

ON SHED

The Journal of the 8D Association

Volume 10, Number 1 : March 2020



'On Shed' : Journal of the 8D Association

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From the Editor

Here we are - another year and another edition of 'On Shed' - the first of 4 due to be published in 2020. At a recent Committee meeting it was reported that there have been suggestions that, as an Association, we might move towards bi-monthly editions of the journal. Regrettably, practicalities render the suggestion impossible at this time. In addition to the financial implications (our printing costs have recently increased considerably), a major factor is the availability of suitable material !

A glance at the 'Contents' section above demonstrates the point that for this (and each) edition, the Editor depends heavily upon a relatively few members who, between them, contribute the majority of the articles that go to make up an edition. In the absence of additional material regularly being available, it would be entirely unrealistic to consider

increasing the number of editions each year.

In the meantime, I remain indebted to those members who have contributed articles for inclusion in this edition of 'On Shed', and I live in hope that others may be inspired to submit material for publication in future editions.

The 'Future Events' section on the back cover shows that, in addition to 2 visits to the SEUZ Waste Transfer Station at Kirkby, there is to be a varied programme of guided walks led by the Association's Chairman, Paul Wright.

On 17th March, our Founder Chairman, Joe Cowley, is to present an illustrated talk about the opening of the GCR's St Helens Central Station in 1900. As ever, your support for the programme would be appreciated.

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Cover photograph : At St Helens Central on 1st August 2009, Stanier 8P 'Princess Elizabeth' No.6201 is seen en route to Liverpool Lime Street on the return leg of a Cumbrian Mountain Express.

Photograph : Tony Foster

News Round Up

Chris Hollins

Given that *'On Shed'* is published quarterly, many of the items referred to in this *'News Round Up'* can only be of historical interest. Nevertheless, every effort has been made to record also those changes, developments and items of interest that have occurred within the 8D area since the date that the last publication was prepared for the printer.

Chris Hollins

Branch Line Society Railtour

On Sunday 8th December, the Branch Line Society ran a railtour that covered the Merseyrail North Liverpool electrified system as well as the Bootle Branch and the Halton Curve. The train, consisting of 4 carriages 'top and tailed' by West Coast diesels 47245 & 47826, departed from Crewe visiting Kirkby, Ormskirk and Southport, before returning to Crewe via Liverpool Lime Street, Runcorn and Chester.

Merseyrail Class 777 : Non Appearance.

The first new Class 777 EMU for Merseyrail was due to be delivered to Kirkdale depot before Christmas. On Thursday 19th December, GBRF were contracted to move several barrier wagons from Kirkdale to Dollands Moor for attachment to the new train enabling it to be towed north. However, the move was cancelled as the new train was stuck in Belgium awaiting onward movement to the Channel Tunnel. The delay was due to the ongoing French national rail strike.

Class 153 : Non Appearance.

In the previous issue of *'On Shed'*, it was reported that Class 153 DMUs were to take over the Chester to Liverpool Lime Street and Wrexham to Bidston services from the December timetable. This did not happen as Transport for Wales decided that the schedules on both routes could not be met if these units were deployed. Although the Class 158's and 150's used on the Liverpool service have been moved to South Wales, they have been

replaced by 2 & 3 car Class 175 units. Class 150 units will continue to operate the Wrexham to Bidston service until the Class 230 units appear.

New Merseyrail Unit Arrives

In the early hours of Thursday 16th January, the first new Stadler built Class 777 EMU (777003) arrived at Kirkdale depot, 'top and tailed' by GBRF Class 66 diesels and barrier wagons.

The unit was due to arrive before Christmas, but had been delayed in France due to the ongoing strike action by SNCF staff. It eventually arrived in the UK via the Channel Tunnel on Tuesday 14th January, and left Dollands Moor Yard the following day between the Class 66's as train 6X29 - the 02.44 service to Kirkdale. The train was stabled in Crewe down refuge loop between 10.41 and 22.20, at which time it departed for Kirkdale via Warrington Bank Quay, Earlestown, Olive Mount Jct and the Bootle branch to Bootle Oriel Road where the train reversed before proceeding to Sandhills for another reversal in order to access Kirkdale depot.

The two GBRF locomotives and barrier wagons were due to return to Tonbridge West Yard as 6Z24, departing Kirkdale depot at 04.27, however this service was cancelled when the train reached Edge Hill Tuebrook Sidings.

It is expected that driver training with the new trains will commence shortly on the Kirkby branch, although the first route to get

them in passenger use will be the New Brighton line.

Engineering Work on the CLC

On the weekend of 11th and 12th January, engineering work took place near Hough Green, bringing locomotive hauled trains to the line. On Saturday 11th, three engineers' trains ran between Crewe Basford Hall and Hough Green, together with an extra working between Basford Hall and Brunswick - the result of an additional engineering possession between Hunts Cross, Seaforth and Litherland. On Sunday 12th, there were two engineers trains between Basford Hall and Hough Green.

The Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Oxford Road and Airport services, along with the trains to Norwich, started from Warrington Central, with bus connections between Liverpool and Warrington. On Sunday 12th, due to further engineering work in the Stockport and Chesterfield areas, upon departure from Manchester Piccadilly, the Norwich trains were diverted via Romiley and Marple, regaining the normal Hope Valley route at New Mills South Jct. At Sheffield, where the trains would normally reverse, this didn't happen as they travelled to Chesterfield using the former Great Central main line from Woodburn Jct to Beighton Jct, where trains accessed the former Midland Railway old road route through Barrow Hill to Tupton Jct in Chesterfield, putting them back on their normal route.

DRS to Take Over Dagenham Car Trains

Commencing in February, Direct Rail Services will replace GBRF in operating the 04.00 Dagenham Dock to Garston and 15.49 return car trains, on a three year contract. GBRF, who took over the service from DB Cargo in 2017, have been using Class 66 diesel locomotives on the service for some time, having previously used some of their Class 92 elec-

tric locomotives.

DRS are expected to use their Class 88 bi-modal locomotives on the service. Although the whole route is electrified, the train has to be shunted at Dagenham and Garston by diesel locomotives. The benefits of the Class 88 having a diesel engine may lead to the withdrawal of shunting locomotives at both ends of the route.

Avanti West Coast Plans

Avanti West Coast, who operate the West Coast franchise have ordered new Hitachi High speed trains for the West Coast main line. Upon delivery in 2022, it is expected that they will replace the Pendolino sets currently operating between Liverpool Lime Street and London Euston. Those sets may then be used to work the London Euston to Edinburgh and Glasgow services via the West Midlands, replacing Voyager sets currently used on those routes.

The Liverpool to London service will become half hourly, with a 7 car electric Hitachi set maintaining the present hourly service calling at Runcorn. The new additional services will call at Liverpool South Parkway. They will operate using a 5 car bi-modal Hitachi set which, when it gets to Crewe will attach to another 5 car set which has come from either Chester or Holyhead for the journey to London Euston

Trans-Pennine Woes !

Trans-Pennine Express have reduced until further notice, the service between Liverpool Lime Street and Edinburgh to only four trains each way with an additional working to and from Newcastle. Weekday Departures from Liverpool are at 06.24, 11.24, 13.24, 16.24 with a final 21.08 service to Newcastle. Departures from Edinburgh Waverley are at 06.27, 11.33, 16.33 and 18.11 with an additional working departing Newcastle at 10.06.

The Hitachi built Inter City Express Trains which are used on these services are also not being used to their full potential. Network Rail has issued instructions that they should be used in Diesel mode between Liverpool Lime Street and York and also between Chathill and Longniddry on the East Coast main line north of Newcastle. This is due to ongoing electricity supply issues in the Marshall Meadows area North of Berwick-upon-Tweed, which also results in certain LNER services, which use the same type of train having to use their diesel capability on Sundays.

Even though Network Rail have advised that the Class 802's should be driven in diesel mode from Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Victoria, the services I have seen they have been operating from the overhead Electrification. As a result of having to use partial Diesel operation North of Newcastle, Network Rail is compensating TPE for this. They however were led to believe that when the Liverpool service was being extended to Edinburgh, Class 185 DMU'S upgraded to operate at 125 MPH would be used on the service.

