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Contributions are welcome:

- (a) as e-mails or e-mail attachments;
- (b) a hard copy of a computer file;
- (c) a typed manuscript;
- (d) a hand-written manuscript, preferably with a contact telephone number so that any queries can be sorted out;
- (e) a CD/DVD;
- (f) a USB storage flash drive.

Any queries to the Editor, please.

The **NEXT ISSUE** will be dated March 2012, and contributions should get to the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1 February 2012.

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Copies of this magazine are also available to non-members: a cheque for £8 (payable to 'Barrowmore Model Railway Group') will provide the next four issues, posted direct to your home. Send your details and cheque to the Editor at the above address.

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The cover illustration for this issue is a photograph of one of the Irish railways equivalent to our 'Presflo' – a bulk cement wagon which is unloaded by air pressure. This one – no.25051, was built by C.I.E. (the Irish Transport Company) in 1964: here it is in the yard at Dundalk on 14 May 1997. Robert Drysdale's article on these 'bubbles' (as they were known) is on later pages of this issue, and see also the note in the Editor's page.

Forthcoming events

(2012)

14 Jan. 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

4/5 Feb. 2012: Stafford show.

24/26 Feb. 2012: Glasgow show.

25 Feb. 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

14 Apr. 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

19 May 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

8 Jul. 2012: Gresford show: 7mm group.

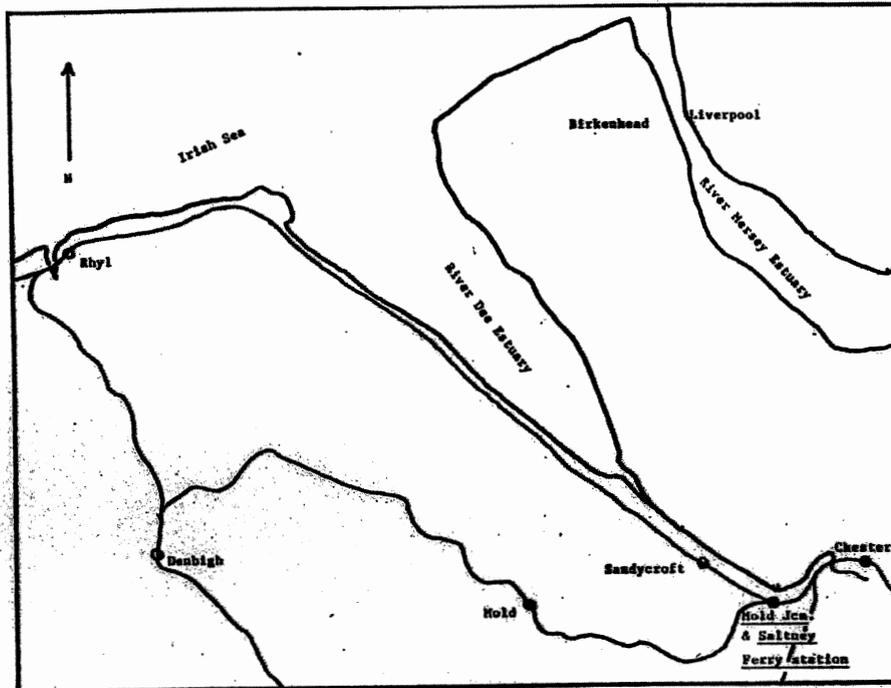
21 Jul. 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

18 Aug. 2012: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

Notes of other railway-related events for this column are welcome

"A barracks childhood"

by Jim Lowe



A note on barracks, by David Goodwin: Barracks, or dormitories, were built by many of the larger railway companies. The main reasons for their construction were largely due to a combination of geographical factors, including: (a) the rail network and the location of goods marshalling yards, where the wagons of goods trains could be re-sorted according to destination; (b) location of engine sheds - whether close to, or remote from centres of population with potential lodging facilities; (c) the individual railway's pattern of working - was a junction/yard/shed in a position that made it necessary for crews of goods trains to spend nights away from home?

In railway parlance, a number of terms were used to refer to lodging: 'lodging turns', 'double homers', 'double trips', 'lodging out' were amongst the most common. In early Victorian days, most lodging was done on a small-scale, local, basis. Railwaymen (drivers, firemen and goods guards most commonly) who had run out of time - maximum hours of work were limited to some extent by the companies' own rules - would be accommodated by local residents, loaned cash to pay for this, and a watch so that they could clock on when their next turn started. In the 1860s the Great Western Railway paid a lodging allowance of 2s.6d. (12.5p) per night [2].

The companies realised fairly quickly that railway-owned hostels would be more economical in many places than paying individual allowances. The London & North Western Railway and the Midland Railway were among the keenest proponents of this development by the turn of the century, and the practice spread. The advantages for management were mainly financial, but an extra 'plus' was that personnel in a hostel near a locomotive shed were readily contactable. For the men, hostels and the double-home system had a couple of good points: a company-owned hostel was a known and fairly reliable place to stay, and the money was good! Also some men who did not get on too well with their families looked upon the system as affording 'escapes' from domestic tension. But having said this, lodging was unpopular with most men and their wives; the practice was increasingly thought of as 'antiquated' and unpopular with unions, leading eventually to strikes in the 1949-1955 period in a number of places. Of course by that time the system was dying out because of other factors, and railway modernisation put the final touches to its widespread use: Mold Junction is a case in point - the shed itself was closed and the barracks there sold by British Railways in 1966 [1] [3].

In 1947, the L.M.S. is recorded [4] as owning 43 staff hostels. The capacity varied between 9 (at Oban) and 105 (at Crewe). With 40 beds, Mold Junction barracks was just a little smaller than the average.

Notes

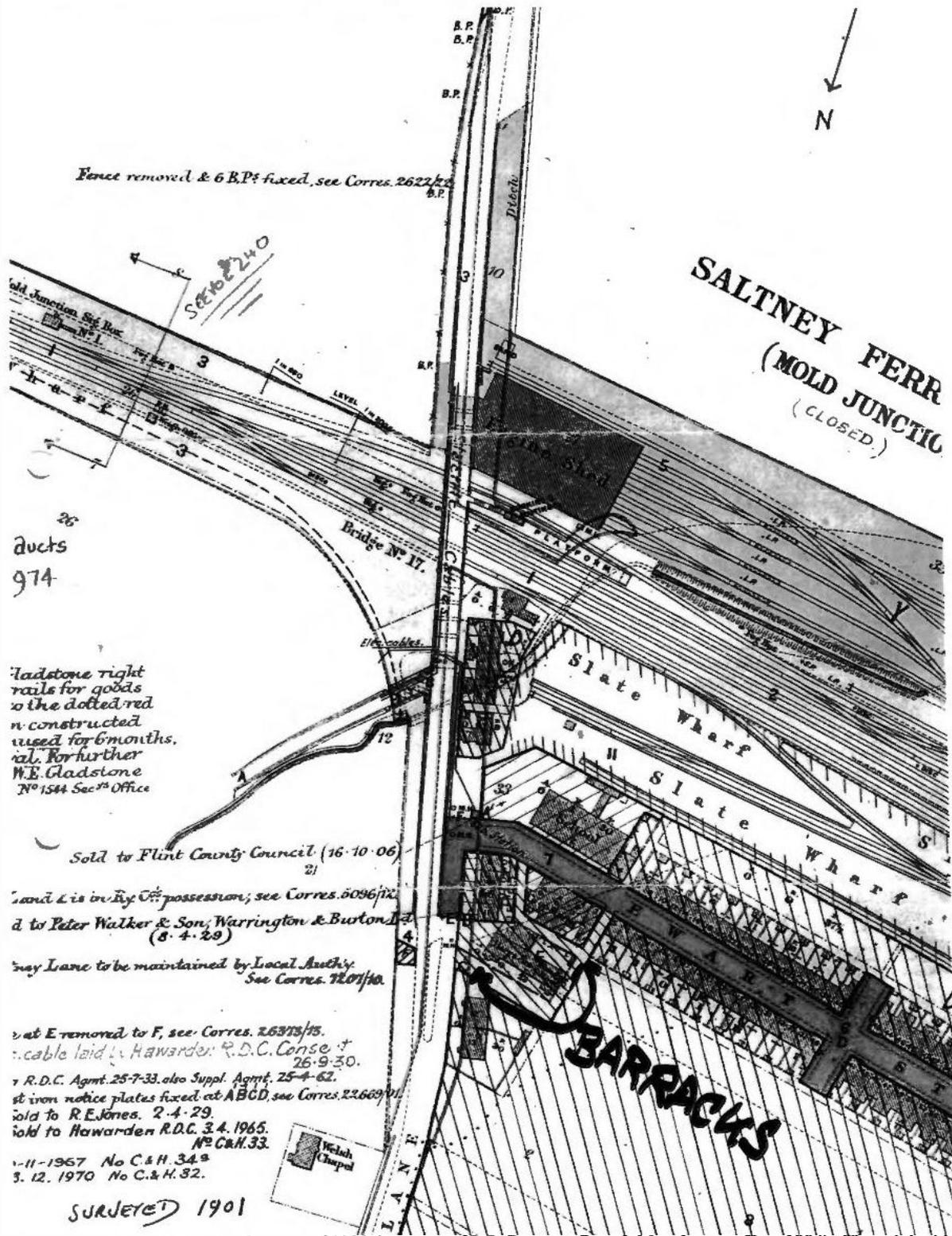
[1] Jackson, D. & RusseU, O. *Home from home*. IN *Forward* (G.C.R.Society), summer 1987. (Describes Great Central practice).

[2] Kingsford, P.W. *Victorian railwaymen ... 1830-1870*. Cass, 1970. isbn 0 7146 1331 2.

[3] McKenna, F. *The railway workers, 1840-1970*. Faber, 1980. isbn 0 571 11563 2. (Chapter 7 - 'The double homers', pp190-229).

[4] Hawkins, C. & Reeve, G. *LMS engine sheds ... vol.1: the London & North Western Railway*. Wild Swan, 1981. isbn 0 906867 02 9.

A note on Mold Junction, by John Dixon: Travelling west out of Chester station along the Holyhead line for about three miles, having crossed the border into Wales, a passenger looking out on the left will see a derelict engine shed now used by a scrap metal merchant, adjacent to a road overbridge. Almost immediately after this the observant passenger will see, curving away from the Holyhead line on the same down side, the trackbed of the former line to Mold - the Welsh town itself being nine miles distant; this Mold branch was just off this plan to the right.



Fence removed & 6 B.P.s fixed, see Corres. 2622/23

ducts 974

Gladstone right rails for goods to the dotted red n constructed used for 6 months. al. For further W.E. Gladstone No 1544 Sec^{rs} Office

Sold to Flint County Council (16.10.06)

land is in Ex^{ts} possession; see Corres. 6086/12

d to Peter Walker & Son, Warrington & Burton Ltd (8.4.29)

may have to be maintained by Local Authy. See Corres. 7107/10.

at E removed to F, see Corres. 26373/15.

cable laid by Hawarden R.D.C. Conseq^t 26.9.30.

R.D.C. Agmt. 25-7-33, also Suppl. Agmt. 25-4-62.

st iron notice plates fixed at ABCD, see Corres. 22669/11.

sold to R.E. Jones. 2.4.29.

sold to Hawarden R.D.C. 3.4.1965. No C.&H.33.

11-1967 No C.&H.34^a

3.12.1970 No C.&H.32.

SURVEYED 1901

A portion of the L.N.W.R. land survey of 1901 (courtesy of B.R. Property Board, Manchester office, 1994). The original is coloured, and as usual with L.N.W.R. plans, Euston is to the left.

At the time that this Mold Junction came into actual use (1849), bringing the Mold Railway company's line into physical contact with the Chester & Holyhead company's line (itself opened just over a year before), there was no immediate community as such, although the villages of Bretton and Saltney were each only about a mile away. Within a few years a slate depot was set up to handle the huge output from the North Wales quarries, with extensive sidings developing; but it wasn't until the level crossing here was replaced with a road overbridge in 1874 and half a dozen houses provided alongside the bridge, that a small railway community took root. Not long afterwards the London & North Western Railway company (successor to the Chester & Holyhead company) decided to erect an engine shed at this spot to cater for the increasing freight haulage in the Chester area. This shed was opened in late 1890, the new posts being filled by men transferring from the L.N.W.R. Chester shed. At the same time a rapid building programme, necessary to house the numerous drivers, stokers, guards and the like, resulted in the creation of a village (named 'Saltney Ferry' after the nearby ferry over the River Dee), complete with its own school, post office, and station built at railway expense; chapels and a church soon followed to cater

London and North Western Railway.

*Secretary's Office,
Custon Station.*

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LOCOMOTIVE & ENGINEERING
COMMITTEE OF THE 8th APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF THE
May 1891.

MR. WEBBS' REPORT :-

12,996. Schools at Saltney Ferry, Mold Junction.

He will shortly have these schools ready for use, but they will have no funds of their own to start with till they get the first Government grant, and they also require to be placed under proper management. He thinks it would be advisable if it could be arranged for the Revd. T. P. Dimond-Hogg, the Vicar of Saltney Parish, which is the nearest parish to the new school, to undertake the supervision of the schools and also the people generally.

He has seen him on the subject and if the Company concur, and will write to him to that effect, he will see the Revd. S. E. Gladstone in whose parish Saltney Ferry is situated, on the question, with a view to a satisfactory arrangement being made. He already, by arrangement with him, looks after another outlying portion of his parish. Mr. Hogg estimates that in the first year £150 will be required to start the work, and that afterwards £75 a year will be sufficient to maintain it.

The Committee understand that the £150 required to start the school will be provided out of the Chairmans Fund, and they approve of the stipend of £75 per annum being paid to Mr. Dimond-Hogg until further order.

Mr. Webb to carry out the arrangement when approved by the Board.

for the religious needs of over 100 families living mainly in two long terraced streets running close to and parallel with the main through lines. The station, also named 'Saltney Ferry' was opened in 1891. One other important structure built by the L.N.W.R. in the 1890s was a three-storey lodging house (commonly called 'The Barracks'), for the use of train crews arriving from distant places.

