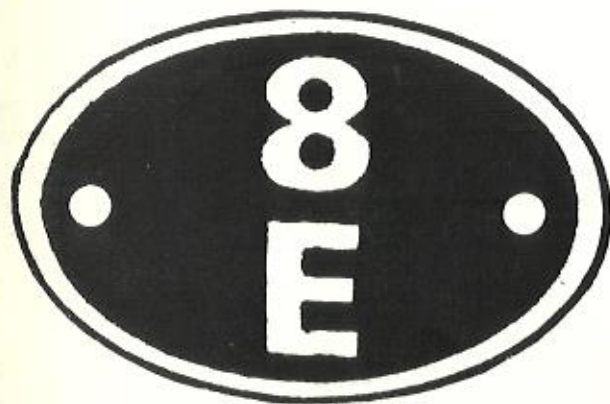


THE



MAGAZINE.

ISSUE No. 16

WINTER 1984-85



30p

THE 8E ASSOCIATION.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

CHAIRMAN: G. Roughsedge. (Northwich 782344)
VICE-CHAIRMAN: C. Worrall. (Frodsham 32607)
SECRETARY: M. Lenz. (Northwich 44959)
TREASURER: J.D. Little. (Moore 567)
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS: M. Lenz/R. Meredith.
FIXTURES OFFICER: R. Meredith.
TOURS OFFICER: A.E. Bennett.
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: N.D. Lightbown.
MAGAZINE EDITOR: M. Lenz. (Northwich 44959)

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT "THE 8E MAGAZINE".

The magazine is a quarterly publication, appearing in January, April, July and October, and contributions for each issue should reach the editor by the following dates;

Spring Issue - March 7th. Summer Issue - June 7th.
Autumn Issue - September 7th. Winter Issue - December 7th.

All contributions to be sent to the following address;

The Editor,
"The 8E Magazine",
2 Manor Drive,
Rudheath,
NORTHWICH,
Cheshire,
CW9 7HR.

THE 8E MAGAZINE.

No. 16. Winter 1984 - 85.

EDITORIAL.

I would like to thank those members who have complimented me on the quality of the magazine and I hope to continue with the present format for as long as our finances will permit. I am grateful for all the contributions that I am now receiving but I would be pleased to receive more black and white photographs for use in the magazine. Whilst I do appreciate that most people use colour these days, I feel sure that many of our members must have black and white prints from those days when colour was more expensive, and if these show railways in the areas around Northwich and Warrington, then I would be delighted to make use of them if possible. I can use colour prints on the black and white pages but they are often difficult to assess as to the end result when printed on the magazine paper, however I will consider them for use on the cover provided that the negative is also enclosed with the colour print. Any prints submitted should be of enprint size (5" x 3").

1984 has seen the quality of this magazine improve to such a point that it now compares favourably with those produced by larger and more well known societies. With your help this standard can be maintained in the coming year, so keep on sending your contributions, no matter how small.

COMMITTEE MATTERS AND A.G.M. REPORT. By M. Lenz.

Since my last report we have had three committee meetings, the October one dealing with our presence at the Mid-Che hire Model Railway Society

COVER PICTURE: B.R. Standard Class 4MT 2-6-4T locomotive number 80079

about to depart from Bridgnorth with a train for Bewdley,
25th April 1984. (Photo - M. Lenz.)

Open Day later in the month, an event that proved most successful for all those involved. Work on the coach was also discussed and also the subject of the future of the shed building. At our November meeting the layout of the Annual Report formed the main topic followed by further discussions regarding the shed. At the December meeting the arrangements for the A.G.M. were formulated, and the finished Annual Report was studied and various aspects of the finances were looked into.

The A.G.M. took place at our monthly meeting, the first to be held in our new venue at the Red Lion Hotel, Barnton, on the 11th of December and the attendance was slightly improved on the previous years. The meeting was opened by the Chairman who proceeded to work through the agenda laid out in the front of the Annual Report. Since all members should by now have received their copies of the Annual Report I will not go into detail about the A.G.M. itself since the items are all covered in the report. With regard to the election of officers it was the intention of the committee to have the various officers elected individually but a motion by Mr. T. Walton for the voting to be done en bloc, was seconded by Mr. E. Bellas and accepted by the membership present, whereby those committee members prepared to stand for re-election were voted back in for another year at one go. As you will see from the list of Committee Members inside the front cover of this magazine we have dispensed with the positions of Coach Restoration Officer and Materials Officer, and at our December committee meeting the suggestion was made that Colin Worrall should be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Association, a vote being duly taken and carried unanimously. As I mentioned in my last committee matters report in the Autumn issue we were looking for a person to take on the position of Public Relations Officer, however at the December committee meeting it was decided that the position will be shared jointly by our Fixtures Officer, Bob Meredith, and myself. Thus the size of the new committee stands at seven, which we consider to be quite sufficient for the present size of the Association.

The subject of the future of the shed was also raised at the A.G.M.

but members were informed that various options were open to us and that we would continue to maintain our foothold at the shed for as long as possible under the present arrangements held with BR.

On the Monday morning following the A.G.M. the Chairman and I had a meeting with B.R., the town Mayor and fellow SE member, Bob Mather, and a representative from the Rates Department of the council at Northwich Station so that measurements of the site could be taken in order to obtain a figure for the rates applicable to such a site, should it be taken over by a body similar to our own. At the time of writing we are still awaiting the figures.

The same week our Chairman received an invitation from Councillor John Chesworth to attend a meeting at the Council Offices in Church Road, Northwich regarding the setting up of some sort of Heritage/Museum Trust in the Northwich area. The invitation was made to us since we are the only established railway enthusiast group in this part of Cheshire, and because of our various activities and connections within the preservation movement. Our Chairman asked me to accompany him at this meeting which proved to be most interesting but at this stage no definite plans were being made.

So as members can see your committee is kept busy one way and another.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS. By N.D. Lightbown.

Since a report on the current membership status appears in the Annual Report it is pointless for me to duplicate it here. However, there is one matter relating to membership that requires mention here, namely that of the subscription fee. Because of increased costs of both meetings and the magazine it was decided at the December committee meeting to increase the subscription rates for the first time since the Association was formed. The new rates are as follows:-

Ordinary - £5.00 Junior - £3.00 Family - £7.00 OAP - £3.00

These new rates are certainly not excessive and compare favourably with those of many other enthusiast/preservation groups and I am sure members feel that they still represent good value for money.

