



ON SHED

The Magazine of the 8E Association



Issue 40

Summer 1995

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COVER PICTURES

- FRONT:** With a strong 8E connection at Llangollen, it seemed appropriate to allow the Flying Scotsman the privilege of carrying the Northwich shedplate before it left. Tom Walton is captured replacing 34A (King's Cross) with the 8E plate. Welsh Channel 4 TV filmed the run to Deeside Halt and return, unaware that they were recording a piece of history. (March 1st, 1995)
- BACK:** Even the swans turned out to watch Ivatt 2-6-0 No.46441 (and diesel companion) crossing Northwich viaduct, (photographed from Hunts Locks), on the outward leg of the Stockport - Chester and return diner, promoted as a route 'tester' by Waterman Railways, on Sunday 26th March. Sadly, the Saturday evening run was cancelled due to low bookings - hardly surprising at a reported £59 per head!

(both pictures : Alan Carr)

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Summer edition of the 8E magazine. I hope that you will find it interesting and useful in helping to plan your Summer excursions. The fine recent weather will hopefully continue, and we can all pursue our interests more comfortably. Alan Carr has put his computer expertise at our disposal, and is responsible for the improvements in clarity and presentation. I am also grateful for his photographs of current railway activities. Recent speakers at our meetings have been excellent, with more to come. Details of these and all local events can be found inside this magazine. As always, I welcome any suggestions to improve the magazine still further.

Paul.

TECHNICAL NOTES

This is the first 8E magazine to have been completely desktop published. I hope that it meets with our readership's approval. For the computer buffs who may be interested, the programs used were 'WORD for WINDOWS' and Microsoft PUBLISHER, using a 486 PC with a DeskJet printer and a black & white hand scanner.

Alan.

THE CENTRE SPREAD

We are most grateful to Dave Dyson for kindly providing us with a copy of his excellent shot of Northwich shed, taken in 1962. It is a marvellous pre-preservation record of the site from which our association takes its name, and we felt that we should do it justice by reproducing it as a glossy centrepiece.

View From The Chair

May heralds the Summer timetable. Will it bring more trains and more routes for more passengers? More freight perhaps? Maybe just the opposite! I don't know, and neither, I think, do our government. For them the way forward seems to be to fill our roads, towns and cities with smog producing buses and cars.

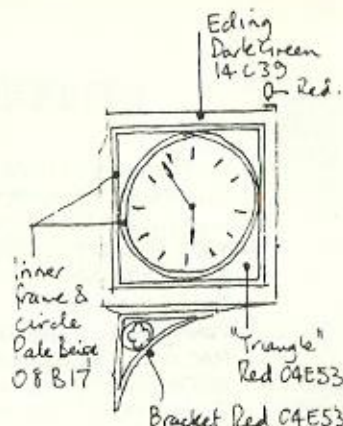
Recently I spent a day on the East Lancs Railway with Mike Lenz, Steve Blakemore and my son Steven. Getting there was very easy. We left the cars at Northwich and took the train to Altrincham, connecting with the Metrolink through Manchester to Bury - all for £6.50 return. Surely this is the way forward for city centres - frequent, pollution-free trams. Let's hope that other cities follow Manchester and Sheffield in creating an integrated transport system.

Waterman Railways have taken over the private charter reins, and I'm sure that we all hope that they get a return on their investment - I think they will find it tough, but that they will succeed in the end. One of their competitors, 'Days Out', has come up with some innovative routes. My concern is that there may not be enough customers for both companies. It will be an intriguing couple of years - there's no doubt about that.

On the 8E front we need to take steps to halt the decline of our membership. Why not bring friends or relatives along to our meetings and let them see what we have to offer. Your committee also thinks that we need a couple of projects for our members to get involved with. The Northwich station clock is likely to provide one opportunity, and there will be more.

Finally, I must comment on the high standard of our meetings recently, so come on, bring your friends - they won't be disappointed.

Colin Worrall



Back in January we had a meeting with Railtrack's Chris Chitty to discuss our proposal for restoring the station clock. His response was very encouraging, but we had to wait until 19th April for Railtrack's official reply in a letter which laid out their 'rules of play'.

Essentially, we had to agree to carry out the necessary restoration work and paint the clock housing to the architect's suggested colour scheme (see above illustration) whilst Railtrack would be responsible for the removal and re-erection of the clock, and the transport to and from our premises. We have agreed to all this, but have had to ask them to reconsider their opposition to protecting the restored clock against vandalism (e.g. perspex sheets covering both faces). We feel very strongly that it would be folly to return the clock in an unprotected state. All our labours would be very swiftly undone by the sad creatures who populate the station during unstaffed hours.

At the time of going to press we are awaiting Railtrack's response. No doubt we will soon be asking for volunteers to assist with this venture which should provide us with some valuable publicity. Interestingly, Railtrack continue to insist that the clock is mechanical. We know that it was converted to electrical operation some years ago and have re-iterated this in our recent letter.

AJC

TWO YEARS TO REMEMBER

Harry Watson will be a familiar face to most 8E members. He is the resident artist in Children's Corner at Crewe Heritage Centre. Harry spent 31 years in BR service, retiring in 1984. His first 2 years of service were spent at Whitchurch where he was a telegraph clerk and it was during this period that he produced the scraper board pictures reproduced with this article. Of these years (1953 - 55) Harry writes:

"Recollections of night duty in the tiny, gaslit, scruffy telegraph office - just me and mice for most of the night. The booking office closed at 10.00pm, so the telegraph clerk issued and collected tickets during the night. First train to be dealt with - Hereford to Crewe.

After departure of that train at 10.30pm, the shunter from the goods yard turned off all the gas lamps, and the station was left black and deserted, save the telegraph office. Here the clerk would occasionally be reporting trains from and to Crewe, Shrewsbury and Craven Arms using 'sounder' equipment invented even before morse code!

A quiet period this, and I might well be drawing and painting (see photo illustrations which were produced whilst working at Whitchurch). The 1.25am Crewe to Cardiff would tear through the station with lots of smoke and sparks flying, as if celebrating the long haul up Wrenbury bank.

Signs of life about 2.15am, gas lamps turned on and, at 2.35am, the 9.50pm York to Swansea steamed in. The odd passenger would join or leave - often fishermen loaded up with tackle and basket. Lots of activity now - unloading and loading of mail, newspapers, parcels and livestock. The shunter was busy uncoupling the Aberystwyth portion. The Swansea left at 2.43 and the Western Region engine for the 3.15 Aberystwyth, waiting patiently in the far platform, would come to life and back onto the vehicles left on the up main line.

Loading up continued, finally ready and departed 3.15 down the Cambrian branch - first stop Ellesmere, then Oswestry and on to Aberystwyth.

Back at Whitchurch - quiet now, but lots of parcels, newspapers, mail to bring over to the down platform. Also livestock - calves with legs tied in sacks, pigs in crates, day old chicks and racing pigeons. The parcels clerk would deal with all these when he arrived at 6.00am.

In the meantime there was only one place where all these living creatures could be accommodated, and that was the general waiting room, next to the telegraph office! The parcels clerk would clear the room, open all windows and brush up before passengers could venture into the bleak, cheerless room.

After departure of 3.15 train - peace again, except for animal noises next door. Gas lamps turned off and station back to sleep, leaving me to study 'Block Signalling', Parcels & Booking Office correspondence courses, and to carry on drawing. Occasionally a visitor about 4.00am, the local 'Bobby'. "Everything all right Sir?" I was not sure that everything was all right, as prowlers during the night would rest in any room that could be found. The telegraph office would be firmly locked and bolted!

Another visitor at that time - the shed fireman clocking on early to light fires on the engines on the small loco shed. He would stop for a chat and a brew.