After an initial good start with the new Liverpool Lime Street to Glasgow Central service, over the past few weeks quite a few cancellations have taken place. This has been due to the Class 185 DMU'S being used on Manchester Airport to Scotland services, as a result of the non availability of the new Class 397 EMU'S. Hopefully this will resolve itself in the next few months, and the new EMU'S will be operating the Liverpool service from the May timetable change.

Unusual DMU Workings

On Thursday 23rd January, the 10.52 Liverpool Lime Street to Norwich service, reporting number 1L09, was formed as far as Nottingham of 4 Class 153 single railcars. Since East Midlands Railway started operating the franchise, they have a fleet of 17 Class 153's.

Due to Class 158 units being used on other services, it has been decided to use the single railcars in pairs on the cross-country service between Liverpool and Norwich more often until 2022. At that time, the service will become Liverpool Lime Street to Nottingham, operated either by Northern or Trans-Pennine Express - assuming both are still operating by then in view of their recent service problems !

On Saturday 25th January, for the first time since the December 2019 timetable change, all of the Liverpool Lime Street to Chester services were operated by Class 150 & 158 units. Two and three car Class 175 units have dominated the service since December. These replaced the Class 153 railcars which had originally been allocated to replace the 150's transferred to the South Wales Valley lines. The 153's are now used on the Crewe to Chester and Llandudno to Blaenau Ffestiniog services.

The Late Ron Cotton

Career railwayman Ron Cotton died on 19th January aged 88.

He worked on all five British Rail regions but it was in the North West that he is probably remembered the most. While serving as Divisional Manager in Liverpool he introduced special cheap fares known as Apex standing for Advanced purchase excursion on Inter City services. He also brought in Round Robin tickets (see accompanying article in this issue) which proved successful.

After Liverpool, he became Divisional Manager in Manchester after which he was appointed by the British Rail Board to oversee the closure of the Settle and Carlisle line. While dealing with the closure, Ron started advertising the train service and within a year doubled the passenger numbers. Instead of operating 4 coach trains twice a day, hauled by Class 31 diesels, they suddenly became 12

coach trains hauled by Class 47's. The time he took to get the closure proposals passed by the board enabled a record number of people to protest about it, resulting in a public enquiry along with legal action. Subsequently, Ron took early retirement in 1987, and two years later the Settle and Carlisle line was rerieved by the then Minister for Transport Michael Portillo, who later said that it was the best Ministerial decision he ever made.

Mark 4 Vehicles at Alstom

On Monday the 3rd of February, a train of former LNER Mark 4 carriages were moved from Worksop to the Alstom plant in Widnes. Running as 5Z19, the train departed from Harry Needle Railway Company's Worksop Down Yard at 08.47 arriving in Widnes at 15.54. The train had travelled via Doncaster,

Wakefield Kirkgate, the Calder Valley line to Manchester Victoria and then Warrington Bank Quay to Crewe where it reversed for the remaining few miles to Widnes. The carriages are being refurbished for use on the new Grand Central service of five trains a day between Blackpool North and London Euston due to commence in May this year, which will utilise hired DB Cargo Class 90 electric locomotives for traction.

Northern Rail Franchise

The Government announced in January that Arriva Trains would be stripped of the Northern Rail franchise from the end of February. At this time, the Minister for Transport Grant Schapps has yet to announce who will be appointed to take over running the service from the 1st of March.



Class 70 on the 'Bin Liner' : On Wednesday 5 February, the 09.14 refuse train from Bredbury to Runcorn Folly Lane was hauled by Freightliner Class 70 70014. This is believed to be the first time that one of this class has been used on the service, as Guide Bridge drivers have only just been trained on this class of Locomotive.

Photo : Chris Hollins

Signalling Controls

Dennis Flood

Introduction

The history of railway signalling is a fascinating subject and over a period of more than 175 years it has been radically transformed from a man walking in front of a train with a red flag to an industry which now embraces digital technology with the use of visual display screens (VDU) and automatic route setting (ARS).

However the purpose of this article is to look at how some railway incidents and scenarios that were unique to specific locations brought about signalling and interlocking controls locally and, in some cases, nationally. An explanation is provided as to why a specific signalling control was introduced.

(1) Lime Street Controls

This signalling control checked track circuits either being occupied or clear, and that there is sufficient room in a partially occupied platform to accommodate a second train. To do this, track circuits of a known length were provided within the platform line and in the rear of the previous signal to achieve this arrangement.

This arrangement was brought in as a result of an incident on 31 July 1924 when the 2.40pm service from London Euston to Liverpool Lime Street collided with a light engine that was standing half way down the platform. The train driver would not have been aware of it. The signalman was not aware of the presence of the light engine.

The recommendation from this incident was the provision of track circuits which could be used to `measure` the length of trains. This signalling control was still in use until the closure of Lime Street signal box in July 2018.



Top : Lime Street Station, scene of the 1924 accident involving a Euston - Liverpool train and a light engine in the station. **Photo** : 8D Collection

Bottom : Lime Street signal box, positioned at the north side of the tracks in 1924. **Photo** : D Ibbotson

(2) Caterham Controls

This required a trailing crossover at a terminal station to lie in the `normal` position towards the departing line, in order that a runaway train or vehicle from the station would be directed onto a line in its direction of travel.

This arrangement came about as a result of an incident which occurred on 26 June 1945 when the 9.34am electric train from Caterham to London Charing Cross departed against a signal at danger and collided head-on with the incoming 8.55am electric train

from London Bridge to Caterham. The collision resulted in the deaths of both motor-men.

(3) Brownes Lock

This is a lock that ensures that a spring catch point is closed before a signal in the rear of the catch point can be cleared to a signal in advance of that catch point if that signal is at danger. This arrangement is only provided where the distance between the catch point and the signal in advance of the catch points is less than the longest train which could be stopped at that signal.

The Brownes Lock ensures that there is no risk of a derailment for a train standing over these catch points. The signal in advance will require the catch points to be 'normal' before it is allowed to be cleared.

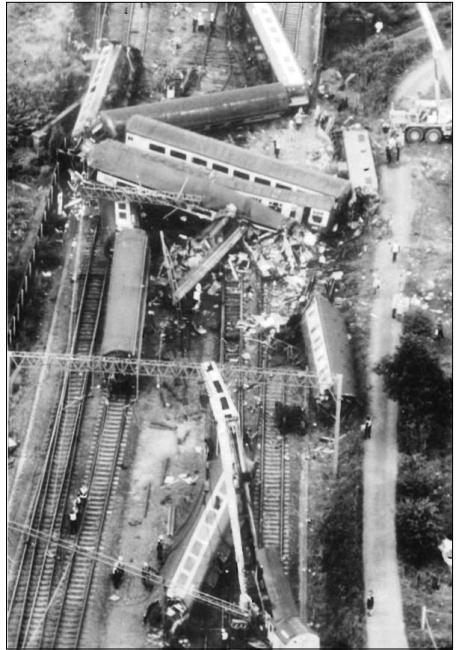
This control was not normally installed 'new' (as standard) but tended to be fitted retrospectively when it was deemed to be an operational requirement.

(4) Colwich Controls

This arrangement prevents the display of flashing yellow junction indications unless the signal immediately beyond the junction signal is clear or ready to be cleared – in other words the route has been 'set' beforehand by the controlling signaller. This is in case a driver fails to recognise that the junction signal is maintained at yellow and does not clear to a less restrictive aspect other than that which is displayed.

This arrangement was introduced as a result of a collision at Colwich in Staffordshire on 19 September 1986 when the driver of the 1700 London Euston to Manchester Piccadilly service mistakenly interpreted the flashing yellow junction signalling sequence leading up to signal CH28 as meaning that the route was set for his train throughout the entire complex at Colwich Junction. It was not, and he passed the next signal CH23 at danger.

The result was a major collision with the 1720 Liverpool Lime Street to London Euston service which was running under clear signals at the time on the up fast line at Colwich. Tragically, the driver of the Liverpool to London express was killed and 75 passengers were injured.



Colwich Jct, scene of the Staffordshire collision in 1986. The incident gave rise to the introduction of 'Colwich Controls'.

(5) Foxhall Controls

This arrangement applies providing a 'position light' type junction indicator for the single route from a signal where that single route applies through a set of facing points for the diverging route, and a line exists on the route straight ahead for which there is no legitimate signalled route – or it is of lower significance to the 'main' route.

