

ISSN 1745-9842

Barrowmore Model Railway Journal



Number 22

March 2010

Published on behalf of Barrowmore Model Railway Group by the Honorary Editor:
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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 2010, and contributions should get to the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1 May 2010.

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Copies of this magazine are also available to non-members: a cheque for £7 (payable to 'Barrowmore Model Railway Group') will provide the next four issues, posted direct to your home. Send your details and cheque to the Editor at the above address.

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The **cover illustration** for this issue is a photograph of Muine Bheag station, on the Dublin (Heuston) to Waterford line in what we would describe as the 'south midlands' of Ireland, on 8 May 2009. This small town in County Carlow (hardly more than a village – with a population of about 2,500 it is a similar size to Saughall) was previously known as 'Bagenalstown'; the station was opened on 24 July 1848, was closed to goods traffic in 1976, and reverted to the Irish form of the name in 1988. That the station is there, and still open for substantial passenger traffic is a symptom of the importance that the government of the Irish Republic places on rail passenger traffic. By contrast, Saughall station was allowed to close over sixty years ago, and Chester – Dee Marsh Junction railway line itself some thirty years later.

Forthcoming events

(2010)

20 Mar. 2010: 7mm running track (American), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

20/21 Mar. 2010: Nottingham show

23 Mar. 2010: "The Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley Railway": talk by Bob Miller to HMRS at the White Lion, Bolton Street, Bury. (Contact Bob Miller or the Editor for more information).

27/28 Mar. 2010: Alexandra Palace show ("Mostyn" is appearing).

17 Apr. 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
17/18 Apr. 2010: S4 North, Wakefield.
24/25 Apr. 2010: Epsom show ("Johnstown Road" is appearing).
1 & 2 May 2010: Liverpool M.R.S. show.
22 May 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
12/13 Jun. 2010: Chatham show ("Mostyn" is appearing).
26 Jun. 2010: 7mm running track (American), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
10 Jul. 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
7 Aug. 2010: 7mm running track (American), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
21 Aug. 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
25/26 Sep. 2010: Scaleforum, Leatherhead ("Mostyn" is appearing).
9 Oct. 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
30 Oct. 2010: 7mm running track (American), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
20 Nov. 2010: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
4 Dec. 2010: 7mm running track (American), Llanbedr (see Editor for details).
11/12 Dec. 2010: Wigan show.

(2011)

May 2011: ExpoEM, Bracknell ("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)

"Mostyn" at Wigan – a cautionary tale of the effects of an ambitious stock programme, sleep deprivation and alcohol by Gavin Liddiard and Richard Oldfield

It's not often that you return from a weekend at an exhibition with only the vaguest of recollections of what took place. Wigan 2009 was our second outing with "Mostyn" in partly-extended form and certainly the most complex operational challenge we have ever faced. How did this arise?

Well, it all started back in the Summer when, released from the burdens of building the extension boards and having returned from Perth, the "Mostyn" stock-builders embarked on a general stock-building frenzy. Ambitious new projects were started, some older projects received fresh impetus and some of the old chestnuts remained unloved and gathering dust in forgotten corners. Time moved on and we reached Autumn still full of enthusiasm but with nothing finished. Nearly 50 vehicles had been started in some way and a lot of progress was being made but we lacked the focus of a clear deadline to push stock through to completion. A group of us then decided that there was an opportunity to beat our all-time record for the amount of new stock introduced at one exhibition if we got our act together. The ball started rolling.

At the start of December, only two weeks before Wigan, the rate of work had dramatically increased and rewards were beginning to be seen. We now had one completely finished wagon! – a rather nice ex-ironstone hopper in stone traffic from Penmaenmawr quarry based on the kit which was launched by 51L Models following a lot of input from BMRG. We did also have over forty other vehicles, most of which were in the final straight but some were still trailing behind and a couple had fallen at fences along the way.

That rather nice Scottish gentleman, Iain Kirk, then made his customary contribution with two scabby departmental opens to bring the tally to three. We entered the final week before Wigan with another thirty-nine vehicles now lettered courtesy of some speedy transfer work with our ALPS printer followed by some high-pressure lettering in a marathon two-day session. The total then climbed to 12 completed vehicles as 3 Lowfits, 2 ex-LMS Fish Vans, 2 Lampreys and 2 Tunnys were finished. Finally, on Thursday afternoon, 15 Freightliner flats left the airbrushing area for running tests thus bringing the running total up to twenty-seven.