THE LIVERPOOL STEAM SHEDS - MY BICYCLE. By J.D. Little.

Thank you, thank you, to all of you who expressed their enjoyment of my first article 'Early Days'.

So now, fired with fresh enthusiasm, and for your entertainment, would you like to join me for a trip around the Liverpool steam sheds in the late 1950s?

During a morning break at school as I was about to down the regulation mini bottle of milk, I got into conversation with another railway enthusiast, albeit a boy from a 'higher class in the school. He told me all about the Liverpool Sheds and where they were, and how I could visit them all in one day by using my bicycle. A map was promised to me so that I could follow a circular route around the city, starting and finishing at the Pier Head.

Sure enough, by Friday afternoon I had in my possession a very well detailed map and itinerary of how I could cycle around Liverpool and visit all six steam sheds there. There were even a few notes like 'Avoid the Foreman at Walton-on-the-Hill because he throws rocks at trainspotters!' (His modern counterpart must be the one we met recently at Tyne Yard, whom we believe chases railway enthusiasts with a baseball bat! So intending visitors be warned. Take a good supply of base-balls to test his skill with the aforementioned weapon.). I also seem to remember being told not to hang around in the tunnel leading to Edge Hill shed too. I planned to go over on a Sunday as the sheds would be at their fullest then, and the road traffic would be a bit kinder to a young lad on a bicycle.

And so the great day came, tyres were given a final pump up, pocket money checked, bottles packed and drinking bottles topped up with orange juice. Note book and spare pens last of all and I was ready for the off. A quick sprint down to Woodside, and onto the ferry boat for the river crossing to Pier Head. The ferry boat incidently, was one of the old steam boats, the very elegant 'Claughton', soon to be replaced by modern diesel boats. Once on the Liverpool side it seemed like alien territory to me, but the map held good and soon I was chaining up my bicycle at Edge Hill.

A quick walk through the tunnel, heart in mouth, and before I knew it, I was in the shed. Cor, what a sight, what a great big place, with engines everywhere. I walked along lines of Super Ds, Black Fives, Jubilees, every so often coming across a Princess Royal or a Coronation Pacific. Some were very clean, and to my amazement, one of the Princess Royals was painted in red and it looked magnificent. There were lines of Jintys, having a week-end rest from their labours up and down the Lime Street tunnels. A Coronation Pacific was on the wheel drop with its center pair of driving wheels missing and all its rods and associated parts strewn all over the floor. The atmosphere here was terrific, the long roads of the shed seemed to go on for ever, and the repair section was like a small works on its own. Lots of young boys like myself were scurrying around jotting down numbers and keeping a wary eye open for any signs of authority that might appear. One loco that sticks in my mind was 'Silver Jubilee'; it was in an appallingly filthy condition, but someone had carefully cleaned the raised numerals on the cab side. It was hard to tell if it was painted green or black, or any other colour for that matter. With all the numbers safely in my notebook it was time for a last quick look around before scurrying back through the tunnel to retrieve my bicycle. Shed number one, (8A) was in the bag.

The next shed on my map was Bank Hall, the shed that served the now closed Liverpool Exchange Station and some of the dock areas. There was only one way into the shed (officially) and that was from a door in the wall by the road bridge. No where to leave the bicycle outside so I decided to drag it inside with me. Unfamiliar surroundings, where do I go from here? That question was quickly answered by a hand trying to pick me up by the scruff of the neck. "And what do you think you're doing here then son?" "P...P...Please mister, is there somewhere safe I can leave my bike and go and look at the engines and get the numbers?" "Where are you from then?" the voice inquired, gradually returning my feet to the floor. "Birkenhead side" I replied, with the additional note that I visited that shed every night to see their engines. "So you're not one of the louts

from round here then" he said jerking his thumb in the direction of the door, and at the same time finally letting go of my shirt collar. The man looked me up and down, looked at my smartly turned out bicycle, and then came the ultimatum. "Lock it up and leave it there, you've got exactly ten minutes to go around. Don't touch anything and don't go in any of the cabs." "Thanks a lot mister, I'll do exactly as you say." And with that the bicycle was duly locked up and I was down the steps into the shed yard as fast as I could go. A very different set up to Edge Hill met my gaze. This shed was in a very cramped position with two separate buildings, a coaling plant and a turntable. (I had missed the coaling plant and turntable at Edge Hill due to the fact that they were hidden behind a wall.). The engines here were very clean, and the sight of two gleaming Jubilees, 'Mars' and 'Dauntless' were a sight to behold. There was a Black Five from Cork hill, 44767 with its Stephenson motion, and my first Clan Class Pacific, 72006 Clan Mackenzie. In the other shed, which seemed to serve as a small repair depot too, I found some of the lovely little ex-L & Y Pugs, used for shunting and transfer freights on the docks. Some of them had wooden buffers, whilst others had the curious flap arrangement to cover the chimney, and thus directly deflect the smoke sideways when the engines were working on the lines which ran underneath the Liverpool Overhead Railway. There were also 0-6-0 saddle tanks and the 2-4-2 tanks that worked empty stock to the station. This was the first time I had ever seen an engine with this wheel arrangement, and I stood back to gaze at it for a brief moment. All too soon my ten minutes were up and I was reporting back to the man in the office. "Thanks a lot mister, that was really smashing, and I did not touch anything." The man seemed to have warmed to me a bit now, and we had quite an interesting talk about engines for a few minutes. I thanked him once again, and I left Bank Hall with the advice that if I came again and asked for Mr. I would be allowed to go around the shed. I was feeling on top of the world now, shed number two (2/A) was crossed off my list, and all was well.

TO BE CONTINUED.