In winter the telegraph office was a scruffy, but cosy and warm, little den with a gas fire and gas stove working on and off all night brewing up tea and keeping the place warm, even when the icy winds and snow swept between the platforms. It was the only habitable room during the night, and there were times when stranded passengers off the York train would spend several hours in the telegraph office, waiting for daylight before moving. No drawing those nights! The general waiting room was open all night, but with no light and no heating, not to mention the livestock, it was no place for humans!

Saturday night / Sunday turn was a different routine. A Chester train arrived 11.00pm. Tickets to collect and chaos for a few minutes. A wheezing, popping gas mantle the only light to see what tickets were being handed over.

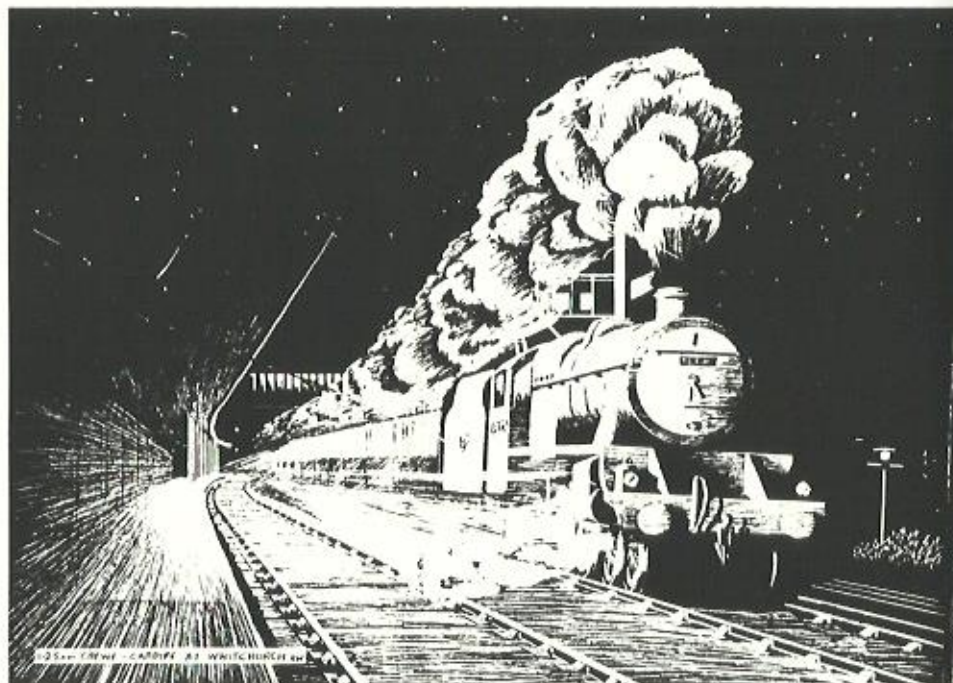
All the passengers came in a bunch, and there was no chance to see what was handed over until they had vanished into the night.

Sunday morning The 12.05am Cardiff to Liverpool stopped at Whitchurch about 4.00. I was ready. Telegraph office gas fire off, lights out, doors locked. Collect tickets from any passengers getting off, jump on train and away to Crewe. That was the end of a week's nights at Whitchurch.

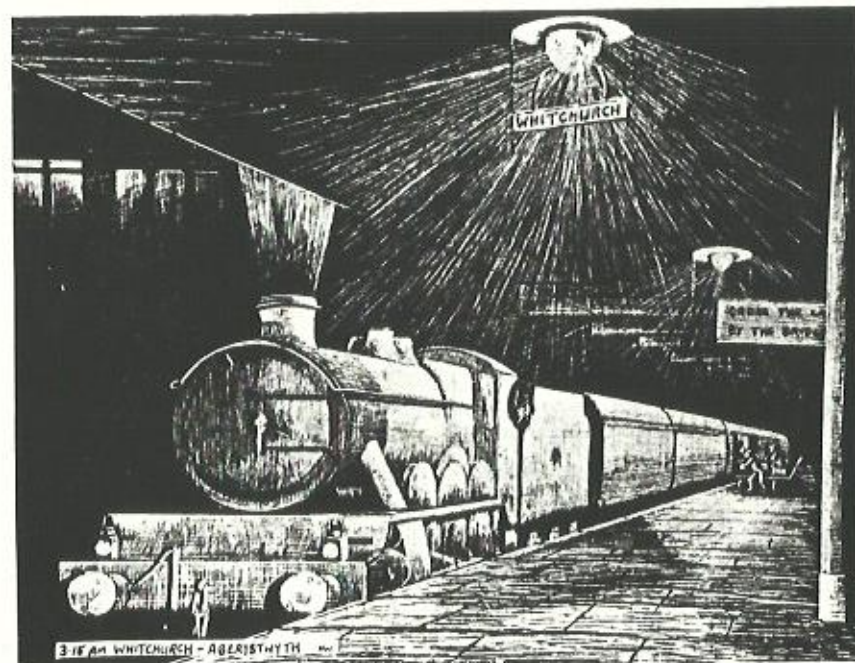
Those were just a few thoughts on the night shift - the day turn provided as much interest. This was the Railway, and life at a small station before Beeching cuts - before high technology and computers were heard of, and when railwaymen ran and worked the railway. A more interesting job could not have been found anywhere.

Now, Whitchurch is an unstaffed halt...!

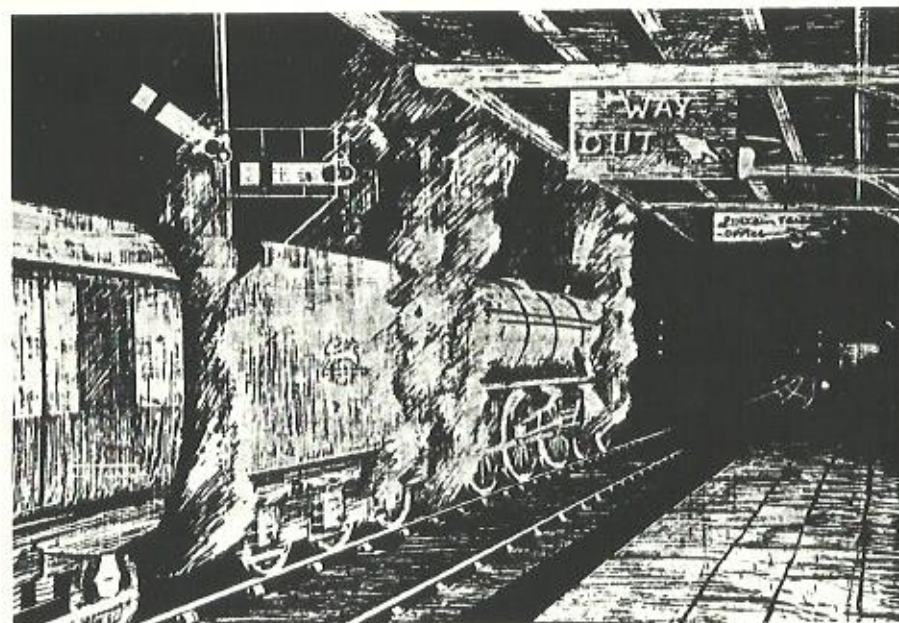
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The 1.25am Crewe - Cardiff at Whitchurch with lots of smoke and sparks flying.



3.15am Whitchurch - Aberystwyth (the Aberystwyth portion from the 9.50pm York - Swansea)



9.50pm York to Swansea Mail at Whitchurch

Sales Report

The first six months of the year have seen our sales stand at the usual swapmeet venues of Chester and Stoke-on-Trent where takings have been somewhat low, but, as reported in previous issues, our main source of sales income comes from the monthly National Model Railroad Association, British Region, Calder Northern Division meets at Broadheath, Altrincham. In addition to these monthly meets we have also attended the NMRA British Region Winter and Spring meets (held at Padgate & Stoke-on-Trent respectively) which have both provided excellent sales income.