The provision of a junction indicator avoids the possibility of a driver believing that they are heading 'straight on'.

This signalling control was introduced as a result of an incident at on 27 September 1967 when a diesel hydraulic `Warship` class locomotive No.D853 `Thruster` overtook whilst travelling at 75mph at Foxhall Junction in Didcot when passing over a 25mph temporary speed restriction. The restriction would have been referred to as a PWS – a Permanent Way Slack which it was called in those days.

The locomotive was working the 09.45 from London Paddington to Weston-Super-Mare service at the time of the incident.

The driver misinterpreted the green aspect displayed at Signal R180 (which was also preceded by green signals given to the driver) as applying to the straight ahead route for his train when in fact it applied to the diverging route.

Signal R180 was not fitted with a junction indicator due to only having one main aspect route which was that being applicable to the diverging route. The clearance of a position light signal on Signal R180 only applied to the straight ahead route.

It is not difficult to understand how a driver could make such an error under that particular signalling arrangement. One passenger was killed and 23 were injured.

(6) Highland Loop Controls

This arrangement applied to the illuminating of signal indications in loops only when a route is set towards them or a train is approaching the signal.

This signalling arrangement was in widespread use on the Scottish Region of British Railways.

(7) Huddersfield Controls

This arrangement prevents a train from being signalled permissively into an occupied platform (more than one train on the same line at

the same time) when the platform starting signal has been cleared beforehand for another service ahead to depart.

Furthermore this arrangement will prevent the platform starting signal being cleared if another train is signalled under permissive working behind one which is already standing in the platform ahead. This is to prevent a driver entering an occupied platform under permissive working arrangements and mistakenly `reading through` to the platform starting signal, thus reducing the potential for a collision with a train ahead.

Ironically, this arrangement is not named after a particular incident at Huddersfield but because Huddersfield was the first location to be fitted with such an arrangement after re-signalling took place there in 1958.

Implementation of this arrangement became widespread on British Railways following an incident at Stafford on 4 August 1990. At 0030, the 2336 Stoke-on-Trent to Birmingham Soho empty coaching stock train (ECS) entered the platform with a position light signal having been cleared for the driver. Under these circumstances, a driver must be prepared to stop short of any obstruction on the line ahead towards the next stop signal. The driver of the 2218 Manchester Piccadilly to Penzance service had a green signal ahead to depart from the same platform.

The Birmingham train collided with the rear of the Penzance train ahead in the platform. The driver of the Birmingham train was killed, and thirty six passengers on the Penzance train were injured.

(8) Leatherhead Controls

This is an electrical equivalent to Sykes locking which enforces that a train must have passed a signal before the signal in the rear can be cleared again and applied both to signals at the same signal box and through the block section.

Leatherhead Controls were not named after an incident but Leatherhead was the first location that this signalling control arrangement was used.

(9) Moorgate Controls

This control arrangement ensures the progressive lowering of 'trip cock activation arms' at pre-set intervals to ensure a train is slowing as it moves towards buffer stops. A trip cock is a device that will vent brake pipe pressure from a train automatically and apply the brake immediately.

This control arrangement was introduced on London Underground following an incident on 28 February 1975 when a Northern City Line train failed to stop at Moorgate and crashed into the end wall of the tunnel. Forty three passengers were tragically killed.

(10) Morpeth Boards

These were introduced as a result of a high speed derailment at a Permanent Speed Restriction at Morpeth in 1967.

This arrangement provided for the fitting of Advanced Warning Boards (AWB) and Automatic Warning System (AWS) magnets (to give an audible warning within the driving cab to a driver) in connection with Permanent Speed Restriction (PSR) boards located where there is a significant reduction in line speed.

(11) Moreton-on-Lugg Controls

This arrangement retrospectively fitted approach locking controls to level crossing barriers following the replacement of the protecting signal without the passage of a train. This has been necessary where the control is lacking following 'like for like' replacement of manual level crossing gates (which had inbuilt 'natural' approach locking because of their manual nature) with lifting barriers – which do not.

This control arrangement is also known as 'Barrier Raise Inhibit Control'. The control when replacing crossing gates with lifting barriers at a level crossing with mechanically worked signals was difficult for the railway industry to fit and was required at these locations often without the use of track circuits.

This control arrangement was introduced following a serious incident at Moreton-on-Lugg in Herefordshire on 16 January 2010. The incident would have been prevented if approach locking had been fitted between the signals and the level crossing controls.

(12) Welwyn Controls

This signalling control prevents the sending of a second 'Line Clear' on an absolute block instrument until the berth track circuit of the home signal at the signal box concerned has become occupied and 'clear' after the first 'Line Clear', or a mechanical release 'winder' has been operated on the block shelf.

This avoids the possibility of a signalman giving a 'Line Clear' in the belief that a train has left the section when it has not and thus giving a second 'Line Clear' in error.

The operation of the mechanical release 'winder' also carries out



a very important human function for the signalman.

It gives him time to think carefully about why he is actually having the need to carry out this action, as it is not a normal occurrence within the signal box - such as regular use of the block instruments and block bells for example. Given that the consequences of his action could be quite catastrophic, it is a simple reminder to think 'WHY AM I DOING THIS?'

This signalling control arrangement was introduced following a serious collision on 15 June 1935. The signalman at Welwyn Garden City erroneously gave the 'Train out of Section' bell signal for the 10.53pm Kings Cross to Newcastle service to Hatfield No.3 signal box (in the rear) when it had not actually arrived. He then accepted the 10.58pm Kings Cross to Leeds service. The signalman at Hatfield No.3 signal box actually rang his counterpart at Welwyn Garden City signal box to enquire about the suspiciously short time that the 10.53pm Kings Cross to Newcastle train had spent in the section between Hatfield and Welwyn.

The signalman at Welwyn Garden City was quite adamant that the 10.53pm Kings Cross to Newcastle train had gone forward beyond his signal box when, in fact, it had not ! A serious collision between two trains was now inevitable.

As a result of the lack of locking preventing the block being cleared before a train arrives, and the inattention of the signalman at Wel-

wyn garden City, the 10.58pm Kings Cross to Leeds train collided violently with the rear of the 10.53pm Kings Cross to Newcastle train. Thirteen people lost their lives and 29 were injured.

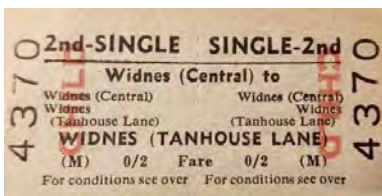


A 'Welwyn' mechanical winder avoids the possibility of a signalman giving a 'Line Clear' in the belief that a train has left the section when it has not, and thus giving a second 'Line Clear' in error.

Photographer : Unknown

The term 'Welwyn Control' became universally known within the railway industry as a result of this serious collision.

Widnes (Central) to Tanhouse Lane for 2^D (less than 1p) !



Earlestown Wagon Works Test Train

Rod Dixon

Driving through Earlestown recently, I was surprised at the number of houses that had been built on the site of the old wagon works. As a former railwayman based at Sutton Oak loco sheds, I recall how many different types of vehicles had been made over the years at the Earlestown works.

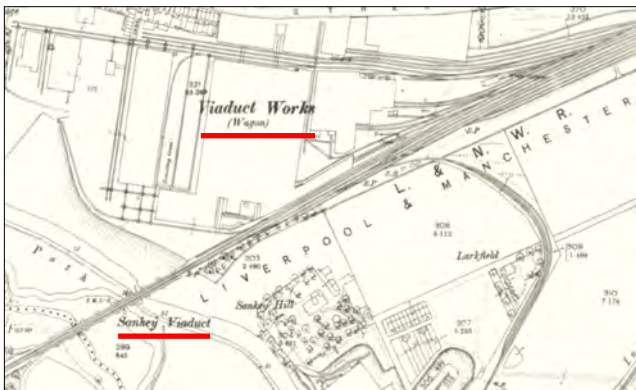
With Sutton Oak being one of the nearest depots to Earlestown, we dealt with much of the traffic that came out of the works.

