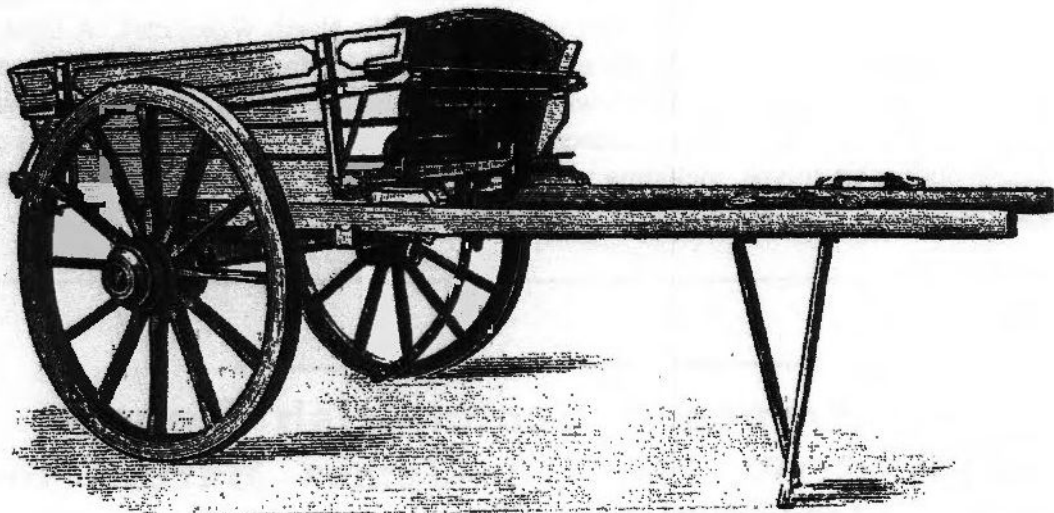


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Barrowmore Model Railway Journal



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Contributions are welcome:

- (a) as e-mails or e-mail attachments;
 - (b) as a 3.5in floppy disk, formatted in any way (as long as you tell me if it's unusual!); disks can be provided on request;
 - (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 June 2008, and contributions should get to the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1 May 2008.

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Copies of this magazine are also available to non-members: a cheque for £6 (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 an engraving of a different form of transport, taken from a commercial catalogue from about 1904 (hence prototypes suitable for "Johnstown Road"!)) which was reprinted in 1978. Eric Power has a copy of this extensive catalogue of the products of the East Yorkshire & Crosskills Cart & Waggon Co. Ltd., Beverley: this particular engraving shows: 'the North Wales cart. A light cart, used extensively in North Wales, and specially suitable for hilly districts. Has an effective tipping arrangement. (4ft6in wheels, available in 20cwts, 25cwts, and 30cwts capacity form)'. The catalogue illustrates many other items of interest to modellers of the steam outline prototype, including various luggage trolleys and platform trucks as well as many designs of horse- and traction engine-hauled vehicles.

The Proposed Scotch-Irish Tunnel.

GLASGOW, Sept. 5.—James Barton to-day explained to the Engineering Congress, now in session here, the proposed tunnel between Scotland and Ireland. The committee which considered the routes thought that the best was from a projecting portion of Wigtownshire, where the Scotch coast is within twenty-one to twenty-five miles from the coast of County Antrim. The cost of the undertaking is estimated at £10,000,000.

(This is an extract from the "New York Times" of 6 September 1901: does anyone know anything else about this very ambitious plan for a long tunnel – presumably for railway track – since Barton was a prominent railway engineer and self-propelled road vehicles were in their infancy??).

Forthcoming events

8/9 Mar. 2008: Kidderminster show.

15/16 Mar. 2008: Nottingham show.

22/24 Mar. 2008: York show.

29 Mar. 2008: 7mm running track (special American O gauge day), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

12 April 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

19/20 Apr. 2008: Scalefour North, Wakefield.

3/4 May 2008: Liverpool show.

17/18 May 2008: Trainwest, Melksham ("Mostyn" is appearing).

17/18 May 2008: ExpoEM, Bracknell (new venue)

31 May 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

7/8 June 2008: DEMU showcase, Burton-on-Trent.

14/15 June 2008: Chatham show.

12 July 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

13 July 2008: 7mm running track show, Gresford (see Editor for details).

9 Aug. 2008: 7mm running track (special American O gauge day), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

23 Aug. 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

6/7 Sep. 2008: W.H.R. show at Dinas ("Johnstown Road" is appearing).

13/14 Sep. 2008: ExpoEM North, Slaithwaite.

20/21 Sep. 2008: Warrington show ("Johnstown Road" is appearing).

11 Oct. 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

25/26 Oct. 2008: Beckenham show ("Mostyn" is appearing).

15 Nov. 2008: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

28/30 Nov. 2008: Wakefield show.

13/14 Dec. 2008: Wigan show ("Johnstown Road" is appearing).

(2009)

27/28 June 2009: Perth exhibition ("Mostyn" is appearing).

12/13 Dec. 2009: Wigan show ("Mostyn" is appearing).

(The Editor welcomes details of other events of railway interest for this column)

Our web-site address is: www.barrowmoremrg.org.uk

(Also of interest is: www.mostynhistory.com)

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Mostyn – the extension dilemma: how did we get here?

by Richard Oldfield

Casting my mind way back to early 2001 when the design and timberwork construction for “Mostyn” was mostly done, I’m certain that it never once crossed my mind that we could ever exhaust the capacity of the fiddle yard. The baseboards were designed to maximise our re-creation of the prototype, maximise their storage capacity and, crucially, fit within the room in which it was being built. At that time we probably had no more than 80 items of stock with the great majority being either Mark 1 coaches or 16T minerals.

Running time forward to Spring 2002 we made our debut at Macclesfield exhibition with only 7 of the 17 fiddle yard roads in operation – and there were large open spaces on the roads that were working! Since then, despite diversions onto other projects, the stock-building has continued steadily. Each successive exhibition has seen new items added including locomotives, diesel multiple units, coaching stock and wagons. They are all allocated to formations, allocated to fiddle yard roads, tested and possibly tweaked before becoming part of the regular “Mostyn” fleet. This process has continued until today when we have one of the largest P4 fleets in the country with about 320 items.

Therefore, it goes without saying that the challenge of operating the layout at exhibitions has become greater due to an increase in the number of individual trains and more intensive use of the exchange sidings at the front of the layout. The complexity is most apparent in the fiddle yard where double, treble and even quadruple road occupancy is now commonplace. The amount of ‘slack’ in each road has also diminished/disappeared and this means that the braking and positioning of trains within the yard has to be much more precise in order to avoid rear-end collisions and fouling of turnouts.

What is the problem?

At Railex Aylesbury exhibition in May it became apparent (‘screamingly obvious’ might be a more accurate expression!) that we were reaching the capacity of the current fiddle yard. There’s still about 25 feet of storage road unfilled which might sound a lot but it’s two feet here, four feet there, three feet elsewhere – nothing really significant apart from a bit of space that will be taken up by current projects before the end of 2007. With multi-occupancy roads this means that, whilst a train is passing through the scenic section, it is necessary to shuffle other trains in order to make space for it to return to the fiddle yard.

This situation is manageable in itself and we’re currently implementing changes like fiddle yard distant signals and BR Rule Book procedures which will lessen problems but (and this is a particularly big ‘but’) there’s nothing we can do with the existing baseboards that will allow us to cope with the extra stock that we are planning to build.

Extra stock! – what extra stock do we need?

The original concept of “Mostyn” was quite simple – a spectator should be able to watch the layout and see a typical cross-section of the trains that would actually have worked there in Summer 1977. Like all other modellers we like doing the rarities and oddities but there was a colossal variety in everyday stock that worked on the North Wales Coast main line in 1977. You might think that we have covered the basic necessities with our current fleet of 320 items but we are not even half way there.

Here is a tentative list of what we might still build (the number of examples of each item to be built is shown in brackets) – you can argue about the inclusion or omission of certain items but you’re certainly not going to make a significant difference to the overall total:

Locomotives:

YEC 0-4-0 No.1	(1)	
Class 08	(1)	
Class 24/25	(7)	New locomotives needed = 21
Class 40	(9)	
Class 45/46	(1)	
Class 47	(2)	

We are adequately supplied with locomotives at present but each new rake will obviously require new haulage power. Classes 24 and 25 are needed most urgently for everyday trip workings and general freight work.

Diesel Multiple Units:

Class 100	(2)	
Class 103	(6)	
Class 104	(9)	
Class 105/106	(2)	
Class 108	(4)	New DMU vehicles needed = 44
Class 110	(3)	
Class 115	(8)	
Class 119	(3)	
Class 120	(3)	
HST	(5)	

The argument for Classes 110 and 120 is a bit tenuous but they’re each very distinctive and would make a great addition to the roster. I’m sure Eddie will be disappointed at the lack of ambition shown above and is more than ready to fight the case for even more vehicles!

As far as the HST is concerned we actually need a short crew training formation of two power cars and three intermediate vehicles but it is very likely that we will build a full ‘two plus seven’ formation.

Hauled Coaching Stock:

Mark 1 Catering	(4)
Mark 1 Sleeping	(1)
Mark 1 BGs	(4)
Mark 1 4-wheeled CCTs	(10)
Mark 2 (early)	(16)
Mark 2/3 Air-conditioned	(10)
Special Parcels Vans	(10)
LMS Parcels Stock	(5)
LNER Parcels Stock	(2)
GWR Parcels Stock	(5)
SR Parcels Stock	(2)

New coaching stock needed = 69

OK, I realise I could be accused of failing to adequately address the need for more parcels stock with the above requirements but sometimes compromises have to be made!!