I mentioned in previous magazine reports, and also in the last Annual Report, that I had been reducing the level of stock which the Association carried, as a result of comments made at previous AGMs. Unfortunately this does not appear to have been a wise move as it has resulted in considerably reduced takings. The result was that at several swapmeets towards the end of last year and the beginning of this year we failed to recover our fees for the event.

This downward trend in our sales income was discussed at a recent committee meeting and the unanimous decision was that we should increase our stocks to a more substantial level. This has now been done and has already resulted in greater income at recent swapmeets and NMRA meets.

At the time of writing we have just attended our first Model Railway Exhibition for a couple of years, this being a new event organised by Norton Cross Model Railway Group, held at The Railway Age, Crewe under the heading of Crewe International Model railway Exhibition. It proved reasonably successful for both ourselves and the organisers and hopefully will become a regular event.

I was also attending the exhibition with layout modules of my own (as part of the Calder Northern Division's modular layout) and would like to thank both Colin Worrall and Alan Ashurst for assistance over the weekend with transport, setting up and taking down sales and layout modules, and manning the sales stand. Thanks also to Geoff Meek and John Hey (Calder Northern Division members) who assisted with manning the sales stand during the weekend.

As you will see from the fixtures list, on the next page, we have a substantial programme of sales events for the remainder of this year, mostly NMRA events which are not usually open to the general public but at which guests are always made welcome. If you can spare the time and would like to help out with sales please let me know.

Mike Lenz

Membership Report

Six months into the current membership year our total membership stands at 58, of which 10 are life members. Overall our membership continues a slow decline. We have recently enrolled four new members, but more would be welcome. If every member were to introduce a friend or relative, with an interest in railways, to the Association we could bring our numbers back to the level it stood at five years ago.

Mike Lenz

Crewe Rail Fair 1995

AUGUST 27/28 BANK HOLIDAY
The largest (only?) open day this year!
Over 50 locos on display, various trade stands, steam and diesel hauled shuttle services in the Crewe area, numerous other attractions. The 8E Association will be represented at this Basford Hall Yard event, both with sales stand and display site stewarding. Contact Colin Worrall or Mike Lenz if you wish to be involved.

A.A.

Sales Fixture List



Saturday July 16th

Saturday August 19th

Saturday August 26th

Sunday August 27th

" " "

Monday August 28th

Saturday September 16th

Saturday September 23rd

Sunday September 24th

Saturday October 7th

Saturday October 14th

Saturday November 4th

Saturday November 11th

Sunday November 26th

Saturday December 2nd

Saturday December 9th

Thursday December 28th

NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
Swapmeet, Northgate Arena, Chester.
NRMA Late Summer Meet,
Stockton-on-Tees.

Crewe Rail Fair, Basford Hall, Crewe.
Crewe Rail Fair, Basford Hall, Crewe.
Swapmeet, Ryles Park School,
Macclesfield.

Swapmeet, Northwood Stadium, Hanley.
NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
Swapmeet, Northgate Arena, Chester.
Swapmeet, Northwood Stadium, Hanley.
Swapmeet, Ryles Park School,
Macclesfield.

NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
Swapmeet, Northgate Arena, Chester.
NRMA Calder Northern Division Meet,
Bardsley Hall, Broadheath, Altrincham.
Swapmeet, Northwood Stadium, Hanley.

Entries in **BOLD** text denote confirmed bookings as at 1st May, 1995.

Mike Lenz

WARRINGTON AREA GROUP REPORT

Organising our meetings programme in Latchford will hopefully become a little easier now that my career base has moved from Birmingham to Manchester, in what proved to be something of a hastily arranged transfer in late April.

After preparing for the last couple of years for relocation of the West Coast Train Planning team away from our historical Crewe base, we eventually took up duties in the West Midlands shortly after Christmas.

Within a couple of weeks we were told that the entire West Coast Zone was to be broken up in a Railtrack reorganisation - designed to slim down zonal activity from the existing ten to eight zones. The non-geographic East Coast and West Coast operations were to be the obvious casualties, and within a few short weeks of the announcement I was to find myself heading back north to join former colleagues already in place at Rail House, Manchester, with the Railtrack North West planning unit.

All of this shuffling about during the early part of 1995 has of course been very disruptive to both family and social life, but hopefully things will settle down for a while now and I shall be a considerable beneficiary in terms of length of the working day, and a number of other respects as well.

It was a great help not to have to make arrangements for a Warrington meeting in March as our annual joint fixture with the Warrington group of the Great Western Society was scheduled for their venue this year. Accordingly, a small group of 8E folk were pleased to join with our GWS colleagues at Warrington Masonic Hall for an interesting slide show and talk on the East Lancs Railway.

Prior to this, Geoff Smith had provided the entertainment in fine style at our own venue in January, showing us a selection from his own, very extensive slide collection. The main features were N W area colliery and other industrial steam in the late 60s and 70s. We also saw slides from the same period when Geoff was working for BR in Warrington. There may well be chance of a rerun at a suitable Northwich meeting in the future.

At the time of writing preparations are in hand for our May meeting which will feature Welsh railway topics (in video). The following meeting dates are:

Fri 28 July) Subjects still to be
) finalised, (likely to
Fri 29 Sept) be video nights).

Fri 29 Nov - Neil Wilson (ex BR, Warrington) with slides of mostly European Railways, trams and other transport topics, especially Switzerland.

As ever, I repeat my invitation to all the membership to come along and join us and help boost our modest attendance figures. The usual range of backup facilities (sales, publicity displays, refreshments, raffle etc) are always provided in the convivial 8E manner.

Do then try and join us at 7.45pm at **St Hilda's Church clubroom, Slater St.** (Off A50 Knutsford Road, one mile from Warrington town centre), Latchford.

See you there!

Alan R. Ashurst
WARRINGTON AREA OFFICER

RAILWAY LINES

a browse through the bookshelf

The recent publication of Colin Gifford's '*...And Gone Forever*' prompted me to seek out the earlier companion volume ('*Each A Glimpse...*'), published in 1970. The author's notes made interesting reading. All of us must have been in the situation of waiting for a steam train to appear, straining to discern the distant sound of a locomotive. Here's how Colin Gifford, waiting alone in a remote windswept Pennine location, describes it.

"Here she comes. Or does she? It is amazing how the mind, under circumstances of anticipation, will convert various sounds into that made by a steam engine. The sound which penetrated my daydream was in fact that phenomenon of the late steam age, a motorcade of enthusiasts, a sure indication that the 'special' will follow shortly."

He goes on to discuss something which must occur to all photographers on occasions:

"No doubt about it this time, that is a steam whistle. We shuffle about, a foot to the right, a couple of feet to the left, a few words to our neighbours, check our equipment and crouch slightly. The sound of my camera operating is lost in the general clatter of many metal parts moving. I have taken three photographs of the train passing but concentrating on their composition through a necessarily restricted field of vision, I could not fully enjoy the climax of the occasion. Momentarily more fortunate are those who simply watch, with no other purpose than to enjoy. Theirs is a transient benefit, a personal reward; long term they lose, for a picture can be of lasting pleasure to many."

I have a bit of trouble accepting that conclusion. I think that photographers do miss out long term. The photograph, which can be a source of lasting pleasure, can never restore the original experience which the unfettered viewer can enjoy. What are your views on this dilemma?

Continuing in philosophical mood, here is an extract from the final volume of Tom Rolt's autobiography '*Landscape With Figures*'. This was completed in 1974, shortly before he died, but not published until 1992. His comments from 20 years ago are even more pertinent today, with well over 100 'Barry' locos yet to be completed - many not even started.