Saltney Ferry station was closed in 1962 and Mold Junction shed itself in 1966; the redundant barracks building was sold by British Railways in 1966, and converted into flats. It still stands today - renamed 'Ferry Lodge' but externally largely unchanged from the days described in Jim's reminiscences.

(A barracks childhood, by Jim Lowe)

Men from sheds at Holyhead, Caernarvon, Bangor, Llandudno, Alsager, Stalybridge, Patricroft, Leeds and elsewhere all stayed at Mold Junction from time to time. The accommodation provided was spartan but adequate. On the ground floor the accommodation available to the 'lodgers' consisted of a mess room, kitchen (which also contained lockers), bathroom and outside toilets. There were no indoor toilets!!! There were forty bedrooms on the two upper floors - twenty on each. There were two 'landings' on each floor, one having eight bedrooms the other twelve. Crockery was provided but the men had to cook their own food. The cooking was usually done in an oven or in front of the Mess Room fire. Washing up was done by the resident Barracks staff. The staff consisted of a Matron who was on call twenty-four hours per day but whose working hours were from 08.00 to 16.00 six days per week. There were two female assistants, one on duty from 06.00 to 14.00, the other from 10.00 to 18.00. From 18.00 to 22.00 the Barracks was manned by young men from the 'Sheds' who were primarily employed as 'knockers-up'. They stood in until the arrival of the 'night man' who came on duty at 22.00 hours and worked through to 06.00 the following morning. The Barracks was closed after the end of the Saturday night/Sunday morning shift until 06.00 on Monday morning.



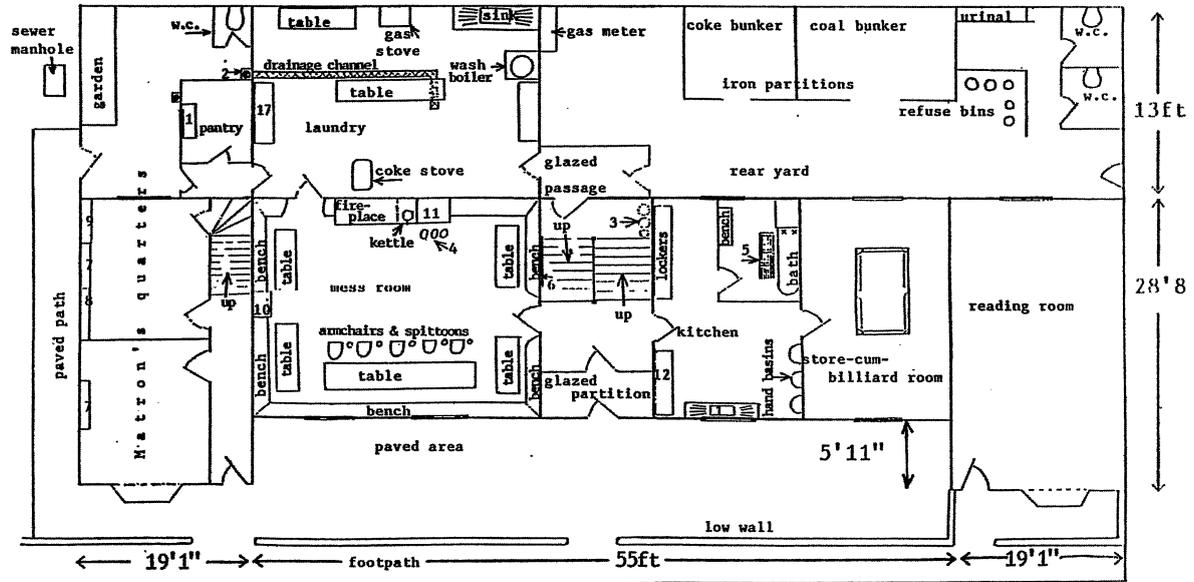
The barracks was renamed 'Ferry Lodge' after its sale by British Railways in 1966 and conversion into flats. Seen here on 8 January 1994.

Entry was through a solid wooden front door into a vestibule, then through a glass-panelled door into a passage way. On your left would be the door to the mess room; on your right a door into the kitchen; facing you would be the stairs leading to the upper floors and on the left of the stairs, a passage way leading to the rear yard and the laundry. Under the stairs were fire buckets filled with sand and water. In the mess room wooden benches were fixed around the walls. Wooden tables were provided, each with a metal-sheeted top. There was a table across each end and one long table down the side of the room. The fire-place was sited on the other long wall. In front of the long table were placed wooden armchairs, and alongside each chair was a large heavy metal spittoon filled with sand. At the end of the room opposite to the door a small desk was built on to the wall and on the desk stood the Register.

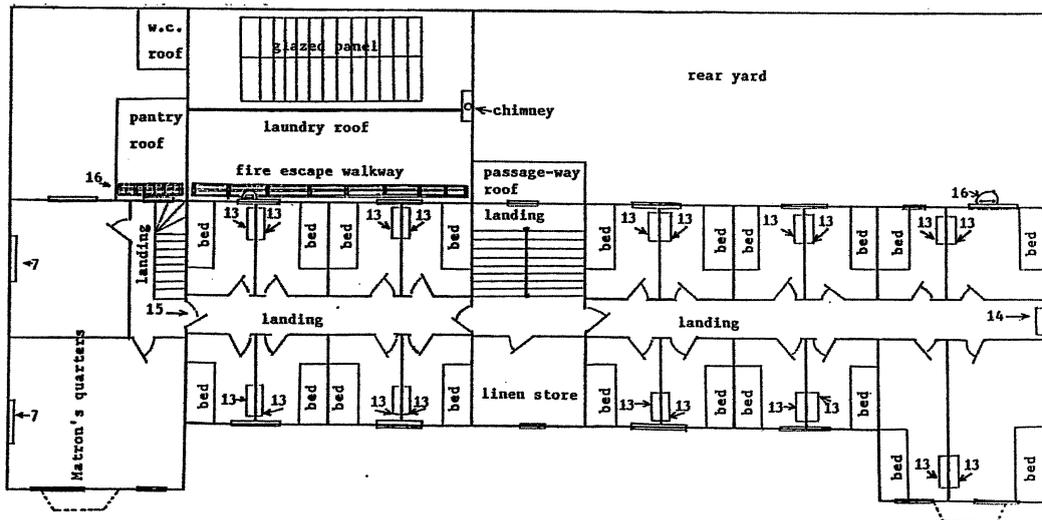
Everyone was obliged to sign in on arrival. Under the desk could be found railway magazines and periodicals.

L.M.S. railway barracks, Mold Junction

Diagrammatic plan of ground floor, c1930-1950. (Not to scale).



Diagrammatic plan of first floor - same plan repeated on second floor, but without communicating door to Matron's quarters.



- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 : sink | 10 : desk |
| 2 : drain | 11 : water tank |
| 3 : fire buckets | 12 : crockery |
| 4 : coal scuttles | 13 : wood bench seats |
| 5 : duckboard | 14 : slop sink |
| 6 : booking-in board | 15 : access from
matron's quarters |
| 8 : shelves | 16 : fire escape |
| 9 : cupboard | 17 : towel cupboard |

The fireplace provided all the hot water for the bath and sinks, and housed a large oven and a hob on which stood a large cast iron kettle about the size of a five gallon drum. Water was drawn off via a brass tap and the kettle itself was filled from a tap at the side of the fireplace via a rubber hose.

Two large windows opposite the fireplace were curtain-less but did have pull-down blinds. During the war years additional blackout material was provided. Suspended from the ceiling in front of the fireplace was a rectangular wooden clothes drying rack.

The mess room and kitchen floors had brown quarry tiles. In the kitchen itself lockers could be found immediately on the left of the door along the wall which separated the kitchen from the stairs. Each wooden locker was approximately 18 inches square by 18 inches high - just large enough to hold an engineman's basket or a guard's leather bag and hand lamp. On the wall to the right of the door could be found another set of wooden lockers, slightly smaller than the personal lockers; these contained the crockery available for the use of the lodgers. Along the right-hand wall ran the large washing-up sink and its draining boards. Four wash-hand basins were on the wall opposite to the door and another door leading into the Reading Room.

A wooden partition separated the bathroom from the kitchen in the left-hand far corner. The bathroom contained only the bath and a wooden bench plus a duckboard to keep the user off the stone floor.

Down the passage on the left a door gave access to the laundry. Although no longer used as a laundry it still contained a large sink, wash-boiler and cast-iron fireplace. A large free-standing iron coke-fired stove stood by the wall adjacent to the mess room. Its purpose was to heat the water for the central heating system. A wooden cupboard held the hand towels which were issued to each lodger on arrival. A large wooden table occupied the centre of this room and the fittings were completed by a large gas stove.

The end of the passage also gave access to a small lean-to conservatory which in turn led into the rear yard. In one corner of the yard stood a wooden cupboard which housed the gas (supplied from Chester Gas Works) meter. Also in the yard were two large bunkers made of heavy metal plate - one for the coal and one for the coke - and in the far corner the men's urinal, two lavatories and the refuse bins. Coal and coke were delivered by the wagon load as and when required. There were no toilets indoors, only a slop sink on each of the large landings! Window sills were very wide and deep and on one of the sills in the rear yard could be found a couple of quite deep concavities formed over the years by the lodgers using the sills to sharpen the knives issued as cutlery.

Going up the stairs to the first floor a one hundred and eighty degree turn had to be made half way up on an intermediate landing. Immediately in front at the head of the stairs was a room used as a linen store. To the right was a door leading onto a landing containing eight bedrooms; to the left was a door leading onto a landing containing twelve bedrooms. The bedrooms themselves were formed by wooden partitions with a gap of approximately eighteen inches between the top of the partition and the ceiling. Each room contained just the single bed and a small wooden bench with a you-know-what under the bed. These last items had to be emptied by the barracks staff into the slop sinks situated at the end of the long

The second floor was a repeat of the first.

A piece of coconut matting ran the length of each landing and fire precautions were taken care of by buckets of water and fire exits through bedroom windows onto metal ladders attached to the outside walls. From the large landings the ladders went down into the rear yard; on the small landings the ladders led onto a catwalk on the laundry roof then down into the rear yard of the Barracks or into the Matron's rear yard. At the end of the small landing on the first floor a door gave access to the first floor in the Matron's quarters but it could only be opened from the Matron's side.

A 'Reading Room' was situated at the end of the Barracks furthest from the main road. In the early years it served the local community in many ways being used to hold religious services, Scout group meetings and to collect the 'Tontine' (a form of health insurance from which members received payment whilst they were off sick. These payments could be withdrawn if the recipient was not home by a certain time in the evening). One elderly inhabitant of the village claimed to have been christened in the Reading Room. There was initially no access from within the Barracks but in later years a door was made from the kitchen area and a half-sized billiard table was installed for the use of the lodgers.

My first memories of the Barracks were when my mother, Harriet Lowe, obtained a post of assistant. This would have been in the mid-thirties, when I was six or seven years old. As the widow of a railwayman she would have received some priority in the selection. (My father, a goods guard, had died as a result of a railway accident in December, 1930, when aged 35). After his death she had eked out an existence on a widow's pension of ten shillings (50 pence) per week plus five shillings (25 pence) for her child. Additional income was obtained by taking in lodgers - railwaymen of course. At the time of her appointment the Matron's post was occupied by a Mrs Fradley, a widow with two sons and one daughter. When Mrs Fradley moved to take up the post of Matron in the Barracks at Holyhead, mother was given the post of Matron at Mold Junction.

[Notes by John Dixon of telephone conversation with Albert Fradley of Kinnerton (age 79 at the time): Mrs Fradley, Albert's mother, was a Yorkshire woman whose husband was a loco man killed on the railway in 1928. She came from Farnley, Leeds, to Mold Junction barracks in 1929 as Matron; she had two sons and one daughter, aged 11, 9, and 3, Albert being the second son. She left Mold Junction in 1937 for a similar job at Copley Hill, Leeds, which was a barracks for railway guards' crews.



The engine shed at Mold Junction in 1937, before the shed roof was re-built lower. (W.T.Stubbs collection).

Albert got a job as porter at Saltney Ferry station, then as porter/signalman at Bagillt, then about 1938 as signalman at Caernarvon No.2 box. While he was here, he was called up for the forces in WW2, joining the R.E.'s railway operating

division. After the war he got a job as railway guard at Chester then later at Northgate when the DMUs came, finishing up a station announcer at Chester General. His elder brother was on the loco at Holyhead, where he still resides.

Albert remembers the barracks being very busy at times – queuing up for accommodation. He seems to think there were 44 bedrooms, two of which doubled-up for other purposes (I've forgotten what they were, he said). Remembers the linen baskets put out on the station platform for collection and also that the men could do their own washing in the laundry. A block section of bedrooms would be closed off in turn for cleaning purposes – e.g. 8 or 12 at a time....]

As accommodation was provided as part of the remuneration we moved from 19 Ewart Street (not far from the Barracks) into the Matron's Quarters. The postal address of this was 1, Flint Road, Saltney Ferry, but "L.M.S. Barracks, Mold Junction" always found us. Free gas and coal were also part of the wages. There was no electricity in any part of the building and gas was still the only source of illumination when we left in the mid-fifties. The Matron's quarters consisted of - on the ground floor - a sitting room, or parlour as we then called it; a living room and a small pantry-cum-kitchen. When we first moved in the pantry had no light so we had to use paraffin lamps, torches, or more often than not cycle lamps. A gas light of sorts was rigged by a local do-it-yourself chap! On the first floor were two good sized bedrooms with gas lights; on the second floor were also two rooms the same size as the first floor rooms but no lighting was installed! As there were only the two of us these two top rooms were used mainly as storage space for spare furniture and a games room for yours truly. I well remember organising a boxing tournament with about four of my mates until Harriet stopped proceedings. I got a roasting because the noise we were making disturbed some of those taking rest in the Barracks next door.

The toilet was in the yard outside and was water-flushed from a cistern. Although no toilet facilities existed indoors ours was fairly modern when compared with the 'tip-pan flushing' of the toilets of the other houses in the street. (A 'tip pan' toilet was flushed by a pan which was so shaped that it tipped over when filled by waste water from the house sink).