One job (turn) that was allocated to Sutton Oak was the result of a plan by British Rail to speed up freight trains by retro fitting vans with vacuum brakes. The idea was to give freight trains a brake fitted



One of the five 2-6-0 BR Standard Class 4s based at 8G Sutton Oak, regularly used on the Earlestown Wagon Works test train.

Photo : John Atherton Collection



The 'Viaduct' Wagon Works at Earlestown took its name from the Sankey Viaduct seen at bottom left of the map. Originally established as Viaduct Foundry, the small engineering works was leased by LNWR in 1853. Closure came in 1964.

front portion to be able to run at faster speeds and to avoid stopping or slowing on steep downgrades.

The 'Test Train' turn started at about 07.00 by preparing the BR 2-6-0 Standard Class 4. We took the light engine to Earlestown works sidings to attach a train of vans fully refurbished and fitted with vacuum brakes. The train comprised about twenty five or thirty vans and a brake van at each end. The last brake acted as a tool van with three or four vehicle fitters riding with the guard. On departure, we headed to Newton-le-Willows, Parkside Jct, to take the left fork to go to Golborne Jct where we joined the main line north towards Wigan. We were timed to follow an express for Scotland, so we should have a clear line to Farrington Jct. It was intended that we should have as fast a run as possible to test the running gear on all the refurbished wagons. Drivers differed, but most of the men I worked with went as fast as possible to give the train a good run.

At Farington Jct the train was turned off the main line onto the branch to Lostock Hall Jct where the loco was detached to run around the train. We then shunted the train into Farington sidings, alongside the main line.

After stabling the train, the fitters would examine all vehicles, looking for faults and hot axle boxes. They would also give the train crew an idea of how long it would take to fix any faults. The engine was detached and taken light to the nearby Lostock Hall loco shed where we could turn the loco on the turntable and, if the outside foreman was not about, get some coal from the coaling plant. We were not booked to take coal ! Our routine then was to stable the loco and go for some food. The driver would determine whether we went to the shed mess room, or (if we had any money) go for a pint and pie at a nearby pub - against the rules but not as serious an offence as it is today !

After a meal break we got steam up in the

loco to take it off the Lostock Hall shed, back to Farrington sidings where we hoped the fitters had finished and the train would be ready to take back to Earlestown. We could leave as soon as we were ready, but it was always the slow lines for us back to Standish Jct ! Obviously we couldn't delay any timed trains. From Standish, we were usually routed over the Welly line. This took us around to the east of Wigan, away from passenger traffic, rejoining the main slow line at Bamfurlong.

On returning to Earlestown, any suspect vehicles (hot axle boxes) would have to be shunted out of our train and returned to the works, together with the extra fitters' brake van. After any necessary shunting, we would take the train forward to Sutton Oak or Ravenhead sidings to go into service. Finally, the loco would be taken on to Sutton Oak shed and we would book off duty at about four or five o'clock.

Rod Dixon



Set to close in March of this year, the above photograph records the day that rail enthusiasts from around the country visited Fiddlers Ferry Power Station aboard the "Ferry-go-Round". Seen negotiating the tight loop, and heading for the coal dock on 20.10.12, No.66197 was being driven by 8D member John Wilson.

Photo : Tony Foster

Merrymakers, Mystery Specials and Round Robins

Chris Hollins

Drastically under used carriage fleet

In the 1950's and early 1960's, British Railways ran a lot of day excursion trains, as well as half day and evening excursions. This was achieved as the railway had a large fleet of carriages, some of which worked only twenty five per cent of the year. This was one of the facts pointed out in the Beeching report that made British Railways look inefficient. Beeching reckoned that several thousand carriages were used no more than eight weeks in a year, spending the rest of the time parked in sidings. He recommended a drastic pruning of the carriage fleet. This was eventually carried out, resulting in a massive reduction in the number of excursion trains that could be operated.

Weekend day excursions

After the modernisation and electrification of the line from London Euston to Liverpool and Manchester, as well as the West Midlands and the Potteries in the 1960's, British Rail's Stoke Division looked at the possibility of running day excursions at weekends using stock that was not required for passenger train use. At this time, weekend services (especially on Sundays), between Manchester Piccadilly and London Euston via Stoke-on-Trent were considerably less than on weekdays, and nowhere near what they are today. As a result several rakes of Mark 2 A/B and C were available for use at weekends.

Stoke leads the way !

At the time, the Stoke Division was one of the biggest in the country covering an area that included Crewe, and as far west as the Cambrian Coast. After 1968 it was the only British



Rail division that had steam locomotives as part of its allocation. It looked after the Vale of Rheidol tank engines at Aberystwyth.

In the late 1960's, George Dow, the well known railway author, was the Divisional Manager at Stoke. Together with his staff, he agreed to run the day excursions from Stoke to various destinations marketed under the Merrymaker name. In the early 1970s it was decided to draw up a yearly programme of trains to various coastal destinations in the South and West. The Southern Region had many spare Class 33 diesels at weekends, enabling them to haul trains from Mitre Bridge Jct near Willesden to the South Coast. The Western Region had Class 47 & 52

"Western" diesels to take trains forward from Birmingham New Street to the west county and South Wales.

Daisy Hill to Brighton

Trains started running from Stoke and Stafford to Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings as well as Paignton, Weston-super-Mare and Barry Island. Other trains ran to Skegness and Great Yarmouth. These proved successful with the result that the Merrymaker name was extended to other excursion trains being operated by the London Midland Region. These trips included Liverpool and Manchester. Interestingly, some of the Manchester trains started at Daisy Hill as it was believed that a manager who worked at Rail House in Piccadilly, and who was in charge of the programme, insisted on being able to board the trains at his local station. This gave rise to such trains as Daisy Hill to Brighton and Eastbourne appearing in the working timetable weekly notices.

Trips from Liverpool

In Liverpool, the Divisional Management at Rail House in Lord Nelson Street started advertising Merrymaker excursions in the mid 1970's. They followed a similar pattern to the Stoke Division destinations of Brighton, Hastings and Paignton. Also included were trains to Largs, Southend and Whitley Bay.

The Largs train utilised Mark 1 stock which was then hauled by a diesel to Preston, with an electric locomotive taking over to Carlisle. From there another diesel took the train via the former Glasgow and South Western routes to Largs. On several occasions a Class 40 was used between Carlisle and Largs.

A one-off train that ran in 1975 was from Liverpool Lime Street to Wemyss Bay. Included in the fare was a boat trip to Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. As the West Coast main line had been electrified north of Weaver Junction the previous year, the Class 86 electric took the train all the way from Preston to

Wemyss Bay.

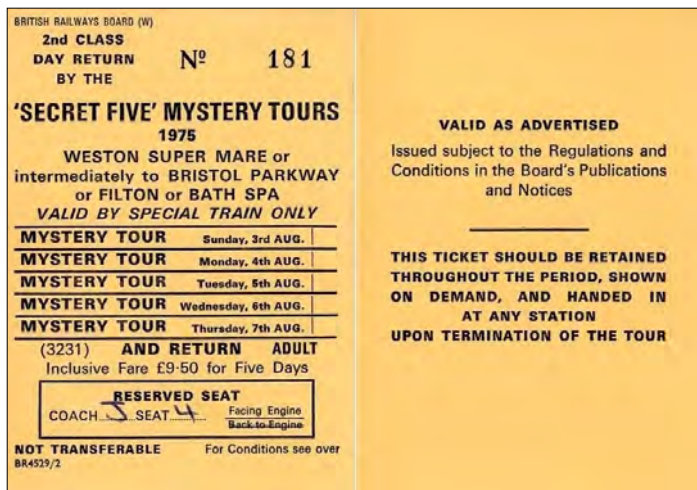
Second Class only !

I made a journey to Southend on one of the trains. Gerald Bland a friend of the late Alan Robinson, who worked for British Rail at Crewe and was in charge of the carriage rostering, told him that the train was composed of all second class Mark 1 stock apart from one carriage, which was a First class side corridor compartment vehicle. Only Second class tickets were sold on Merrymakers, so you could use any first class vehicles on the train at no extra charge. Alan told me to go and claim one of the compartments at Lime Street with the rest of the party getting on at Runcorn. This I duly did and we enjoyed a run behind a Class 85 to Willesden Jct, this being replaced by a Stratford allocated Class 37. We then proceeded via Primrose Hill, the North London line, Gospel Oak, Barking and the London Tilbury and Southend line through Upminster, Pitsea and Leigh-on-Sea to Southend Central.