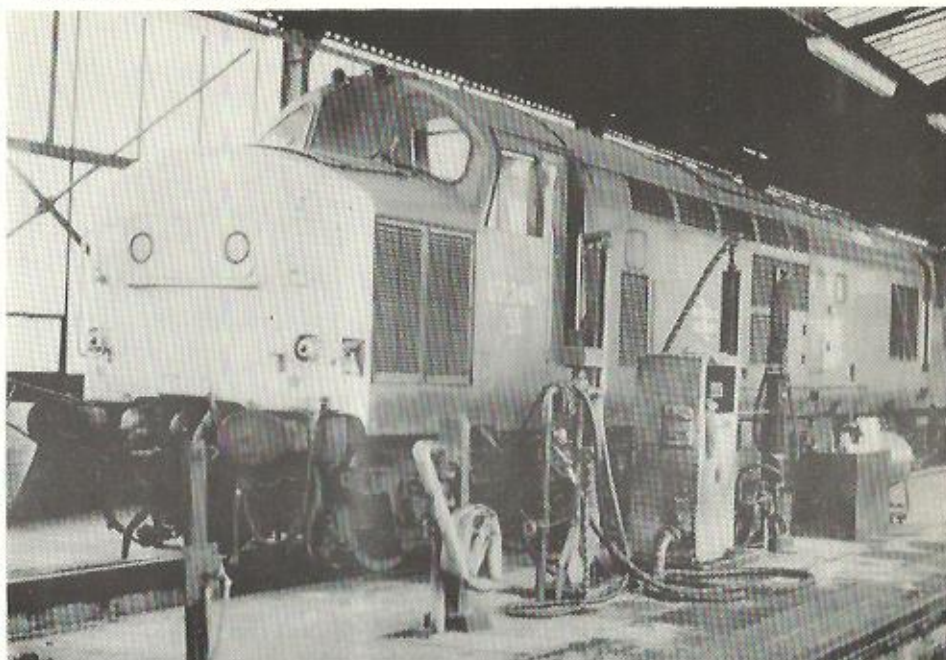
PACIFICS AT CHESTER - OCTOBER 1984.



Above: L.N.E.R. A3 Pacific 4472 Flying Scotsman. Below: S.R. Merchant Navy Pacific 35028 Clan Line with the Welsh Marches Express. (Photos: M. Lenz.)



CLASS 37's AT REST.



Above: 37.246 inside the shed at Shirebrook, 12/2/84. Below: 37.264 in revised livery on Eastfield MPD, 22/4/84. (Photos - M. Lenz.)



FIXTURES LIST FOR 1985.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| January 8th: | Mr. R. Nicholas - Film Presentation. |
| February 12th: | Mr. D. Poole - Slide Presentation on B.R. Steam. |
| March 12th: | Mr. D. Mosley - More from the N.R.M. Archives. |
| April 9th: | Mr. M. Draper - Talk on the Severn Valley Railway. |
| May 14th: | Mr. B. Dobbs - Slide Presentation. |
| June 11th: | To be confirmed. |
| July 9th: | Member's Meeting - Quiz and/or member's slides. |
| August 13th: | Informal Meeting at the Lion & Railway Hotel, Northwich. |
| September 10th: | Mr. G. Lilleker - Talk on the Advance Passenger Train. |
| October 8th: | To be confirmed. |
| November 12th: | To be confirmed. |
| December 10th: | A.G.M. and Member's Social Meeting. |

All the above fixtures will be held at the Red Lion Hotel, Runcorn Road, Barnton near Northwich, except where indicated otherwise, and will start at 8.00pm prompt. Refreshments will be available during the evening.

The following bodies have been approached to fill those dates above marked 'To be confirmed'; The Western Locomotive Association, The 6000 Locomotive Association and Venice Simplon Orient-Express Limited but at the time of writing these dates had still to be agreed by the parties concerned.

REVEREND RAILWAYMEN? By I.J. Hutchings.

"Why is it that so many clergy seem to be interested in railways?" is a question I face either from railway enthusiasts who discover I am a vicar or from clergy who rumble my railway interests. They cite examples from Bishop Eric Treacy, whose eminent photographic work needs no comment from me, to the Rev'd W. Awdrey, whose creations include Thomas the Tank Engine and his 'friends'. My college days are peppered with clergy with an interest in the railway - I was even reprimanded by a tutor once for not being a member of the Great Western Society, just because I had a GWS poster on my door!

Nor is the clerical interest in railways anything new. In 'Red for

Danger', J.T.C. Rolt describes a high speed derailment at Wigan in 1893, and refers to the evidence of one Rev'd C.W. Dod at the subsequent enquiry. Although Dod's view did not prevail, we are told that he was "a keen student of railways, ... who frequently amused himself by timing the speeds of trains." Rolt comments that the love of railways which so many pillars of the established church display is no recent phenomenon!

But it seems to go back further. Looking at the guest list at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, we find no less than the Bishop of Lichfield. Just a courtesy to an eminent member of society, we assume - but Liverpool and all stations to Manchester were, in 1830, in the diocese of Chester, not Lichfield. So why the Bishop of Lichfield rather than the Bishop of Chester? I can only guess that the former Bishop displayed some kind of interest in this new-fangled means of transport that the Bishop of Chester just could not arouse. Be it said that the current Bishop of Chester would undoubtedly have been present if he had been around at the time - he has to content himself with opening the new power signal box at Chester!

We seem to have clergy interest from day one, which still continues. The Vicar in the Titfield Thunderbolt is not the only one who might be caught reading a railway journal in his study. But why? What is it that draws so many clergy like a powerful magnet? Is it something about the power of a steam loco in full spate? Is it the mechanical intricacy of train control? Perhaps it is because railway practice is a rich source of illustrative material for sermons!

Honestly, the best theory I've heard so far comes from our friend the Rev'd W. Awdrey, who says it's something to do with the fact that the Christian faith and railways are marvellous ways of getting to wonderful places!

EDITOR'S FOOTNOTE.

With regard to the previous article it would seem apparent that not only are many clergy interested in railways, but that quite a number of

them also share a considerable interest in railway modelling. Mention was made of the Rev'd W. Awdrey and this gentleman is a good example of what I mean. Whilst assisting members of the Macclesfield Model Railway Group with one of their layouts at an exhibition in Nottingham a few years back, I had the good fortune to meet the Rev'd Awdrey, for he was also exhibiting a layout based upon his story books at the same exhibition, and it was proving most popular with the children present.

I recall my grandfather (a church organ builder and repairer by trade) telling me of a vicar whose model railway covered the entire house on one floor with the walls between rooms having tunnels in them! It would seem that both enthusiasts and modellers have the blessings from on high!

SOLUTION TO RAILWAY CROSSINGS NUMBER 10.