As you might imagine the men who stayed at the Barracks over the years were very varied in many ways. No matter whom they were, what they were, or where they came from each received the same courteous and considerate attention from the staff. Each was required to sign the register and select the room of their choice and to indicate against their room number the time they wished to be called. After completing these requirements most had a wash and cooked their meal. What they did after their meal depended on such things as the time of their arrival and the season of the year. If it was spring some would cross over the River Dee by ferry and walk to Bee's Nurseries along the river bank. There were many keen gardeners among railway staff. Some would take a bus or train into Chester and visit a cinema, theatre or pub. As alcohol was not allowed on the premises some men preferred to take a jug around to the local off-licence (there was no public house in the immediate area), purchase a pint of draught beer then sit on the wooden bench outside the front door of the Barracks to quaff their ale, especially on a pleasant summer night. Local railwaymen would occasionally stop for a chat as they went by.

One frequent visitor was a venerable old gentleman by the name of Mr Morris - father of the local postmistress - he was often to be seen in the village pushing a wheelbarrow. The passage of time has wiped away the memory of the barrow's contents but I do remember that he used to leave his barrow outside the Barracks whilst he went in for a chat. As he was a very religious character and a local preacher the conversation was usually brought round to religion. On one occasion some of the men tired of his sermon so one of them slipped out to his barrow and chalked a message on the front which advised onlookers to back a certain horse which happened to be running that day. Needless to say poor old Mr Morris was very irate indeed when someone drew his attention to the message later that afternoon. He stormed back to the Barracks, into the mess room and proceeded to bring down the wrath of

God on whoever had dared to perpetrate such a vile deed. My own clear recollection of Mr Morris - whom we young lads always referred to as "Old Galvanic" but I don't know why - was of this tall white-bearded old gentleman, clad in an old gabardine raincoat which was tied around the middle with string, either digging his allotment or coming towards us down the back of the houses pushing his barrow. As he approached we would stand aside and await the inevitable question which he always asked in his deep booming voice - right from the bottom of his boots - "Well boys, are you playing?" "Yes Mr Morris," was always our reply. Our reply was always followed by three booms as he went on his way "GOOD - GOOD - GOOD".

I got to know some of the men who came to the Barracks quite well. For instance one of the guards from Bangor by the name of Dick Ellis was a theatre goer and he would occasionally ask my mother for permission to take me along for company. A driver again from Bangor used to bring me copies of the *Wide World* magazine after he had read them. I did eventually place a regular order with our local newsagent and I still have many copies of this magazine dating back to the 1950s and some of the earlier copies have the name 'Hayden' pencilled on the front cover.

Another of the guards who befriended my mother and I was a Gwilym Peris Davies from Caernarvon. He used to write poetry and had actually won a Bard's cap and gown for poems submitted to the Welsh National Eisteddfod. We were invited to his home to meet his wife and family and then given a tour of Snowdonia by taxi which included the Aberglaslyn Pass and Llanberis. It was his intention to take us to the summit of Snowdon by train. Unfortunately there was mist on the mountain and the train was not running. On one occasion he gave me a copy of a poem which he said he had written just for me. Knowing I was animal-mad the poem was about a dog whose master had died. Entitled "Old Mot", it was a very sad poem which impressed me greatly at the time, but regrettably my copy has been lost during the intervening years.

Another invitation to visit came from a Mr Tom Doran, a driver from Leeds. This was quite a pleasant few days because a relative of his had a farm and I was able to spend much of the time among the animals and generally pottering about.

Some of the antics practiced by the lodgers ranged from trapeze acts on the clothes drying frame suspended from the mess room ceiling to swapping lockers, making French beds and false alarms. One such incident happened when a sleeper was snoring so loudly it prevented the rest of the lodgers on the same landing from going to sleep. Someone had the bright idea of banging on the offender's door and shouting fire then returning to his own bed whilst the snorer was dashing down stairs shirt in one hand and holding his trousers up with the other. On another occasion loud bumps and grunts were heard coming from one of the bedrooms so it was decided to ask another of the lodgers to investigate. On entering the room he found the occupant in his shirt, and the mattress off the single bed propped up against the wall. The occupant was sitting on the bare springs sweating profusely. He sheepishly explained that a train was fast approaching from the opposite direction and on the same line as his own! He had jumped off the footplate and had lifted his own train onto the next line!!

Sometimes arguments developed over rules and regulations. Out would come the appropriate manual and occasionally heated discussions would last quite a long time. It was generally agreed that the Welsh-speaking railmen were at a disadvantage when they had to be assessed for promotion. They would be examined by an English-speaking examiner instead of being questioned in their mother tongue. Because of this some would, unfortunately for them, 'put the cart before the horse' when answering the question and thus fail. Their fault lay

in their language not in their knowledge - their thinking was in Welsh with its different syntax!

When my mother first took up the post of Matron at the Barracks no permanent residents were allowed. This rule was relaxed sometime in the nineteen forties, probably during the war years. The first men to take up permanent lodgings were a group of men from Ireland. Among the group were two brothers by the name of Larkin. One of the brothers, John, had an accident whilst working in the 'shed'. His arm was severed by a locomotive when John was trying to get out of the repair pit. I understand that his brother was close at hand at the time and rendered assistance but he was so upset by the accident that he returned home to Ireland very soon afterwards. John stayed on at the Barracks until it finally closed and then found lodgings in Chester. My mother used to do a lot of darning and repairs for John because of his handicap and John in return never failed to visit her in her retirement at least once a year, usually at Christmas and always bringing her a gift in acknowledgment of her kindness. When my own son was born he too was added to the gift list. The visits continued right up until mother died in February 1983.

At about the same time a young coloured chap by the name of Steve arrived from the African Continent. He was on a fact-finding mission to learn how the railways were run in this country. However I have not heard of any closures over there! This is not to say he did not learn anything during his stay: he probably learned more than Beeching!!

Not all the men who took up permanent lodgings at the Barracks worked at Mold Junction. One chap - 'Sailor Jack' Jones was a driver at Chester. He was quite a character and he used to travel to and from Chester on an old motor cycle. This machine was always difficult to start and Sailor would be seen taking the plug out and holding it over a gas jet to dry it out, stripping the carburettor to clean the jets or even repairing a puncture before setting off. These procedures were a great source of amusement for the local youngsters. They would sing out each time Sailor prodded the kick-start: four - five - six - - ten - eleven - twelve . By now Sailor would be quite hot and bothered; the counting did not help the situation so he would chase them off with dire threats. When he returned to his kick-starting the chant would resume - seventeen - eighteen - nineteen - twenty. If and when the engine eventually burst into life a rousing cheer would go up from the assembled kids and Sailor would be given a noisy, spirited send off.

When he wasn't tinkering with his bike Sailor would often be making some sort of gadget or other which he thought would be of some use to someone. For instance he once made a toasting fork for John Larkin which would enable John to toast both sides of the bread without removing the bread from the fork. (In those days, of course, bread was toasted in front of a coal fire and not in one of the sophisticated electrical gadgets which nearly everyone uses today. Unfortunately today's toast does not have that lovely flavour which was produced by the coal fire).

When the main companies were amalgamated to form British Railways some of the residents were working at Saltney on the old Great Western Chester to Wrexham line. With the advent of permanent residents an additional member of staff was employed in the form of a cook and lodgers were then able to purchase meals. This kind soul by the name of Miss Bentley soon learned I had a great appetite for vegetables and she would occasionally appear at the communicating door with a nice plateful just for me. Maybe she was taking pity on a skinny young lad!

I have already said that I had many friends among the men who 'booked off' at the Barracks. I also had friends among the young 'knockers-up' who used to come over from the sheds to do duty from 18.00 to 22.00 hours. After completing their chores they were quite happy to fill in some of the time by playing darts, rings, cards, dominoes, etc. with yours truly. Names which come easily to mind include Jim Foxall, Ivor Chilton and Jack Vearncombe. Unfortunately I cannot remember them all; there were about six on the rotating shift. One chap on permanent nights was a Mr Kirkham who lived in Hoole and was a keen fisherman. He gave advice freely on the subject and was always interested in any tackle which I might acquire. It was not unusual for him to bring his own tackle to work on a Saturday night and then walk back to Chester along the river bank on a Sunday morning, fishing as he went.

When coal or coke was required the request was made via the 'Shed' and a wagon load would be shunted into the Slate Yard. From there it would be brought across to the Barracks in wheelbarrows by engine cleaners who were delegated to undertake this duty. As you can well imagine some barrows were occasionally overloaded and some fairly large lumps of coal dropped off while *en route* from the slate yard to the Barracks, especially when negotiating the cobbled entries between the houses. This was an ideal opportunity for the local lads to help themselves to the scattered lumps and hare off home with their spoils.

All linen used in the Barracks was sent away weekly for laundering. Every item sent was accounted for, and the clean linen returned was also counted before being placed in the appropriate store. This was a job I sometimes became involved in - counting the hand towels which were issued to the lodgers, approximately 144 per week. If my memory serves me correctly the laundry went to the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool for washing and it was despatched in canvas-lined wicker baskets. These were large enough for me to hide in with plenty of room to spare.

As we had no bath in the Matron's quarters we had to make use of the bath in the Barracks - usually on a Sunday when it was closed. During WW2 a line was painted around the bath approximately five inches from the bottom: this was to indicate the level of water allowed, in order to save fuel. This also reminds me that a disc of yellowish green paint was painted on the front window sills. It was about four inches in diameter and its purpose was to provide warning of the presence of mustard gas: if gas was present in the air it was supposed to change colour. Memories of the war years associated with the Barracks also include selling rabbits to the men who lodged in the Barracks for them to take home and eat. In those days I used to breed these fascinating creatures for showing and any surplus or mismarked animals were sold off to supplement a meagre meat ration.

As lads one of our favourite areas for playing football with a tennis ball was in the entry between the back of the Barracks and the backs of the Co-op and Off Licence. It had ten foot walls either side and was about thirty yards long - ideal. That is until the noise we made reached the ears of the Matron (my mother). She would then appear on the scene to send us elsewhere so that the men taking rest were not disturbed.

These same ten foot walls also enclosed the yard of the Matron's quarters. Access was by a large heavy wooden door which tended to sag on its hinges so the heavy latch needed a tidy jerk and coordinated push to enable the door to be opened. We had to put a piece of metal under the door and lever it up if we ever wished to engage the large bolt with which it was furnished. The front door of the house was kept permanently locked by a mortise lock, two heavy duty bolts and a safety chain! Everyone who knew us always came to the back with the exception of one friend in the local motor club who insisted on calling at the front door just

to hear all the locks, bolts and chains being unfastened. He used to say it reminded him of a prison scene he had once witnessed at the cinema!

We remained living at the Barracks until mother retired from the Matrons post in May 1957. On her retirement mother was granted the tenancy of a newly built council house - No.36 Kynaston Drive, Saltney Ferry. After living at the Barracks, number 36 with only two bedrooms was quite small so this necessitated the disposal of quite a lot of surplus furniture. So ended a fairly long and interesting chapter for both Harriet and myself.



Mold Junction photographed from the road overbridge, some time between 1966 and 1970; Saltney Ferry station was closed in 1962 and the partially lifted track that passed the solitary island platform can be seen at the bottom. The shed itself has been closed but the coal chute lasted until demolition in August 1970. The Mold branch diverted to the left, while the main Holyhead lines swung to the right.

Finally I must record that the existence of the barracks to this day is probably due to the intelligence of our family pet, a golden retriever by the name of Sandy. He was about two year old when he warned my wife (then my girlfriend) and me that chairs were on fire in the living room of the matron's quarters. At the time we were keen motor-cyclists and we arrived home from a run and tried to light the living room fire. We thought that we had failed after attempting to draw the fire by putting a sheet of newspaper up the front, so we went out to the garden to carry out some maintenance on the machine. When we heard Sandy barking at the gate we went to see what he wanted and he immediately dashed into the house and came out coughing and spluttering. We went in and found the fire had been kindled and the paper had actually set fire to a chair and a pair of recently purchased pannier bags. We got buckets of water and succeeded in dousing the blaze. Each time we dashed in Sandy came too, still snuffling. We hadn't the heart to stop him paddling in the mess.

So the Barracks (as "Ferry Lodge") stands to this day: an ever present reminder to me of a kind, intelligent and faithful companion.

By order of British Railways Board—London Midland Region.

SALTNEY FERRY, NEAR CHESTER
(2½ miles from Chester City Centre).

WYNNE DAVIES & CO.

are instructed to offer For Sale by Auction,

at the

HAWARDEN CASTLE HOTEL, QUEENSFERRY

at 2 p.m. on

TUESDAY, 26th JULY, 1966

(Subject to Conditions of Sale)

THE SUBSTANTIAL DETACHED FREEHOLD THREE-STOREY
PROPERTY

being the

FORMER RAILWAY STAFF HOSTEL and CARETAKER'S HOUSE SALTNEY LANE, SALTNEY FERRY

conveniently situated about 1 mile from the centre of Saltney, only 2½ miles from Chester City Centre, and close to Queensferry and Deeside, easy reach of the North Wales Towns.

The Building is of imposing proportions, brick-built with slate roof, and contains:—

CARETAKER'S HOUSE

forming part of main building and with connecting doors thereto on ground and first floors:—

Ground Floor:

Entrance Hall; Sitting Room, 12ft. x 12ft., with wood block floor, fireplace and bay window; Living Room, 13ft. x 12ft., with combination cooking range; Scullery with sink, 7ft. 6in. x 6ft.

First and Second Floors:

4 Bedrooms, 13ft. x 10ft. 3in.; 16ft. x 12ft.; 13ft. 3in. x 10ft. 9in. and 16ft. 6in. x 12ft.

MAIN HOSTEL BUILDING

Ground Floor:

Mess Room, 24ft. 6in. x 20ft. with quarry tile floor;
Toilet Block, 20ft. 6in. x 12ft. with three wash-basins and partitioned off Bathroom.

Reading Room, 20ft. 6in. x 12ft., with partition and wood block floor.

Games Room, 26ft. x 16ft. with wood block floor.

Attached Single Storey Brick-built Kitchen, 24ft. x 20ft. 3in., with brick floor, sink, washing boiler and central heating boiler.

First Floor:

Dormitory Area, 41ft. x 20ft. 4in. divided into 11 cubicles and W.C. Compartment.