Revenue Freight Stock:

Air-braked Opens	(10)
Air-braked Vans	(3)
MGR Hoppers	(28)
Sulphur Hoppers	(48)
12T Vans	(30)
Freightliners	(30)
Bogie Bolster Cs	(8)
Nuclear Flasks	(2)
Associated Octel Tanks	(12)
2-axle Fuel Tanks	(12)
Coke Hoppers	(20)
Presflos	(30)
21T Minerals	(15)
Plates/Tubes	(12)
Petroleum Coke Hoppers	(17)
Various Brake Vans	(8)
LPG Tankers	(12)
Ferry Vans	(3)
Cargowaggons	(5)
Miscellaneous Opens	(10)

New freight stock needed = 315

With revenue freight stock it can be argued that, except for block trains that ran in fairly fixed formations, we could afford to reduce the level of build of some wagons in the above list. The counter to this argument is that I think you will already find that the majority of the above is already bought and sat in project boxes awaiting its time on the workbench. This certainly applies to the OBAs, HAAs, Sulphur hoppers, Freightliners, Bogie Bolsters, TTAs, HTVs, Presflos, 21T Minerals and others. I'm also certain that

there are other interesting wagons which worked past Mostyn and are omitted from the list altogether.

Departmental stock:

Tamper	(1)	
CWR carriers	(10)	
Grampus	(7)	
Whales	(2)	
Seacows/Sealions	(10)	
Miscellaneous Opens	(8)	
Departmental Coaches	(4)	New Departmental stock needed = 71
Breakdown Train	(1)	
Dolphin/Tench/Sturgeon	(4)	
Tunnel Inspection	(3)	
Assorted Well Wagons	(4)	
Various Brake Vans	(6)	
Miscellaneous Vans	(6)	
Sand Wagons	(4)	
Inspection Saloon	(1)	

Of course, with the departmental fleet you can just go on and on. There are no S&T vehicles in the above list and the ballast hopper oddities like Mackerel, Trout and Herring are also absent. Departmental vehicles are very interesting to model since they normally have special modifications and markings so I would not be surprised to see other wagons creep onto the list.

Overall you can see that there is a total of 520 vehicles on the 'to do' list. Even if you took a sharp axe to some of the totals you will still be left with about seven years of consistent steady stock-building to do – in our most productive year so far we managed to finish about 70 items but some years, especially when there are other projects on the go, this total can be much lower.

What are the options?

Firstly, we need to establish the 'rules of the game'. When we go to an exhibition we take all the existing "Mostyn" fleet (without exception) and also any new stock that is ready to make its debut. All the stock leaves in working condition and should return in the same condition with any repairs/adjustments completed as they become apparent. The stock is handled once at the start of the weekend to take it out of its box and place it into its formation in the fiddle yard and once at the end of the show to return it to its box. The only exceptions are for repairs and also for routine cleaning of locomotive/DMU wheels. We've learned these disciplines over many exhibitions and they are not negotiable (or at least not in the case of any stock I have built).

We do not have 'reserve stock' or 'alternative stock'. Each item is either passed for use and part of the fleet (and running) or it is not part of the "Mostyn" roster. Furthermore we do not change formations nor add/remove formations during the course of a show –

this avoids double-handling and its associated greater risks of damage. If you look at the fiddle yard during an exhibition you should see that everything is on a fiddle yard road or siding, nothing should ever be 'off the rails' except if it is being cleaned or repaired. It all gets more complicated when (by the end of 2007) we move into a position where there is more stock than total storage available. If we do nothing and continue to build stock in line with the listings above you can see that we would end up with more than twice the amount of stock than we could ever display at one time. We either have to accept that the aims of "Mostyn" need changing since we cannot say that we provide a typical cross-section of the traffic of the time if there is not space to accommodate it on the layout or we need to provide twice the storage area that we have at present.

The 'do nothing' option would see us choosing which stock to take to each exhibition and leaving the rest behind. It's an easy option and would undoubtedly bring forward the end of "Mostyn's" exhibition life for me. I'm not really that interested in treading water or 'doing more of the same' ad infinitum. I'm committed to building stock for "Mostyn" - which is probably quite good since Dave Goodwin and I have mountains of projects in mind for which most of the components are already bought.

The 'do something' option is very much more complicated, very interesting and exciting but requires a big commitment from the "Mostyn" team (and probably others as well). If we are going to do something then the big questions are:

What should be the size, shape and construction quality of the fiddle yard extension?

Should we extend the scenic section as well?

The other factor that is critical in our deliberations is that we already have a whole series of exhibition commitments for "Mostyn" for 2008 and 2009. This means any extension work needs to be carried out whilst the whole of the current layout continues to be exhibited.

It's big but is it clever?

The current scenic section of "Mostyn" can be thought of as three central straight boards which accurately follow the prototype and two curved boards at each end which have reality somewhat compressed (in order to get round the 90 degree bend). The fiddle yard is a mirror of this. A simple option for expanding the fiddle yard might be to keep the number of roads the same and to plug in a number of extra straight boards. This will not work in our case because you would need to plug in an equivalent number of additional straight boards in the scenic section and you cannot do this when the straight section is already true to prototype (we would certainly be unique if we modelled more than the prototype!!). You can argue that we could re-align some of the curved sections but this would entail a large scale re-build of the existing layout which, in turn, would take us off the exhibition circuit. This approach would also lead to very complex levels of road occupancy in the fiddle yard.

It therefore follows that we need to build a second fiddle yard. This has the advantages of being practical to execute without disturbing the existing layout and also keeps the challenge of multi-occupancy of roads at a manageable level. If we built it to exactly the

same dimensions and track spacings as the current fiddle yard then the new straight sections could be joined with the existing straight sections for a 'post-Mostyn' project at some point in the future.

The second fiddle yard would join the existing layout at each end via a double junction placed just ahead of the entrance to the existing fiddle yard. It would then curve round parallel to the existing yard with just enough room for someone to get in between them. It will be necessary to extend the side of the layout in order to make the double junction but this is a relatively minor task. Overall this extension is already a big job since it will require the construction of 10 new boards and about 40 new turnouts (compared with the 16 boards and 53 turnouts on the current layout).

In a moment of inspiration (others may choose words like 'self-delusion' or 'madness') it occurred to me that there was very little point in doing so much to increase the storage capacity of the layout if we did not also increase the scenic part of Mostyn. This would give each train a longer period in front of the public and would enable us fully to model all the signals controlled from Mostyn box. It's also relatively simple since it would consist of no more than 6 additional straight boards with plain double track (and no turnouts). The layout would be transformed from its current scenic run of 26 feet to about 50 feet with the overall footprint being roughly square rather than rectangular as current. We would, however, need to find a solution to the question of the Mostyn Dock branch which currently follows the main line round the curve into the fiddle yard but may need disguising if it has to do this for a much longer distance.

In terms of the total amount of work to be done in design, timberwork, turnout construction, track-laying, scenic work, electrics and lighting, I've roughly calculated out the second fiddle yard and scenic extension at two man-years or 4000 hours. This is not significantly different to the job of building "Mostyn" in the first place. I'm sure we could make some significant savings if we worked in fewer but longer sessions rather than relying on club nights. Nevertheless we do need to be absolutely clear that a project of this scale will not be achieved unless every member of the Mostyn team commits themselves to at least five hours per week on an on-going regular basis for about two and a half years. This may not, at first sight, appear too onerous but this has to happen in addition to everything else we do like building stock, exhibiting and, lest we forget, "Johnstown Road" which has its own priorities.

From my point of view I think the extension (in some form) is the only option we have with "Mostyn" if we want to keep it at the forefront of the fine-scale hobby and prolong its life. Everyone I've spoken to in the club is 'up for it' but I don't really see the average number of hours being spent as anywhere near sufficient to embark on another ambitious project. It might be better to settle for an easier life that more accurately reflects the time that we are prepared to spend on our hobby.

The dilemma is clear.

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To Brockenhurst, Bournemouth & Poole.

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DVD reviews, by Dave Millward

Archive railway films, what is available?

We're back on home soil for this review but the 'tardis' has undergone an equally gruelling journey: back to 1951, in search of a British answer to the early quality of 'Uncle Sam's' railroad films. 'Cam' Camwell was fortunate enough to be 'in the right place at the right time' with a quality cine camera/lots of film and the resources to tour the British Isles. He recorded the decline of a world beating railway system in the post war years and his efforts are available (but beware that Strathwood sent me their last set with a warning that Kingfisher may be ceasing production) as a set of three DVDs, covering the period from 1951-1965, including (in my view) the most important decade of our railway history.

'Cam' Camwell, vols. 1-6 (two volumes per DVD), by Kingfisher (contact Railway Recollections on 0844 800 8818).

Volumes 1 and 2, 1951-1955

The theme of each of these productions is a 'round robin' tour of the British Isles during the specified time period, looking at rare and threatened lines/steam types whilst they still retained the dignity/authenticity of normal everyday operation. The list of those covered is long and distinguished, making for fascinating viewing, O.K., the soundtrack is occasionally unconvincing but much of this footage is likely to be unique and an important contribution to the 'jigsaw' of our railway heritage. I was 'riveted' to my chair throughout this program, witnessing a fabulous procession of vintage trains (hardly a Mark 1 or standard loco type to be seen) passing through 'complete' railway scenery, with all fixtures and fittings in place and in everyday use.

Volumes 3 and 4, 1956-1960

Our journey through five and a half hours of Cams work continues with the focus shifting to a whole host of different lines and locos newly under threat. Once again he captures the essence of the period with quality sequences of filming; remember this is still a time when few enthusiasts had the wherewithal to film their interests and so the rarity value alone makes the footage worthwhile. The steady pace of branch line life is mirrored in the gentle rate of change during the programs; a privilege of having so much of one mans work to hand. Pre-grouping loco types are harder to find as numerous standard types take over their duties. Colour clips start to appear in an otherwise black and white presentation.

Volumes 5 and 6, 1961-1965

With the Beeching era looming there is no shortage of threatened subject material, added to which the pace of change starts to build. More and more uncommon colour footage appears and it is of a high standard too, how refreshing to see that someone took the time to go way off the beaten track to the far-flung outposts of the network. I've seen many railway programmes but none to rival this depth of coverage. Mark 1 coaches and standard loco types occupy a large percentage of these volumes but there is much other interest too.

Gradually, the cuts of this period become more apparent, starting with some bare signal posts but this is soon reinforced by views of disused/ lifted lines and sidings full

of redundant stock. We journey on to the point at which barely alive routes are represented by single tracks winding through the dereliction.