"A big question mark that hangs over the long term future of preserved railways, particularly those of standard gauge, concerns their steam motive power. Who will cope with the locomotives when they need a major overhaul and, in particular, a new boiler? The number of steam locomotives, in this country alone, which enthusiasts have preserved is truly remarkable, yet I cannot help feeling that the future of many of them is by no means certain. Some quite short preserved lines seem to have collected locomotives far in excess of their real needs and I speculate whether this may not solely be due to too much zeal but to ensure the long term working future of the railway by building up a reserve of motive power so that when one locomotive has been run into the ground it will be possible to replace it by another. If this is the case then it is the negation of preservation."

AJC

CHESHIRE RAILWAYS IN OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

by Mike Hitches (Alan Sutton Publishing)
128 pages : 170 photographs

This is a super collection of photographs of railways, stations, locomotives and trains from Cheshire between the 1920s and 1965. Some older photographs are included but these are undated. The layout and quality are outstanding, but this is a casual reader's book rather than one for serious research.

The great achievement of this book is the quality of reproduction of the photographs from such a wide range of sources. There are one or two photographs per page which are all black and white and very clear. Each image is described with between one line and half a page of text which is informative and interesting. Photographs of railways under construction, stations and timetables are included. Among the text are lists of locomotives on shed on a particular date.

The book is divided into the following chapters -

1. Crewe 2. LNWR routes 3. Chester
4. Lines to the Wirral 5. Cheshire Lines
6. The North Staffordshire Railway

This structure allows the author to progress along each railway, and through time, fluently - without losing the reader's interest. In each chapter he includes many facets of railway infrastructure, with something for every taste. Items range from a Precursor class racing through Crewe to the building of a streamlined Coronation Pacific; a list of the 65 locomotives based at Chester in May 1954 to the Waterloo class in Chester in 1930. The stations of Hooton in the 1930's with Northwich station and shed in the next section. The book concludes with three pages on the Cheshire section of the North Staffs Railway. This is a very interesting look at our local railways over the decades, and well priced at £7.95

P.Y.



A busy platform scene at Northwich station. All the station staff are posing for the photograph. The clock showing 10 o'clock. (undated)

STEAMING ECCENTRICS

The Cover Story

It was almost 50 years ago, somewhere in Lancashire, that retired engine driver Clumpy Jennings established a lineside smallholding. He erected a sign advertising eggs and poultry for passing loco crews to see. It became customary for drivers to stop their trains and select a bird (which would be despatched whilst they waited), and take it home for their wives to pluck and cook. The five minute delay to the train was invariably overlooked by the signalmen at each end of the section, who were also Clumpy's customers.

Stan Wilson, an ex-Newton Heath fireman, relates this story and its subsequent developments for one of Clumpy's customers in his forthcoming book 'Steaming Eccentrics', a collection of humorous tales from steam days - all based on actual incidents.

Stan was in need of a cover photograph for his book and wished to illustrate the scene where a chicken was being carried back onto the footplate. I had volunteered to try and produce a suitable photograph and, because of the author's suggestion that a small LMS engine should be used, I thought of the Llangollen and Haworth 'Jintys'.

Whilst considering how to arrange a photo session, I had a call from 8E colleague Chris Simon, (who is also a volunteer fireman at Llangollen). He told me that Derek Foster's Jinty was to be in service the next day (Sunday), and that he had primed Bob Maxwell, the rostered driver, to indulge a photographer with some out of the ordinary photo requests. The opportunity seemed too good to miss, so I decided to go.

I had no idea what to do about the chicken which had to be dead but not plucked. As I arrived at Llangollen I had almost given up the idea of using the bird and was considering a few less bizarre alternatives.

Before finally abandoning the initial plan I thought that I would call in at a farm and enquire about the possibility of 'borrowing' a hen.. The whole thing seemed more and more absurd, especially as I wasn't going to allow one to be killed for my art! The first two farms which I spotted were well guarded by fierce dogs, and with no sign of anyone to calm the brutes I gave up without making my request.

Between Berwyn and Glyndyfrdwy I found a farm advertising free range eggs. The old chap who I spoke to in the farm shop had a chuckle when I asked if he had a dead chicken which I could borrow. "Just before Christmas would be the best time", he offered "there may be some chance then". He told me of another possibility near Glyndyfrdwy, but really it was a forlorn prospect. I decided to have one last try.

Following his directions I arrived at the farm. Once more I explained my problem which was again received with amusement. "We don't kill our hens" the farmer's wife explained, "they just die of old age." Then she remembered. One had dropped dead the previous day, and I was welcome to the corpse. This was a wonderful piece of luck, and within a few minutes I was waiting at the platform at Glyndyfrdwy with a dead hen in a large paper sack.

When the Jinty arrived, I explained my idea to Bob Maxwell who kindly agreed to let me have a few minutes at Deeside Halt. I jumped onto the footplate, and after running round we set off. I noticed that the bag began to smell rather powerfully at this point, and some concern was raised by the three crew members regarding the date and means of the chicken's demise. Fireman Alan Jones wasn't at all happy with my pungent sack, and kept his distance.

When we stopped at Deeside, Bob Maxwell let me get on with it, but I noticed that he found something to occupy himself with when I needed a volunteer to hold the bird. With Alan keeping well out of the way, this left trainee driver Bob Haslam to take the starring role. I marvelled that he performed so bravely without complaint - it certainly wasn't a pleasant task holding the stinking carcase. After a few minutes I let the train go, receiving quizzical looks from a few passengers who had noticed the performance. One chap in the leading coach had a camcorder - I wonder if he recorded any of our cameo?

I was now stranded at Deeside Halt with my chicken. The 'Flying Scotsman' came and went but I stayed put. The sun was coming out and I was hoping to have another crack at Stan Wilson's cover shot - this time with the loco the right way round. Finally, one and three quarter hours after I last saw her, the Jinty appeared and I flagged her down with my vis-vest.

I can't imagine that the crew were too happy to see me, but they didn't show any irritation. Bob Maxwell agreed to let me have a couple of minutes and went to tell the guard. Fireman Jones shrank back in horror when I suggested that he may like to hold the bird this time. "You can get scabies from one of them you know", was his laconic contribution.

Thus, the luckless Bob Haslam was again pressed into service. He knew the required pose by now, and as I shot a few frames he earned a round of applause from driver, guard and signalman watching from the platform. Goodness knows what the passengers made of the scene!

A cab ride back to Glyndyfrdwy left me with the final problem of disposal of the corpse. The farmer had suggested chucking it into the fire, but strangely the crew wouldn't entertain this idea. Eventually, I was able to give it a decent funeral in a council waste bin at Llangollen. Its opportune demise had been entirely to my benefit, yet I was thoroughly relieved to be rid of it! I was privileged to be invited to shoot the cover photograph, but I would insist on the provision of a dummy theatrical chicken if ever again faced with a similar assignment.

Stan is a friend of the BE Association. He entertained us with his memories in April '94, and becomes my first repeat booking when he returns in October this year for part two of the 'Clanky Junction' reminiscences. 'Steaming Eccentrics' (Silver Link Publishing) comes out in August. Some of the stories have been published in the 'Manchester Evening News' - 20 years ago when the late Brian Redhead was editor - and broadcast on the radio (in BBC 'Light Program' days), but the tales have never previously been published in book form. We hope it achieves the success that it deserves.

Alan Carr

FROM ELGAR TO CHARLIE BARLOW

The inclusion of a picture of North Acton station in Mike Walker's recent slide show (April 95) prompted these reminiscences from Chris Simon.

In the sixties and seventies I made regular visits to our head office in NW10, one of London's intensively industrialised sectors. My memories are given a respectable yellowing of age when I tell you that the office 'phone number was 'ELGAR' 6565.

Travelling to London from the north west, NW10 was the area the train hurried through after passing the twin towers of Wembley and before reaching the Bakerloo at Queens Park, which heralded the final approach to Euston. To the student of railway history the area offered a rich seam - every visit providing a chance to discover another piece of the jigsaw.