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Alan Ashurst's article on the sidings which connect with the "Low Level" line underneath the present Wilderspool road bridge brought back many memories of this once busy and important line. Yes, Greenhall's brewery was connected - and I can recall the brewery horses pulling wagon loads of grain across the then tramlines in Wilderspool Causeway right into the brewery itself. Not only grain, but rail wagons loaded with empty barrels for replenishing at source. Not once a month - but almost a daily occurrence.

Then before the Warrington Corporation Electricity Works was taken over by Manweb, shunting was a daily routine in the sidings and often long lengths of 10 ton open trucks with their various company or private markings were to be seen. And on the morning of Warrington's annual walking day sets of third class coaches were lined up awaiting a loco from Dallas to draw them into Arpley Station to carry the hundreds of Sunday School children for their annual outing to Norton (now Runcorn East), Frodsham, Helsby or Dunham Hill. The empty stock would come down the bank from Manchester on the Wednesday or Thursday before the great day.

The "low level" line wasn't to main line standard but it was a railway very much so, with the many freights and four-coach passenger trains coming and going every half-hour or so - much to the dismay of the poor cyclists and tram drivers who strained eyes up at the large Wilderspool box, elevated on girders and situated between the present road bridge and the iron river bridge. A cranking of signal levers and a wheel likened to a ship's steering wheel was manhandled to operate the gates for the passing of every train. I used to stand on the long-removed footbridge and await the 5.30pm ex London Road, due in Arpley at 6.17pm. The loco came down the bank bunker/tender first and if the 'peg' was off it really shuddered as it passed over the tram lines at the crossing, and with application of the brakes and entry onto the iron river bridge, a rumble was heard that had to be experienced in order to be believed.

But I'm wandering off - the two platforms at Arpley Station were quite wide apart and connected for passengers by a footbridge. Between the 'up' and 'down' lines were two centre 'roads', buffered about 20 yards short of the river bridge. These were invariably used for the stabling of empty stock. One train which always rested here was what was termed the "Dance Train", ie, the 10.50pm ex London Road which terminated at Arpley at 11.37pm. This train conveyed many passengers who went into the large dance halls in the city every night, and quite often was full as far as Broadheath - tapering off at Dunham Massey, Heatley & Warburton, Lymm, Thelwall (always announced as "City"), Latchford and Arpley. Here windows on both sides had to be closed, if left open, before drawing forward to Slutcher's Lane - then back into middle road, lights out, douse the tail lamp, await the fireman uncoupling the loco - and 'right away' Dallam!

Oh yes, full of interest - no peeping round the brake door and two on the bell. Incidentally, no parcels traffic was carried on this train, though on all others parcels were very heavy, especially the 4.15pm from Bank Quay Low Level bay platform. As well as many passengers heavy parcel and newspapers were carried. This and the 5.18pm to London Road carried many of Crosfield's office staff who lived at Thelwall or Lymm - and of course the 4.15 went right on to Whalley Bridge. Warrington guards in the thirties had plenty of work - there were two top links and the goods guards worked some excursions - and a porter/guard was always available should a man not turn up!

Bank Quay woke up at 5.00am those days - and one could travel to Liverpool Lime Street from either High or Low Level platforms. The same applied to Manchester - High Level to Exchange, Low Level to London Road.

In 1939 there were 18 departures daily from Bank Quay Low Level to Manchester, the last one at 11.55pm being the Normanton Mail. On Sundays there were just three departures. Arrivals from London Road numbered 15 daily with arrival at Arpley being some two minutes earlier.

Departures from Low Level to Lime Street via Ditton numbered 15 with

arrivals numbering 16. The last train departed Lime Street at 10.40pm arriving at Low Level at 11.12pm giving a 32 minutes start to stop time with a heavy train!

And so I could go on - but perhaps I have allowed pen to run to paper too easily. Nevertheless, it will soon become plain that with the aforementioned comings and goings Bank Quay Low Level was a busy place and I will never forget the rugby match at Leeds, the date of which escapes me, but sixteen specials were fully booked for Leeds. Nine went High Level and seven went from Low Level, and to see those departures was a sight not to be forgotten.

High Level had its early departures too with trains to Manchester Exchange at 2.15am, then 6.15 and 7.20am; to Lime Street at 5.22am, 7.05 and 7.40am; to Wigan at 5.22am, 6.06am, 7.20 and 7.40am; to Chester at 7.27am, 8.10 and 8.50am; to Crewe at 6.54am, 7.50 and 8.08am; to St. Helens at 5.22am, 7.20am, 7.40 and 8.19am (these trains via Earlestown) whilst there were trains to St. Helens via Low Level and Widnes, Appleton, Clock Face, Sutton Oak and Peasley Cross; to Leigh, Tyldesley and Bolton (Gt. Moor Street) at 6.15am, 7.05am, 7.20 and 8.30am. And with these departures, plus arrivals, as well as the main line services - Warrington Bank Quay High and Low Level were certainly "on the map" so to speak. Warrington Arpley was staffed - Booking Clerk and Station Staff - and there was always a good fire in a clean and well-cared for waiting room. Yes, happy days. Plenty of fire and water - and much, much more - interest and pride in the job!

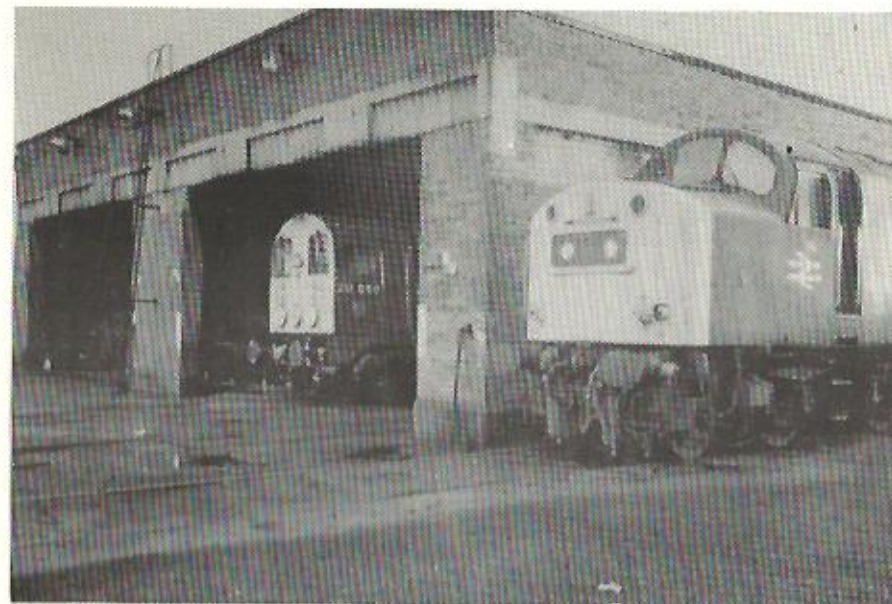
FOOTNOTE:

Action Grange and Frodsha Junction signal boxes received their daily papers via the Guard of the 7.26am to Chester. A spot-on throw to the foot of the signal box steps did the trick!