An enormous slice of our railway history has been captured in these six programmes. For anyone visiting this country for the first time and wishing to learn about the history of our railways, there surely can be no better way of achieving it in an evening. We have to be grateful to Cam for having the presence of mind to make so many quality recordings of so much that would otherwise have lived on only in the minds of those fortunate enough to have experienced it first hand. If you can find his films, buy them!

XX

Greenore Hotel update:

Sod's law suggests that as soon as something is published, extra information will come to light ... and so it comes to pass!:

Alan O'Rourke (H.M.R.S.) has contributed a photocopy of the article on *Carlingford Lough and Greenore* by the engineer James Barton which was published in the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers for 1876.

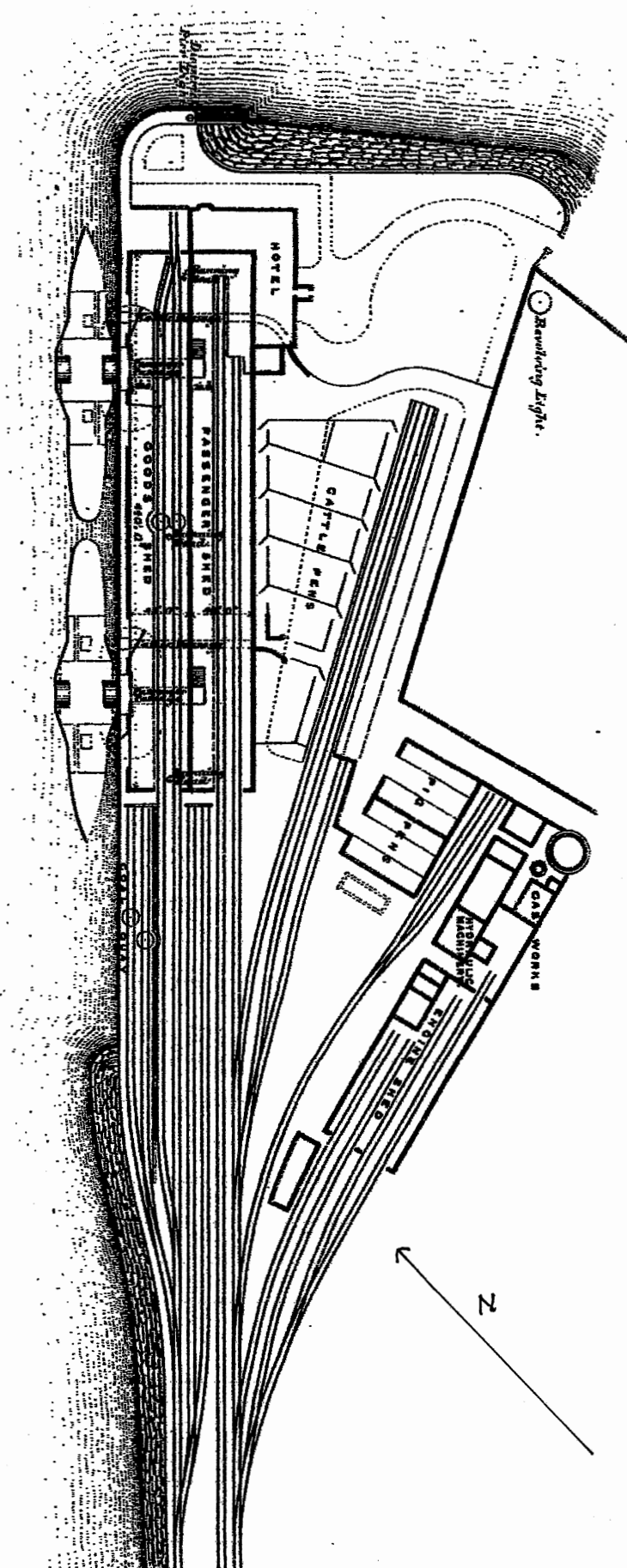
This includes interesting descriptions of the building of Greenore and the railway infrastructure, illustrated by several diagrams showing the apparatus for lifting the 100-ton blocks used; the lifting passenger stage; and a map and plan of Greenore which is reproduced here (next page).

You will see that the subway for passengers passed from the quay-side, under the station platforms, into the Hotel; while that for livestock also passed below platform level from the cattle/pig pens to the ships at the quayside. Tony Miles has described a visit to the station in 1952 (shortly after the railway had closed), when these access subways to the quayside were still visible, but so dark that he only ventured a short way in.

Also of interest is the hotel's wrapping-round the station passenger shed – a feature that is not obvious from contemporary photos of the Hotel.

A few weeks ago Norman and I were pleased to receive a visit from John Martin of Dundalk in the Irish Republic (he supplied us with much valuable information which went into the Hotel article in the last issue). One purpose of his visit to the U.K. was to see some of the records held by the London & North Western Railway Society – which of course is where Norman Lee comes in! We were able to show John the Barlow article of 1876 which he had not previously seen. A pleasant, evening ending in the Barrow Social Club after which Norman took our visitor back to his hotel in Crewe. I have also learned from another friend in the Republic – Fr. Richard Walsh – that the National Library of Ireland in Dublin holds a number of other Lawrence Collection photographs of the Greenore Hotel (see page 11 of our last issue); he also tells me that there are other photos of the Hotel in the Eason Collection which is also in the stock of that part of the National Library called the National Photographic Archive in the Temple Bar district. I intend to visit the Archive and investigate these photos when I go to Dublin next – and there are a number of interesting hostelrys nearby, prominent

PLAN OF GREENORE MARINE STATION.



among them being the well-known Porterhouse in Parliament Street; it brews its own beers. Should you visit it on foot (the only sensible way, since there is no car park!), try their 'Wrasslers Stout' – a far tastier (and stronger!) brew than that produced down the road at the Guinness Brewery.

Add to the "Notes and acknowledgements" on page 17 of the last issue:

Carlingford Lough and Greenore by James Barton. IN Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, 1876.

Railways in Ireland, part 2 by Martin Bairstow (Belfast & County Down; Northern Counties; Giants Causeway; Ballycastle; Dundalk Newry & Greenore; Belfast Tramways; Cross channel shipping). £14.95. ISBN 1 871 944 33 4.

National Library of Ireland web-site: www.nli.ie/

**DOWN THE LINE – A nostalgic journey along the old branch railway from
Waverton to Whitchurch, By R. M. Bevan.**

ISBN: 978-0-949001-35-1. Price £9.95 + £1.00 p&p.

Published by C.C. Publishing, Martins Lane, Hargrave, Chester, CH3 7RX.

A Brief Review by Tony Robinson.

One of the great things about getting an article into a national magazine is that it draws together like minded people who have interests common to the subject covered. My article in the March '07 edition of "Backtrack" attracted a number of kindly observations that served to both widen my knowledge of the Chester - Whitchurch line and at the same time introduce me to a number of individuals who had that common interest and even experience of the line. One such was Mark Bevan a local historian and publisher, who whilst admitting not to be a railway enthusiast, was infact engaged upon research of the villages and their inhabitants along the route of the line. I am delighted to say that the fruits of his research have now manifested themselves in a book that is both well presented and brimming with interesting information that until now probably was only known to a few local people.

The soft cover book has 105 pages and is essentially an annotated photographic album. Taking the route of the erstwhile railway as its spine, it covers a multitude of subjects from activities along the line and its stations and staff to the people who used it and their homes, farms and in some cases their halls of grandeur. For us railway buffs there is interesting coverage of the local railway builder and engineer Thomas Brassey of Bulkeley Grange, other perhaps more well known places covered include Bolesworth, Broxton Upper and Lower Halls, Carden Hall, Edge Hall, Cholmondeley and Peckforton Castles, etc., etc. The local Cheshire cheese making industry has been detailed as never before along with its essential rail services. Some enlightening information about the copper mining around Bickerton makes interesting reading for those of us who always considered some of the photographs adorning the walls of the "Coppermine" public house to be somewhat "fanciful"!

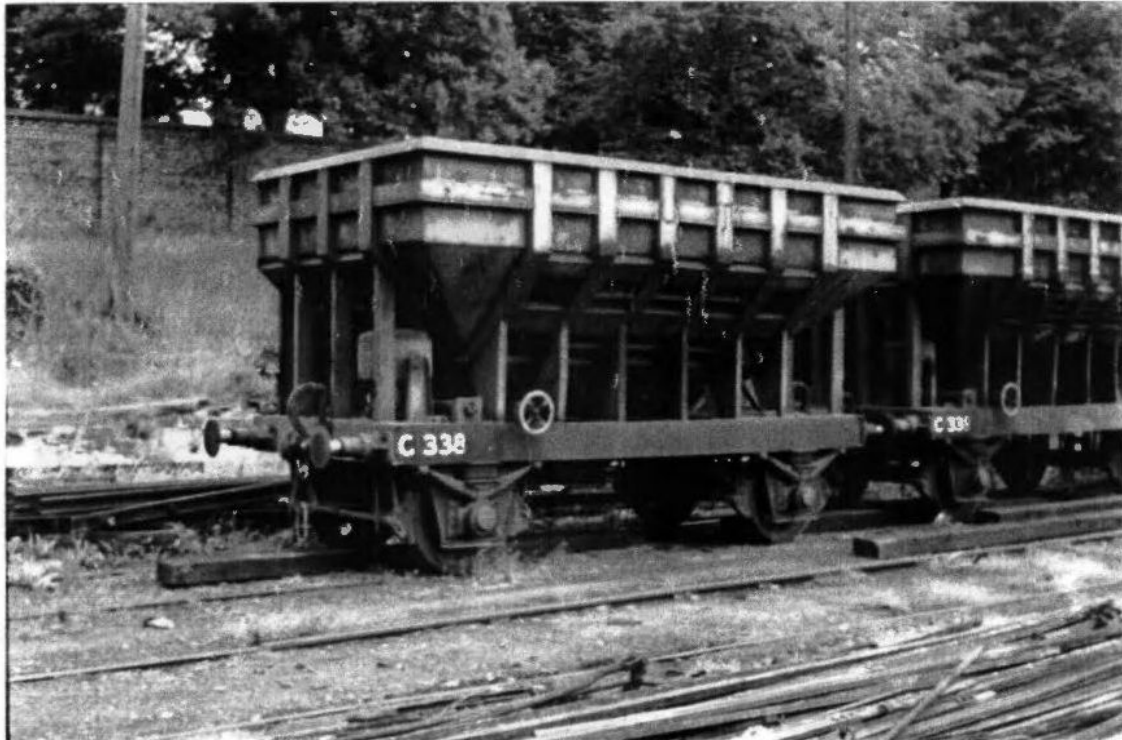
The villages of Tattenhall & Malpas are covered in some detail as are the Hamlets of Burwardsley, Harthill and Tushingham. As one would expect Whitchurch is covered in great detail and many hitherto unknown facts have emerged both of the town, its people and its erstwhile importance as a canal and railway route centre.

