Marylebone?" No contest! Marylebone would not even be there were it not for the vision of Sir Edward Watkin.

Incidentally, my biography of him has just come out in a revised paperback version.

from Lawson Little, Newark, Notts

Forward 182 p29: statue of Sir Nigel Gresley.

The mention in the latest issue of the 75th anniversary of the death of Sir Nigel Gresley in connection with the proposed statue at King's Cross, reminded me that on 5th April 1991, the 50th anniversary, I made a special trip to the churchyard at Netherseal in Derbyshire, to locate his grave. After much searching I eventually unearthed it, literally, as it was extremely overgrown and had obviously not been tended for years. With no tools available, I did the best I could to make it presentable and added a bunch of flowers. I've never had an opportunity to re-visit the site, but I hope that it is better looked after these days.

Editor's note: Both Nigel's grave and that of his wife, Ethel, were restored in July 2009 thanks to railway enthusiast Gordon Collier, who campaigned and raised money for the project. They are now cared for by members of the Shackerstone Railway Society.

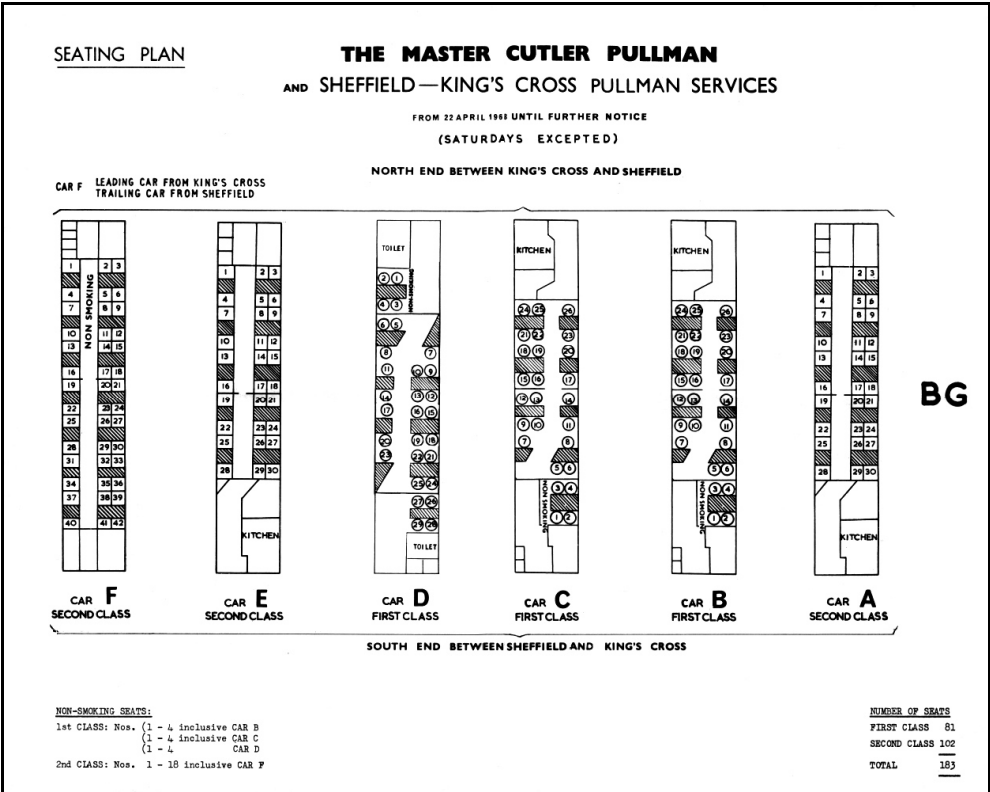
from David Wrottesley, Sheffield

Forward 182 p8: 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll.

I much enjoyed the article about 'The Master Cutler' in the current issue of *Forward*. The one point of issue I have always found difficult in reconciling is the assigned motive power/loco shed/train crew for the morning departure from Sheffield Victoria. I thought it was always Sheffield Darnall men with a Darnall loco, light off shed, as the first working of the day throughout to Marylebone. I recall seeing photos of Darnall B1s on the 'Cutler'.

However in the final years of the LNER, it was decided that improved power was required on the train. Darnall had no allocated A3s and it was decided that a Leicester A3 with Leicester men would work it. The crew, with loco, arrived overnight in Sheffield with a Marylebone to Manchester/Liverpool passenger/parcels, but then worked the "Master Cutler" from Sheffield to Leicester. Locos were not changed, but they were relieved by a second Leicester crew that worked it to Marylebone, the two workings being the most prestigious Top Turns at Leicester. In consequence Sheffield Darnall men controversially lost their most important turn to London. It was not until the train got diverted to Kings Cross by BR(ER) that the work returned. Is it possible for someone to confirm this matter and the dates for the motive power and train crews on this particular train.