Regular observers of pre-exhibition “Mostyn” routines may be wondering where the usually disciplined work on stock testing had got to. We were so focussed on stock-building that the layout was not in fact erected until Thursday and any testing was both minimal and half-hearted. We were starting to feel the pace. It has also to be noted that work was continuing constantly on the mega Class 104 DMU project as other smaller challenges were completed.

Friday dawned and the hectic pace accelerated further. At this stage the Class 104 DMU project had completed bodies and interiors, a running chassis but no underframe detail and was completely unpainted. Dave ‘The Rev’ Millward arrived at the club and was ushered into a quiet corner and told to complete the weathering of four hoppers before moving from his chair. This he did and the total moved on to thirty-one.

Completion of the Class 104 underframes took until lunchtime when they were passed over to Gavin who takes up the story of what happened next:

“I could see the pressure was on, the deadline for departing for the exhibition would normally have been midday but it was already nearly 2pm. As everyone else dismantled the layout, packed the tuff-crates and loaded the van, I started a bout of ‘extreme air-brushing’. To add to the general merriment we discovered a leak in the roof of the van and promptly despatched Ted Oldfield on to the roof armed with two rolls of duct tape and some bubble-wrap.

To get the job done it was necessary to mask the drive trains of the motored units and the Kadee couplings on all the units. Priming the fleet followed with a vague hope that it would dry very quickly. There was just time to clean the airbrush and mix the underframe dirt colour before picking up the first primed body and repeating the entire cycle.

I encouraged everyone bar the van passengers to clear off to Wigan as an advance party and this just left Richard and Ted Oldfield to keep me company as the clock ticked on. The completed glistening wet underframes were carefully packed into a

tuff-crate as others were still in the spray booth. The final underframe left the spray booth at 2.50pm and five minutes later it was packed, the club was locked and we were climbing into the cab of the van (complete with the underframes to keep them warm and hopefully encourage them to dry).

We arrived at the venue at 4.30 pm, met the rest of the team (Dave Faulkner, Simon Stevens, Simon Curness and Dave Millward) and were lucky to get immediate access for off-loading. Erection of the layout was characterised by a level of disorganisation brought about by tiredness and the sense that we were running three hours late. It was a classic case of forgetting the basics when under pressure. Disaster struck when three lengths of fiddle yard trackwork were destroyed in a wholly avoidable accident and the whole weekend pivoted on our reaction to this. We were lucky in that C+L Finescale were immediately opposite us and the stand was manned so we could buy replacement flextrack but great debt is owed to Dave Faulkner for stepping calmly forward to make the repair. This, of course, reduced the available manpower and delayed the full erection and testing of the layout. The venue was due to close at 8.45pm but we managed to hang on to 9.30pm before being ushered out by staff. By now the layout was fully functioning and all the stock was out but only a few roads had been tested and perhaps half of the locomotives had been cleaned.

After a brief stop at the wrong hotel we arrived at the Britannia Hotel in Standish, dropped our bags and proceeded to the pub opposite in pursuit of food and drink. They had stopped serving food and we were too shattered to walk the mile or so back into the town centre. We drowned our sorrows in beer, crisps and nuts – you can make your own mind up as to what was consumed most. At chucking out time we returned to the hotel where most sensible people would have gone straight to bed but, oh no, the bar was still open and we kept the barman company until he dropped the shutters at 1.45am.

The following morning breakfast at 7.30am was a quiet and subdued affair. I'm sure autopsies have been conducted on healthier specimens than we were. However, fortified by a good full English breakfast, we arrived at the exhibition venue just after 8.45am for some intense preparations. The remaining locomotives and DMUs were then cleaned and all stock tested when the advance booking customers flooded into the halls."

It was then that we returned to the challenge of the Class 104s in the hope that the aforementioned distractions had given the underframe paintwork enough time to dry. The table we were doing this on became an attraction in its own right and it was difficult to do the work because so many visitors wanted to talk about it. The wheel treads were cleaned of primer/paint, draw-hooks and couplings were added, the final addition of lead weights were fitted and the bodies were married to their underframes. Then, following adjustment to the buffer shanks on inner ends, necessitated by buffer locking on tight curves, set by set the units were introduced to the roster until all 11 vehicles were running.

Exhibitions are not really the place for stock testing but no fewer than 27 items of the new stock fleet first turned a wheel in anger in front of the public at Wigan (the Freightliners at least got a few circuits in the club on Thursday night). Some

adjustments were necessary but nothing major and most were spotted away from the public eye.