DEADLINE DATE FOR MAGAZINE NUMBER 17 (SPRING 1985 ISSUE).

All contributions should arrive no later than the 7th of March.

NORTHWICH SHED - SATURDAY 10TH NOVEMBER 1984.



Despite being only a fortnight from closure, the following locos were on shed; 08.694, 20.045/060/073/162 and 40.160/181. (Photos - M. Lenz.)



THE 8E SERVICING TEAM IN ACTION.

Saturday September 29th saw both L.N.E.R. A3 Pacific 4472 Flying Scotsman and S.R. Merchant Navy Pacific 35028 Clan Line visiting Chester at the same time. The usual 8E servicing team was in attendance as the photos below and opposite show and also present was the small sales stand jointly shared with the Llangollen Railway, the takings from which were a welcome boost to our funds.

Below: Messrs. Buckley and Worrall man the standpipe. As can be seen we have yet to introduce one man operation! (Photo - M. Lenz.)



Above: Many hands make light work - or so they say! Below: Messrs. Bellass, Harris, Kerry & Roughsedge try to look as if they know what they are doing! (Photos - M. Lenz.)



PASSING SCENES OF BRITISH RAILWAYS.

Alas, the scene below is no longer with us, for with the commissioning of the power signalbox at Chester earlier in the year, all the old type boxes ceased operation. Here we see the interior of the old L.N.W.R. Chester No. 2 Signalbox during the visit by a party of 8E members. Note that there were still a considerable number of levers still in use at this time, 17/3/84. (Photo - M. Lenz.)



TOURS PROGRAMME FOR 1985.

The following is the provisional programme of tours for 1985, but in order for these tours to go ahead your support is needed. During 1984 it would seem to be mostly Warrington members who have participated and it would be pleasing to see more faces from amongst the Northwich members as these tours are organised for the benefit of all 8E members, and not just those from Warrington!

FEBRUARY: THE DONCASTER DIPPER II.

A one day tour visiting the following MPDs; Tinsley, Barrow Hill, Shirebrook, Worksop, Doncaster and Knottingley.

APRIL: THE CABER TOSSER.

A four day tour during Easter weekend to Scotland visiting the following MPDs; Motherwell, Fort William, Inverness, Ferryhill (Aberdeen), Dundee, Perth, Thornton Junction, Dunfermline Townhill, Haymarket, Millerhill, Eastfield, Polmadie, Ayr, Carstairs, Grangemouth, Falkirk and also Glasgow Works.

MAY: THE MANXMAN.

A weekend tour to the Isle of Man whereupon arrival all participants are free to do as they wish, e.g. visit bus depots, railways, pubs etc..

JULY: THE VALLEYS WANDERER.

A weekend tour to South Wales visiting the following MPDs; Landore, Margam, Radyr, Pantyffynnon, Barry, Cardiff Canton, Severn Tunnel Junction, Bristol and Westbury.

AUGUST/

SEPTEMBER: THE EAST ANGLIAN.

A weekend tour by rail to Ipswich then a "Freedom of East Anglia" Rover Ticket for the following day. (NOTE: This is the tour carried over from the 1984 programme.)

For further information contact the Tours Officer, Alan Bennett.

BOOK NEWS.

As might be expected, the end of the year sees quite a number of new titles appearing, something to do with Christmas I think! Ian Allan continue to release a considerable number of books on a regular basis, whilst the likes of OPC and Jane's release fewer titles and not quite as often.

Taking Ian Allan first of all, a book which should be of interest to 8E members is The Cheshire Lines Committee Then and Now by Nigel Dyckhoff at £6.95. Whilst primarily a pictorial book, there is a short history at the beginning of the book, but I can recommend it to all as there are many excellent pictures, some provided by local railwayman Wilf Egerton, with whom some of our members are acquainted. There are a number of photos of Northwich itself both in steam and diesel days. Of interest to fans of Western Region steam is Plymouth Steam 1954-1963 by Ian H. Lane at £6.95. This title looks at steam in and around Plymouth and also such branches as those to Princeton, Kingsbridge, Yealmpton and Callington. The book does not just cover the western region lines but also those of the southern, whose presence in steam days was quite substantial. For those interested in stations, especially railway modellers of the Great Western/BR Western steam eras then GWR Country Stations: 2 by Chris Leigh at £6.95 will be most welcome. This book follows on from volume one but has more in the way of pictorial content, as well as numerous scale drawings in 2 and 4mm scales (N and OO Gauge). For modern image fans as well as modellers of the present day railscene, the next in the Rolling Stock Recognition series; No. 3 Departmental Stock by Colin J. Marsden at £4.95 is a must. The book follows the format of earlier titles in the series with photos of all the various vehicles currently in use with BR.

Amongst the new titles from OPC are Power of the Class 31s by Brian Morrison at £9.95, a price which seems to me to be a bit excessive when one considers there is no colour content within the book. The fourth edition of the OPC Rail Atlas has also recently appeared at £5.95. For steam enthusiasts OPC have recently reprinted several of the Steam Power

Series books including Power of the A1s, A2s and A3s, Power of the A4s and Power of the Standard Pacifics at £8.95, £7.95 and £7.95 respectively. For those interested in southern steam then the following title is a must, The Southern West of Salisbury at £7.95.

As one can see there is quite a varied selection of new books which should help to provide a few stocking fillers!

EDITOR'S NOTE.

In the Autumn Issue of the magazine I mentioned that the Association is putting together an illustrated talk that can be given to other groups or societies, and I asked members for any slides/photos of local railway scenes to be sent to us for copies to be made from them. The response so far has been minimal, yet I am sure there are many of you who have items which are just the thing that we are looking for. So come on, send us your slides or photos, we will take good care of them and return them to you as soon as copies have been made. I would especially like to receive photos or slides taken at the 1980 Open Day which show the double-heading of Black Five 5000 and the Class 25 on the I.C.I. hoppers, or did this event go un-photographed?