All in all for anyone who values our local heritage, this book is a must, photographic quality understandably is in some of the more ancient views below par but generally it is very good and the work represents excellent value for money.

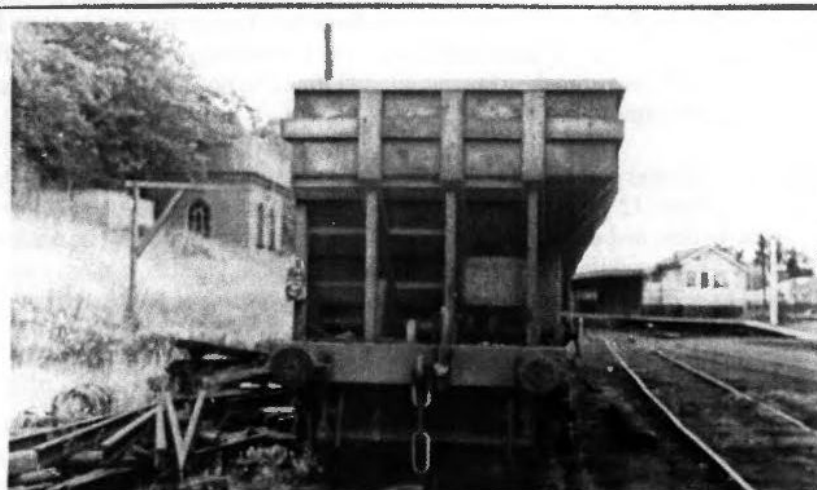
A Wrexham area coal merchant's Private Owner 7-plank wagon, built in 1903, by the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company. Load was 10 tons, and the livery 'chocolate with red band, Letters white shaded black'. Because of the photographic emulsions used in those days, it is difficult to differentiate red colours from black and darker tones like chocolate, in black/white photographs, but I think the red band seems to be on the second plank from the top. It has end, side and (presumably) bottom doors.



An odd-shaped wagon, by David Goodwin



On one visit to Northern Ireland in the 1970s, I was intrigued to come across a short rake of odd-looking wagons in a siding at Lisburn station on the Belfast-Dublin main line. I took several photographs here, and a few more when I found others in another siding (I think it was at Antrim). I later discovered that they had been built by Cravens of Sheffield in 1966, specifically for the job of moving spoil from a quarry at Magheramorne (near Larne) to a site of motorway construction just north of Belfast, on the shore of Belfast Lough. This work started on 5 December 1966.





The wagons were originally numbered from 'M1' upwards, and sported a distinctive pale blue livery. I can't say they looked anything but 'dirt coloured' when I saw them ten years after they had started work; the running numbers had been changed by then. These lop-sided hoppers were obviously built for unloading on one side (the Belfast Lough side) only, as you can see from the photograph above; I imagine that this feature must have seriously restricted their use once the motorway work was finished. In traffic, they ran in a rake of 20 wagons, with an ex-LMS/NCC 2-6-4 tank engine at each end, and they were time-tabled to do 11 trips each week-day. This service represents the last regular use of steam locomotives in the British Isles, and lasted until 1969.

Notes:

The N.I.R. spoil trains by P.D.Gray. IN *Railway World*, January 1969.

Paragraphs in the *Irish Railway Record Society Journal* IN Oct.1966 and Feb.1967 issues.

"Lion" excerpt

This is a reprint of the Richard Thwaites's editorial from the Autumn 2007 issue of "Lion" – the newsletter of the Liverpool Model Railway Society, and we thank him for permission to copy it: a not untypical example of troubles with regard to club-rooms that commonly afflict model railway clubs. We in B.M.R.G. have only a short history when compared with the Liverpool club, but there is no law that says we won't in future face similar problems!

"As I sat down to write this editorial it suddenly struck me that this edition was Number 50; yes, number 50. At a rough guess that's about 12 years since our newsletter has been published in this form. I hope that the efforts of the writers and of course the editors have been appreciated by its readers I –hope that it has – because I have certainly enjoyed producing it. Various readers, not only in our club, but countrywide have thanked me for the efforts that have been made to present a newsletter that is interesting, informative and helpful. I like to think that the name of the Liverpool Model Railway Society is presented in its pages to the outside world in a good light. Another anniversary this year is of course the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Society. We have survived many problems over the years. The idea of the club started in a night school class in Gateacre Comprehensive School, and we then started to meet in hotels and the Friends Meeting House in the city centre. Our efforts to find a 'home' nearly had our first club rooms in Lord Street however the

rent proved too costly; where have we heard that before? In 1983 we found a suitable place in the Gregson Institute and Museum in Garmoye Road, Wavertree. Actually it was in two rooms one was the disused chemical labs and the other was a room which contained a Dinghy being constructed by the local Sea Ranger group. We then moved on to the station house at Mersey Road station on the Northern Line. There we repaired and decorated the rooms and just when had finished a phone call informed me that there had been a fire and a lot of our hard work had been destroyed. So we started again from square one and eventually had the rooms back to being a nice and comfortable club. Then Railtrack, our landlords, increased our rent to an unacceptable level to us and we were forced to move out for a short while whilst we found other accommodation. We spent six months in the Gallery of my Church, St Peters Methodist in High Park Street and then 11 years ago Jimmy found us club-rooms in the redundant social club which had belonged to the Blessed Sacrament Church in Chapel Avenue, Walton. (complete with a few samples behind the bar about which nothing more will be said). A year ago we were forced to vacate there and now we find ourselves in the School Rooms at County Methodist Church. Who knows what the future will bring - lets hope that whatever happens the Liverpool Model Railway Society will survive and conquer any problems that rear their heads, as they have in the past."

Letter to the Editor

(e-mail from Dave Millward):

"Hello all, As a follow-up to the club magazine article covering the 'Bare Metal' plastic scriber and cutter of several issues ago [No.6, June 2006; reprinted below] I can confirm that this is a superb tool. Have a look at the end detail of the fruit Ds, the grooves in the planking have been continued (once the moulded tail lamp brackets have been removed) so realistically that it is hard to tell that they aren't the original detail. Also, the fine cutting tip is perfect for removing plastic swarf from corners and recesses."

Workshop notes, no.9

I met up with Dave Millward from Leek at our clubrooms recently, and he was using a tool similar (in effect) to the Olfa 'Scrawker'. I asked Dave for details

"You requested information on the cutting scriber for the Barrowmore magazine -

The tool is made by Bare Metal, is available from Hannants of Lowestoft (tel.01502 517444) at a price of approx £12 (inc p&p) [also - cheaper - from other retailers - try the Internet]. Its proper title is a plastic cutting scriber. The specially shaped tip cuts into the plastic and guides the cut material away as the tool is drawn across plastic sheet, producing a very neat groove. Pressing on harder removes more plastic and produces a deeper, wider groove. I have used it to reproduce the gap across the top of the Class 45 and 46 ('Peak') nose, which Bachmann forgot to do. If you need any more information, just ask. [His details are on our 'contacts' list - Ed.].
Regards - Dave"

.....

Accident at Chester General station, July 1949

CHESTER (London Midland Region), 4th July [1949].—In daylight and clear weather, a passenger train was entering the station under a calling-on signal when it collided at about 10 m.p.h. with the rear of another passenger train which was on the point of leaving the platform. There was no derailment and damage was slight, but 43 passengers and 7 railway servants sustained minor injuries. The driver of the incoming train was held responsible. He had been stopped at the home signal for about four minutes before the calling-on arm was lowered, but he was moving too fast to stop in

time when he saw the rear of the train ahead at short range; the view from his side of the footplate was restricted by curvature, but it was ample from the other side. Exemption from Absolute Block is essential to prevent the accumulation of delays at this busy station and no change in the method of working was recommended.

Note This is an excerpt from *Accidents which occurred on the railways of Great Britain during the year 1949*, H.M.S.O., 1950.



This photograph (ref. LNWRS LS 268) was found by Norman Lee, the London & North Western Railway Society photographic officer, in a collection of official L.N.W.R. photos. It is thought to show a scene at Balderton on the Great Western's line from Chester to Shrewsbury, in about 1910. A miniature railway ran from Eaton Hall to its terminus and an interchange with the standard gauge at Balderton, just a few miles south-west of Chester. But what an official L.N.W.R. photographer was doing in Western territory, I don't know!

Editor's page

The **Historical Model Railway Society (H.M.R.S.)** is, in the Editor's opinion, one of the most influential and worth-while bodies serving our hobby. It is run by volunteers, and of great assistance to anyone researching any railway in the British Isles. There are separate research societies serving parts of the country (e.g. the Welsh Railways Research Circle, the Irish Railway Record Society), but the H.M.R.S. with its large membership allied to a system for distributing queries to an appropriate expert, and a massive photographic archive is the first port of call for any researcher. Prominent

providers of rolling stock photos invaluable to modellers of the 1977 scene include H.M.R.S. members Paul Bartlett and Dave Larkin. Of course, any voluntary society is dependent on enough people putting themselves forward to do the necessary jobs – and this is where I come the point of this editorial: the North West Area Group organiser post is vacant, and has been since I retired from it at the beginning of 2008. The job is not onerous – it mainly involves arranging speakers for local meetings – please ask for details if you could be interested.