The general pressure of the situation was tweaked further by a shortage of operators and some ensuing lengthy sessions that were unavoidable. The tempo was slower than normal and no-one was getting a decent rest. It has to be said, however, that the general public were lapping up the performance and the layout was continuously crowded. It was particularly pleasing to learn of the distances that some people had travelled to see "Mostyn" – one guy, Andy, had come from Greenock and another had travelled from Bournemouth. It was a real treat to show Colin Craig our completed Freightliner flats.

Saturday night consisted of a super Indian meal at the Taste of Bengal restaurant in Standish followed by a gentle beer or five. The highlight of the evening was when Ted was 'sharked upon' by a representative of the local totty but he mysteriously refused her advances.

The general healthiness of the group was vastly improved for Sunday breakfast and we entered the venue with a spring in our step. Preparation went very smoothly with all motive power cleaned and replaced in a fiddle yard bursting at the seams. Most of the day sailed past but a couple of notable lapses in concentration occurred with resultant carnage. Hardly anyone managed to spend much time looking at the rest of the show and it was soon time for the inevitable dismantling, loading and return to Barrowmore. This went well and "Mostyn" returned to her home without further incident.

There are lessons to be learned from this weekend.

1. As a group we really pull together when the chips are down.
2. "Mostyn" is still evolving and it's important to remember the tried and tested procedures as well as drive it forward.
3. Even short lapses of concentration can cause major damage.
4. Always try and have an early night on the Friday evening after set-up.
5. Don't operate if there is alcohol in your bloodstream.

We suspect that lesson 1 will always apply, lessons 2 and 3 will be worked at, and, predictably, lessons 4 and 5 will continue to mystify us.

Christleton accident

The original of the photograph was given to John Dixon, with the information that it was of an 'accident at Christleton'. However the only railway accident at this location that I have so far been able to trace, was a derailment to an L.N.W.R. passenger train that occurred on 23 February 1886; this is briefly recorded in the *Chester Chronicle* of 27 February 1886, as transcribed below the photograph.



“ALARMING ACCIDENT ON THE RAILWAY.-

On Tuesday afternoon the express from Euston timed to arrive in Chester at 4.15 had proceeded safely as far as the Christleton tunnel when one of the carriages left the line. The passengers were greatly alarmed as the train jolted over the permanent way. An unsuccessful endeavour was made to find the communication cord, but at length the cord was pulled by the vibration of the carriage itself, and the train was stopped. The couplings fortunately held on, or there was every possibility of a serious calamity.”

The photograph is obviously of a quite separate event – date unknown – but obviously from a long time back! “J.Peake, coal merchant” is possibly from Llandudno Junction, while the only other identifiable private owner wagon is from the “Brymbo Steel Co. Ld.”. Both are not surprising if the location is indeed Christleton.
So who can tell me any more about this incident????

Letters to the Editor

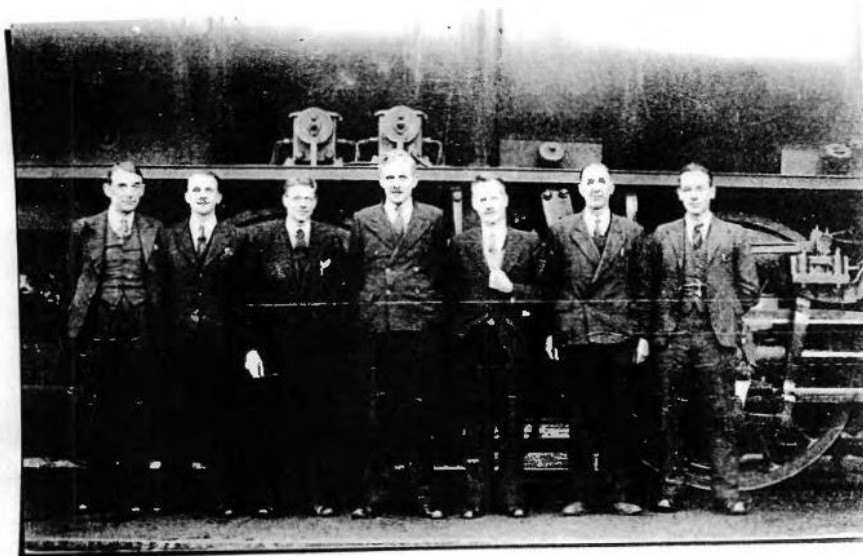
E-mail from Tony Robinson (Whitchurch):

“David - Your copy of **Campbell Highet's** letter in the Dec '09 BMRJ intrigued me. Campbell was a friend & colleague of both my father and Maxwell Dunn. He came onto the N.Wales scene around 1951 when he was appointed Assistant District Motive Power Supt* at Llandudno Jct shed. He moved away to Accrington (L&Y) about 1953/4.