TOURS REPORT: 1. By M. Lenz.

Friday 12th October, 6.00pm. There I was stood awaiting the minibus that was to take me for my first tour of the London sheds, sorry, MPDs. There was no way I could mistake the 8E minibus from any other for as it approached there, for all to see, in the front window was a headboard proclaiming this to be 'Auntie Janes Therapeutic Outing II'. Well what else can you expect from a bunch of Warrington suspects? Having squeezed into the small opening that passed for a seat, we set off. We had not been going long when a certain Mr. Healey uttered those immortal words, 'I don't feel well.' This did not please our driver, Big Al, since he was sat alongside this gentleman and directly in the firing line, so to speak! Nevertheless we continued on our journey via the M6 and M1 motorways,

breaking the journey at Watford Gas services, so as to stretch our legs and attend to the call of nature. Several members of the party headed for the shop and emerged with crisps, sweets, cans of pop etc. Surprise, surprise, so did Mr. Healey, who then spent the next part of the journey consuming all he had bought. So much for not feeling well!

Our hotel was in Kensington and with some expert navigation from Alan Ashurst, and one or two U-turns from Big Al, we all arrived in one piece. Now the fun started, for on checking in at the hotel they claimed to know nothing of our booking and Big Al spent the next half hour or so getting the matter sorted out. Meanwhile we had all noticed an unusually large number of Pakistani/Indians moving about the place, and we were starting to wonder about the sort of hotel this was. Eventually things were sorted out and then we all dispersed to our rooms to freshen up before meeting again in the lobby to discuss the plans for the remainder of the evening. Now Kensington is not exactly the hive of activity and excitement one might expect so Alan Ashurst, Stephen Marsh and myself left the others to look for a suitable hostelry whilst we headed for the underground station and a train to Picadilly Circus and the bright lights of the West End. We wandered around admiring the sights and more besides, before catching the last underground train back to Kensington.

Saturday was to be spent visiting the various motive power depots around London, the number visited depending upon our ability to find them whilst negotiating the traffic and various weird and wonderful one-way systems. Our first port of call was south of the Thames at Stewarts Lane, where there is both an MPD for the electro-diesels as well as a carriage shed for multiple unit stock. It is also here that the stock for the Venice Simplon Orient-Express Pullman train is maintained and whilst we could not go around the carriage shed, it was possible to see the stock from the footbridge nearby. From here we headed back north of the Thames to Ripple Lane, Parking, but here we were refused entry, although we were able to see the majority of the locos anyway. We then made our way to Stratford Works where we had an appointment for 11.00am, and although we

arrived early we were able to go around earlier as our guide had just finished taking the previous party round the works.

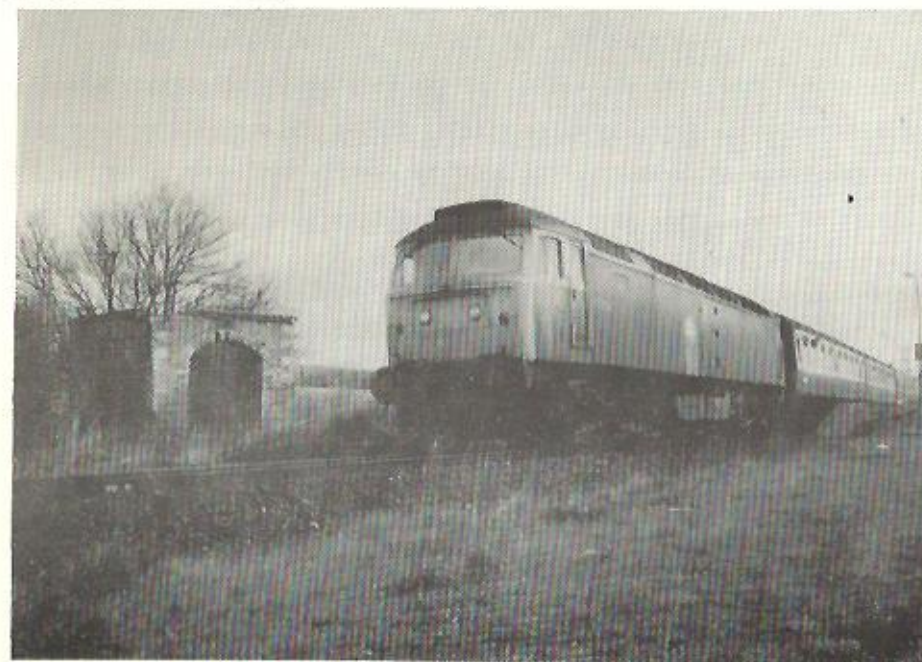
From Stratford we then had to make our way to Cricklewood in north London, with a stop en route for some refreshments, both liquid and solid! It was on this part of our journey that we lost time for we were held up by the queues of traffic on the North Circular Road. We were not allowed around Cricklewood, nor Willesden which was next on our list, so it was off to Old Oak Common, and here we were able to gain access. By this time the light was fading fast and as the remaining sheds were now all south of the Thames it was decided to call it a day and return to the hotel.

On the way back to the hotel Alan Ashurst suggested a trip on the new Gatwick Express service before going into the town and so once back at the hotel the plans for the evening were finalised. Several of the party were in favour of the run to Gatwick Airport, myself included, and so after a freshen up we all met in the hotel lobby before setting off. Upon our arrival we all made for the main airport buildings where we were able to partake of some refreshments before catching the train back to town. We again spent the evening around the West End, and that particular area known as Soho seemed a popular spot! We caught the last underground train back to Kensington but when we arrived at the hotel we found that the evening was only just beginning for a party was being held in one of our rooms by the remaining members of the party, with a couple of exceptions, Mr. Healey being one of them. The party was quite lively as one might expect with the likes of Big Al in attendance, and at one stage several members (no names mentioned!) disappeared for a while and attempted to lift the bed and one Dave Healey, out into the corridor, alas without success. Although I believe he did wake up to find an assortment of cans and bottles filling his bed! Even after the party had finished and most of those present had returned to their rooms, certain of my fellow room-mates continued the festivities, one even being so bold as to pose naked on the balcony outside, although the cold night air was seen to have an effect upon him after a while!