Richard O recently directed my attention to a recently opened model shop in Chester: it



Vicars Cross Road, Vicars Cross
Chester CH3 5NL
01244 311442
sales@eamodels.co.uk
www.eamodels.co.uk

Chester's premier model centre

is situated just a few yards towards the city centre from the Garden Lane traffic lights on Vicars Cross Road. I have driven past it on numerous occasions since it opened last September without noticing it! I got round to visiting the shop, and found an establishment selling radio-controlled planes, cars and boats as well as Bachmann, Hornby and other model railway lines. They also stock Woodland

Scenics, Evergreen plastics, Tamiya and Humbrol paints, and modellers' small hand-tools. They had a few Bachmann wagons on display, but not a VBA or VDA which they were happy to order for me. There is (free) parking outside the shop, so it is probably worth giving them a ring (phone and e-mail on card above) when you want something.

Recent books

Down the line: a nostalgic journey along the old branch railway from Waverton to Whitchurch by R.M.Bevan. C.C. Publishing (Chester), 2007. £9.95. ISBN 0 949001 35 1.

Railways in Ireland, part 1 by Martin Bairstow (Great Northern, SL&NC, Lough Swilly, County Donegal, Cavan & Leitrim, Clogher Valley, Castlederg & Victoria Bridge). £13.95. ISBN 1 871944 31 7.

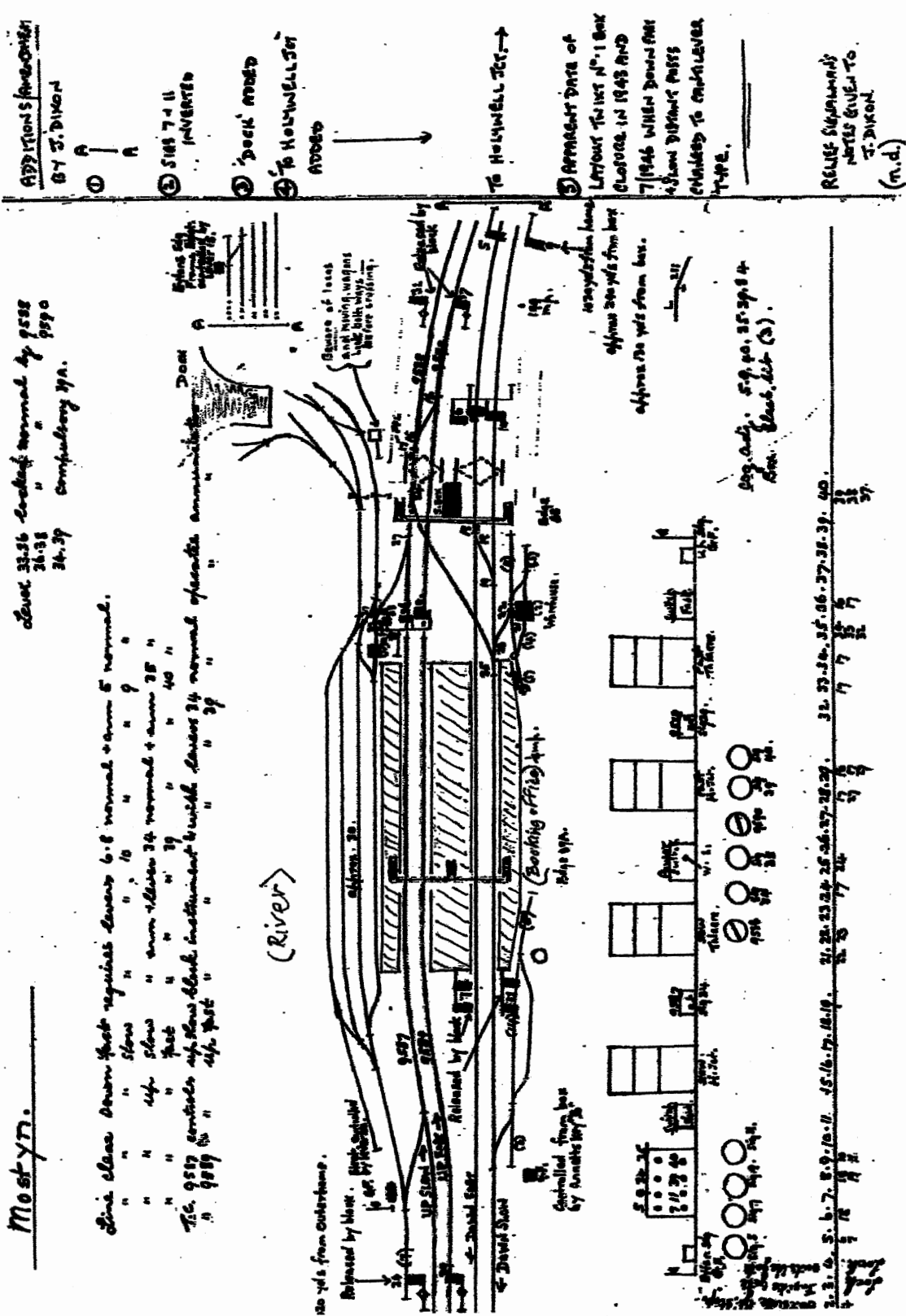
Railways in Ireland, part 2 by Martin Bairstow (Belfast & County Down; Northern Counties; Giants Causeway; Ballycastle; Dundalk Newry & Greenore; Belfast Tramways; Cross channel shipping). £14.95. ISBN 1 871 944 33 4.

Wagons of the middle British Railways era: a pictorial study of the 1955-1961 period by David Larkin. Kestrel Railway Books, 2007. £14. ISBN 1 905505 06 7.

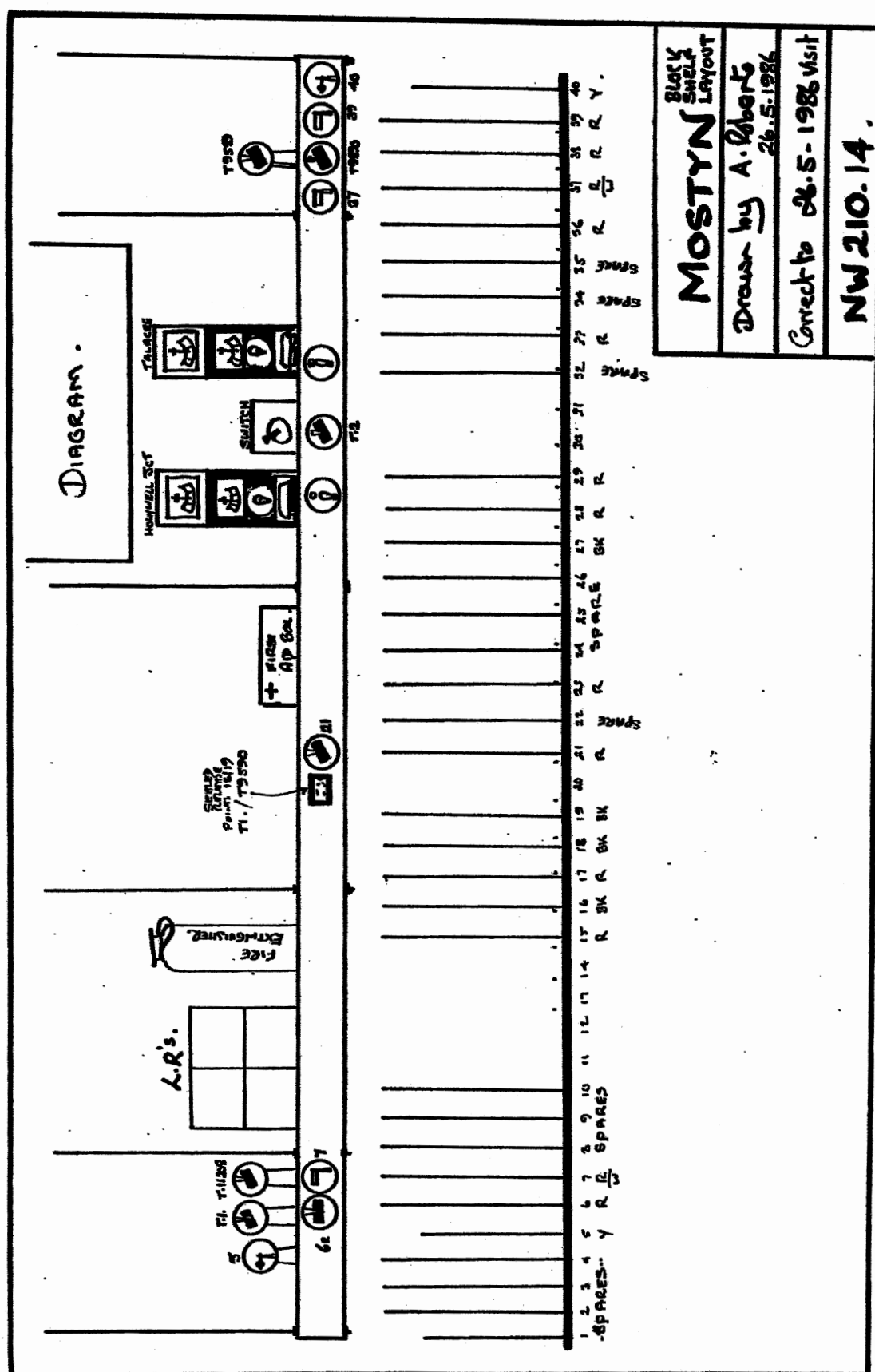
Merseyside: the Indian summer (vol.1 – Return to Woodside; vol.2 – Return to Pier Head) by Cedric Greenwood. Silver Link, 2007. £18.99, £19.99. ISBNs 1 85794 272 9 and 1 85794 273 6.

LNER wagons, vol.2: LNER north-eastern area (ex-H&B, ex-NE, ex-M&GN wagons absorbed by the LNER) by Peter Tatlow. Wild Swan, 2007. £35.00. ISBN 1 905184 34 7.

Private owner wagons: a sixth collection by Keith Turton. Lightmoor, 2007. £21.00. ISBN 1 899889 25 9.



This block shelf layout diagram of Mostyn S.C. in 1986 is by Alan Roberts of Abergele.



4377 passes the junction at Saltney on a fine day in August 1957 with a goods train bound for the WR



line. Photograph by Sid Wainwright of Blacon.