Housemaid's Pantry, 8ft. x 6ft.

Dormitory Area, 25ft. x 20ft. 4in. divided into 8 cubicles.

Second Floor:

Dormitory Area, 41ft. x 20ft. 4in. divided into 12 cubicles.

Housemaid's Pantry, 8ft. x 6ft.

Dormitory Area, 25ft. x 20ft. 4in. divided into 8 cubicles.

The division of the Dormitory Areas into Cubicles is formed by timber boarded partitioning, very easily removed.

Outside:

Brick-walled Fully Enclosed Yard at the rear, containing 2 W.C.s and a 2-stall Urinal, Small Paved Forecourt to the Hostel, together with a small plot of land adjoining the Caretaker's House on the Saltney Lane frontage.

APPROXIMATELY 4,500 SUPERFICIAL FEET

CONTAINED ON THREE FLOORS OF MAIN HOSTEL

excluding the Caretaker's House.

SITE AREA, 1,200 SQUARE YARDS OR THEREABOUTS

including the access road and passageway.

Actual site of Buildings, Forecourt and rear Yard:
770 square yards or thereabouts.

Freehold Tenure and free from Chief Rent.

Mains Water, Gas and Drainage connected.

IRON FIRE ESCAPE LADDERS FROM FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS
TO YARD AT THE REAR.

ACCESS ROADS.

The property is served by an access road from Saltney Lane, to the front and side, and the site of this access road will be included in the sale.

ENTIRE VACANT POSSESSION ON COMPLETION.

THE SALE OF THIS PROPERTY AFFORDS THE OPPORTUNITY OF ACQUIRING SUBSTANTIAL DETACHED PREMISES VERY SUITABLE FOR CONVERSION INTO FLATS. PROPERTY ALSO IDEAL (subject to Planning Approval) FOR REPOSITORY-STORAGE-WAREHOUSE USE, CLUB, RECREATION AND GAMES CENTRE, INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES AND OTHER USES.

Local Authority: Hawarden Rural District Council,
Council Offices, Hawarden (Tel. 3107).

County Authority: Flintshire County Council,
County Offices, Mold (Tel. 106).

VIEWING.

Keys are available for inspection of the premises upon production of these Particulars to Yardmaster's Office, Saltney Ferry (rear of No. 40 Ewart Street and only two minutes' walk from the Hostel), between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4.30 p.m., Monday to Saturday. Premises to be secured after inspection and keys returned immediately to Yardmaster's Office so that they may be readily available in case of emergency.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Auctioneers:

WYNNE DAVIES & CO.,

Central Chambers, 10, Conway Road, Colwyn Bay
(Tel. 30475).

N.B.—Whilst these particulars are believed to be correct their accuracy is not guaranteed and they shall not be deemed to form part of any contract for sale.

The barracks was sold by B.R. in 1966 and the estate agent's leaflet is reproduced above.

(This is an enlarged and revised version of a similar article which was published in *Merseyside Express* in June 1966)

Book Review by Richard Oldfield:

English Electric Traction Chester to Holyhead, Volume 1: 1959 to 1983, compiled by Steve Morris. Ty Mawr Publications, 2011. ISBN 0 9552354 5 6. RRP £17.95

Our group is a fan of specialist Ty Mawr publications. I have four of the five books listed on their website (<http://tymawrpublications.co.uk/books.html>) and this new book covers "Mostyn's" 1977 time setting. It can be no surprise that it appeared immediately on our 'must buy' list. My only hesitation was the relatively poor photographic reproduction of an earlier book from Ty Mawr (*Class Forties to Holyhead*) - we tend to pore over the minute detail in photographs and it is very frustrating to try and discern what a blurred component might be.

First impressions are important and this hardback book of 96 pages consisting of captioned colour and black and white images 'ticks all the boxes'. The photographic reproduction is certainly very good and the images are of a size which rewards closer study.

The book is laid out in geographical sections heading westwards from Chester to Holyhead. Each section starts with a brief introduction and then moves rapidly on to photographs which are, again, in geographical rather than date order. The captioning is full of interest which betrays a great depth of understanding of the subject matter and this is a credit to the compiler and photographic contributors. The photographers include several people like Dave Plimmer, Dave Rapson, and Pat Webb who are well-known to the "Mostyn" team and have been very willing to share their knowledge with us over the years as we strive to re-create the 1977 North Wales main line railway scene. Some photographs appeared to be 'old friends' to me but this does not mean that they have been published before but rather that the photographer had kindly let us see them at an earlier date.

It would be hard to choose 'photograph of the book' as there are so many temptations but, for me, it is hard to beat 40129 and 40170 double-heading a Holyhead bound Freightliner on page 44. Our model of 40170 has put in years of service on the layout whilst 40129 is earmarked for completion in our next batch of 'Whistlers'. On page 92 there is not only Class 40 40076 on the Petroleum Coke hoppers heading for Anglesey Aluminium in 1978 but also a converted Palbrick wagon in use as a match vehicle for crippled Freightliner flats. Yet another specialist wagon to add to our 'to do' list!

This is a super book, an excellent record of a long-gone and much-changed railway scene. Congratulations to all involved.

Trevithick Single No. 291, PRINCE OF WALES

A follow-up to John Dixon's article on Queen Victoria's trip through Saltney in 1852

by Norman Lee

PRINCE OF WALES was new - straight out of L.N.W.R.'s Crewe Works - when it was used on Queen Victoria's train at Saltney in 1852, as related by John Dixon in *BMRJ* No.28.

Most of Mr Trevithick's single drivers were scrapped in the late 1870s or 1880s. PRINCE OF WALES lingered on for much longer.

It lost its nameplate in 1862 when the name and number were transferred to a new Ramsbottom 'Problem' - the Trevithick engine became No. 291A and then 1117.

It stayed in revenue earning service until 1879. However, instead of being cut up, it was passed on to the Crewe divisional civil engineer for use by him and his staff to travel around his part of the LNWR network - in effect, it was rather like the Victorian equivalent of a company car. Each division was allocated a similar engine, along with a saloon, and the Engineer could call on his engine at will whenever he needed to inspect track or structures under his control. The number-plates were removed and plates bearing the text ENGINEER CREWE were fitted to the cab side - the plates were castings and quite different from ordinary LNWR engraved brass locomotive nameplates. Other examples were ENGINEER LANCASTER and ENGINEER SOUTH WALES.

ENGINEER CREWE was given a large cab - the original engine had just a weather board - although the cab wasn't as spacious as appears in the photograph as much of it is occupied by the firebox. Some of the other ENGINEER engines received similar treatment - ENGINEER BANGOR for example. The latter is now preserved as COLUMBINE in the National Railway Museum at York - its large cab was removed when the engine was restored to its earlier form and the cab is on display at the Railway Age in Crewe.

ENGINEER CREWE was rebuilt in 1892 and given a larger boiler with modern boiler mountings and circular smokebox door. It was eventually scrapped in 1899 when it was replaced by one of Mr Ramsbottom's 'Samson' class 2-4-0 engines - No.424 SIRIUS. The cast nameplates were moved to the 'Samson' and stayed there until 1914 when the 'Samson' in turn was replaced by the redundant 'Whitworth' No. 209 PETREL - the ENGINEER CREWE plates stayed with that engine until 1932. By that date, well into LMS days, the Engineer would have been able to travel by road (although a company car sounds much less exciting than a personal steam engine).

The photograph shows the Trevithick engine facing south at the north end of Crewe station in around 1890 - perhaps just before the engine was rebuilt. The tender is fitted with a weatherboard to give some protection when running backwards. In later years some of the

ENGINEER engines were given tenders with roofed cabs - they must have spent many an hour waiting in sidings in the rain. The notice in the background is for the 'Crewe Arms Station Hotel' which belonged to the railway in those days.





Ellesmere Port no.2 signal cabin. Opened about 1924 by the L.M.S.R./G.W.R. Joint Railway. It had an L.N.W.R. tappet frame of 45 levers. Closed by British Railways in November 1983. Photographed on 14 June 1975; (caption by John Dixon).

Rock and roll to Sydney

by Tony Robinson

Although not exactly local this story does involve my efforts, as head of a local machinery manufacturing company, to export the products of that company to the antipodes. The period was the late eighties and early nineties and several trips were made separately, by my co-director and me to areas beyond the European shores in reasonably successful efforts to that effect.

The first trip that I made to the antipodes was in January 1988. This involved flying by Quantas from Manchester, on a Friday evening to Auckland, New Zealand, arriving Sunday afternoon, local time. Having been met by our agent and given the customary tour around the sights I was deposited at my City centre hotel feeling totally disorientated time-wise; the previous day having evaporated during the flight between Dubai and the Singapore area! Anyway having eaten an evening meal and not feeling like turning in I decided to do a bit of exploring as it was a mid-summer evening with some hours of daylight remaining. Strange as it may seem I found myself gravitating toward the docks where a fair amount of "rail-related" infrastructure could be seen.



This picture I took at the Strand station on automatic setting just to prove I'd actually been there as it was the furthest from home that I'd ever ventured! It was an absolutely deadly quiet Sunday evening with no sign of movement or people. The stock in the adjacent platforms is awaiting a Monday morning departure to Hamilton. The universal gauge in New Zealand is 3'6". Sadly this station was to close in 2003 to be replaced by a new underground transport complex, as one might expect

being hidden away beneath the city, completely lacking in character!



The sad scene today, the broken track overgrown with weeds!

(Photo: *Auckland news*)



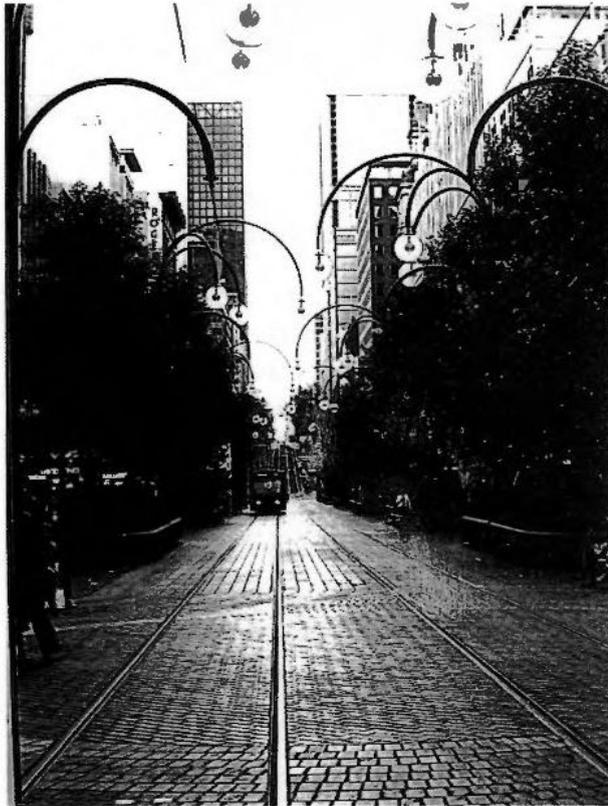
Looking past where I was standing on that fine summers evening in 1988 one can see the line heading north eastwards out of the city with a fine British style signal box guarding the exit from the dock sidings which are shown below.



In the distance can be seen the Auckland city centre high rise blocks and in the dock reception sidings a proliferation of container traffic and a train of open top mineral containers. Conventional vans with sliding doors can be seen on the far right up against the warehouse.

Current plans are to increase rail borne traffic to 30% of the total in and out of the docks and a new intermodal handling centre has recently been constructed.

Having spent a few of days visiting existing and potential customers in the Auckland and Hamilton areas of North Island my next port of call was Melbourne in Victoria, Australia. Again travel was by air direct to Melbourne where I was met by our agent, John Goulet (of French descent pronounced Goolay) a man whose late father just happened to have been the station master at Melbourne's Spencer Street station. Now John whilst not a railway enthusiast by our standards did have more than a leaning towards the local rail system and therefore encouraged by my obvious interest, urged me to sample its delights! Well firstly if you like trams a trip to Melbourne is well worth the trouble, as I found out. The whole city is criss-crossed by tram lines with what was then an ultra modern system running from East to West (See photo below left taken on a fine evening in the city centre looking westwards towards the setting sun). The trams being (then) modern two car articulated sets, not unlike the Metrolink units of Manchester.



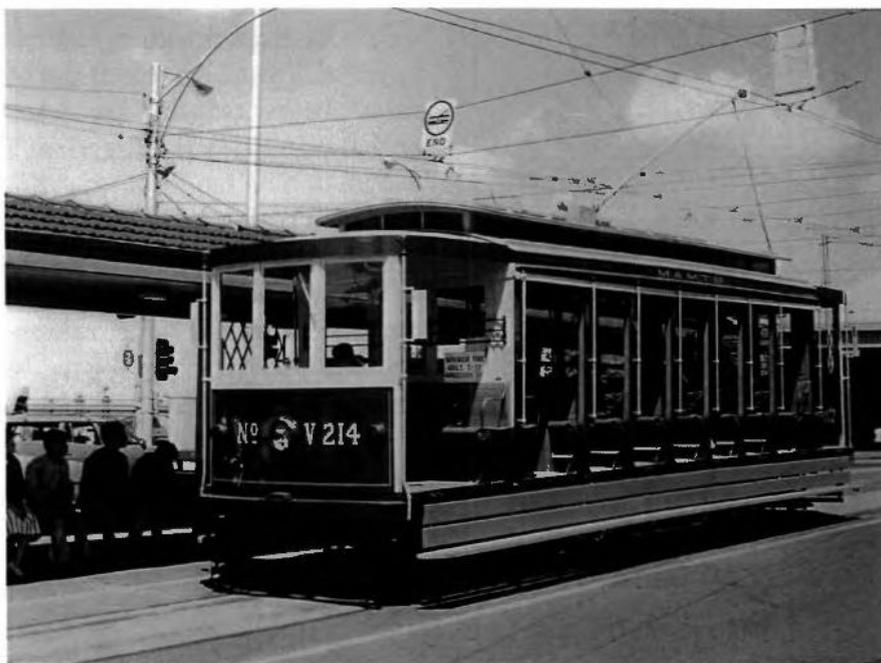
Running north to south ran a system employing much older vehicles and it was this (to me a more interesting system) that I was to sample. As mentioned above John encouraged my use of the trams and when I had a Saturday afternoon free he suggested that as it was mid-summer and very hot I take a trip on a tram down to "Nipple Point" for a swim. "Nipple Point I queried?" John answered to the affirmative with a gleam in his eye!