Next day we were to visit the remaining London MPDs at Hither Green and Selhurst before heading for Eastleigh and then onto the Mid-Hants Railway. We were unable to gain access to either of the two London MPDs and so we made for the motorway, and thence to Eastleigh where we had a permit for the depot, but not the works unfortunately. We then headed for Alresford and the Mid-Hants, where we arrived just in time to see the ex-L.S.W.R. T9 4-4-0 departing, so we decided to head for the next station along the line, and try to catch the train there. We found the village of Ropley easy enough, but we missed the turning for the station and the next thing we knew we were approaching Medstead and Four Marks, the present end of the line. Since the shed is at Ropley we did a U-turn and headed back for Ropley, and this time we found the station. Unfortunately we did not have sufficient time to ride on the line, but we did look around the shed, which seemed full of Bulleid Pacifics and not much more. The two War Department locos recently brought from Greece were receiving attention in the yard outside the shed. We just had enough time to see the two trains operating that day cross each other in the station at Ropley, one headed by the T9 and the other by the newly restored BR Standard Class 4MT 2-6-0 number 76017, and a superb sight they both made. After a quick look around the station itself it was back to the minibus for the long journey home. It was decided to head back via London, but not through the centre of the city, instead by way of Heathrow to regain the M1 motorway at Watford. We again made a stop at one of the service areas for refreshments and to stretch our legs before completing the final leg of the journey home.

All in all an excellent weekend. Thanks must go to Big Al for his excellent organisation and also for doing all the driving, often under the strain of much verbal abuse from other members of the party who were out of his reach! Whilst this report has already filled over three pages there are many amusing incidents that have been left out and on quickly glancing through I realise that I may even have forgotten to mention the odd shed that we visited, but then, unlike Alan Ashurst, I do not keep an accurate record of events, but rely on my memories instead!

BRITISH RAIL PHOTOCALL.



Above: 47.274 departs Keith with a train for Inverness, 21/4/84. Below: 20.148 awaits its next turn of duty on Ayr MPD, 22/4/84. (Photos - M. Lenz.)



A PRELUDE TO G.W.R. 150?

Whilst 1985 sees the 150th celebrations of the Great Western Railway, 1984 marked the 125th anniversary of the completion of Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash, which finally linked the Cornwall Railway with the Great Western system and is still in regular use today, alas, no longer by steam. This view taken from the Devon side of the Tamar with the newer road bridge behind. (Photo - M. Lenz.)



TOURS REPORT: 2. By M. Lenz.

Yes folks, it's me again. The only Northwich SE member suspect enough to go on the tours! Well this time it was a one day tour by coach to the East Coast called 'The Humberider' and would hopefully visit the various MPDs around Hull and some parts of Yorkshire. Departure from Northwich was 7.00am on Sunday 2nd December and thence to Warrington to pick up the remainder of the participants. Our driver was a fellow rail enthusiast and this was to be his third SE tour, so this trip was something of a busman's holiday for him.

Our first stop was to be Knottingley where we were unable to go round, but we managed to see most of the locos from the top of the bank alongside the depot. When we set off from Warrington the weather was clear and dry, but on crossing the Pennines into Yorkshire we ran into thick mist, which persisted for the remainder of the day, until we crossed back over the Pennines again, however the rain kept away till we got back to Manchester, so things were not too bad. From Knottingley we made for Goole and then onto Hull Botanic Gardens MPD where we had a permit for our visit. From Hull we then retraced our route as far as the new Humber Bridge which we were to cross in order to visit Immingham depot. We again had a permit to visit this depot where we found a substantial number of locos, and where the old locomotive coaling plant still stands! From Immingham we headed for Scunthorpe and Frodingham MPD, where we again had a permit for our visit. After Frodingham our last destination was Tinsley MPD near Sheffield but by the time we left Frodingham a refreshment stop was due so Geoff Tucker consulted his CAMRA Good Beer Guide and a suitable place to stop was chosen. It was whilst we were all partaking of some liquid refreshment that Dave, our driver, took the opportunity to change one of the coach tyres which had a slow puncture. It was then on to Tinsley where we found a large number of locos on the depot. From there we headed back home via Woodhead, but by this time it was dark and nothing could be seen of the old railway.

Once again an excellent day was had by all.

The event that we in the Association had long been expecting, namely the closing of Northwich shed, came to pass on November 26th. Following the winding up of the Northwich Area Manager's organisation in October, events moved swiftly and almost immediately BR put forward a 26th of November closure date. However, we were all somewhat surprised by the Union's acceptance of the closure proposals with almost indecent haste, most unusual with depot closure plans which are usually fought against for many months, if not years. The shed remained busy right up to the end, there being no gradual run-down. On the night of our last coach work-in (20th November) there were five locos and a 2-car DMU on shed with two more locos arriving during the evening. These were in fact my last loco sightings at '8E' as I was unable to attend on the last weekend due to ill health. Nevertheless several members were present on that final weekend when there were some ten locomotives present, including two Class 25s. Many of these locos were still present as the light began to fade on the Sunday afternoon and there was little to convey the impending closure. However, all the locos were to depart during the course of Sunday night and early Monday morning, the last departure understood to be a pair of Class 20s, since when the building has stood gaunt and empty, save only for our own coach. The local Class 08 shunter continues to be stabled on the headshunt behind the T.C.I. office, the latter building remaining in use until the 17th December, when facilities were transferred across to the station. Rumours continue to circulate about the fate of the shed but recent conversations with BR representatives would suggest that no immediate change to the status of the building is on the cards, and our tenancy agreement for stabling the coach is not currently in jeopardy. The work previously done by Northwich based crews has been split around the following depots; Warrington, Buxton, Crewe, Chester and Garston, and those not opting for retirement/redundancy have been thus transferred. Those opting to finish their careers will remain based at Northwich until early Spring 1985. We will have to wait and see what the future brings,

but let us hope it will be a fairly positive one, although even if a use is found either by BR or in preservation the atmosphere will never be quite the same as when it was an operational shed.