Birkenhead as a coaching centre in the 1800s

Extracted and edited by Eric Power from H.K.Aspinall's "Birkenhead and its surroundings" (1903)

The "Hirondelle" and the "Hibernia"

Early Birkenhead was a great coaching centre, as also were Rock Ferry, Eastham and Chester. A regular service of mail coaches, running to and from North Wales and the Midland counties, was maintained. Handsome four-horse coaches regularly left Woodside ferry hotel and the old Birkenhead ferry hotel. Small two-horse coaches ran between Birkenhead and Chester, calling at many Wirral villages en route.

The traffic for those days was really wonderful: two special coaches, splendidly equipped, ran in opposition and raced from Birkenhead to Cheltenham, a distance of 120 miles, in about 12 hours. This was delightful travelling.

The old roadside inns in Bromboro' and Sutton used to be well-known stopping place for travellers. Coaches changed horses at Sutton half-way house, between Chester and

Birkenhead. The usual stage run before horses were changed was from seven to ten miles, according to the condition of the roads. In fast coaches, the horses frequently galloped, especially the racing coaches. Most of the teams were highly bred horses: there were trotting teams and galloping teams. The pace was always good, and accidents were very rare.

Each coach had its guard, and on the Royal Mail coaches, coachman and guard dressed in scarlet coats and white hats. On entering the town or village, the guards always played the favourite tunes of the day on the cornopean [an old name for a cornet], probably announcing their arrival. On night journeys, the Royal Mail coach guards were armed with pistols.

The old stage-coachmen were held by the travelling public in great respect. The work was hard, but most invigorating, while the drivers and guards of the leading coaches were a superior class of men. Connected with the "Hirondelle", Jordan of Shrewsbury and Leake of Wem were giant coachmen: splendid drivers indeed!

The three noted coachmen in Birkenhead district were old Herbert, Henry Herbert his son, and Mathews. The last named was killed by the falling of a bridge at Chester. It was a new bridge at the Roodee for carrying the Great Western Railway over the river. Mathews' coach had just been placed on the road for North Wales, and his passengers were carried by the Birkenhead & Chester, and the Chester & Shrewsbury Railway to Llangollen Road station where the coach met them to continue the journey through North Wales. The bridge had not long been completed. It was built on cast-iron girders, a principle never since adopted: wrought iron is always now used. The train had only passed a few yards on to the bridge when the girders broke, and down fell the train into the river. Many passengers were injured and several killed; amongst the latter was poor Mathews the coachman. I saw the wreck a few days after the accident, and a sad sight it was. [Editor's note: this accident was on 24 May 1847. The official accident report gives the spelling of the coachman's name as 'Matthews', and five people (including the fireman) were killed and 16 injured: only three (including the engine driver) were uninjured. The bridge was actually built for the Chester & Holyhead Railway – the Chester & Shrewsbury had negotiated running powers over the track from Chester to Saltney Junction. We hope to publish an article on the accident in a future issue.]

Well I remember returning from school [in Bridgnorth] through Wrexham. The "Hirondelle" changed horses at the Wynnstay Arms Hotel. We had been racing with the "Hibernia" from Shrewsbury. There we only a few minutes between us. Our fresh horses were waiting at the hotel door. Almost before the coach stopped, our traces were loosed, horses changed, and in less than two minutes, we were off on our way through Rossett to Chester. All that distance we galloped, the "Hibernia" close behind. We ran into Chester. In two minutes, we were off again. We stopped at the White Lion to change horses, while the "Hibernia" changed at the Albion. We galloped to Backford. The coachman thought he had a few minutes to spare, so we asked for refreshments. Before we could get them, a shout was raised that the "Hibernia" was coming. Our coachman at once drew across the road, the leading horses' heads in one hedge and the back of the coach in the other. The opposition could not pass. Such a volley of abuse and loud language! Peace was eventually restored by drinks all round.

Turnpike roads in the coaching days

Telford's turnpike road, between Shrewsbury and Holyhead via Chester, used to be considered the finest in the world. The Menai Suspension Bridge was built in connection with this road; and to this day it is one of the most elegant structures to be found. I have heard that, when the first chain was being passed across the Straits, Telford was in such a state of mental excitement, lest any hitch should occur, that he sat in a little cottage on the shore with a loaded pistol before him, to be used in the event of failure. Happily, success crowned his efforts, and placed Telford in the front rank of engineers.

One night a sad accident occurred at the corner of a street, now the site of Laird's offices, close to the ferry. In turning the corner, a sharp one, the "Hirondelle" was upset, and several passengers were thrown against the iron railings. Some were very much hurt, but all eventually recovered. This was the only accident I ever heard of connected with the "Hirondelle".

The most notable coach in Wirral was old Herbert's "Umpire", a light pair-horse coach, which ran between Birkenhead and Chester via Bebington, Bromborough, Eastham village, and Sutton; leaving Woodside Hotel at 10a.m., arriving at Chester at 12noon; returning at 5p.m. and arriving at Woodside at 7p.m. This was good travelling, eight miles an hour; horses were changed at Sutton each way. Old Herbert's son, Henry, had a four-horse coach which ran to Shrewsbury: horses were changed every seven to ten miles.

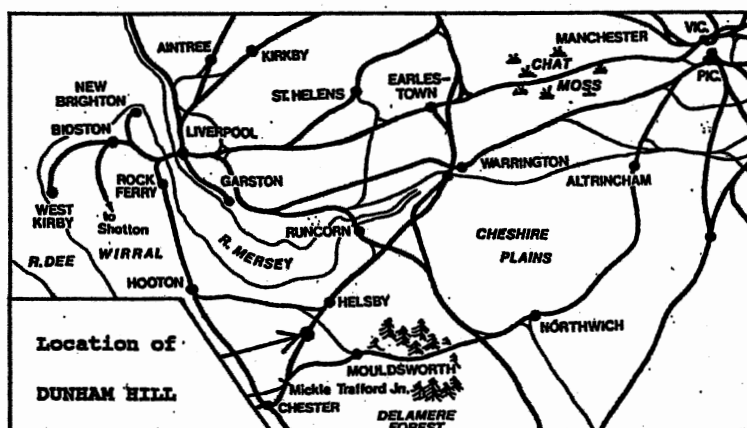
Notes:

Birkenhead and its surroundings by H.K.Aspinall. 1903.

Report ... on the fatal accident on 24th May 1847 ... on the Chester & Holyhead Railway by the Board of Trade Commissioners of Railways. H.M.S.O., 1847.

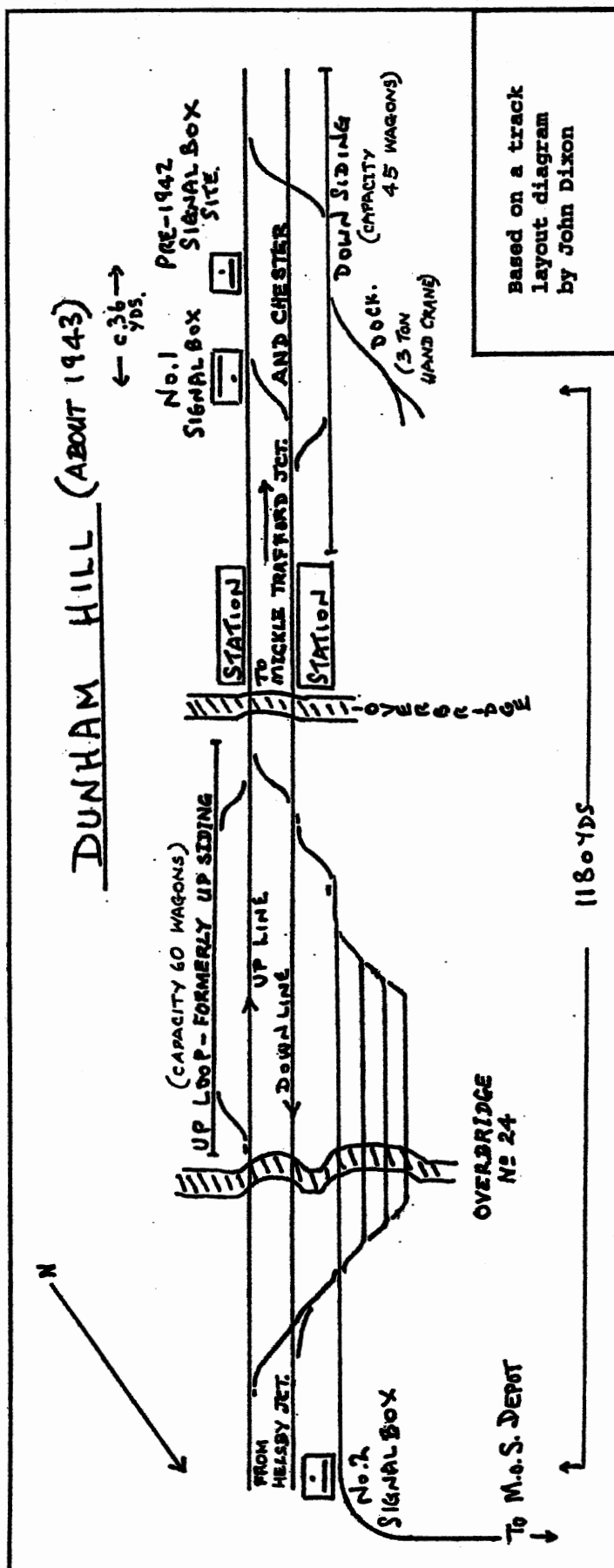
Dunham Hill no.2 signal box

by David Goodwin



IF YOU have ever travelled by train between Chester and Helsby, you may have noticed a derelict signal box on the west side of the line, about five miles out of Chester and some two miles short of Helsby [4]. The line here is relatively flat (the gradient varies between 1:660 rising and