So armed with my bathers and a towel off I went on one of the vehicles* shown below crossing Swanston Street bridge in a southerly direction. The destination on the tram was "South Beach" and the whole "clanging & screeching" experience took me back to my early childhood when we rode on the Llandudno trams to Penrhyn Bay and Rhos-on-Sea on not dissimilar vehicles for the very same purpose. The only thing to add was that on arrival at the South Beach I was not about to be disappointed! Good bathing too!



*The "W6" Class trams entered service in the 1951-55 period, have 4 x 30kw motors driven from a single overhead wire 600v D.C. system and like all of the Melbourne systems run on standard gauge track.

The next day (Sunday) on further explorations of the city I came across the nicely restored ancient 4 wheeled clerestory roofed "toast rack" vehicle shown below, this was giving rides out into the eastern suburbs so I hopped aboard for a thoroughly enjoyable experience.



Sitting behind the driver I noticed that on approaching points he sometimes, but not always, slowed down. The latter seemed to coincide with changing of direction (taking the turnout),

so I asked him how the points were controlled. Apparently taking power causes the points to switch, this of course happens when speeding up from slowing on approaching the point! I have no doubt that most tram enthusiasts will already know this, ah well I didn't until then!

Just across the Swanston Street bridge is situated the busiest station in Australia, this is the Victoria State Railways Flinders Street station named after the adjacent street running along the north bank of the Yarra River.



FLINDERS STREET STATION.



JOLIMONT PASSENGER YARD.

The station handles most of the suburban services in and out of the city and just beyond the station is the Jolimont passenger yard and this is the largest rail complex in the whole of the continent. The interesting thing is that the railways of Victoria and South Australia were built by Irish engineers to a gauge of 5'3" whereas the New South Wales railways were built to the British standard gauge. Standard gauge tracks finally made their way through to Melbourne from Sydney in 1962. Historical research reveals that the railways of N.S.W. were greatly influenced by the British: Dugal Drummond on locomotive design and the L.N.W.R. on passenger rolling stock!



A MIXTURE OF GAUGES IS THEREFORE EVIDENT AT THE APPROACHES TO SPENCER STREET STATION IN MELBOURNE.



(LEFT) THIS WAS THE THUMPING GREAT G.M. DESIGN, AUSTRALIAN BUILT CO-CO DIESEL ELECTRIC THAT WAS TO HAUL THE WRITER OVERNIGHT TO SYDNEY.
 (RIGHT) THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS TRAIN ALONGSIDE THE SPENCER ST. PLATFORM.
 (Note the dual gauge track under the locomotive).

Well as the above pictures suggest this was to be the (railway) highlight of my two week long trip in 1988. Following John's advice I booked a berth on the overnight sleeper to Sydney and I have to say the memory has stayed with the writer to this day. The train although running on standard gauge tracks had a generous loading gauge as per the stock designed for the "broad gauge" track. Having taken the above photos I settled in to my well-equipped and relatively roomy berth and departure was timed for about 8 pm. We hadn't been underway long when there was a loud knock on my door from the attendant advising that "Dinner was now being served in the restaurant car". So off I went down the train for what seemed like a couple of miles to the restaurant car which was next to and beyond a "buffet car" that was replete with bar, piano and dance floor! This was to be travel in the real Aussie style hence the experience sticking in my memory! Naturally an unhurried perusal of the menu in the bar was accompanied by a pint of the ubiquitous "Amber Nectar" before an excellent meal was embarked upon in the restaurant car. By now the light was fading and I noticed that the speed of the train never seemed to get much above of what I estimated to be about 60mph or so. On finishing an excellent 3 course meal I adjourned to the bar next door where a fellow passenger, who I believe was Irish, had sat himself at the piano and was busily tinkling away. Nobody actually took to the dance floor but a great time was had by all, I decided to turn in about 11.30 pm. So for only the second time in my life I was to sample the delights of a sleeping berth on a train! (First time being Chester to Paddington many years previously). And so we gently rocked and rolled through the night. At about 7am there was another loud knock on the door with the attendant advising that breakfast was now being served, this of course proved to be a delicious "English Breakfast" with all the trimmings, soon we were passing through the suburb of Liverpool outside Sydney where on arrival in broad daylight I espied a strange single platform station* just outside but entirely separate from Sydney Central station where we arrived at about 8.30 am. I was met on the platform by our NSW agent, a grand chap called Don Swinton who thought I was "nuts" for coming by train!

* This I discovered was the "funeral station" serving the adjacent city cemetery.



THE ONLY RAIL RELATED PICTURE THAT I MANAGED TO TAKE IN SYDNEY WAS THIS ONE TAKEN WHILE TRAVELLING NORTH BY CAR OVER THE HARBOUR BRIDGE.

As the reader might guess Don was not interested in railways and whilst an excellent guide, kept me well away from them! A couple of evenings after my arrival in that most attractive city we ascended the 1000ft high Sydney Tower, on looking out over the city I espied a plume of steam and smoke over in the station area, when I queried Don about it he said steam excursions were a common thing there saying "I didn't realise you were interested"! The above picture shows a city bound suburban electric emerging from one of the south towers of the harbour bridge, up until 1962 trams used the (now) traffic lanes through the right hand towers.

I returned to the antipodes in 1990, visiting Christchurch, New Zealand where time didn't permit viewing of the South Island railways and again Melbourne and Sydney, when I enquired about taking the sleeper train again, I was told it had been discontinued due to the "age of the rolling stock", another case of just in time I guess!

Letters to the Editor

E-mail from **Dave Greenly** regarding Tony Robinson's **Merseyrail incline** photo:

" My reason for writing is the photograph in the current issue of the Barrowmore Newsletter of the Moor Street Incline and I must admit that I wasn't aware of its existence up to now. Where exactly it is and what function did it perform on Merseyrail? Was it a way of getting surface trains onto the underground system - I have a vague memory of hearing about a way up to the top that was beyond the platforms at the Mersey Railway Liverpool Central Low Level but was never sure that this existed. I'd welcome details of where I could find out any more - perhaps you could persuade a local expert to expand on the subject in your newsletter"

.... And here is the photographer's reply:

(part of an E-mail from Tony Robinson...):

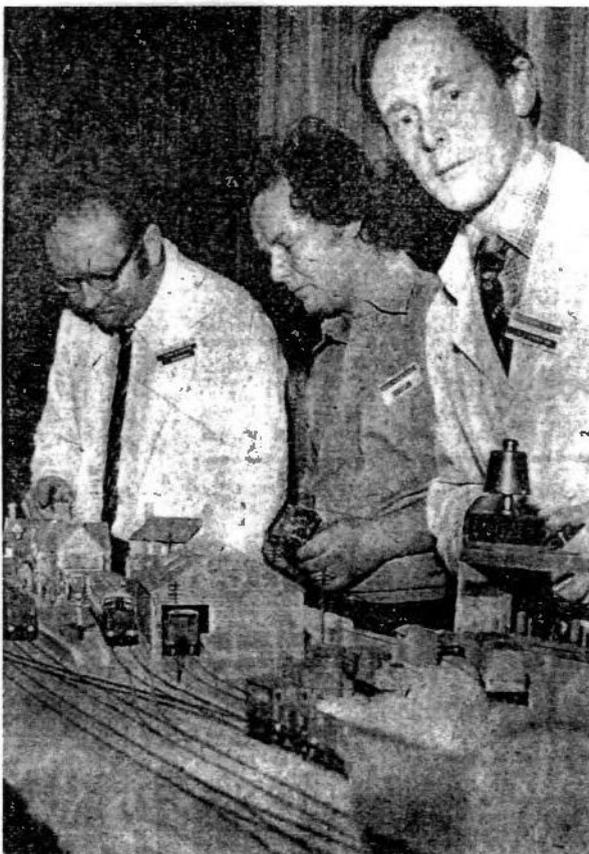
"..... the incline in the photo runs under what used to be Exchange station and is very much "in the present" as it is the current Liverpool - Southport/Ormskirk route. One can view it from the rear of the private parking area belonging to Williams BMW dealers, I found the spot almost by accident as I was actually looking for remnants of the old tunnel that ran up from Riverside station...."

(and a reply from Dave Greenly):

"Thanks for forwarding Mr Robinson's message with details of the Moor St incline. Very interested that it's behind the old Exchange Station. More years ago than I care to remember I started work in St Pauls Square behind the station when it still had steam as well as the Southport electrics and the inside was basically the old L & Y station including ex-Bell Telephone wooden phone boxes! And I wasn't interested in railways! I do recall however the dark and wet pedestrian subway that ran under the station throat that was a good short cut to Vauxhall Rd but not a pleasant walk. As an aside why would the incline be named after Moor St which (as far as I know) is located behind James St station? Regards – Dave"

E-mail from **John Crompton**, following up on his search for a newspaper picture of the MMRS EM group's GWR layout:

".... I've found the *Liverpool Echo* photo I mentioned in the last email - attached. It looks as if "Bromfield" was fully developed, so it was probably 1974 It's not good, but recognisable - we were so young in those days.



Mike Richards [left], Paul Rees [centre] and me, of course - I do still recognise the other two if not myself".

In answer to my query of "whatever happened to Mike Richards?", John replied: " Mike moved to Wilmslow with his job in Excise and then to HM Edinburgh office round about 1988/90. We'd lost touch for a few years, but when we moved to Scotland in 1994 we re-established contact and we still meet up from time to time. As hinted in my 'piece', he and Kay suffered a house fire in 1995 which gutted their upper floor – contractor resealing a flat roof with bitumen on a windy day – and the new "Downton Road" boards helped the blaze. Mike never got back to modelling after he left Merseyside, although last time we met he was still a member of the EM Gauge Society."

E-mail from Group member **Richard Stagg**:

"...I visited the British Library recently to see its current exhibition of illuminated royal manuscripts. A really fascinating exhibition by the way and one I had to go back a second day to finish off looking at everything there was to see there.

Whilst there I spent a little while looking at the philatelic collection - itself something that one could spend a lot of time at. However in it there is, (I suspect), a virtually complete collection of pregrouping railway letter stamps. I spotted some really obscure lines, and some that we are more familiar with such as the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Cambrian. I could not see any examples from the Festiniog or the North Wales Narrow Gauge. Maybe it was only standard gauge lines that issued them [in those days]. Most of the collection seemed to consist of mint copies but there was one interesting complete envelope showing a Cambrian Railways stamp with the Cambrian title struck through and the letters GWR overwriting it in red ink and I think a date in 1922 or 23...."

E-mail from **Laurence Wheeler of the Chester Model Railway Club**, giving advance news of their next rail tour:

"THE WAVERLEY EXPRESS – Saturday 21st April 2012

Promoted by Chester Model Railway Club and the Dee & Mersey Group of the Ffestiniog Railway.

As a member of the Chester Model Railway Club we bring you advance notice of our Spring 2012 outing. Please help to make this railtour a success, our share of the proceeds from this tour will provide funds for future enhancements to our clubroom and facilities.

We have been asked many times recently for a trip to Scotland, and specifically Edinburgh, and this is the first year that the route has been available to us. To include our friends from Shropshire and North East Wales we are doing it differently by starting from Shrewsbury then picking up at Gobowen, Wrexham, Bache, Hooton and Frodsham. The train then continues north via the English Fells and the Scottish Southern Uplands to Edinburgh Waverley arriving about 12 noon. The attractions available at Edinburgh don't need any description, and we arrive right in the City Centre. We will leave for our journey home around 4:30pm.

Full details are now on our website and you can book online using your credit or debit card or PayPal account. Simply visit www.chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours.htm .

You will receive an email acknowledgement of your online booking and more information on timings will be sent when available. Tickets will be posted a few days before the train runs. (There is no need to provide a SAE when booking online).

If you prefer to book by post you can download and print a paper booking form off the website or wait until the New Year when we make our normal postal mailshot.

We look forward to meeting all our existing customers and welcoming many new ones. Please forward this email to friends and family who may be interested in joining us on this splendid day out.

Any questions, please drop me a note by replying to this email or to my personal address, laurence.wheeler@tesco.net .

Laurence Wheeler
Railtour Organiser

Some readers will be aware that the Editor's youngest son lives in the Republic of Ireland – since 2003, in a small village in Co. Louth, not far from Drogheda on the north-east coast. Until recently, I was able to make annual visits, usually using public transport – taking the train from Dublin to Drogheda where he would pick me up for the drive to Tullyallen. While waiting for him at the station I would take photographs of any rolling stock present or passing; adjacent to the station car park is the junction with the Kingscourt branch, where the Platin cement factory is situated. Very often a goods train would be parked there, waiting to join the main line - usually a train of cement wagons. So I have had ample opportunity to photograph the wagons: I have fifty or so 'Bubble' negatives!

Observations on CIE 4-wheeled bulk cement wagons

by Robert Drysdale

This article was first published in *New Irish Lines* in March 2009 and has since been updated slightly.

The 4-wheeled bulk cement wagons, or "bubbles" as they were popularly known, were iconic of the modernisation of Irish railways in the 1960s. They are continuously popular subjects for modelling, so in this article a few observations are offered with that use in mind.