Elsewhere on the railway scene, as Autumn turns to winter without any major developments to report, the only subject which comes to mind is that of the rather alarming number of accidents which appear to be happening of late. To be fair, rather a false impression has been created by the media who, at times, seem to revel in BR's misfortunes. The overall level of accidents is probably no greater at present than at any other time; the unfortunate aspect bringing these events to more prominence being the regrettable loss of life involved, and the often spectacular nature of the crashes, as with the recent one alongside the motorway just to the east of Eccles when 'Peak' 45.147, working 1E79 10.05 L'pool Lime Street-Scarborough, ran into the rear of the 6E85 08.45 Stanlow-Leeds oil train, previously halted at signals. The driver of the 'Peak' and one passenger were unfortunately killed, but in view of the location and the trains involved it must be said that it could have been much worse. Just recall for a minute the appalling accident on the M25 motorway a few days later, when nine people died in a pile-up in thick fog, and reflect upon the many thousands of passengers that BR carries perfectly safely in similar conditions.

On the general BR motive power scene the Class 46 locomotives have been reported as extinct with effect from November, and the Class 40 fleet stumbles on towards the same goal, with less than 20 machines active by the turn of the year. Class 25 work is also rapidly draining away in favour of Classes 20/31/37 operation, although as the remaining Class 25s are to be concentrated on Crewe, they are likely to remain operative in the North West for some time yet. On the 'new build' front, BRIL Crewe released its last Class 56 during late November in the new 'Railfreight' Grey/Red livery, more common to the Doncaster-built

Class 58s. This last Class 56 has gone to Gateshead Depot and rumour rife at Crews suggest this could be the last mainline diesel to be built there, with the current interest in General Motors products being shown by both BR Management and the Government. At Doncaster, recently outshopped 58.020 has been named after this BREL Works and at the same time an order was announced for a small follow-up batch of these locos.

A preliminary move in the 'buying from outside' field has in fact already been made, with a decision that could well set a precedent for future semi-privatisation. BR (WR) is on the verge of giving the go-ahead for Foster Yeoman to purchase and operate four high powered General Motors diesels, for use on BR main lines between the company's Merehead Stone Quarries in Somerset and various terminals in London and the South East. Whilst purchased and owned by Foster Yeoman, these machines will be crewed and maintained by BR personnel, whose services Foster Yeoman's will effectively 'hire' to drive and repair their locos. They are sure to provide an interesting sight on the West of England main line when they eventually enter service, which judging by the speed of turnaround of orders from General Motors should not be very far into the future.

On the local steam preservation scene activities at Dinting include work on 'Jubilee' 4-6-0 45596 Bahamas, now dismantled for restoration, and the painting, in black, of ex-Great Central R.O.D. (04 Class) 2-8-0 63601. A4 Pacific 60019 remains devoid of identity except for 'Bittern' nameplates and retains a coat of red oxide paint. All other machines are quite presentably displayed, including the LNWR Webb Coal Tank 1054 (BR 58926) which has now returned to Dinting after summer duty on the Wilsons Brewery Specials from Manchester Victoria. This loco is likely to be used at the Dinting Centre over the Christmas holiday period.

Most private railways, at the time of writing, are busily engaged on the 'Santa' Special workings which are now widespread around most steam

centres and provide welcome extra revenue in the 'off' season. These types of services were pioneered by the Worth Valley Line in the early 1970s, and they now do very good business in this respect, with advance booking essential on the pre-Christmas Sundays when these trains run. The Worth Valley is maintaining a year-round Saturday service this year, to be worked during December/January/February by the two railbuses which have now been in Worth Valley hands for longer than they were owned by BR. These two machines celebrated their 25th Birthday during 1983 and provide a novel travel experience (and also a fine view) when in use on the KWVR. A visit on Saturday 8th December found railbus M79964, in its original BR green livery, operating the service and being well patronised. All the 'big' locos were present, although none were in steam, and 'City of Wells', 43924, (4)8431 and 75078 created quite an 'S & D' atmosphere at Haworth New Shed where they were all stabled.

And now to finish, some "Stop Press" steam news! A full programme for the Spring/early Summer 1985 SLOA (and others) operations is currently being put together and many notable new developments are in store. Specials on a semi-regular basis look set to operate out of London Marylebone with, initially, 'Sir Nigel Gresley' and later, our old friend, 'Leander' in charge. There are to be events on the Carlisle-Newcastle-Teeside group of lines, with 'Clan Line' and the 'Duchess' featuring, the latter engine will also be going to Scotland for Edinburgh-Perth/Stirling duties. BR Standard Class 4 4-6-0 75069 is to work in the Hereford and Gloucester areas and greater use is to be made of routes radiating from Manchester Victoria. In connection with the last item, we have been advised that 'Clan Line' will visit Northwich in late February when we will be required to provide coal and water. The visit is, however, likely to be a short one and will probably occur during the hours of darkness. Nevertheless, let us hope that this is a good omen for 1985, and that we have a steamier year at Northwich than that of 1984, so we are keeping our fingers crossed!

STEAM AT NORTHWICH - FEBRUARY 1985.

Mention has already been made in the 'Members Briefing' of the visit to Northwich of Merchant Navy Pacific 35028 *Clan Line*, the following being the situation at the time of writing. We have been informed by BR's Steam Liaison Officer, David Ward, that '*Clan Line*' is scheduled to lay over at Northwich for several hours during the early morning of Saturday 23rd February, in order to receive coal and water and to have her fire cleaned whilst en route to Manchester Victoria in order to work a special to Carlisle. We are at present in contact with the Chairman of the MNLPS regarding the necessary final arrangements that need to be made, and further details will be given to members at the monthly meeting in February.

IN THE SPRING 1985 ISSUE.

Due to pressure of space this issue, several features have had to be withheld including the next in the 'Lure of the Scrapyards' series, which will now appear in the Spring issue. There will be a further instalment of John Little's 'Liverpool Sheds - By Bicycle' article plus all the regular features such as Committee Matters, British Rail Photocall, Members Briefing etc..

PHOTO FEATURE.

Members may have noticed that the locos featured over the last two issues have been getting smaller, and this issue is no exception! The two photos opposite show examples of 3mm Scale (TT Gauge) railway modelling and show both kit-bashed and kit-built models. This scale is no longer available commercially, but secondhand models are readily to be had, as well as kits and bits necessary for scratchbuilding.

Top Right: BR Standard Class 5 4-6-0 73051 passes a BRCW 3-car DMU.
Right: Bulleid 'West Country' Class Light Pacific 34007 Wadebridge passes the signalbox light engine. (Photos - M. Lenz.)