Some trains started from other stations in the Liverpool District area, most notably Southport. Several trains ran from there to Dover, Bournemouth and Hastings. All were routed via Wigan Wallgate and Warrington Bank Quay where they called to pick up passengers. Merrymaker specials decreased in number until finally abandoned in the 1980s. By that time, the carriage fleet was being used more intensely due to the increase in the number of normal passenger services.

Mystery Specials

Commencing in the 1970's, running alongside Merrymakers were Mystery Specials. They were advertised in local newspapers with just a few hints as to where the train was going to, and what time it would arrive. With a bit of guesswork you could probably work out where it was going. In the working timetable weekly notices they were shown as "Mystex" with the train reporting number. Destina-



of Mark 2D air conditioned stock to London St Pancras. The return leg to Runcorn from Euston was behind a Class 86. The second trip was from Runcorn to Liverpool Lime Street and then behind a Class 47 on the 09.41 service to Edinburgh. The class 47 was replaced at Preston by a Class 82 electric for the run to Carlisle. Upon arrival the Glasgow to Nottingham service was

tions from Liverpool and Runcorn included Bournemouth, Brighton, Bristol, London, Paignton, Scarborough and Skegness.

Looking for the beach - at Nottingham

One rather bizarre Mystery special which was advertised to a seaside destination from Lime Street, picking up at Widnes and Warrington Central. The train should have gone to Skegness, however it only got as far as Nottingham where the station staff were amused as children with buckets and spades wanted to know were the beach was. It appears that a late engineering block was put on the line to Grantham and, the diversionary route through Lincoln and Sleaford wasn't available. The passengers who claimed were refunded their fare.

Round Robin tickets

After several years of successful operations, Mystery Specials went the same way as Merymakers. In their place came the Round Robin tickets valid for a day on a set route. The ticket cost £5 second class and £7.50 first class. Of the routes offered, I travelled on three of them. The first one was Runcorn to Crewe and then a DMU from Crewe to Derby changing there on to a Class 45 hauled train

cancelled due to a snow drift on the Settle and Carlisle line, forcing me to return home the same way I had arrived. As I had not completed the route, I was given a replacement ticket which I was able to use several months later. On that occasion, I travelled over the S&C behind a Class 45, returning from Leeds behind another of the same class on a Newcastle to Liverpool service.

The third trip again was on the 09.41 Edinburgh service. A Class 47 took the train from Lime Street to Preston, where it was replaced by a Class 86 as far as Carstairs. For the last leg to Edinburgh Waverley, a Haymarket allocated Class 40 was in charge. An added bonus was the train taking the Suburban line from Slateford Jct to Portobello Jct due to resignalling work at Haymarket.

Return from Edinburgh to York was on a Kings Cross service hauled by one of the first Class 47's allocated to Gateshead depot. These locos were known as "Generators" due to there different electric train heating equipment. At Newcastle, the 47 was replaced by a Deltic, which as I was sitting in the carriage behind the locomotive nearly gassed me when the carriage air conditioning equipment sucked in the cloud of diesel fumes which

erupted from the engine when we departed. After changing trains at York, a Class 45 returned me back to Liverpool on a Newcastle service.

A second trip on this route a year later, the return journey from Edinburgh to Liverpool was on a through train via Newcastle, Leeds and Manchester - something which Trans-Pennine Express have now decided to do. Another Gateshead 'Generator' (Class 47) worked the train throughout, along with car-

riages forming a set normally used on Kings Cross to Edinburgh services. The set included a Mark 1 Restaurant car. At the time, the Eastern Region was the only one still using Mark 1 RUO (Restaurant Unclassified Open) vehicles on Intercity services.

Eventually Round Robin tickets were phased out, and an interesting few years of Merry-makers, Mystery Specials and Round Robins came to an end.

Warrington Railway Pensioners' Trips

Wednesday 15 April : Beeston Castle : Cheshire

Wednesday 13 May : Dumfries

Wednesday 24 June : Caernarvon : Trip on Welsh Highland Railway to Porthmadog. Lunch in Porthmadog, then Ffestiniog Railway to Blaenau Ffestiniog. Coach returning from Blaenau Ffestiniog

Wednesday 15 July : Highclere Castle (Location for TV 'Downton Abbey') : Hampshire

Wednesday 12 Aug : Bala Lake Railway : Trip on Bala Lake Railway, then by coach to Barmouth for lunch and afternoon

Wednesday 9 Sept : Llandudno, a North Wales favourite resort.

Saturday 10 Oct : Pickering : North York Moors Railway for the 1940's weekend.

**For confirmation of dates and times, please contact Roy Dixon on
01925 638299**

'On Shed' journal material

Your 8D related articles and photographs invited

The task of gathering in material for the journal is never ending. On that basis, you will not be surprised to learn that before this edition is published, material for the next edition - due in just 3 months time - is already being sought. News items, comments, photographs and tales of yesteryear are always most welcome !

I would be very grateful for your assistance if you feel able to contribute material for publication. Alternatively, if you don't have the time or inclination to put pen to paper, but might like to suggest an appropriate topic, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Many thanks -
tony.r.foster@btinternet.com

Near Miss at Ditton Junction !

Tom Temple

On 22nd July 1956, the day they opened the new signal box (Ditton Junction No.1), I booked on at 8D for the shunt at Ditton sleeper yard. The diesel was in the workshop for repair so we had a standard shunt - Fowler 3F 0-6-0T No.47616 from 8D. My driver was Billy Wynn. It was a nice sunny morning and our first stop was at Deviation home signal where I had to implement Rule 55 - ie. sign the signalman's book. On entering the box, the signalman gave me a verbal instruction to pass on to my driver. The instruction was *"Pass all signals at danger and proceed to Ditton Junction"*. I passed on the instruction to my driver and we set off on the fast line to Ditton Junction. We passed Deviation's starting signal, chugging along without a care in the world. We passed Ditton's home signal and as we approached Ditton Junction all hell was let loose !

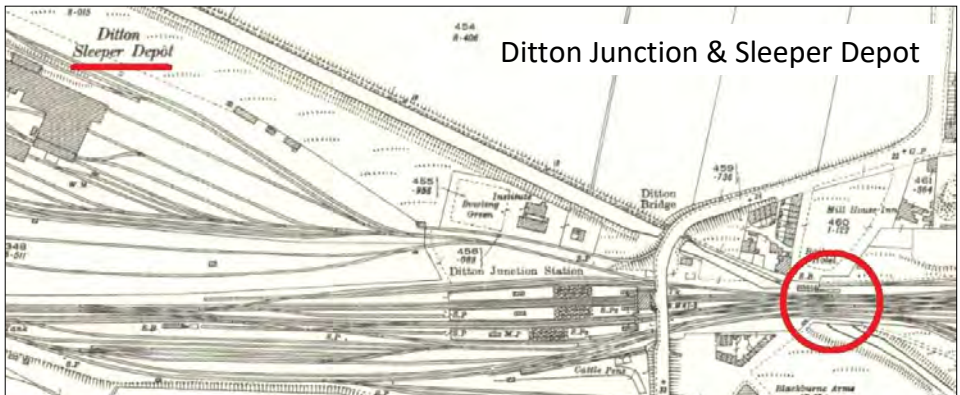
We started to hear an engine's whistle popping - like a runaway !

In order to get into the sleeper yard at the Junction, we had to cross over the fast line from Liverpool. At this point we were about 200 yards from the junction, when all of a sudden this express came thundering under

Ditton bridge doing about 70 mph. We were heading straight in front of the express ! Quick thinking by my driver meant that he was able to put the engine in reverse and fully open the throttle. It seemed like a lifetime before we started to slow down and reverse. I will never forget the expressions of shock and horror on the faces of the express train's footplate crew. The express continued on its journey and we backed up, clear of the junction. I then had to go to the signal box where lots of bells were ringing ! The box had shut down and there was a signal inspector in the box - due for a heart attack !

I repeated the instruction that the signalman had given me at Deviation, and he then told us to proceed to the sleeper yard. Later that morning, the Ditton station master came over to the yard and called my driver to one side and they had a long talk. When I asked what had been said, my driver said *"Forget it"*.