Normally the itinerary was main line to Euston (and a hearty breakfast), a visit to the booking office and a sprint across the concourse to the Watford (third rail) service on the next quarter hour which retraced the route (with a few variations) to Willesden Junction.

This station had, in its heyday, boasted a Main Line, a High Level and a New station. The modernisation plan had meant the end of the Main Line platforms; the High Level station still had a service from Broad Street to Richmond. The Watford line DC trains from Euston used the New (1916) station, where derelict bays were evidence of a loss of a more intensive service. Occasional Bakerloo trains coming out further than Queens Park threw in dimensional confusion - as well as a splash of colour.

A fifteen minute walk to HQ took me along a dusty and busy road where the odours of TCP production and the Walls meat pie plant competed for olfactory attention. LT Routemasters rushed by on route No.266, the 2 indicating trolleybus parentage and the 66 prompted memories of a Nat Cole song. The kick on the 2-6-6 was that a couple of the 1964 vintage buses on that route went on to be turned out in the special Silver Jubilee livery in 1977, and were immortalised as models.

Willesden Junction (really not close to Willesden, but situated in Harlesden) was an LNWR preserve. The streets of terraced houses next to the station were called Stoke Place, Crewe Place and Webb Place. On the other side of the road a freight liner depot healed the scar left by the demolition of the 1A motive power depot. Only the name of the road - Old Oak Lane - hints at the Great Western presence nearby!

The head office was a substantial site beside a goods line which had at some time provided rail access to the warehouse. Adjacent, and parallel to the goods line was the former North London line which provided a route for EMUs from Broad Street to Richmond, on a 15 minute frequency.

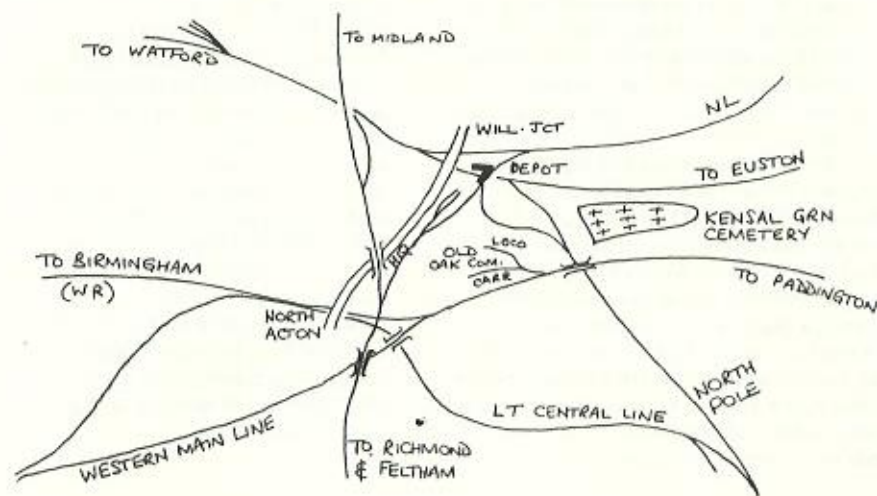
The North London line had at one time formed part of the Outer Circle (an early M25 without the jams). The head office site had one side adjoining Midland Terrace; the villas on the far side of which backed on to another goods line linking the former Midland main line with the LSWR. This line was built to provide a way for coal trains to reach the extensive and well-known Feltham yard (and thus south and west England) without passing through central London.

After a couple of visits to head office I discovered that the upper floors of the south end of the building commanded a view across the carriage and engine sheds at old Oak Common, which had already switched to diesel traction. I remember a meeting on a summer morning, the business was punctuated by the passing of EMUs between Broad Street and Richmond. Suddenly a plume of white steam emerged, as if from a lifting safety valve, from the direction of O.O.C. It turned out to be from the steam crane being used to raise roof beams during the refurbishment of carriage sheds to hold the High Speed Trains.

There was a decent dining room at Willesden, but there were alternatives in the shape of the Fisherman's Arms (next to the freightliner yard) or The Castle, a rather more twee establishment next to the BBC rehearsal rooms. One of the attractions of The Castle was to 'mingle with the stars'. I remember seeing Stratford Johns (Chief Supt. Barlow of Z Cars) once, and I held the door open for John le Mesurier (Sgt. Wilson to Arthur Lowe's Capt. Mainwaring), but I never quite managed an Equity card.

To get to The Castle meant a ten minute walk along Victoria Road passing more industrial units before crossing a bridge which spanned three sets of tracks. One of these was the Birmingham line from Paddington (regrettably the Kings had already disappeared), another goods line linking the Western region with Acton Wells Junction (from where it seemed possible to head in any regional direction).

Finally, and very deep but nevertheless above ground, was the Central line which called at North Acton at this point. From North Acton the Underground offered an alternative, slower way to the LMR route to reach central London, but as most of the journey was above ground it did have some interest - in particular a stretch near White City, where a tight re-alignment to make use of the GWR's Ealing & Shepherd's Bush tracks meant that trains ran on the right hand side.



The Central line called at West Acton, North Acton and East Acton stations; the North London called at Acton Central and South Acton. Acton also boasted another L.T. station at Acton Town and a Western region station at Acton Main Line. It's a relief to find that Acton Bridge is still in Cheshire.

For reasons connected with the proximity of studios, the BBC frequently used NW10 as a backdrop for location shooting. It was odd to sit at home and watch Dave Allen using the uniform doors of Crewe Place as the basis for a sketch. Or, to see the entrance to the former enginemens' barracks take on the role of a building in Newtown for a Z Cars episode.

Railway history has its own drama and irony. Kensal Green cemetery barred the proposed route for the GWR main line to make a shared use of Euston. Thus the two main lines which were so close at this point have separate termini. But Kensal Green cemetery is also Brunel's last resting place.

I have not set foot in NW10 for almost twenty years. I presume that there will have been changes. The main impact on the area must have been the development of the Channel Tunnel depot at North Pole Junction. The location has always carried that name - *I'll leave the explanation to another time.*

IT PLAYS TO INCREASE YOUR WORD POWER

Match the description nearest to your understanding of the word

1. EMU

- a) Antipodean bird, popularised by Rod Hull
- b) Australian wine
- c) European Monetary Union
- d) Electric Multiple Unit

2. MIKADO

- a) Ancient Chinese Emperor
- b) Gilbert & Sullivan opera
- c) Steam loco wheel arrangement

3. BARDIC

- a) Relating to (Celtic) Bard
- b) Railway hand-signalling lamp

4. DOWN SIDE

- a) Term (favoured by politicians) to express disadvantages
- b) Public school (and SR loco)
- c) Direction away from main junction

5. BRUTE

- a) Not gifted with reason, merely animal or material
- b) Animal other than man
- c) British Rail Universal Trolley Equipment

6. CASTLE

- a) District of Northwich
- b) Fortress or fortified house
- c) GWR locomotive

7. CAULIFLOWER

- a) LNWR goods engine
- b) Vegetable

8. BANKER

- a) Proprietor of financial institution
- b) A betting card game
- c) Keeper of gaming bank
- d) Locomotive assisting trains to climb gradient

9. GRAMPUS

- a) Risso's dolphin (Grampus griseus)
- b) One who puffs
- c) 20 ton ballast & sleeper wagon

10. LMS

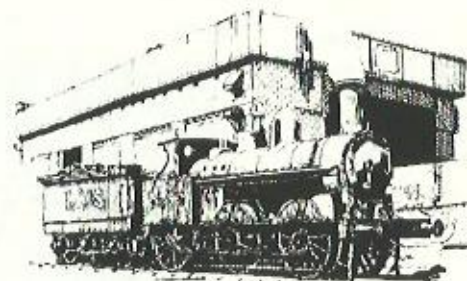
- a) Local Management in Schools
- b) A well known railway - pre 1948

11. PANNIER

- a) A basket or bag for a beast of burden
- b) Water tank position used by GWR

12. ZULU

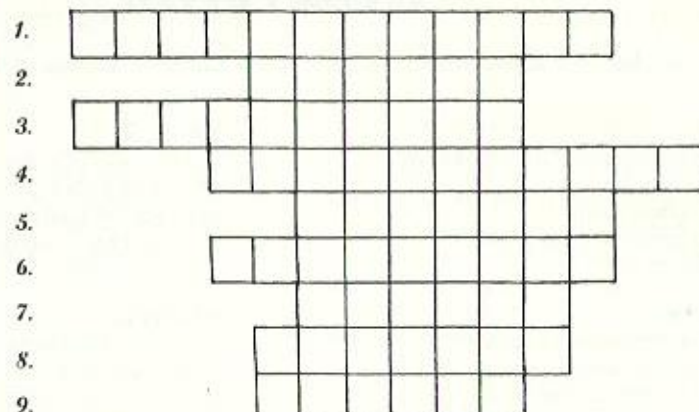
- a) South African Bantu people / language
- b) A Paddington - Birkenhead parcels train



a cauliflower?