I enclose an original Seating Plan for the service for April 1968. This is the last period of operation.



The seating plan for "The Master Cutler" in April 1968.

from Richard Allsopp, Worksop, Notts

Forward 182 p8: 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll.

The photo on page 18 of 'The Master Cutler' at Worksop was taken by myself. It shows the up train from Sheffield to Kings Cross not the down train as captioned. The photograph was taken during the first days of the new working in September 1958 and the train was strengthened to seven bogies by the addition of the Eastern Region dynamometer car.

I attach a photo of the down train taken around the same time approaching Worksop from the east showing the large maltings which were then still in use. All have now been demolished. The train on the left had recently arrived as a terminating service from Nottingham and unusually ran forward and reversed into the loop to clear both running lines prior to the loco running round ready to return south.



The view from the level crossing footbridge at the east end of Worksop station in Sept.1958. The train approaching is the down 'Master Cutler' hauled by an EE Type 4. photo: Richard Allsopp

from Rob Lane, Monks Risborough, Bucks

Forward 182 p8: 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll.

In the article about 'The Master Cutler' by Robert Carroll there is mention on page 12 of class L1 no.67785 taking the 'Cutler' from Marylebone to Woodford. This train was in fact the 12.15pm to Manchester. It was the engine on the up 'Cutler' that had failed so it could not take up its return working back to Leicester on the 12.15pm Manchester. With only about 45 minutes turn round time, there was no time to spare, even when everything was running smoothly. On that particular day I was the fireman on no.67785, (the best of the class L1 fleet) and we were all ready to set off with the 12.20pm to Princes Risborough local, when the engine was commandeered by the Marylebone Loco Inspector. I can't remember who it was now - Sam Oldknow or Bob Songhurst. So no.67785 took the 12.15pm for Manchester as far as Woodford with a stop at Princes Risborough for water. The load was only seven coaches. We finished up with another L1, the station pilot, for our train to Princes Risborough.

I remember another occasion when a class A5 tank came to the rescue and set off from Marylebone with an express service. It also happened at Aylesbury to an up train when a

class J11 'Pom-Pom' was hooked on to an A3 and it ran tender first to Marylebone. It must have been a bit on the windy side for the footplate crew, but they got there OK.

On the same page is a list of A3 Pacifics used on 'The Master Cutler'. I have a list of A3s used on the post-war GC services. As well as those listed in the article the list includes 60044 *Melton*, 60053 *Sansovino*, 60056 *Centenary*, 60061 *Pretty Polly*, 60090 *Grand Parade*, 60106 *Flying Fox*, 60109 *Hermit*, 60110 *Robert the Devil* and 60111 *Enterprise*. My list does not include 60108 *Gay Crusader*.

Forward 182 p34: 'Gresley Pacifics on the Great Central'.

There is mention in the article reprinted from *Locospotters' Annual 1962* that the A4 Pacific no.4488 *Union of South Africa* worked on the GC in Feb. 1941. An old railwayman friend of mine tells me that he remembers 4488 along with *Mallard* and another A4 (it was a '*Dominion*') visiting Aylesbury at various times with trains of war wounded and attendant medical staff from the north. They were being transferred to the new hospital at Stoke Mandeville. A fleet of ambulances would meet them and take them to the new hospital. The question arises as to how the trains were worked back north? How were the locos turned? One possibility is that they worked the trains tender-first as far as Woodford and then turned on the triangle before continuing their journeys.

from Henryk Szablewski, Chilwell, Nottingham

Forward 182 p34: 'Gresley Pacifics on the Great Central'.

Many thanks for reproducing the *Locospotters Annual 1962* article on Gresley Pacifics on the GC. I presume that 4488 worked into and out of Nottingham Victoria on express services during February 1941. I have photographic evidence of the following A4s at Nottingham Victoria:

- 4468 *Mallard* on a Leicester-Sheffield slow in platform 4 on the 15th May 1939.
- 60014 *Silver Link* on the "Pennine Pullman" special in platform 4 on 12th May 1956 working from Marylebone to Sheffield Victoria.
- 60029 *Woodcock* on an Ian Allan special in platform 4 on 24th April 1957.
- 60008 *Dwight D Eisenhower* being towed dead in a freight on 23rd April 1964 for preservation.