The next day, we stopped at Deviation box and I again performed Rule 55. The signalman said *"What were you doing yesterday ?"*. I replied *"Obeying your instructions to pass all signals at danger"*. He then said *"I didn't mean Ditton's !"*



Unusual Working at St Helens Junction

Photographed in the summer of 1960, Coronation class 'City of London', 46245 stands light engine alongside the water column and signal box at St Helens Junction.




Photograph : John Atherton

On his way home from school, John Atherton spotted the loco and dashed home for his trusty Kodak Brownie, hoping that he would get the opportunity to take a snap. He was in luck !

Apparently the loco had been sent out from Lime Street to be turned around the St Helens (Shaw Street), St Helens Junction triangle. Quite why it was unable to be turned at Edge Hill is not clear. No reference has yet been found to a turntable failure at that location.

Research suggests the likelihood that 'City of London' worked into Liverpool Lime Street on

the 08.15 from Euston. Given that for some reason it could not be turned on the Edge Hill turntable after coaling and watering, it was sent to St Helens Shaw Street for turning on the line to the Junction. It would then return, tender first, to Lime Street to haul the 17.25 Liverpool Lime Street to Euston 'Red Rose Express'.




Wirral Railway Circle Tour
Friday - Saturday 24th/25th October 1975
"PEMBROKE COAST EXPRESS"

Crewe, Chester, Wrexham, Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton, Birmingham (New Street), Gloucester, Cardiff, Fishguard (Harbour), Carmarthen, Milford Haven, Haverfordwest, Whitland, Tenby, Pembroke Dock, Llanelli, Llandrindod Wells, Craven Arms, Shrewsbury and Crewe.

(1314)
2nd Class N^o 0104

For conditions see over
You may retain this ticket as a souvenir



WIRRAL RAILWAY CIRCLE TOUR
In conjunction with H P Bulmer Ltd, Cranmore Rly., Co., Ltd., and the 5000 Association.
Saturday, 19th May, 1973

"THE ROYAL GIANTS"
CREWE, SHREWSBURY, BIRMINGHAM, OXFORD, HEREFORD, NEWPORT & BACK
"Return to Steam" OXFORD, HEREFORD, NEWPORT

2nd Class N^o 0191

For conditions see over
You may retain this ticket as a Souvenir

Were you there ? Does the WRC still exist ? The Editor would be very interested to hear from anyone who can shed more light on the organisation. The above souvenir tickets are part of a collection that includes also 'The Road to the Isles' and 'Hebridean Express' tours. Editor

Edge Hill Motive Power Depot ‘Star Turns’

Dennis Flood

‘The Merseyside Express’, ‘The Red Rose’, ‘The Manxman’, and ‘The Shamrock’ were named express trains which ran in both directions between Liverpool Lime Street and London Euston. They will be forever associated with Edge Hill Motive Power Depot.

In the late 1970s, I was waiting for a train from West Allerton to Edge Hill when I noticed something I had never before seen on the embankment of the up fast line at West Allerton. It was a concrete star, and contained within it was a rectangular piece of metal with a painted star displayed in the middle of it. I went to have a look at it instead of catching the train to Edge Hill and what I found was quite remarkable.

The names of the four express trains were on the metal plate as follows - *‘The Red Rose’* at the top, *‘The Manxman’* to the left, *‘The Shamrock’* to the right, and *‘The Merseyside Express’* at the bottom. At the top right of the painted star was the word *‘Star’*, and at the bottom was the word *‘Turns’*. What a discovery ! This was clearly to commemorate the *‘Star Turns’* Liverpool to London expresses at Edge Hill Motive Power Depot.

Many years of vegetation had recently been cleared, and there was this remarkable sign exposed for all to see. It had been covered in foliage for very many years and I had no idea it was there. I subsequently spoke about it to a number of Edge Hill drivers and they could



Possibly the only photograph of the commemorative stone on the embankment at West Allerton station. The stone records the previous existence of four named express trains operating between Liverpool and London. Sadly, the stone and the trains have long since disappeared.

Photograph by Dennis Flood

not recollect it, which made the presence of it at West Allerton station even more remarkable.

The origins of the sign are not clear to me but I think it may have been put there in 1951 to commemorate the Festival of Britain Exhibition, at a time before minor alterations were made to the station buildings. West Allerton did achieve fame in its own right as Hornby-Dublo used it as the model for their `modern` station ! *'The Red Rose'* was named on the occasion of the Festival of Britain, so my thoughts may have some relevance.

The appearance of this sign was as dramatic to me as was the disappearance of it in the early 1980s. I have no idea where it went, or who took it and where it is now. At the time, the railman who worked in the booking office at West Allerton Station was a former Brunswick fireman (I've forgotten his name) and he had no idea who removed it or where it went. A mystery indeed !

Until I'm (hopefully) proved wrong, I think the photograph which I took of this sign is the only one currently in existence and it is for this reason that it must be shared with 8D Association members. If any 8D Association member can throw any further light on this matter I would be most grateful.

It is now worth looking at how these four `Star Turns` at Edge Hill Motive Power Depot received their names.

'The Red Rose'

As I have previously stated, the name came about as a result of the occasion of the Festival of Britain in 1951. It was the Lancashire equivalent of the Yorkshire *'White Rose'* express which ran between Leeds and London Kings Cross.

'The Red Rose' was a premier train and was equipped with standard stock throughout. It formed the 12.05pm from Euston to Lime

Street and the 5.25pm back to Euston. However, following a timetable change in late 1951, *'The Red Rose'* was re-timed to depart from London Euston at 12.30pm and was made non-stop from Euston to Lime Street in three and three quarter hours. I can think of several Edge Hill drivers who wouldn't have hung around when working the down *'Red Rose'* in those timings with a *'Duchess'* or a *'Lizzie'* !

'The Shamrock'

'The Shamrock' was introduced in 1954 and it originally departed London Euston at 4.30pm but was then altered to depart from Euston at 4.55pm and the Rugby and Crewe stops were removed making it a non-stop service to Lime Street in 3 hours and 27 minutes. This was remarkable timing, since 12 years later in 1966 with a 3300hp A/c electric locomotive hauling lightweight rolling stock it was only 47 minutes faster between Euston and Lime Street at 2 Hours and 40 minutes !

The return service of *'The Shamrock'* to London Euston from Lime Street was an 8.10am departure (with a stop only at Bletchley) and with a booked arrival of 11.45am at Euston.

'The Manxman'

'The Manxman' was introduced in 1949, timed as the 10.40am departure from London Euston to Lime Street and carried the name *'The Manxman'* during the summer months because it connected with the Isle of Man boat departures from the Liverpool Landing Stage at the Pier Head.

Through coaches were attached to *'The Manxman'* for Southport – these coaches (usually two) were detached at Edge Hill on the down fast line and then shunted into the Southport Bay at Edge Hill Station prior to departure.

An oddity with *'The Manxman'* was that it also conveyed through coaches for Swansea Victoria. These coaches were attached at the

rear, behind the Southport coaches, and were detached at Stafford and then worked to Shrewsbury via Wellington where they then made the long journey via the Central Wales Line to Swansea Victoria. Arrival at Swansea Victoria was 6.35pm.

I can just imagine the Euston station staff announcing *'The Manxman'* departure "*for Liverpool, Swansea and Southport*" !

'The Manxman' only called at Stafford and Crewe and was due into Lime Street at 2.18pm. The *'up' Manxman* was booked to depart from Lime Street at 2.10pm with stops at Mossley Hill and Crewe (I suspect the fireman was not too impressed with the stop at Mossley Hill). The train then made a fast run between Crewe and Euston in 152 minutes for the 156 miles between the two locations. The arrival time at Euston was 5.30pm. *'The Manxman'* was a summer only service as a named train.

'The Merseyside Express'

'The Merseyside Express' had its origins in the days of the London and North Western Railway. It originally ran as a combined train for both Liverpool and Fleetwood, leaving Euston at 5.30pm. In 1905 it became a Liverpool only train and was retimed to depart from Euston at 5.55pm, running non-stop from Euston to Edge Hill. The Edge Hill stop was eventually removed in favour of Mossley Hill which was a much more convenient alighting point for residents of South Liverpool.