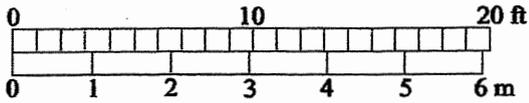
150 of these wagons were constructed by CIE over a period of 8 years and most lasted until 2009 (life-expiry and a policy of reducing freight traffic and replacing 4 wheeled wagons?). By now I believe that all have been scrapped and probably cut up (see postscript). The batch numbers were as follows:-

Numbers	Building year
25050-25069	1964
25070-25094	1965
25095-25099	1967
25100-25104	1967
25105-25119	1967
25120-25139	1970
25140-25199	1972

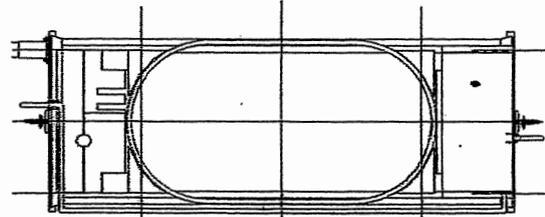
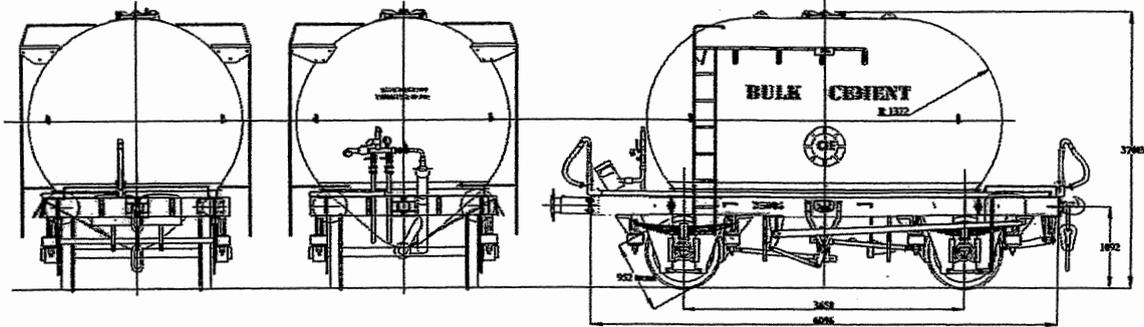
The sub-plot of the article is about what information can be extracted from the Worldwide Web. With the advent of the web and the digital camera many excellent images have suddenly become publicly available, representing an unparalleled information source. Of course, lacking access to the prototype, a lot of "reverse engineering" is necessary to guess what things are. (A list of websites used was given in the original article, but with the collapse of fotopic.net, all the original references have disappeared. Luckily I took copies of all the relevant photographs I found on the web).

I started this work in order to gather information for creating a rake of cement bubbles. The only drawing I had was the one which came with a Model Irish Railways kit, which is quite good. Then I started searching the web for photographs.

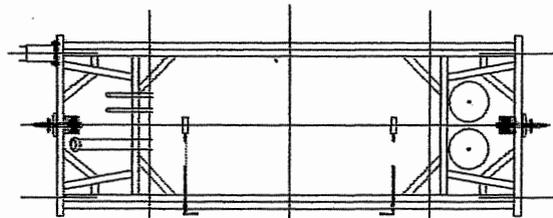
What became clear quite quickly was that although these wagons may seem to be standard, there were actually subtle differences which reflect the building batches and modifications carried out in service. These details might seem a bit too trivial for most people, but I believe



Note some details of hatch omitted for clarity



Deck plating & ringbeam



Underframe plan

Notes:

- 1) Wagon number series 25050 - 199.
- 2) Drawing assembled from CIE drwgs plus photographs.
- 3) Given dimensions are in mm fullsize.
- 4) Another simpler type of loading hatch has been seen but is very rare.
- 5) Various varieties of deck plating and platform over the vacuum cylinders exist.
- 6) The main discharge connection is covered by a rectangular or cylindrical tin box secured to the wagon by a chain.
- 7) Lifting lugs on the solebars are either all present, partly present or all absent.
- 8) There are two varieties of buffers that either sit within the buffer beam (channel) or on a plate outside.
- 9) Discharge handles can be on either solebar.
- 10) Livery was originally orange tank with black underframe and lettering. Later livery was ivory with black underframe and black letters. Note letter format shown is only indicative, a block stencil was actually used.

Drwg.No: CIE/W/001/B

The author's drawing of a 'bubble', based on the C.I.E. drawing plus many photographs. By the turn of the century, the Editor's own photographs suggest that (where it can be read through caked-on cement!) lettering was in white, and positioning and content were variable: use photos when modelling.

that a little variation adds considerably to the realism of a rake of standard wagons. My notes on this aspect are as below.

Detail variations

Solebars: it seems as though these wagons were built with the stronger springs and spring-hangers of the later [C.I.E.] 4-wheeled stock, presumably reflecting their load capacity of 20 or 21 tons. There were many variations of lifting lugs within the class, namely 2, 1 or 0 per side and presumably not necessarily the same number on both sides. Likewise the mounting plate for these lugs could be rectangular, notched or absent altogether and in the latter case various stiffening ribs can be seen instead.



25097 from the third batch (1967): no lifting lugs on solebar, smaller buffer guides, rectangular cover for unloading manifold. The paler patches on the tank are where caked cement dust has come off – in a different pattern on every wagon! Photographed at Limerick Junction on 27 May 2003.

Buffers: two types can be seen on the photographs, both massive with parallel shanks like Dowty hydraulic items. One (older?) type had a smaller base plate which fits inside the open channel outward-facing buffer beam [as in the photo of 25097 above]. The larger buffer [as on the photo of 25075 on the next page] was attached to an additional plate welded across the webs of the open channel. Whereas the larger buffer had a relatively plain housing, the smaller one was lumpy with a distal bulge on each side of the housing and a flat rectangle on the top surface next to the ram [presumably a foot-rest].

Axleguards: most of the axleguards were solid plate items, but some photographs show the earlier fabricated type with a triangular opening on each side behind the spring. This is can be seen on photographs of other wagons of the same era.

Axleboxes: on a few photographs heavily bolted wing-plates can be seen on the side of the axleboxes, while most wagons had plain wings. Earlier wagons had fully a plain dished end-cover whereas most of the photographs on the web show Timken boxes with the characteristic triangular 3-bolt end plate.



Unloading valves: on most photographs, two small yellow-painted handles (seen in the photograph above) emerge from holes in the solebar, which controlled the outlet valves from the tank. Although the little holes seem to be provided on both solebars, the handles appear on only one side. I can see no convention as to which solebar the handles should be on, but there seemed to be about equal numbers of left and right handed examples (this might reflect the alternate order of these wagons mentioned in "Operating practice" below).



Vacuum cylinder covers: the cylinders were located at one end of the wagon and protruded slightly above the chassis, necessitating a raised chequer-plate platform for safe walking over this area. In a large number of examples this plate had been removed, exposing the vacuum cylinders and chassis, which poses an extra challenge for the modeller. The cylinder cover and indeed the deck plating on the valve manifold end of the wagon varied somewhat from wagon to wagon, apparently having been built to fit.

Unloading pipe: at the opposite end of the wagon from the brake system was the unloading pipework manifold. The main unloading pipe of 6" diameter emerged from the decking at about 60° and was provided with a loose cover, which was either cylindrical or rectangular in section.

Loading hatch: the hatch at the top of the tank on the vast majority of wagons photographed was secured by four hinged levers that folded over the rim of the hatch and were secured by a

boss which was manually tightened onto a screw in the middle of the hatch. I found only one photograph of a much simpler hatch securing set-up with only one strap across the lid. The simple variant was the one used in the MIR model.

It is debatable how much variation in these details can be seen in one rake of wagons. New wagons would probably have entered service in very uniform condition but over time modifications would have been made and the various batches would have become mingled.

Colour

According to advice gleaned from the Irish Railway Modellers web group, the bulk cement wagons have had three liveries so far. Initially they ran in a light to mid-grey, then were repainted into CIE orange and finally they were given the Irish Cement ivory colour. Of course since the cement was dumped into the top hatch via a loose hose a lot spilled over the tank; ditto for the unloading platform. Given some rain this caked nicely and held track dust providing a glorious spectrum of very off-white to brown colours, interspersed with patches of virgin white where the cake flaked off. Many tanks showed a strong haze of light brown over the lower half of the tank suggesting track dirt and/or rust. A competition for the most realistically painted and weathered cement bubble would be in order! [To complicate things



even more: the white painted tank proved to be a tempting canvas for graffiti artists – as here on 25129 in 2004, and on 25051 on the cover of this issue].

Operating practice

We are told that we should try to run our model railways realistically, so with that in mind it is worth examining the photographs for operational details.

I have read various opinions about how many wagons rakes consist of, namely 12 wagons per rake originally later increasing to 20.

Photographs of an unloading operation at Adelaide [Belfast] show the wagons arranged in pairs, i.e. with the unloading pipes towards each other. Presumably this was to allow the unloading pipes to be transferred easily from one wagon to the second. However most photographs show a more irregular order, presumably after some shunting.

Despite the apparent complexity, the air unloading system allowed unloading a wagon into a lorry-mounted tank, equipped with a suitable air blower. Thus a large unloading installation was unnecessary for single wagon-loads and cement could be delivered at a simple siding –

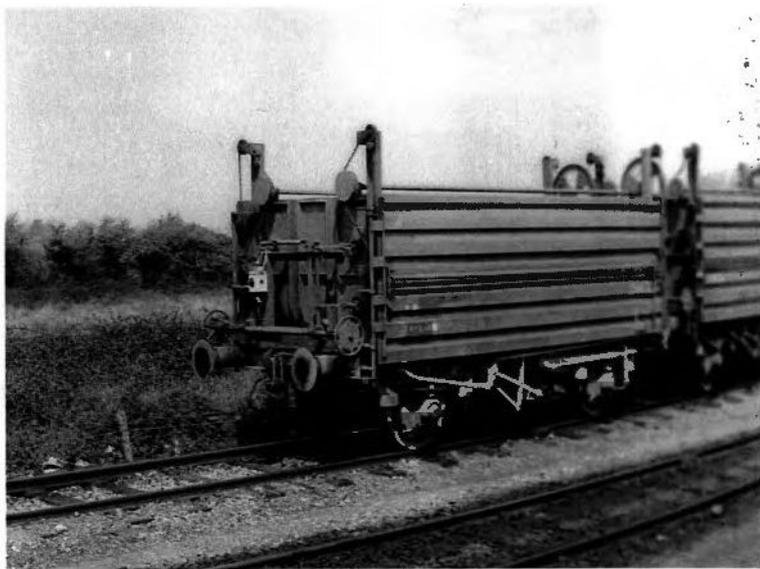
see the example at Waterside [Derry], p.66 in *Ulster Transport Authority in Colour* by Derek Young.

For completeness I should mention my understanding of how the unloading system works, based on the information available for BR's Presflo wagons. "Fluidised bed" is common in industry to make a heavy mass of powder behave like a fluid by pumping high pressure air through it. In our case compressed air was injected via the manifold of 2" piping above the loading platform. The bottom of the cement tank was formed into two cones and it seems most likely that compressed air was injected into each via some sort of a distributor or ring (guessing here) to fluidise the cement in the bottom of each cone. When the valve on the bottom of a cone was opened, the cement flowed out into the large diameter unloading pipe, which emerged up through the decking of the unloading platform and into the unloading hose of the terminal or truck. The instructions for the Presflo state that the pipework must be purged with air before opening the cement valves in order to clear any water which has collected in the system, which seems wise. Loading was via the large hatch on top of the tank, most likely by gravity and since this was not a closed system, spillage occurred. The loading hatch was provided with two small vent valves, which presumably the operator had to open before opening the main hatch to ensure that there was no residual pressure in the tank.

If any reader is able to shed more light on my observations I would be very glad to receive them on realgone@online.no .

I have a wish to construct a rake of these cement wagons in 4mm scale in the next year or two. I intend to base them on a moulded polyurethane tank and an etched brass underframe and details. If anyone is interested in such a kit, which might help to justify a commercial moulding, please make contact as above.

Postscript: to check the status of scrapping these wagons I posted a query on the Irishrailwaynews.yuku.com web-group. One kind correspondent confirmed that all except one had been cut up, but it seems that number 25199, the last one built, has been bought privately and will be moved to the West Clare preservation scheme at Moyasta. Good news indeed!

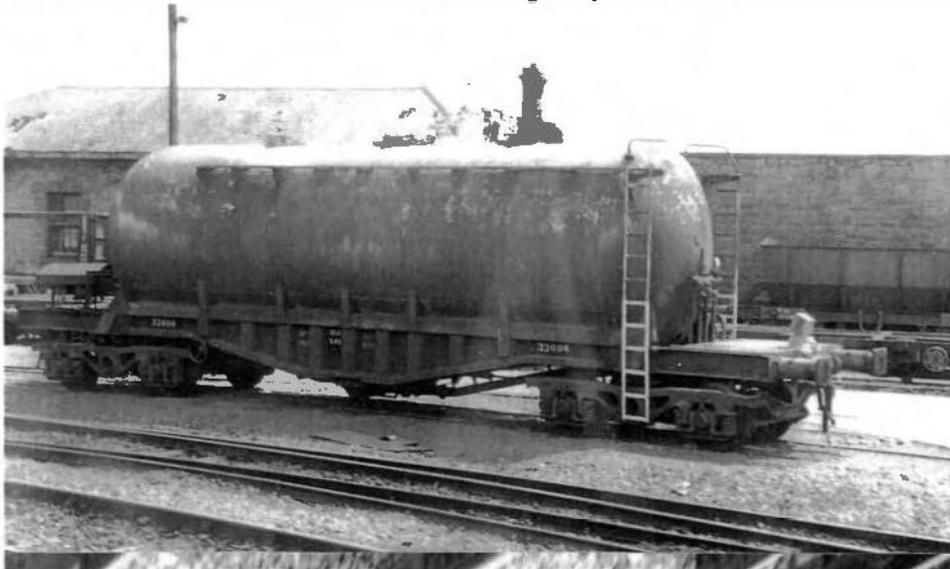


Editor's note: I suspect that the effects on the construction industry in Ireland of their recession will have had a big effect on cement sales. The past half-century or so has seen a number of specialised wagon designs for cement transport: as well as the 'bubbles', there have been a large batch of pallet cement wagons from 1976 on – many of which were later converted into a sort of curtain-sided wagon when the original complex control gear was removed;



A not very good picture of converted pallet cement wagons in the yard at Limerick, taken from a moving train in 2004.

and then what could be considered the direct successors of the 'bubbles', the bogie cement wagons of 1979 onwards. These have a load capacity of 52 tons



a size comparison can be got from the photograph below, taken in Cork on 22 May 2005. The locomotive is no.085, one of the General Motors 071 class.



****See also Robert's letter on the Editor's page in this issue*****



London & North Western Railway Society

Photographic Records

Photograph No. SOC 729

LNWRS General Photos & Scans

London & North Western Railway Stations and Yards. Flintshire. Llong.