Now check your rating - see scores and assessments on page 28

The answer to each of the clues is the name of a society magazine, associated with the indicated railway. Insert the missing word(s) in the appropriate row to reveal, in one column, the name of a 10th magazine. Can you name the south west railway?

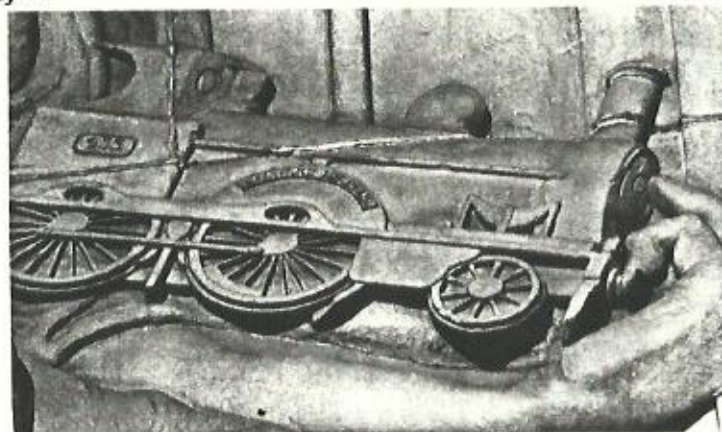


1. Battlefield Line (_____ News)
2. Midland Railway Centre (The _____)
3. Gloucestershire & Warwickshire (The _____)
4. K.W.V.R. (_____)
5. Paignton & Dartmouth (Torbay _____)
6. Lakeside & Haverthwaite (The _____)
7. Cheddleton Railway Centre (The _____)
8. Kent & east Sussex (The Tenterden _____)
9. Dean Forest (_____ Venturer)

answers
page
twenty eight

From which poem was the following line taken? What is the next (and final) line? Who is responsible for its revival?

"And here is a mill and there is a river:"

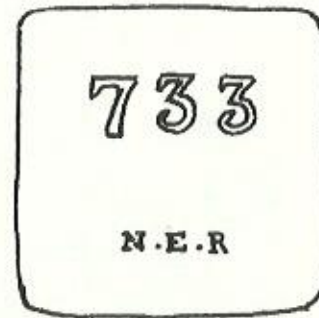


What is the pictured loco? Where can it be seen, and why was it so honoured? Chris Simon will answer these questions in the Crewe 'tour' (see fixture list - July)

RAILWAY PAY CHECKS - some questions raised

Collecting railwayana is largely a hobby for the wealthy, but there are a few niches left which permit the acquisition of a reasonable collection within a small budget. Pay Checks (or 'Cheques' as preferred by the GWR) is one area of collecting which can still be enjoyed without breaking the bank. I am not aware of any published wisdom concerning P.C.s, and my own modest collection poses some questions which the collective knowledge of our readership may be able to answer.

Firstly, there are many different shapes of checks, some peculiar to a specific company (GWR 'dogbone', NER 'scallop' for example), but why were there different shapes within the same depot? What was the reason for the different shapes of the two PCs illustrated above, both BR(LMR) Crewe? Given that they are both for the same department, why did one man have a round faceted check and the other a hexagonal one?



There is a similar query with the three NER checks which are reproduced above. Why no standardisation? I could have shown an LNER oval and scallop to add further variety to this group. The above three checks pose another problem. Not only is there a confusion of shapes, but a differing amount of information included on each check. The Starbeck hexagon is fine - detailing the company, the depot, the department and the pay number. The round faceted check omits the department. Incidentally the SQ depot code is another mystery which baffled a leading collector who I consulted. The square check shows no depot or department. It is quite common to find PCs which only show the pay number - nothing else. Why couldn't the railway companies be consistent even amongst themselves?

If anyone can shed any light on this subject, I would be pleased to hear from you. Perhaps your input will persuade me to attempt a thorough research of the subject, including its origin and demise, and the hierarchical numbering systems which were used.

Alan Carr

A DAY WITH THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

This day really began back in late 1994 when bookings were being taken to drive the Flying Scotsman at Llangollen. This would be the last opportunity this decade - before she was withdrawn for major refurbishment, prior to her return to the main line.

I had an earlier driving experience with the Scotsman in March 1994, but it was at the end of the day and rather dark. This opportunity at least gave me the chance to pick my time and day, thus ensuring a daylight run. Having made the booking and paid the fee all I had to do was sit back and wait. Confirmation duly arrived in the post - Wednesday 18th January at 11.00am. I made a note in my diary, just like it was an everyday event. It felt like that at the time, right up until the big day.

The weather left much to be desired at the start of the week, and on the Tuesday it was gale force winds, rain and snow in places. I anxiously watched the forecast on Tuesday evening. It looked good, but I wasn't expecting miracles.

The instructions were to report at Llangollen station for 10.00am, ensuring time for a conducted tour of the establishment. My partner Kath was accompanying me on this voyage of discovery, and by 8.50 we were leaving Sandbach, with the sun shining and looking forward to a good road with clear signals.

Just before Ruabon we encountered the first snow. Forced to slow down, I thought it unlikely that we would arrive much before 11.00. Shortly after, however, the weather cleared and we were in sunshine again. The only sign of snow was on the hills, so the visions of clearing snow from points and signals melted in the warmth of the sun. We arrived at Llangollen promptly at 10.00, parked the car and reported for duty at the tea rooms. What better place to be after a long drive.

Members of the public assume that all goes to plan behind the scenes in railway preservation. This is not always so - even at Llangollen - and it transpired that three drivers were booked for the 11.00 run, and only one for the 13.30. As I was in no hurry, I agreed to move to the later session - a decision which paid off in the end, as you will see.

The change in our timetable now meant that we could enjoy a ride on the train in the sunshine before my driving turn, thus benefiting by getting a preview of the run. A chance to sit back in comfort and be driven through the landscape, and although the train was cold for a while it was an enjoyable ride. The train got colder as the day wore on. A point to note for would be engine designers - the Scotsman has no train heating pipes on the front, so cannot steam heat when working tender first!

The run went as far as Deeside Halt - there being no signalman at Glyndyfrdwy - but the feeling of disappointment soon faded with the anticipation of taking the driving seat myself. We arrived back at Llangollen in good time, ready for more tea and a chat with the staff, and a chance to meet my driver who was taking over the afternoon shift.

It was turned 1 o'clock when a familiar figure appeared on the scene in his working togs. My driver was none other than Tom Walton, from Northwich, who was also the driver when I had my earlier turn with Scotsman - St David's day 1994. Then, he was a total stranger who placed his life in my hands on that dark March day. After much chat and hand shaking we climbed aboard the footplate to meet the other member of the crew - fireman Paul. He was a most helpful man as I was to find out when it came to my turn to stoke the fire.

departed Llangollen just after 1.30pm. The slight delay was of no consequence as driver training runs are not public service trains. The only passengers we carried were friends and family - my partner Kath being one of the few to brave the elements in a cold train.