The name *'London-Merseyside'* express was given to this train in 1927. In 1928 it became known simply as *'The Merseyside Express'*. In 1932 it was retimed to depart from London Euston at 6.05pm.

It was timed to run the 189.7 miles to Mossley Hill in 200 minutes at an average

speed of 56.9mph. These timings continued until the outbreak of the Second World War. It called at Edge Hill to detach coaches for Southport as *'The Manxman'* was to do some years later when that named train was introduced on the Liverpool to London Route. After detaching the Southport coaches it was booked to arrive at Lime Street at 10.30pm. The Southport coaches then travelled over the Bootle Branch to Bootle Junction where they then travelled over the DC electric lines to Southport.

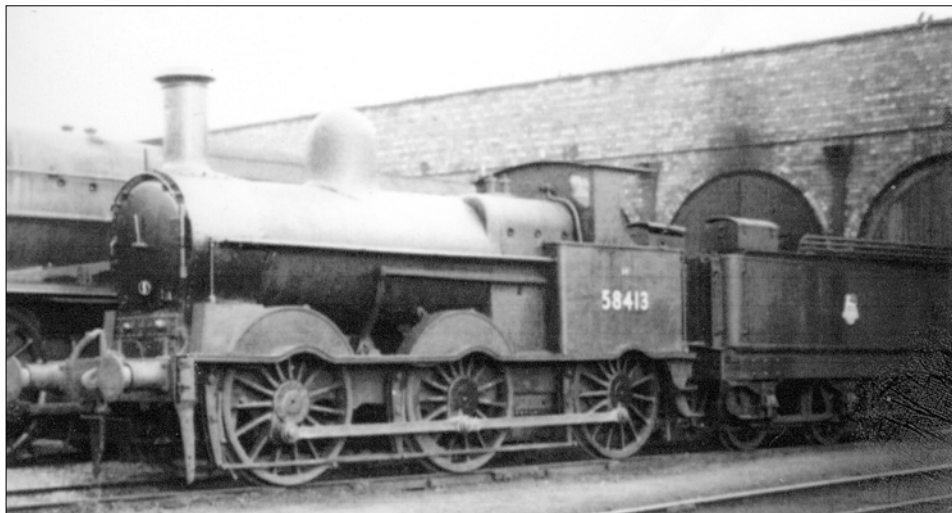
The *'up Merseyside Express'* departed from Lime Street at 10.00am for many years and was due at Euston at 1.30pm. It was subsequently retimed to depart Lime Street at 10.10am and make the journey to London Euston in 3 hours and 30 minutes. Interestingly the Southport coaches for Euston left Southport Chapel Street station at 8.50am and ran directly to Lime Street and were attached by the station pilot to the front of *'The Merseyside Express'*. This saved an Edge Hill stop and the train called only at Mossley Hill.

A few of the Edge Hill drivers told me when working *'The Merseyside Express'* in the 1950s they were always booked over the *'up'* fast line between Crewe and Stafford, and they would overtake *'The Pines Express'* from Manchester to Bournemouth running on the *'up'* slow line. The scene was always set for a race between Whitmore and Stafford – always won by the *'Top Link'* Edge Hill men of course ! A *'Jubilee'* was no match for a speeding *'Duchess'* or a *'Lizzie'*, even with a trailing load of 15 coaches – the honour of the Shed was at always at stake !

The names of these famous express trains ceased to exist in 1966 when through electrification services between Lime Street and London Euston commenced, along with intensive use of rolling stock.

Former Residents of 8D

Photos submitted by Colin Turton



Above : Webb Cauliflower 0-6-0 58413 is shown after withdrawal outside Crewe works. Constructed by the London and North Western Railway as build number 4080, it entered traffic on 30th November 1900. At nationalisation, the locomotive was allocated to Workington shed, transferring to Widnes on 1st July 1950 where it stayed until 16th January 1954, when it moved to Crewe Works and was withdrawn from service on 31st January and disposed of.

Below : Former Great Central Railway (which later became London and North Eastern Railway) Class J10 0-6-0 65198 is seen on Widnes Shed on 7th May 1954.



The locomotive was constructed at Gorton Works and entered traffic on 30th April 1902, a Robinson development of Parker's J10/2 class with larger bearings and a 3080 gallon tender. At Nationalisation, the engine was allocated to 13C Heaton Mersey shed and moved to Widnes on 27th February 1954. It remained there until 14th August 1959, when it was transferred away eventually being withdrawn from 8F Wigan Springs Branch depot on 31st August 1961, the last of the Class. It was then sent back to Gorton Works and disposed of on 30th September 1961.

Photos : Frank Hornby

Once Upon a Time

A Rail Photographer's Paradise

BRITISH RAILWAYS BOARD LM. REGION No. 1151

Subject to the conditions printed on the back hereof and to any limitations set out below
M R. J. ATHERTON

of ST HELENS, LANCOS.

is authorised to enter upon the property of the Board until 31. 12. 67
unless this permit is revoked earlier, between/at the following places:-

THATTO HEATH - GARSWOOD, ST HELENS - ST HELENS JCT, WINWICK JCT - ACTON GRANGE (EXCL BANK QUAY AREA) SANKEY - PADGATE (EXCL WARRINGTON CEN. AREA) GATHURST - HINDLEY NORTH,

for the purpose only of WHELLEY JCT - INCE MOSS JCT & BOARS HEAD - BAMFURLONG JCT (EXCL WALLGATE & NORTH WESTERN STATIONS)

PHOTOGRAPH

This Permit does not entitle the Holder to travel Free on the Railway

Places excluded from the operation of this permit:
**LINES ELECTRIFIED ON A CONDUCTOR-RAIL SYSTEM,
VIADUCTS, TUNNELS, MOTIVE POWER DEPOTS,
DISTRICT ELECTRIC DEPOTS.**

Issued by _____ for H. A. MILLERSTON

DIVISIONAL MANAGER
ACCIDENTS SECTION,
LINE ST. CHAMBERS

BR 6533

Member John Atherton recalls a time when, for a modest sum, you could purchase a 'Lineside Permit'. To a rail photographer, this must have been bliss ! Authorisation "to enter upon" specified rail property is clearly set out on the permit, together with a list of places from which the holder is excluded. Not surprisingly, the permit does not cover "Lines electrified on a conductor rail system" !! Imagine - trackside permission today ?

APOLOGY

On page 27 of 'On Shed' Volume 9, Number 4 there was a rather marvellous photograph showing the 9T21 working from Huskisson Goods to Edge Hill close to Kirkdale station. The photograph was taken by 8D member Brian Roberts. In the caption we have made an error with his forename. For that we are very sorry. It is not the first time that we have done this to Brian. As his photographs are so magnificent he certainly deserves to be credited properly. Sorry Brian. Do keep those photographs coming.

Next edition of 'On Shed' June 1st 2020

The Editor is constantly looking for new material. Your assistance in finding relevant stories, documents and photographs would be much appreciated.

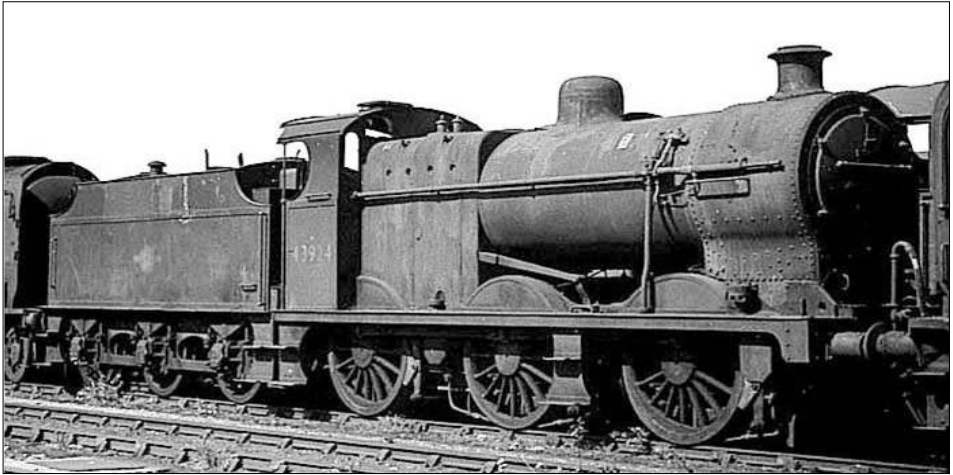
Please get in touch if you can help.

tony.r.foster@btinternet.com

43924 - First Out of Barry

John Atherton

Editor's Note : At a recent 8D Association meeting, member John Atherton presented an illustrated talk about his involvement in the purchase, retrieval and eventual restoration of Midland 4F No.43924. In 1968 the locomotive had the distinction of being the first to be recovered for preservation from Dai Woodham's scrapyards in South Wales. It is also thought to be only one of two that left Barry by rail - all others leaving by road ! Here is a small portion of John's original notes that subsequently formed the basis of a feature article in the December 2018 edition of 'Steam Railway' magazine.