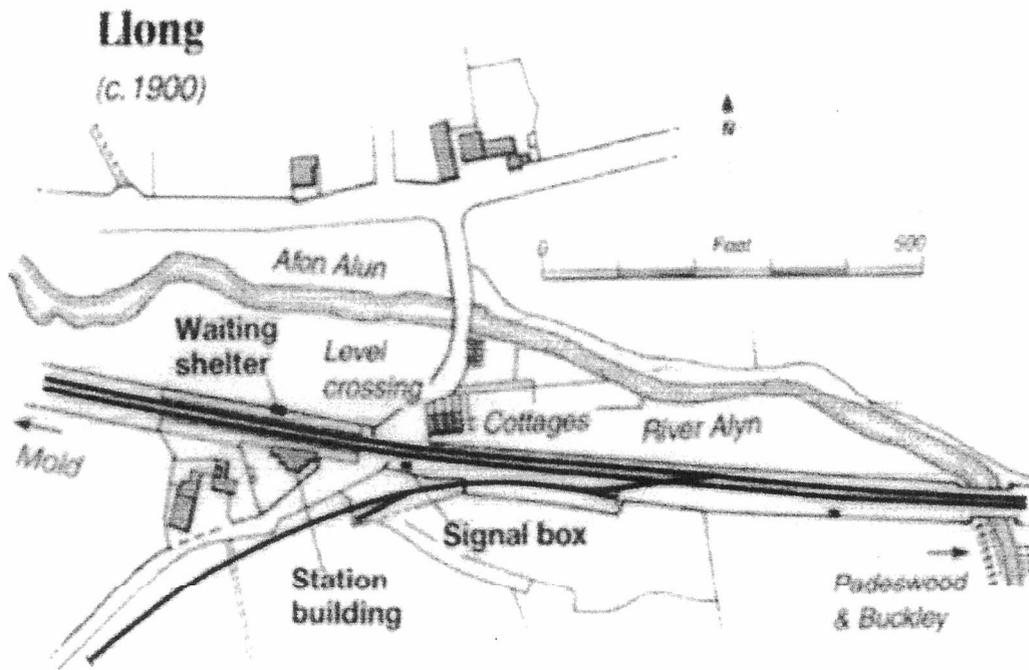
Llong. A private siding with corrugated iron gates closed to the railway. Ivy-clad house on the left, with a girl posed in front of a fence. Photographer is 'A Pollard' of Mold and the photograph is endorsed Llong on the back. Perhaps the siding is at the back of the station and the house is the stationmaster's. C1895?



36.772 Mb LSSoc07_ "Soc0729.bmp

From an auction. 2009.

Quality code - VG (Very good)



The photograph on the previous page was provided by reader Tony Robinson, but it is not clear from the map above where this siding was; can anyone help?

Editor's note: After contacting my Llong 'consultant', Chris Dawson, I received the following reply – "During a recent tonsorial sojourn to my barbering establishment in Buckley, Dave Goodwin brought me a copy of the above photograph for my opinion as, in the mid-1990s, I had done a fair bit of research into the railways in the Llong and Padeswood area during the construction of my 3mm exhibition layout 'Llong and Padeswood sidings'.

I had already been given a copy of the photograph some time ago, and it remains a mystery to me as to why it is annotated as being Llong. Perhaps the person who took it, A.Pollard, came from Llong as opposed to Mold!

In my humble opinion, having taken an interest in the area for many years, I would categorically state that it is NOT Llong. The position of the cottages is totally wrong when compared to the main line to Mold, and the siding which came off the down line, passed no buildings at all!

Having said all this, I can offer no clues as to where the location may actually be – hopefully someone in the readership will be able to furnish a definitive answer. Regards – Chris Dawson."

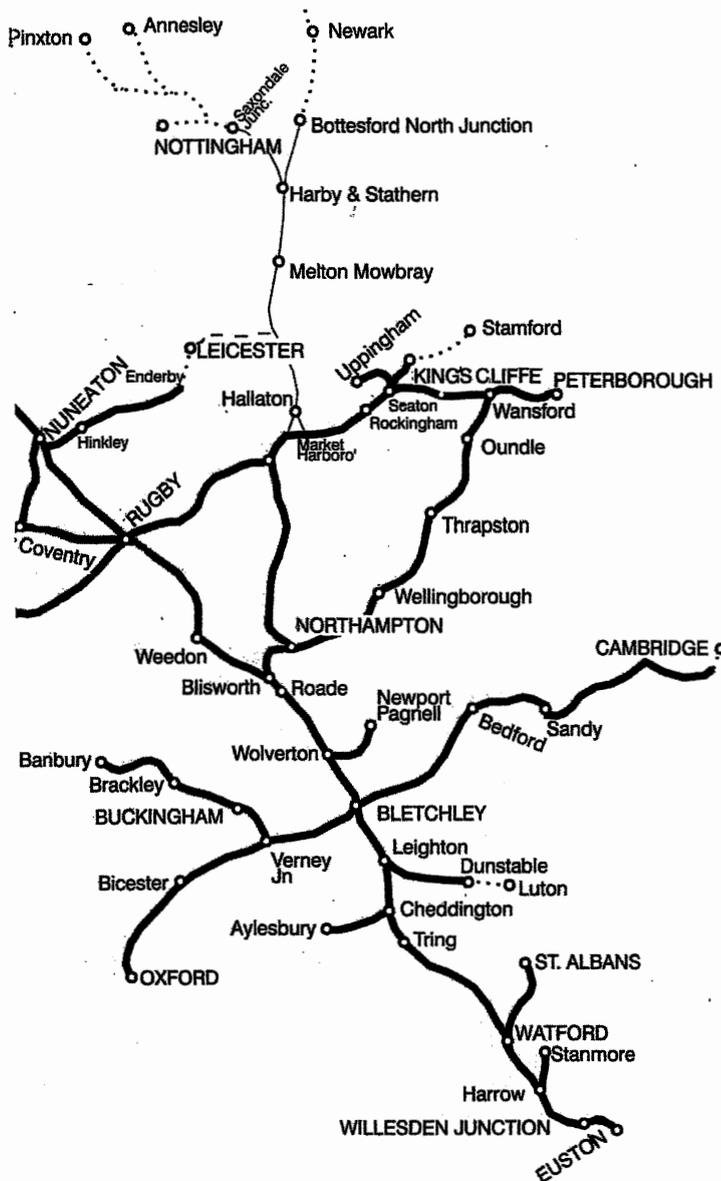
The Editor has consulted his copy of Bartholomew's *Survey gazetteer of the British Isles* and there is only one 'Llong' listed in it – this Flintshire one. Of course 'Llong' (or 'Y Llong' = The ship) is a popular name for public houses in Wales, and there was once said to have been one such near the site of the station.

An Outpost of the LNWR: King's Cliffe

by Norman Lee

One of our members - Phil Sutton - lives well away from Chester and his home is at King's Cliffe in the far east of Northamptonshire. The nearest large town is Peterborough which nowadays is in Cambridgeshire.

Nevertheless the local railway was part of the LNWR and the lines through and around King's Cliffe have an interesting history.



Early ambitions

Until the late 1870s there was no serious talk of a railway through King's Cliffe, although the LNWR had a line which ran from Blisworth, on the original London & Birmingham Railway, through Northampton, Thrapston and Wansford to Peterborough. Indeed, the L&B was the first railway to reach Peterborough where it ran into the Great Eastern Railway station in 1845 before the GER itself began to run trains there. The Great Northern was a relatively late comer which is why its line through Peterborough tends to run along embankments and bridges - the LNWR had already taken the best alignment.

The map shows the southern part of the LNWR in late 1879, with the main line running north west from Euston to Rugby and Nuneaton. Branches around London have been omitted. The joint line to Nottingham is given as a thin line and the LNWR's running powers over the GNR around Nottingham are dotted (as is the

section of the Midland line into Stamford). King's Cliffe is on the newly-built line between the Rugby to Stamford and the Northampton to Peterborough lines. The GNR's line to Leicester is shown as dashed although it did not open until 1883 (by which date the LNWR itself had built its Northampton loop from Roade to Rugby although that is not shown).

In the early days of the railways, the L&B (and its successor, the LNWR) though itself to be the only company to serve Britain north of London - everywhere would be reached via its main line from Euston to Birmingham using either its own branches or the lines of 'local' railways such as the Midland Counties. By the time the LNWR was formed in 1846, the Company had branches to (or construction well advanced) places such as Aylesbury, Oxford, Cambridge and Peterborough. The network was already widespread although some of the journeys were not very direct - Cambridge to Peterborough via Bletchley and Northampton would have been a good day out!

As part of its aim to serve the whole of England north of London, the early LNWR planned a line from Rugby to Stamford in Lincolnshire. This ran through Market Harborough (the Midland eventually shared the station there when it extended its main line towards Bedford in 1857), Seaton (about six miles from King's Cliffe) and on to Luffenham on the Midland - for the last few miles to Stamford the LNWR negotiated running powers over the Midland's branch from Leicester. The Stamford line was opened in 1851 and the LNWR's map of the area remained fairly settled for almost the next thirty years other than the building of a branch from Northampton to Market Harborough in 1858/9.



A view of King's Cliffe station at around the turn of the century. The train is at the 'Down' platform and is heading for Peterborough. It is made up of six 6-wheeled carriages and is pulled by one of Mr F W Webb's 2-4-0 'Improved Precedents', often known as 'Jumbos'. The station platforms are wooden but the buildings are mostly brick, with substantial canopies over the platforms - they have a general similarity with the bigger stations on the joint line whereas many LNWR minor stations of the time had simple wooden buildings. Photograph taken from a commercial postcard and reproduced courtesy of the LNWR Society.

Northampton and Rugby

DOWN STATIONS.	WEEK DAYS.													
	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74
	Mineral.	Mid. Pass.	Mineral.	G.N. Goods	Mineral.	Mid. Goods.	Mid. Pass.		G.N. Pass.	Goods. (Live Stock).	Goods (Live Stock).	Mid. Pass.		Pass.
Telegraphing No. ...														155
Northampton														
Exchange Sdgs dep.														
Castle dep.														
B'ge (arr St. dep)	3 5													
Northampton (M.) dep.		3 22					4 38					5 15		
Hardingstone Junction pass		3 33					4 39					5 16		
Billing ... dep.		3 37					4 44					5 21		
Whiston Siding ... dep.														
Castle Ashby ... dep.		3 34					4 48					5 27		
Wellingboro' Sta. (arr. dep.)	X					4 40								
" (Mid. Junc.) pass		3 40				4 41	4 54					5 23		
Wellingboro' (Mid.) arr.		3 42				4 45	4 56					5 25		
Budin's Siding ... dep.	3 40													
Ditchford ... dep.	4 5		3 55											
Irthlingboro' Iron Ore Co.'s Siding ... dep.	X													
Irthlingboro' ... dep.														
Ringstead & Addington														
Keeble's Siding ... dep.														
Lilip Iron Co.'s Siding (arr. dep.)	4 36													
Thrapston ... dep.	4 52													
Thorpe ... dep.	4 55													
Barnwell ... dep.														
Oundle ... dep.														
Elton ... dep.														
Rugby ... dep.					3 10									
Clifton Mill ... dep.														
Lilbourne ... dep.														
Yelvertoft & S. Park ... dep.														
Welford and Kilworth ... dep.														
Theddingworth ... dep.														
Lubenham ... dep.														
Market Harborough' (arr. dep.)					4 5									
Welham Junction and Sidings (arr. dep.)					4 20									
Ashley & Weston (arr. dep.)					4 30									
Drayton Junction ... dep.					4 45									
Hockingham ... dep.														
Santon ... dep.														
Wakerley & B. Monekton's Siding (arr. dep.)					5 30									
King's Cliffe ... dep.					6 20									
Nassington ... dep.														
Yarwell Junction ... dep.														
Wansford ... dep.					5 10									
Castor ... dep.														
Orton Waterville ... dep.														
Loughville Junction ... pass														
Woodstone Wharf ... dep.														
Market Platform ... dep.														
Fisherburn' (G.N.) (arr. dep.)					7 0									
" (G.N.) (arr. dep.)														

A page from the 'Down' LNWR working time table of April 1915. By this date, King's Cliffe had a through train from Birmingham, starting at 4:00pm, leaving Rugby at 5:10 and reaching King's Cliffe at 6:11pm. To run the 38½ miles from Rugby to King's Cliffe in 71 minutes, including a couple of stops, was not bad going for a country line in wartime. The page shows a GNR train from Leicester which called at King's Cliffe and ran to the GN station in Peterborough - the full timetable only shows one more such train and there were no GNR goods trains at all. However, the GNR ran a passenger service over its branch from Wansford to Stamford which met several of the main line trains and, as the page shows, the branch had a few goods trains too.

Co-operation with the Great Northern

By the 1870s, the vast coalfields in Nottingham and south Yorkshire had been opened. The LNWR had no access to them whilst the Midland ran an endless series of coal trains to London. At the same time, the GNR (which had a relatively small share in the

Nottinghamshire coal traffic) had designs on the likely traffic from the newly-opened ironstone quarries in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. In the 1850s the LNWR had tried hard to suppress the upstart GNR - the latter took most of the London traffic from places such as Peterborough - but under the leadership of the LNWR's chairman Richard Moon the companies had learned to exist together.

Eventually, they collaborated on building a joint line from a junction at Saxondale (on the GNR's line from Nottingham to Grantham) running south to Welham, a little to the east of Market Harborough on the LNWR's line from Rugby to Stamford. The LNWR had running powers into the GNR's London Road station in Nottingham and, for goods traffic, to various GNR colliery lines north of the city. In return, the GNR had running powers to Northampton. The joint line opened in 1879. The GNR built its own branch from the joint line to a large terminus at Belgrave Road in Leicester - the LNWR took no share in this as it already had access, via its line from Nuneaton, to the Midland station in Leicester.