I would like to put out a request to fellow members for information as regards steam locos working through Nottingham Victoria after 3rd September 1966 from their own logs and reminiscences.

from Martyn Ashworth, Loughborough

Forward 182 p42: Letter from Allan Sibley re. 'Life below decks' article.

Allan Sibley writes in response to my article 'Life below decks' that appeared in *Forward 181*. Allan is right about the demise of the ship - he uses the word "complex" -I would use the word "appalling". Along with many others, I tried desperately to save the ship and to prevent its demolition (Kirk Martin did as well) and Martyn Heighten of the National Maritime Museum was brilliant but, we were ultimately defeated. Allan says he was a member of the PSPS - well, I am afraid they do not come out of this business very well - Colin Johnson claims that he offered the ship to the PSPS for a nominal sum but they declined it and this sealed its fate. I say 'claimed' because we came to realise that Johnson was a congenital liar and nothing he said could be believed, but the fact is that he did offer the ship to the PSPS and they did decline it. If they had said yes, would he have honoured his promise? That is the unknown factor.

It was a sorry end for a grand ship and a major piece of Humberside social and railway history. I do not intend to get involved in an argument with Allan about what might have been - it is now pointless and the laws of libel do not allow me to say certain things about Johnson which Allan will not be aware of. What emerged out of this whole situation was the fact that there is NO mechanism in the UK today for "listing" an historic ship, that is to say, if a private individual like Johnson wants to break up a ship, no matter how historic it is, we cannot stop them. A stately home, for example, can be

listed but a ship cannot - the National Maritime Museum does not have these powers. If an historic loco was under such threat there would be (rightly) a national outcry, but ships seem to get broken up with little real opposition - as a result we are rapidly losing all our maritime history despite being an island and a seafaring country.

Allan is right about my photo caption - it was 1975 not 1995!

I appreciated your (very fair) review of Kirk Martin's new book on the Humber ferries - one of the problems Kirk faced when writing this book was the lack of people still alive who worked on the ferries - if you look at many of the photos in the book you will see that a lot of the guys I worked with in the mid 1970s were then nearing retirement ages - so they would now be about 100! In fact, so many of them have passed on it made Kirk's task quite difficult and then, out of the blue, appeared a man who actually worked on the ship when it was being built!

from Fred Hartley, Newark, Notts

Forward 181 p14: 'Life below decks' by Martyn Ashworth.

I very much enjoyed Martyn Ashworth's article on the *Lincoln Castle*. I saw her in service but unfortunately on that day I had no time to get over to Hull and then home to Leicester. I thought there would be time for another visit before the bridge opened but when I did finally cross the waters it was on the *Farringford*. On a gloomy winter day, "lost" in thick fog out on the Humber, I watched the seamen testing the depth of the waters with a pole as we passed over the shallow sandbanks. Was this normal practice with these vessels?

My wife and I recently had a wonderful trip on the *Waverley* from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight and she remarked that it very much reminded her of shopping trips from Grimsby to Hull in the 1960s/early 1970s. *Waverley* is a more glamorous and rather larger vessel than *Lincoln Castle* but from the same shipyard and she has some similarities. I don't know if there are plans to take the *Waverley* to Hull for the City of Culture festivities, but if so perhaps the GCRS could think of arranging a cruise from Grimsby to Hull passing by Immingham and New Holland.

Finally, on at least one of my winter trips across the Humber in 1979-80 I was surprised to find that the waiting room at New Holland Pier station still had a coke stove in use. It was actually one of the cosier station waiting rooms I can remember, despite the fact that a chilly east wind was beating on the windows and the muddy waters of the Humber were sucking and surging around the iron stanchions in the darkness some 50 feet below!

Forward 182 p30: 'On Great Central lines today'.

A correction to the latest 'On Great Central lines today'. The viaduct recently demolished in Nottingham was the former GNR one from Weekday Cross Junction to Nottingham London Road High Level. Part of the former GCR viaduct (several arches of Logan & Hemingway's brickwork) survives between Canal Street and Station Street in use for part of Nottingham's NET tram system. In recent months a massive new bridge has been put in place just to the south across the whole width of Nottingham (Midland) Station on the course of the old GCR, with trams now running across it on an experimental basis, getting a view that has not been available since the 1960s.