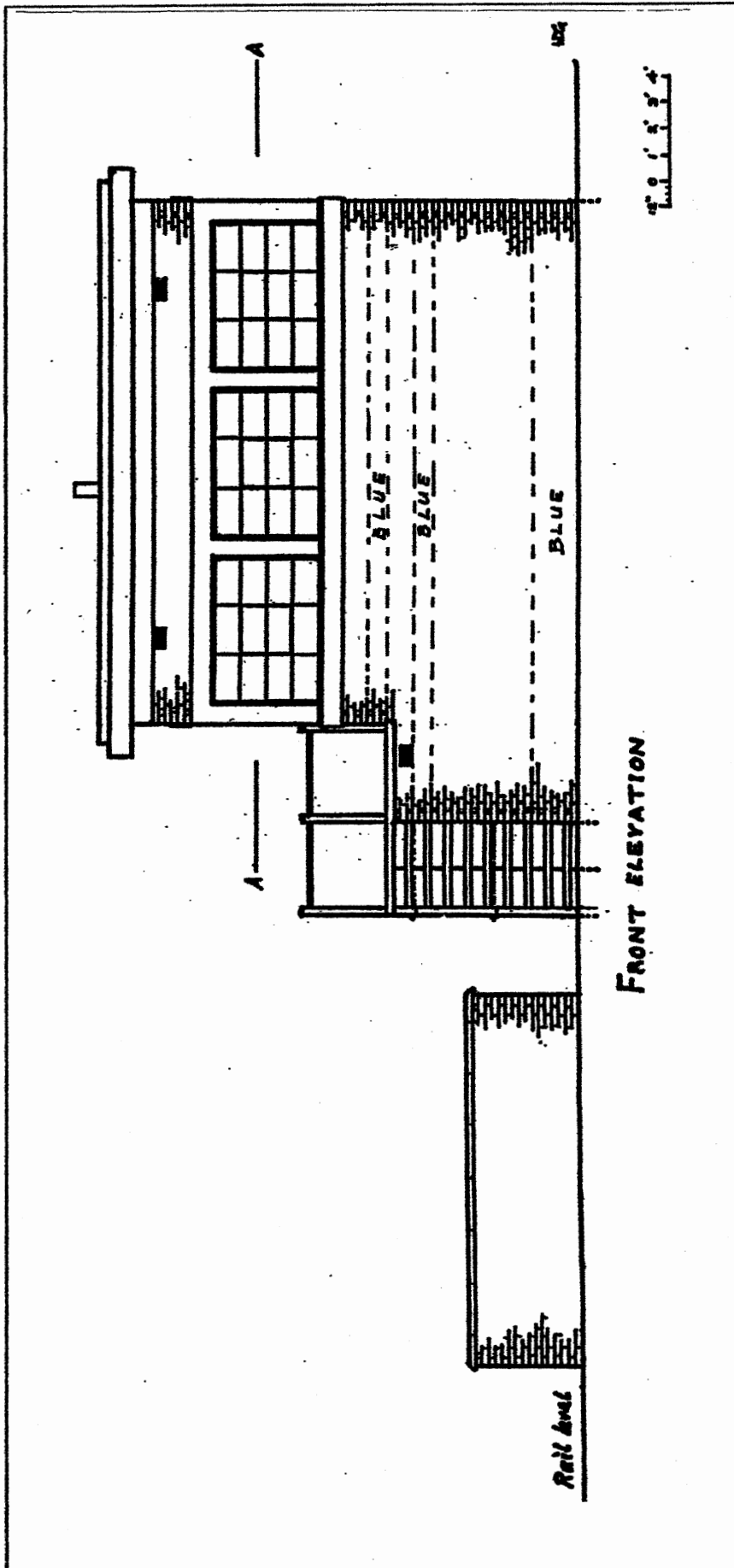
1:211 falling) and straight, and the DMUs which are mostly used on the line nowadays are normally moving quite fast at this point; consequently, a glimpse of the box is all



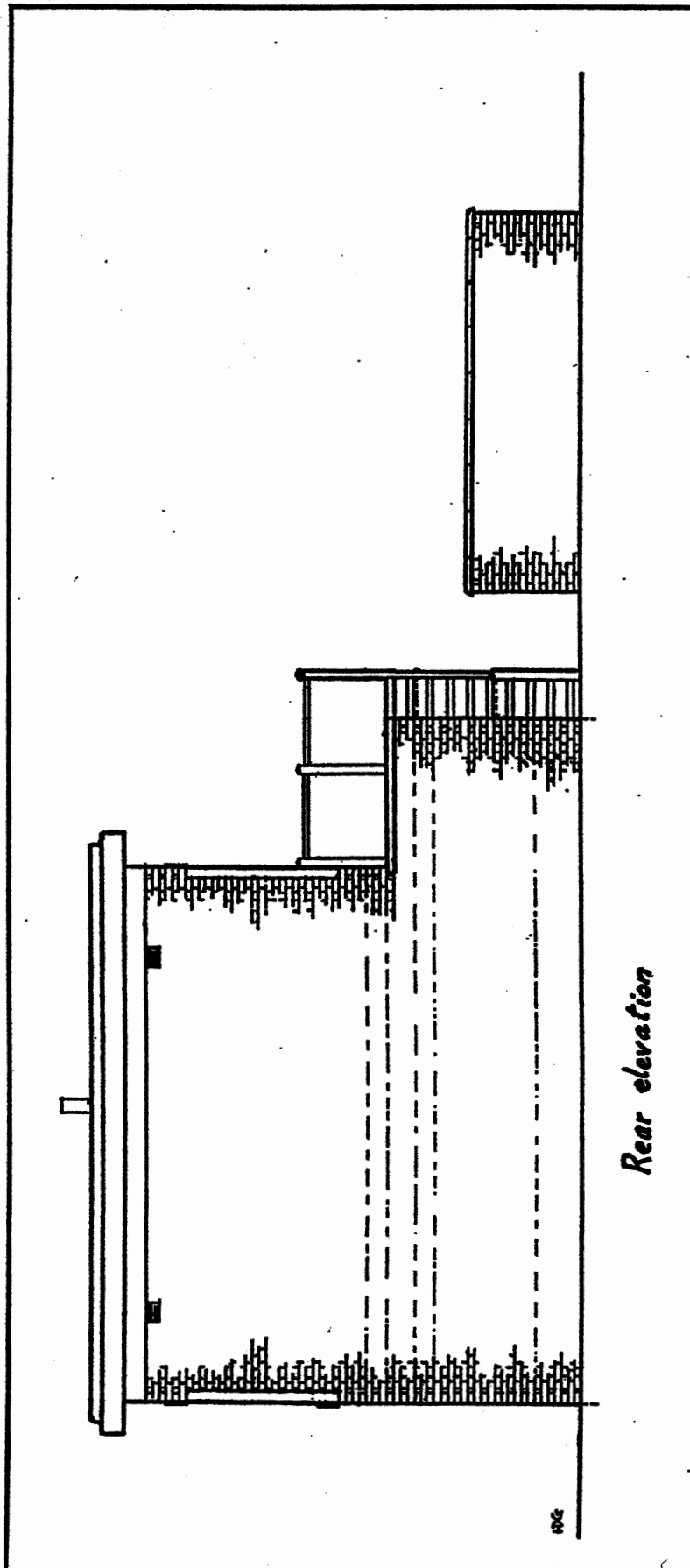
that you get. You may have wondered vaguely why there was a signal box here at all — Dunham Hill station, which closed in 1952, is about three-quarters of a mile away, and anyway had its own box. Nowadays there is virtually no sign of any junction or sidings nearby.

But things were different 40-odd years ago, when the box was built: the early years of World War 2 saw the construction by the Ministry of Supply of a large ammunition explosives depot on the flat marshy land to the north-west of the rural village of Dunham-on-the-Hill. Rail access to the site was from sidings (the longest of the four sidings had a capacity for 60 wagons) which ran for half a mile alongside the joint LMS/GWR line, before branching off in a north-westerly direction to the various storage sheds and magazines. In all, there was over five miles of track within the depot, and motive power within the site was provided by four-wheel diesel mechanical shunters.

So the signal box was built in early 1942 (by the contracting firm of Cartwright Massey from Moore near Warrington) at the same time as the depot. The design, by H.E.Morgan was to Air



Raid Precautions specifications. Consequently, the boxes became known as 'ARP' signal boxes. (Similar local boxes were Dunham Hill No.1, Acton Grange, Capenhurst, Mollington, Mold, Mold Junction No.4, Hope & Penyffordd, Sefton Junction, Edge Hill No.2; and among those ARP boxes still in use, Lime Street, and Runcorn.) Basically, the structure had to resist damage – from direct hits by incendiary devices of up to 1kg, and from blasts from larger bombs landing nearby. Therefore, there was very little timber in the fabric and maximum use was made of pre-cast concrete components in standardised



design/sizes; and there were few openings in the walls of the locking room [1], [2], [3]. Lighting in Dunham Hill No.2 was by oil lamps, heating by a 'Nelson' stove, and drinking water had to be taken to the box in 2-gallon cans. It is reported to have had 16 levers in use (out of a total of probably 20).

Over 50 signal boxes to these flexible standards were built by the LMS. The other railway companies had their own designs to ARP standards of course. But the inherent short-term nature of many of their uses (associated with war-time factories, depots, and such like) made many of them redundant soon after the war. Such was the case at Dunham Hill and a period of great activity in the 1940s was followed by a lengthy running-down period which culminated in final closure of the depot at the end of 1960, and the lifting of the track. The No. 2 box itself was closed down temporarily in 1946 (only opened every so often for maintenance), and (cont'd on p 30...)



Dunham Hill No.2, photographed in March 1990; looking to the west.