A team of like minded rail enthusiasts was put together during 1966 / 67. Our objective was to rescue a Midland 4F (No.43924) from the Barry Island scrapyards. Many visits were made to the yard during the period of negotiation and it wasn't until 10th Sept 1968 that we were finally able to take possession of the locomotive. With myself and a colleague on the footplate, the 4F was to be towed by various diesel engines to Keighley. The movement took place on 11th and 12th Sept 1968.

After a couple of false starts after a faulty spring was discovered, we finally began the journey north behind D1699 with driver Albert Portlock and fireman Peter Rolfe,

both of Cardiff. At 10.50 am and in pouring rain we moved out of Barry Goods Yard. As we left, I noted more steam locos still going into the yard including 76077 and 76084 which had been based at Sutton Oak.

Despite travelling at a very modest speed of about 20mph, prolonged running between stops caused inevitable worry about bearings. At Hereford we came to a stand in the centre road at 16.40 - now 1 hr 24 mins late. A scheduled engine and crew change took place and a new loco (D338) was there to back down onto our train. I recall that quite a crowd had gathered on the platform, all interested in what we were doing.



Midland 4F No.43924 stands on the centre road at Hereford during the locomotive's long journey from Barry scrapyard to Keighley where it would be restored and brought back into service within a relatively short period of time.

Photograph by John Atherton

As we passed Ludlow, our speed had risen to about 47mph - almost twice our maximum permitted speed ! We applied our hand brake and drew the guard's attention to the speed, indicating that we wanted to slow down. The guard applied his brake and started to blow his whistle. Unfortunately, this had no effect so he started waving his red flag. Again, this action had absolutely no effect and we continued travelling at around 45mph. Helpless on the footplate, we could only hope that the axle box and modified spring would stand up to this speed. We had now travelled for about 8 miles since we applied our brake, and at last one of the engine crew noticed what was going on. We indicated that we would like to stop and carry out some checks, and this we did 1/4 mile south of Craven Arms at 18.03. Checks were made and to our surprise all was OK.

At Crewe, we were diverted through 'the Crewe muck hole' - a line that took freight trains under Crewe station, resurfacing quite some distance north on the Manchester line.

We had now been travelling for over 12 hours and I actually managed to have a brief nap before we came to a stop at Alderley Edge station at 23.40. At Stockport, we stopped for a further crew change outside the old steam shed.

After clearing Stockport and travelling under the DC power cables for the Manchester - Sheffield line, we soon joined the route from Manchester Exchange to Leeds via Diggle.

At 3 miles 57 yds.(4803 mtrs) Diggle Tunnel is one of the longest in the country. The journey through it was uncomfortable and diesel exhaust fumes made breathing difficult !

When we reached our next scheduled stop at Healey Mills at 03.08, we were 1 hr 48 mins late. We carried out the inspection routines of oiling the various points, and again all seemed very satisfactory. The repair work to sort out the faulty spring (undertaken by the men at Barry and Cardiff) had obviously been very successful as we had now travelled in excess of 200 miles in around 20 hours at a really sedate pace.

Whilst at Healey Mills, our EE Type 4 pulled away, and was replaced by an EE type 3 No 6946. The brake van we had used from Barry was to be taken off the train and left at Healey Mills. Accordingly, we moved all our belongings into the rear cab of No 6946. For a time, we seemed to be moving from signal to signal, stopping at each one until we eventually arrived outside Holbeck shed in Leeds.

Once on the north side of Leeds we had no delays at all, passing Shipley at 06.13 and Bingley at 6.20. As we left Bingley the dawn was breaking. At least we would now have something to look at for the last few miles of our journey to Keighley !

At 6.30am on Thursday 12 September 1968, we were alongside the signal box to the north of Keighley station. Finally, we reversed into the goods yard. After travelling 232 miles in around 20 hours through 3 regions of British Rail we had arrived !

Three days later it was Manchester Ship Canal loco No 31 that completed the movement of 43924 to its new home at Howarth. Thereafter, our team of 9 founder members of the Midland 4F Preservation Society worked most weekends to get the the locomotive into running condition by the summer of 1970.

Now owned by KWVR, the locomotive continues to give excellent service. I'm pleased to say that I managed one more ride on the footplate in 2011.



Top : After the 20 hour journey from Barry, the 4F is finally towed away from Keighley for preservation at Howarth. **Photo** : John Atherton

Bottom : 43924 is seen here at Oxenhope at a 'railwaymen's day out' in October 2011. Throughout the day, retired drivers and fireman were able to ride on the footplate and handle the controls. **Photo** : Editor

8D Events Programme

19:00 Tuesday 17 March 2020 : St Helens Central Station – 1900

An illustrated talk by former 8D Chairman Joe Cowley. During a stint as a volunteer at St Helens library Joe came across a selection of photographs that were taken at the opening ceremony of the GCR St Helens Central station in 1900. The discovery of the photos has led to Joe putting together an illustrated talk about the station focusing on the year of opening.

10:00 Saturday 18 April 2020 : The Wirral Railway Company : A Guided Tour

This guided tour led by Paul Wright leads on from where the Mersey Railway tour finished off. The surviving lines of the former Wirral Railway (Birkenhead Park to West Kirby and New Brighton) will be explored by train, and some of the closed sections will be explored on foot through short walks from stations. The tour will start at Birkenhead Park and conclude at New Brighton where members wanting to take refreshment can do so. **Meet on the Platform at Birkenhead Park station.**

19:00 Thursday 14 May 2020 : St Helens Central (The Original Station) : Guided Walk

A guided tour led by Paul Wright that complements the illustrated talk planned for March 2020 (see above). Members may think there is nothing left to see at the site of the former GCR St Helens Central but Paul will show that is not the case. **Meet outside the St Helens County Court, Birchley Street, St Helens (car parking available at Birchley Street Car Park).**

10:00 Saturday 20 June 2020 : Warrington Railway Wonders : Guided Walk

A guided tour led by Paul Wright starting from the site of the short lived Warrington White Cross station site (Quay Fold Level Crossing). The walk will include, amongst other things, the Warrington Rail Transporter Bridge and the original 1837 River Mersey bridge of the GJR. **Meet at the level crossing gates at White Cross (Quay Fold, Warrington).**

15:00 Wednesday 24 June 2020 : Visit to the SEUZ Knowsley RTLS Terminal

An opportunity to see the waste transfer station at Kirkby where non-recyclable household waste from the Liverpool City region is loaded onto trains for onward shipment to an energy from waste plant. The visit is timed so that 8D Members can see a train arrive. We will also get the opportunity to see the loading process. This visit is limited to 10 people but there will be a further visit on 1 July 2020 (see below) which will also cater for 10. PPE will be provided but suitable sturdy footwear (boots are best) will be required. **Booking is essential for this trip. Details of where to meet will be given at the time of booking. To secure a place contact Paul Wright by either email pwright964@btinternet.com or phone on 0151 630 5132.**

15:00 Wednesday 1 July 2020 : Visit to the SEUZ Knowsley RTLS Terminal

See above (Wednesday 24 June 2020 event) for full details. **Booking is essential for this trip. To secure a place contact Paul Wright by either email pwright964@btinternet.com or phone him on 0151 630 5132.**

19:00 Tuesday 7 July 2020 : Birkenhead Woodside and Birkenhead Monks Ferry stations : Guided Walk

A guided walk led by Paul Wright looking at what remains of the former LNWR/GWR joint stations at Birkenhead Woodside and Birkenhead Monks Ferry. **Meet outside the Woodside Ferry Terminal**