Query: Listing of lineside infrastructure

I have recently explored most of the GC's Lincolnshire lines before the end of the semaphores and signal boxes, and would like to pose the following questions:-

1. Should we as a society take some view on the relevant importance of the remaining boxes and write to English Heritage suggesting that they extend their listing process (if they have not already done so) to include some GC signal boxes?
2. Is there any possibility that we might be able to arrange one or more visits to the remaining boxes? Wrawby Junction would be high on my list.
3. On a related issue, I read recently that Network Rail is to replace mileposts with kilometre posts. I don't know if this is true but having recently travelled from Lincoln to

Barnetby at a time when the vegetation has shed its leaves, I noted for the first time the remarkable sequence of mile, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile posts on the east side of the line. There are at least 45 between Wrawby Junction and Market Rasen, and most seem to be cast iron plates of what I have always thought to be GC pattern. I hope to fill in the gaps in my coverage on a future journey. I feel we should at least raise the conservation of these lineside items (and the few remaining gradient posts) as something that English Heritage should consider. It is a lot less daft than listing several thousand phone kiosks!

4. The same Lincoln to Wrawby Junction section has several surviving platelayers huts. These are now very rare over the rail network as a whole. Is it not time that one or two were listed, so they would at least be recorded in detail before they are cleared away.

Finally, a query. In *Great Central Volume 1*, George Dow includes a helpful set of gradient profiles of the MS&LR lines east of Sheffield. He shows the mileages on the Market Rasen line as starting from 0 at Wrawby Junction. The evidence of the posts themselves is that the sequence must start at New Holland, as the first post I could see south of Wrawby Junction was $13\frac{1}{2}$, and the 27 mile post is near Market Rasen.

from David Grainger, Hasland, Chesterfield

Forward 182 p41: Map of the Greenland Arm

Your comment regarding the well known member of the GCRS being resident on Clipstone Road (*Stephen Gay - Ed.*) prompts me to add the comment that the grandparents of two other members (one well known and the other not so well known) lived on Fitzmaurice Road which just makes an appearance at the foot of the map.

My father, William Grainger was born in 1905 and was the last of a family of five. When my grandmother died in 1947, when I was six, my grandfather came to live with us until he died in 1951. I remember my grandfather telling me how the border between Darnall and Attercliffe ran down the centre of the road with their house being on the Darnall side. Those who lived on the other side of the street in Attercliffe thought themselves superior!

The family, or at least a part of it including my father and one of his sisters, moved at some time to Chesterfield. The proximity of the GC was maintained in that land was obtained and a bungalow built on the tunnel top at Sutton Springs Wood on the main line between Staveley and Heath.

An invitation from Adrian Shooter

Members of the GCRS, along with family and friends, have been invited by Adrian Shooter (one of our vice presidents) to visit his Beeches Light Railway on **Saturday 27 June**. This railway runs around his garden and is an outpost of the Darjeeling Himalaya Railway - the loco is genuine and the carriages are replicas. The cost, which will be £27, includes a substantial BBQ lunch and as many rides as you want on the railway.

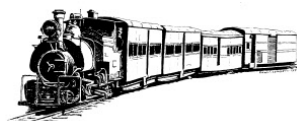
I suggest that payment is made initially to me (cash or cheque made out to GCRS) and when numbers are finalised the Treasurer can send off a cheque for all the party.

Please let me know if you want to accept the invitation and how many will be in your party. You don't need to pay now, but I must receive payment by 1st June at which time numbers must be finalised.

The location is 'The Beeches', Heyford Road, Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire OX25 4SM.

Those who went to 'The Beeches' in 2008 will remember what a great day it was.

Bob Gellatly





Another photo of 'The Master Cutler'. On this occasion the down service is passing Kiveton Park Colliery on the Retford-Sheffield line behind Brush Type 4 no.D1502. The photo was taken at 7.30pm on Mon. 23rd May 1966.
Photo: Mike Eggenton

Rear cover caption

GCR class 9B 0-6-0 no.663 in photographic grey at Gorton when rebuilt with a Belpaire boiler in October 1912. This was a Thomas Parker design for the MS&LR dating from 1891 and built by Neilson & Co. of Glasgow (nos.645-669). The 9Bs were part of a succession of similar 0-6-0 Parker-based designs consisting of classes 9, 9B, 9D and 9E. They were followed by the Belpaire-boilered class 9H and when Robinson took over from Pollitt in 1900, he built a further batch of class 9H and eventually rebuilt all the earlier classes with Belpaire boilers.

All these classes became either LNER class J9 or J10 with the 9Bs becoming part of class J9. No.663 became LNER 5663 and along with a batch of other J9s was sent to Scotland where it was allocated to Bathgate shed in 1925. It was withdrawn in June 1933 and cut up at Cowlairs.

photo: NRM