With Tom behind me, I had no fears of handling this very large piece of machinery, and I quickly gained in confidence. After the initial procedures for getting things moving the rest was fairly straight forward. With such a lot of power to hand, lifting this light load was chicken feed to the Flying Scotsman, but even then a wheel slip in the wrong place could have spelt trouble.

The run to Deeside Halt was a good one. Tom had spoken with the guard beforehand and arranged to stop at Berwyn, giving me the chance to stop and start the train under normal running conditions, which I found most helpful. We had a good run back to Llangollen, although a bit windy being tender first, arriving all in one piece under the watchful eyes of Tom and Paul.

Time for more tea and a warm before taking up my duties as fireman. Here I was to find that it was not simply a case of putting more coal on when you felt like it, but a very fine art of putting coal in the right place at the right time, whilst ensuring that the boiler was never low on water. All this whilst helping the driver watch the line.

Other duties include uncoupling, coupling and operating the points when running round at stations such as Deeside Halt. All in all, the fireman's job is a busy one with never a dull moment.

I am very grateful to all the people at Llangollen who made my day so enjoyable, especially Tom Walton - without him nothing would have moved. Also, my friend and partner Kath who was responsible for encouraging me to enrol. *Thanks.*

Dave Braden

*Below:
'Flying Scotsman' leaving Llangollen on driver training duty.
(photo Alan Carr)*



Thanks to Len Clarke for the following two pages, in which he provides us with an update on two of his many preservation activities, winding up with a ghost story.

LNCR COACH ASSOCIATION The German Connection

The LNCR Coach Association, based at the North Yorkshire Moors at Pickering, recently outshopped Gresley Buffet Car 641 - built in 1937. Restored over an 8yr period, the rebuild to original condition was extensive

Externally clad in the traditional varnished teak, the comment is often heard "Why, if the coach is so old fashioned, have you done the interior in such a modern manner. Indeed the interior is 'modern', but it is in fact just as it was when new in 1937 - then the height of fashion

Bauhaus

The origin of the style of the interior goes back to the influence of a German university - the Bauhaus (building house). After WW1, Walter Gropius its founder developed the idea of exploring the development of mass production in art and design through 'functional craftsmanship'.

Compared to other vehicles of that era, the interior of '641' follows these ideas in its simplicity, even austerity, without ornament or embellishment. The interior furnishings of the 'Silver Jubilee' and 'Coronation' however, feature panelling, columns, cornices and deep furnishings. Externally, both these high speed services featured steel bodied vehicles, as opposed to teak, to complement the newly introduced A4 class.

The LNCR had in the early thirties converted stock into buffet cars, but '641' and its sisters became the first mobile fast food outlets. Mainly used on short distance expresses, '641' was used extensively on the Liverpool St. - Cambridge service.

Hitler

When Hitler came to power in 1933 the Bauhaus was closed down and its designers, architects and intellectuals fled Germany to become foremost influences in post-war design and architecture throughout the world.

The LNCRCA exists to restore and foster interest in the Gresley and Thompson era. It has nine vehicles in its collection, and after '641' has four other vehicles in various stages of restoration. It is conceivable that in 3-4 years the enthusiast visitor to the NYMR could travel in an LNCR train, hauled by an LNCR engine - true LNCR style!

THE PHOENIX ARISES

Into service, now with the ELR, has returned M15916 (formerly E7916), a CK built at Wolverton in 1956. After more than 30 years revenue earning service on the ECML, based at Hull Dairycoates and Leeds Neville Hill, the vehicle was bought by the ELR in 1988

At this time, having already been vandalised, it suffered fire damage and, being in such a poor condition, was earmarked for cutting up. A decision was taken however to donate the vehicle to Peel Lions of Ramsbottom and Tottington. They proposed to raise funds for conversion to a coach for wheelchair visitors

£20,000 raised

In four to five years they raised in excess of £20,000 for the project. In 1992 I was involved with a TEC scheme on restoration in the newly opened Buckley Wells carriage shed. My small team set about stripping out the interior to a shell. We were fortunate to work under the guidance of Albert Potter, a former coach builder at Horwich works

At some time in its early career E7916 had suffered accident damage to the body along one side beneath the gutter. This was cut out and replaced along with rotten sections beneath each window - the common fault on MK1 vehicles. Numerous steel panels were replaced, doors on both sides skinned over and double doors were formed from redundant B.G. doors

One compartment has been retained to form a kiosk for crisps and soft drinks, and at the other end a superlarge superloo was built with all fittings to assist the wheelchair passenger. Fitting out of the two wheelchair saloons includes new ceilings, wiring, lighting and panelled walls in teak. Ten Mk2 single seats are fitted - the moquette salvaged from scrapped 'Man Vic' - Bury electrics and very well they look too! Ex-ambulance hydraulic lifts enable entry, via the double doors, into the central vestibule with the chairs clamped to the floor to immobilise them in the saloons.

Externally the vehicle carries BR maroon livery and features, above the crest, the emblem of Lions International and Peel Lions, Lancashire. All in all a superb vehicle restoration considering its once possible fate. It has given me a good deal of satisfaction (along with hard work and expense). A vehicle for the use of our less fortunate brethren.

THE GHOST TRAIN

Returning to Manchester Piccadilly from a NELPG meeting at Middlesborough (*the good news: BR had paid up 3/4 of the cost of Blue Peter's record slip at Durham. The bad news: we were running 15 mins late*) I walked from platform 3 towards the footbridge and saw what I took to be a 323 for Crewe on platform 13. I hurried along only to see, from the overbridge, the unit pull away. My arrival at platform 13, however, was greeted with the announcement 'The train for Crewe Platform 13' - so I hadn't missed it.

I waited a few minutes, and the announcement was repeated. The following announcement told me that the next train at platform 13 was for - *Norwich*. I figured out that at Oxford Road they had given priority to the Norwich train, and that the Crewe would follow. In came a 158 - *Norwich*. I thought I would go on to Stockport and await the Crewe train. I sat in the 158 vestibule for 5 mins and we didn't move. I wondered if the Crewe would be behind in platform 13. I got off. No sign! I decided to ask the platform inspector

"What time is the Crewe train?"

"It's gone!" he replied.

"It's gone?"

"Yes", he said "5 minutes ago."

"I didn't see it, and I've been here 5 minutes!"

"Well I signalled it off 5 minutes ago" he insisted.

"Well I didn't see a train for Crewe, I must be going barmy!"

"You must be", he replied.

Somewhat dazed and doubting my sanity I got back on the Norwich and we set off for Stockport. I was thinking "Well I've used Crewe trains on and off Piccadilly for close on 30 years and never experienced anything like this. How did I not see it?"

mystery solved

Then it dawned on me. Yes, I'd seen the Crewe departing when I was on the footbridge. As I arrived on platform 13 and, whilst I was waiting there, the two announcements were for the train arriving - when in fact the train had gone!

LEN CLARKE



WANTED

RAILWAY BOOKS or videos in good condition are always welcome as donations for raffle prizes. Have you got anything suitable?

CONTRIBUTIONS (articles or photos) for the December issue of this magazine. All submissions to the editor by November 7th.

1995/96 Fixtures NORTHWICH MEETINGS

Tues July 11th

CREWE WALKABOUT

There is no 'Lion & Railway' meeting this month, or next, because of the Summer break. In place of the usual meeting Chris Simon has offered to lead a guided tour (on foot) around the locations associated with Crewe works, and other places of railway interest in Crewe. All members are welcome. Contact Chris or any committee member for further details.