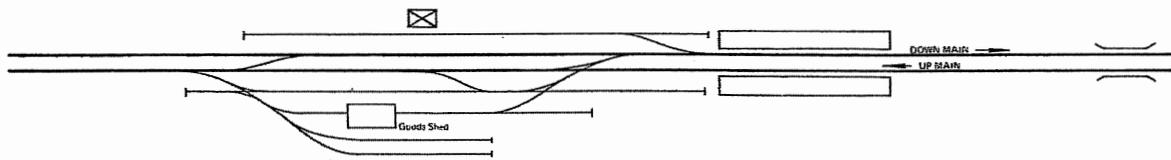
The LNWR appears to have got a better deal than the GNR - the LNWR built up a heavy traffic in coal over the joint line but the GNR station in Leicester never prospered, nor did its passenger services from Northampton to Grantham and to Newark.

Indeed, the LNWR did much better than it (or the GNR) ever expected in 1879. When the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway (which eventually became the Great Central) reached Annesley (one of the spots to which the LNWR goods trains ran over the GNR) in 1892 as the first part of its extension to London, the LNWR negotiated running powers over the new route right into Sheffield. In 1895 the LNWR opened its Nunnery goods station in the City - the Company had reached Sheffield from the south for very little capital outlay and operated very profitable goods and coal trains which ran on to its main line at Northampton. Mr Moon had retired by then but the achievement was very much in his shadow and was the fruit of his earlier work.

The railway reaches King's Cliffe

Other parts of the agreement with the GNR were of more interest to the people of King's Cliffe. The GNR built a branch from the joint line to Newark and allowed the LNWR running powers over this and on to Doncaster for coal trains - the LNWR built an engine shed there. In return, the LNWR built a line from Seaton on the Rugby to Stamford branch to connect with the Northampton to Peterborough line at Wansford - this allowed the GNR to run trains from Leicester to reach its main line to the south.

The connecting line from Seaton to Wansford opened in 1879 and had three stations - Wakeley & Barrowden, King's Cliffe and Nassington. The new section of line was 12.5



A diagram of the track layout at King's Cliffe in 1900 showing the station platforms, the goods shed and the signal cabin. The 'Up' direction is towards Rugby. The sidings are quite extensive for a country station – the LNWR rarely wasted its money and so it must have considered King's Cliffe an important place. Reproduced from 'Track Diagrams of the LNWR - Section 5 Northamptonshire' courtesy Mr R D Forster.

miles long and King's Cliffe was about in the middle. From the start, the LNWR ran passenger trains on the King's Cliffe line from Peterborough to both Rugby and Blisworth. Goods services were from much further afield with trains from places such as Holyhead (cattle), Crewe and Birmingham although many did not stop at King's Cliffe. Some were passed on to the GER at Peterborough for the eastern counties. GNR passenger services ran between Leicester and Peterborough, where the GNR had built a spur to its own station from the LNWR line, and its mineral trains carried ironstone from various sidings in the area. The 1882 LNWR working time table shows five passenger trains each way calling at King's Cliffe each weekday, with an extra market train from Peterborough on Saturdays. In 1882 there were no GNR trains through King's Cliffe – they did not begin until the next year when the GNR's station in Leicester was ready. By 1898, the passenger timetable shows a 'Harwich Express' which left Rugby at 5:07pm and stopped at Market Harborough and King's Cliffe on the way to Peterborough where GER traction took over. The Harwich train reached King's Cliffe at 6:09pm giving a journey time of just over an hour. In 1898 there were three GNR Leicester to Peterborough trains daily each way but by 1915 only two remained and there were still no GNR goods trains. The Harwich boat train had ceased by then, of course. In LNWR days, the line was open to traffic on Sundays but King's Cliffe station was closed.

Later Days - and Closure

In LMS days the services on the LNWR's outlying lines continued but became less important. In British Railways days Dr Beeching's report recommended that the former joint line to Nottingham and both the LNWR's routes to Peterborough be closed - through trains from the north west and the west midlands to the east coast were to be routed via the former Midland branch to Peterborough. The LNWR lines were closed in stages. The King's Cliffe line was



One of the last passenger trains to call at the station on the last day, June 6th, 1966. Ex-works Sulzer Type 2 No. D5145 is in charge of 1M56, 12.40 Harwich to Rugby. I believe D5036 worked the very last train in the opposite direction. Pic: King's Cliffe Heritage, per Phil Sutton.

severed at Seaton in 1966 and the passenger service ended. The line from Peterborough stayed open for goods until 1968 although by then only a single track was used. Not all is lost - Wansford is the base of the Nene Valley Railway preservation group who still use a section of the old LNWR line to Peterborough.

Mostyn : A presentation to Manchester MRS 11th November 2011

(or BMRG finally enters the 'PowerPoint era') – a report by Richard Oldfield

When our esteemed editor accepted an invitation from Manchester Model Railway Society for BMRG to give a presentation about "Mostyn", I do not think he realised that a by-product would be our group's first ever use of PowerPoint software. Previous talks to the HMRS, for example, had been somewhat informal – more in the nature of a chat amongst friends than a full-blown presentation.

As a background theme to this presentation Philip Sutton and I have been talking for some time about how to marshal and collate the enormous (and still growing) collection of Mostyn-related articles, documents, images and other source material. The *Rail Express* articles, for example, ran for 114 consecutive issues and total over 100,000 words with hundreds of associated images. This,

however, pales into insignificance compared with the many folders, filing wallets and lever-arch files that sit in our clubroom. Finally you have the contents of the Mostyn e-group and many thousands of other e-mails.

The more immediate need, for the Manchester event, was to distil an entertaining and informative presentation from this extensive raw material. David Goodwin and myself have given a couple of talks over the years but they were typified by their last-minute preparation, off-the-cuff style and informal delivery. Perhaps it was time to do something a bit more structured and polished?



Richard Oldfield preaches the Gospel of Mostyn to the assembled congregation. Missionary work is a tough job but someone's got to do it! Keen-eyed readers may notice other BMRG faces in the crowd – including David Goodwin, esteemed editor of this magazine, who was taking a well-deserved break from the world of high finance and complex investment decisions affecting his gold-plated, index-linked, 'I'm alright Jack' local government pension....

Manchester MRS were happy to leave the exact topic up to us and we chose to focus on the history of the Mostyn idea and the sequence of events and decisions which, some 20 years later, have led to the very large layout we now have. This covered the early years leading to the abandonment of an unreliable and unloved first attempt which 'crashed and burned' at Scalefour North 2000. Next came the commitment to do it again, but do it properly, which led to the well-built, DCC-operated "Mostyn" which won its first silverware at ExpoEM 2002 and continued in this form on the exhibition circuit until 2009. Finally we have the two-stage extension process which more than doubled "Mostyn" and, with beautiful symmetry, resulted in "Mostyn" winning the coveted ExpoEM trophy for a second time in 2011.

David Faulkner and I chose to develop a PowerPoint presentation which includes a mix of written summary slides, images (of prototype and model) and a couple of video clips. Whilst the structure of the presentation was defined by the PowerPoint slides, we encouraged participation and questions from the audience. They were a little hesitant at the outset but soon warmed to the idea. The fact that no fewer than six members of BMRG came along as well meant that almost all queries could be answered.

Was it a success? Well, we certainly had the attention of the audience for nearly 3 hours including a tea-break and some even commented afterwards that they would look forward to 'Part 2' if we ever did it.

It was interesting to see progress on Manchester MRS's own P4 Layout, "Slattocks Junction", which has had as long a gestation period as Mostyn. There's clearly still a long way to go before it could be classed as an exhibition layout

Editor's page

I was recently informed of the death this last summer of fellow modeller **Adrian Bancroft**, who lived in Drury (near Buckley). Adrian was disabled, and wheel-chair bound, so his actual modelling was restricted; but he was an enthusiast who attended meetings of the local area group of the Historical Model Railway Society which the Editor organised some years ago; he latterly worked for Cheshire County Council's Highways Department.

Readers may be mystified why someone with a Norwegian e-mail address should write an article on modelling Irish bulk cement wagons – and to P4 standards as well! The Editor was also curious, and suggested to Robert that a few words of explanation would be helpful, and here is his reply:

“Robert Drysdale:- I was born in Northern Ireland and have worked abroad since finishing university. I have a life-long interest in railways and a long-term ambition to model parts of the Belfast & County Down, although the early diesel era is also fascinating. Eventually I concluded that since everything would have to be scratch-built anyway, I might as well aim to model in 21mm gauge to P4 standards. Personal circumstances dictate that a permanent model railway is impossible for the time being, so after a long period of armchair planning I am starting to build rolling stock. I have also concluded that new techniques like CAD and etching have a lot to offer with respect to accuracy and sharing results so am embracing these means eagerly. It should be noted that the scarcity of drawings for Irish stock is a continuous cause of grief for modellers of Irish railways, so any time used preparing them is well spent.”

Recent books

Bashers, Gadgets and Mourners: the life and times of the LNWR coal tanks by Peter W. Skellon. Bahamas Locomotive Society, 2011. £19.00. ISBN 978 0 9569292 0 4.

The railway detective omnibus by Edward Marston. Allison & Busby, 2011 (includes: *The railway detective*; *The excursion train*; *The railway viaduct*). ISBN 978 0 7490 0964 9. £12.99

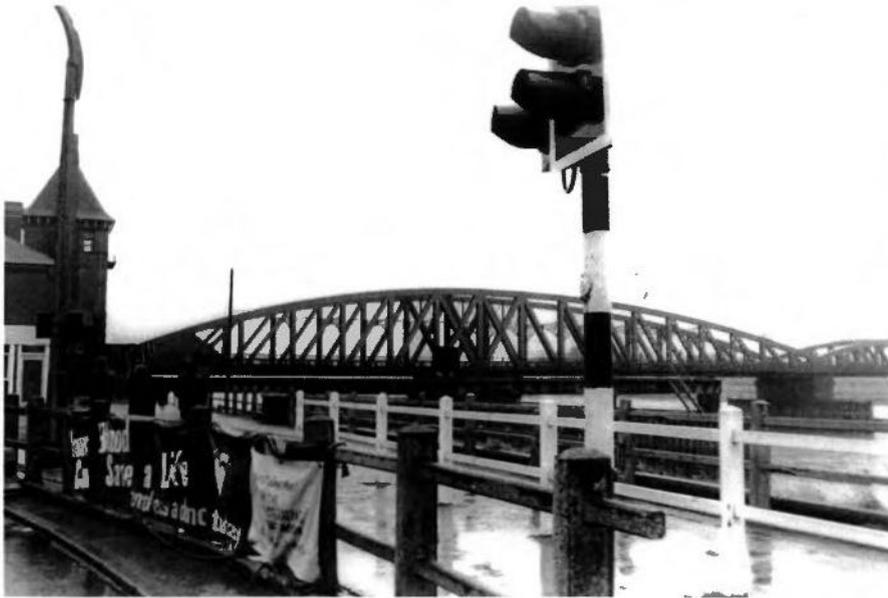
One again, lack of time has prevented progress on research into the rebuilding of the Dee railway bridge – I hope to obtain a ‘round toowit’ shortly!

Odds and sods section



As we have a printing constraint of a multiple of four pages, the Editor likes to try to fit in complete articles at the end of each issue: usually, it works out, but not this

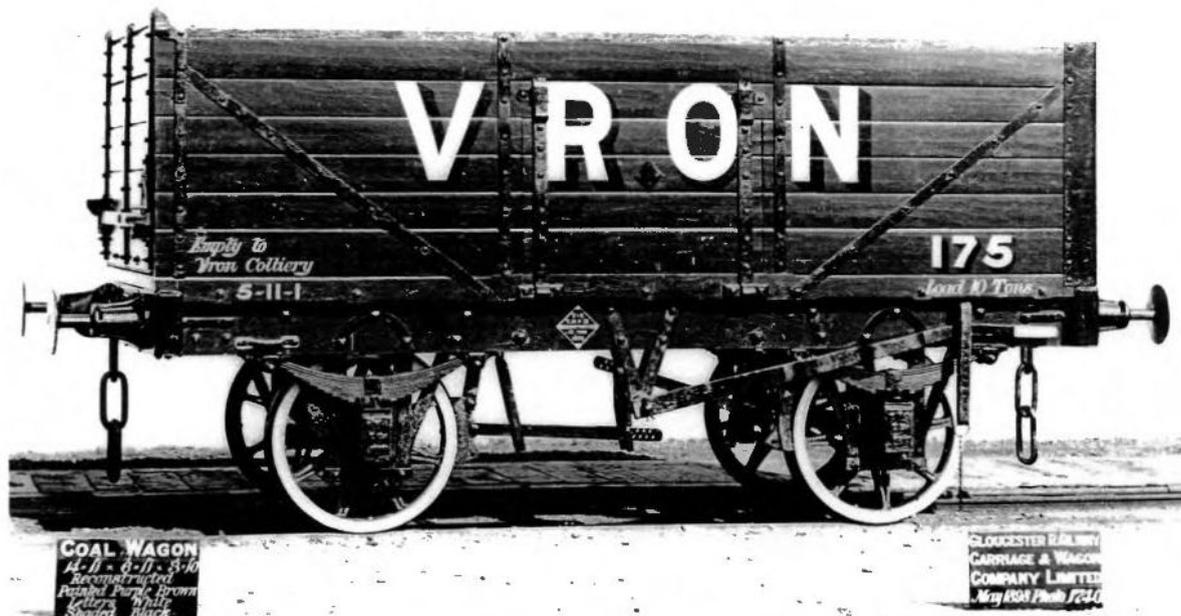
time! Diesel brake tender B964046 (coupled to D5239) is pictured at Toton in July 1970.



The Hawarden Bridge on 20 October 1973, looking upstream to Queensferry. This is the span that could be swivelled to allow larger shipping to pass through, and the tower with the necessary hydraulic machinery is on the extreme left.



This earlier photograph of Hawarden Bridge station shows workers for Summers Steel Works disembarking from a Wrexham-bound train, probably in the 1950s; the hydraulic tower is in the centre of the picture. It was demolished towards the end of the century, when the ability to open the span became redundant.



A 10-ton private owner coal wagon operated by Vron Colliery, which was just south of Brymbo near Wrexham. This 6-plank end door wagon had just been rebuilt by the Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. in 1898, presumably from dumb-buffered form; it was painted purple/brown with black ironwork and black-shaded white lettering. (HMRS photo).

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