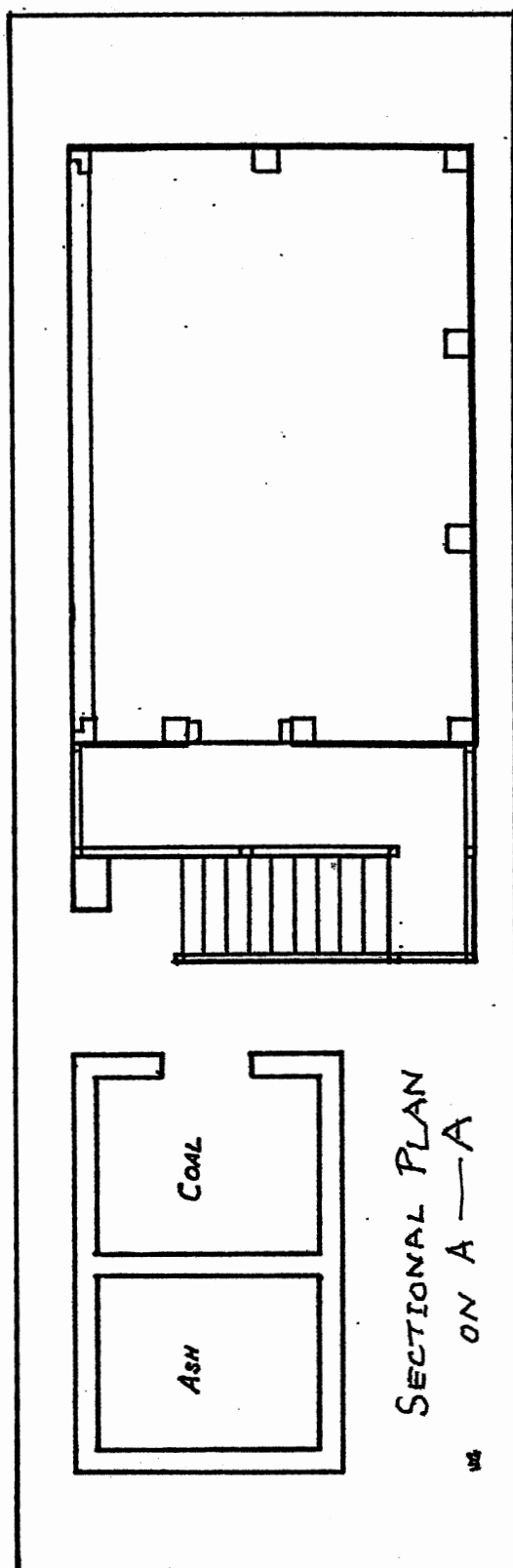
...looking north.



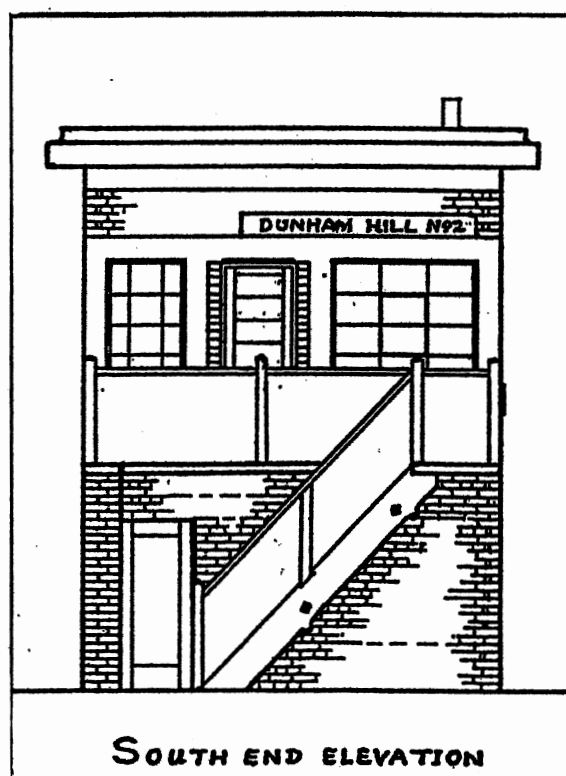
*...also looking north – a closer view
of the underneath of the staircase*



...and looking east.



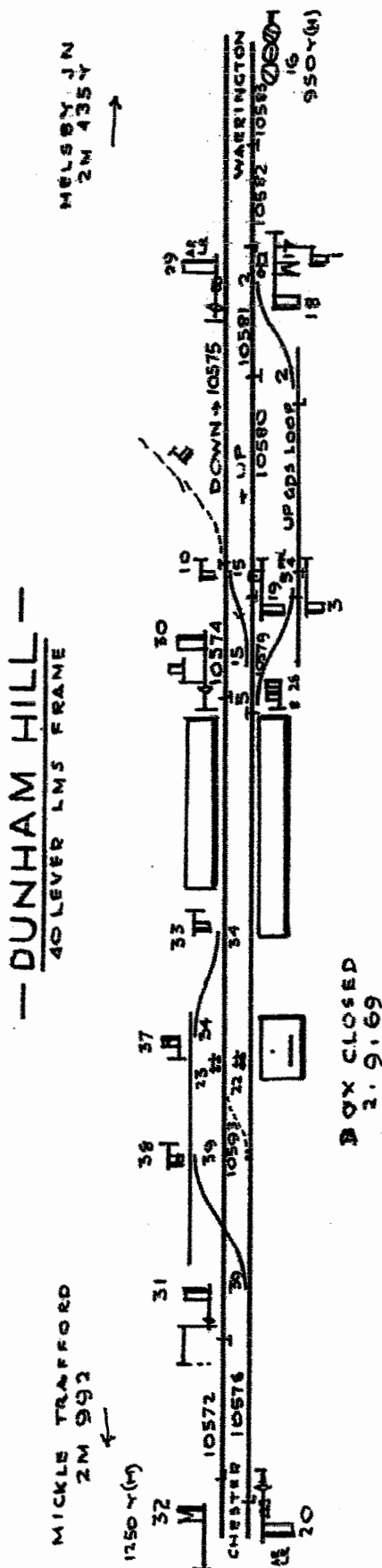
then completely on 25 November 1951, after being out-of-use for some time previously (the notice of official closure said it would be 'taken away' — it was still there when I drove past in October 2005!); it controlled access to the sidings at the Helsby end (see the track diagram). Access to the Chester end of the sidings was controlled by Dunham Hill No.1 — renamed 'Dunham Hill' after the No.2 box was closed.



A note on Dunham Hill and Dunham Hill No.1 signal boxes

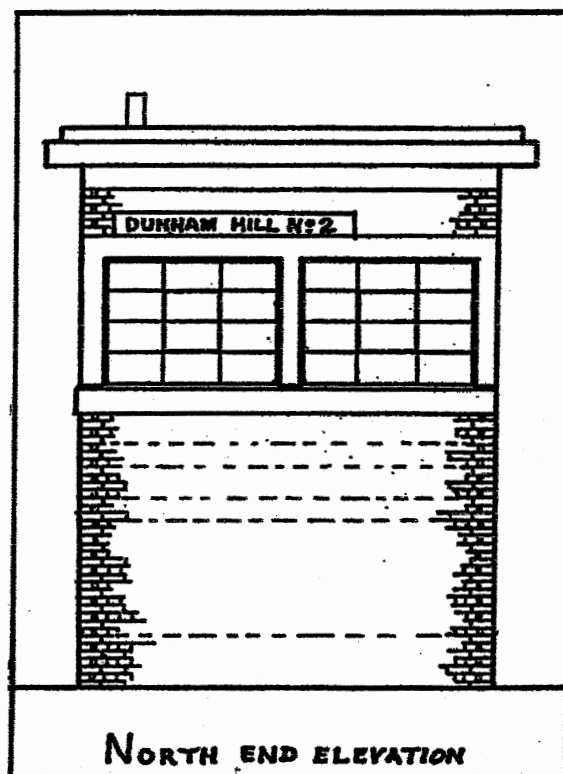
The first box at Dunham Hill, on the 'up' side, to the south of the station platforms, was probably built by Saxby & Farmer in 1873: it controlled leads into the down siding (45 wagons capacity), up siding (60

wagons capacity) plus a cross-over and ground-frame release for the up siding. This box is estimated to have had 18 levers in use. It was replaced in 1942/43 by the erection of two ARP-style boxes: No.1 was built about 36 yards to the north of the 1873 box



and controlled the station end of the MoS sidings (the up siding was later made into a loop). This No.1 box had a 40-lever frame in rear of the box. The main subject of this article – Dunham Hill No.2 – had a smaller frame (20 levers) also in rear of the box, and controlled the Helsby end of the sidings. After No.2 box closed, the up loop was worked from No.1 box by motorising the points at the Helsby end (too far away from the box for mechanical operation). The station closed to passenger traffic in April 1952, and the signal box itself in September 1969, and later demolished. Of course there were many turnouts within the MoS depot, but these were hand-operated by the second-man on the locomotive.

Although there are very few 'ARP' boxes left in use, they are reputed to be very difficult to demolish. Indeed, this example at Dunham Hill seems almost to have been vandal-proof. You can perhaps see from the photos (taken in March 1990) that more than 50 years of disuse have left this building relatively unscathed.



Note on the drawings

These are to a scale of 4mm:1ft (1:76 ratio), and were made using known standard LMS dimensions together with photographs of the derelict signal box. Some features can only be guessed at: for instance, there are now no window-frames or doors left, so I have had to decide that the most commonly-used sort were fitted – i.e. in the case of window-frames, galvanised steel with a central sliding section. Similarly, there is no clue left as to items like rain-water drainage pipes, or the capping on the coal/ash bunker walls. The name-boards are also only approximate: one can just be made out in the background of a late-1940s photograph. Constructional materials were mostly red (common) brick and reinforced concrete. The roof was bitumen/felt covered concrete. Floors, steps, railings, etc. were also concrete. The outside brickwork was cement-rendered over the top three courses. ‘Blue’ (engineering) brick was used as shown on the drawings.

Paintwork colours were probably: (LMS) light stone window frames and brown doors; (BR) light biscuit for window frames with gulf red doors. The name-board would most likely have had white letters on a brown or gulf red background.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to many people who provided information, among whom are: John Dixon, Richard Foster, Frank Jenkins, Norman Lee, Robin Peover, Bill Rear, Martin Wynne, and many former employees of the MoS depot.

References

1. *A pictorial record of LMS signals* by L. G. Warburton. OPC, 1972. Includes a useful drawing on p53.
2. *A pictorial record of LMS architecture* by R. Anderson and G. Fox. OPC, 1981. ISBN 086093 083 1.
3. *The signal box* by the Signalling Study Group. OPC, 1986. ISBN 0 86093 224 9. Includes information on other railway companies in addition to the LMS.
4. Ordnance Survey 25" Map (1962 revision) sheet No. SJ4773 shows the position of the box; its grid reference is SJ473735.
5. This is an enlarged version of an article first printed in "Railway Modeller" in December 1990.

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