Tues Aug 8th

NO MEETING (Summer Break)

Tues Sept 12th

ARCHIVE STEAM Colin White

Colin, of B&R Videos, has put together a programme of archive steam, with a focus on the north west, including rare footage of Northwich.

Tues Oct 10th

STEAMING ECCENTRICS (Part II)

Stan Wilson

Ex- Newton Heath fireman, Stan Wilson returns with more of the reminiscences which entertained us 18 months ago. Highly recommended. (Stan's book 'Steaming Eccentrics' was due to be published in August - see article elsewhere in this issue.)

Tues Nov 14th

TWO LEGS, FOUR WHEELS & A '645'

Doug Birmingham

Medium format excellence from this much published photographer who always seems to be on hand to record the significant happenings in steam preservation. The 645 is not an Irish wheel arrangement - it's an expensive camera!

Tues Dec 12th

AGM - followed by our own Len Clarke

In a departure from the norm, there will be a second half slide show after the AGM formalities have been completed. The effervescent Len Clarke will be bringing us up to date with his activities in many areas of preservation. The ideal finale to our 1995 fixtures.

1996 PREVIEW

Tue Jan 9th

'Smoke Gets in My Lens - Sometimes' Colin Whitfield

Tue Feb 13th

'British Industrial Steam' Ian Smith

Tue March 12th

'Signalling Made Simple' Nick Patching

Venue: 'The Lion & Railway' (opposite Northwich Station)

7.45 pm start. Non-members most welcome



DATES FOR THE '95 DIARY

june

18 YNYS MON - (71000)
17/18 CREWE H.C. - Thomas
24/25 Gt. Central - Gala weekend
24/25 SVR - Forties w/e

july

1/2 NYMR - 150th Anniv Gala
1/2 KWVR - Steam & Diesel w/e
15/16 ELR - Transport extravag.
22/23 NYMR - Vintage vehicle w/e
29/30 Foxfield - steam gala
29/30 Llangollen - Beer, steam & folk.

august

12/13 Llangollen - Forties war w/e
12/13 KWVR - Family w/e
19 Talyllyn - Race the train
27/28 Foxfield - Steam & oatcakes

september

2/3 SVR - Thomas w/e
2/3 Welshpool - Steam gala
16/17 ELR - Diesel enthusiasts w/e
16/17 Llangollen - Transport extrav.
16/17 Gt. Central - Gala w/e
23/24 SVR - Gala weekend
30/1 KWVR - Enthusiasts w/e
30/1 Foxfield - Diesel w/e
30/1 Talyllyn - Enthusiasts w/e
30/1 Ffestiniog - Vintage train w/e

october

7/8 NYMR - gala w/e
8 SVR - Vintage vehicle day
21/22 Gt. Central - Thomas w/e
21/22 Llangollen - Diesel w/e
23/29 Llangollen - Thomas week
28/29 NYMR - Wartime w/e
28/29 ELR - Steam gala

november

4 Bala Lake - Fireworks night

Will you be attending any of the above events? Let 'On Shed' have your reports and/or photographs for possible inclusion in the December issue. (Please check all dates with the railways or steam press before travelling.)

Llangollen Society Meetings

(Town Crier, Chester - 8.00pm)

SEPTEMBER 7th

'25 Years Of Welsh Narrow Gauge'

Dave Southern

OCTOBER 5th

'Railway Magazine' (illustrated talk)

Chris Milner

NOVEMBER 2nd

'Trans-Limpopo 1991' (Audio visual)

Alan Castle

DECEMBER 7th

'Modern Traction - Fact or Fiction'

Fred Kerr

JANUARY 4th '96

'UK Rail Miscellany'

Doug Birmingham

solutions

poetry poser

(SEE PAGE TWENTY)

Robert Louis Stevenson's 'From A Railway Carriage' concludes as follows:

"And here is a mill and there is a river;
Each a glimpse and gone forever."

Colin Gifford borrowed this last line for his two celebrated photographic volumes

'Each A Glimpse....' (1970)
'.... And Gone Forever' (1994)

(SEE PAGE TWENTY)

Not wishing to hand the reader everything on a plate, the answers are given below *in a different order* to the clues in the puzzle, and also including two red herrings. When inserted into their correct places, the tenth magazine title will be signalled. But do you know the associated railway?

KNOTTY	EXPRESS	DALESTREAM
CORNISHMAN	BULLIVER	WYVERN
IRON HORSE	TERRIER	FOREST
PUSH AND PULL	SHACKERSTONE	

railway
society
magazines

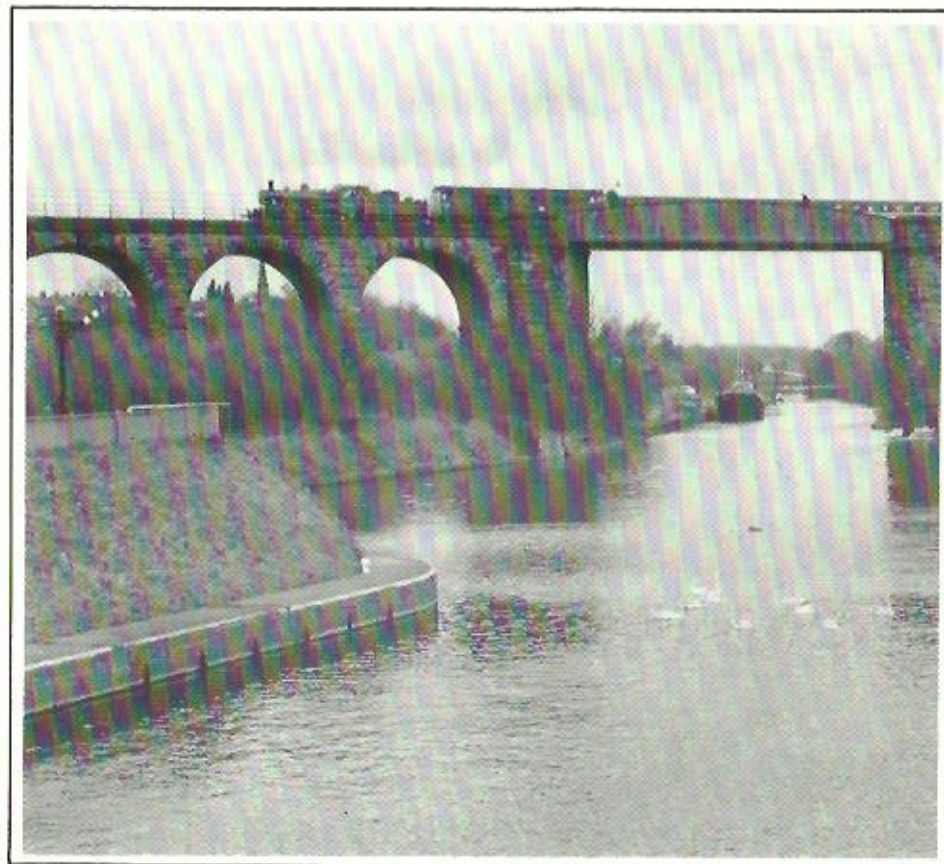
INCREASE YOUR
WORD POWER

(see page nineteen)

SCORE				YOUR RATING	
1. (a)2	(b)1	(c)1	(d)0	Over 20	BRILLIANT, but it's only for fun
2. (a)2	(b)1	(c)0			
3. (a)2	(b)0			12 - 19	Could do better
4. (a)2	(b)1	(c)0			
5. (a)2	(b)2	(c)0		6 - 11	Please read more widely
6. (a)1	(b)2	(c)0			
7. (a)0	(b)2				
8. (a)2	(b)1	(c)1	(d)0	Under 6	See you at the next 8E meeting!
9. (a)2	(b)1	(c)0			
10. (a)2	(b)0				
11. (a)2	(b)0				
12. (a)2	(b)0				



The Northwich station clock. Soon to be in 8E hands?



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