You will probably know that he was a fairly prolific author (one assumes in his retirement) with an Oakwood Press book on the Wirral Railway to his credit (I recall getting it out on loan from Chester library in the late sixties).

See attached photo which will be in the "Dad" book.

* Assistant to Mr Rhill & later Mr Ewer of 6A Chester which on nationalisation became the "Mother" or "A" shed for N.Wales. Regards, Tony".



THE NORTH WALES SHED MASTERS IN THE EARLY FIFTIES.

From left to right:-

J.M.Dunn - Bangor. T.G.Dentith - Holyhead. C.Highett - Llandudno Jct.

A.R.Ewer - Chester. J.E.Robinson - Mold Jct. J.Dicken - Birkenhead.

? Lloyd - Rhyl?

Photo. J.M.Dunn.

E-mail forwarded by John Stockton-Wood:

--- On Tue, 29/12/09, Buckley Society <bucksoc@uwclub.net> wrote:

"From: Buckley Society <bucksoc@uwclub.net>

Subject: The Buckley Railway

To: "Buckley Society" <bucksoc@uwclub.net>

Date: Tuesday, 29 December, 2009, 21:58

In 2007 we compiled and published a book entitled 'The Buckley Railway Album and Associated Industries' which contained over 200 old photographs of the Buckley branch line from Connah's Quay Docks up through Northop Hall to the Buckley Junction Railway Station. Local interest was high, the Album was very popular and the 1,000 copies printed sold very quickly.

In recent months using the services of 'Knew Productions' in Rossett we have transferred all the original 200+ images plus three new photographs that have come to light since 2007 onto DVD supported by a professional commentary explaining each view. The three new views are of a section of line south of the Holly Lodge Railway Crossing, a view of E. Parry & Sons Buckley staff loading railway wagons and a further view of the old railway bridge in 'Dirty Mile' Buckley. Despite appeals in railway society magazines, local newspapers and contact with camera clubs etc. no film footage of the line in operation has ever been unearthed. If anyone has any knowledge of any cine film taken of the line could you please let us know.

Copies of the DVD are now on sale at Buckley Library; the Barbers Shop, Mill Lane, Buckley; Bethany Books, Shotton; and Siop y Morfa, Rhyl, priced at £9.95. Wrexham Museum will also be stocking the DVD in the New Year once their temporary transfer to the Bersham Heritage Centre is complete.

A postal service can be arranged upon request, the cost including a padded envelope and postage in the UK is £11 - payable to 'The Buckley Society'

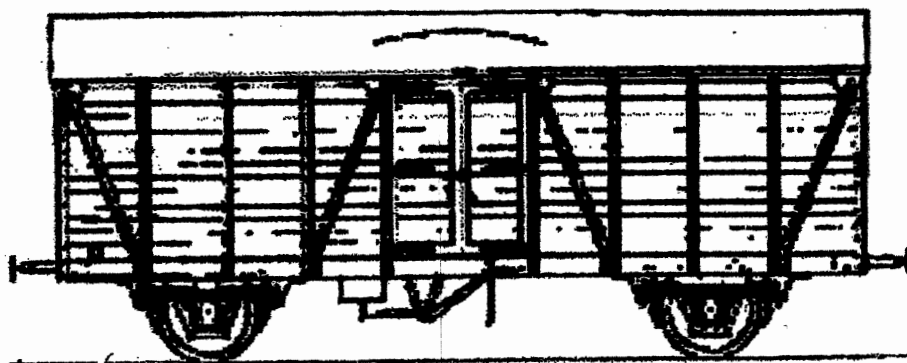
All the best for and New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Paul Davies, Hon Sec

See website at www.buckleysociety.org.uk

As a result of the little piece on LMS design Diag. 2026 Motor Car Vans (CCTs in B.R. parlance) in *BMRJ* no.21, reader Peter Lawson of Hankelow has written with a correction:

".... I enclose some comments on the article ... [drawing attention to the fact that Parkside Dundas had introduced a kit for this vehicle, as well as the older prototype mentioned on page 32 of *BMRJ* no.21] –



LMS 4 Wheel Motor Car Van (Diag. 2026)

Product Code: PC40

£10.60

Modelling LMS design motor car vans: Parkside Dundas offer two kits in their 4mm range of wagon kits, PC33 to D1929 and PC40 to D2026. I have not located scale drawings for either of these vehicles, but the kits seem to check out well against the dimensioned diagrams and published photographs. As mentioned, B.R. built a batch of 75 vehicles [to the later diagram] at Swindon ... I believe both these kits offer a good starting point for modelling.

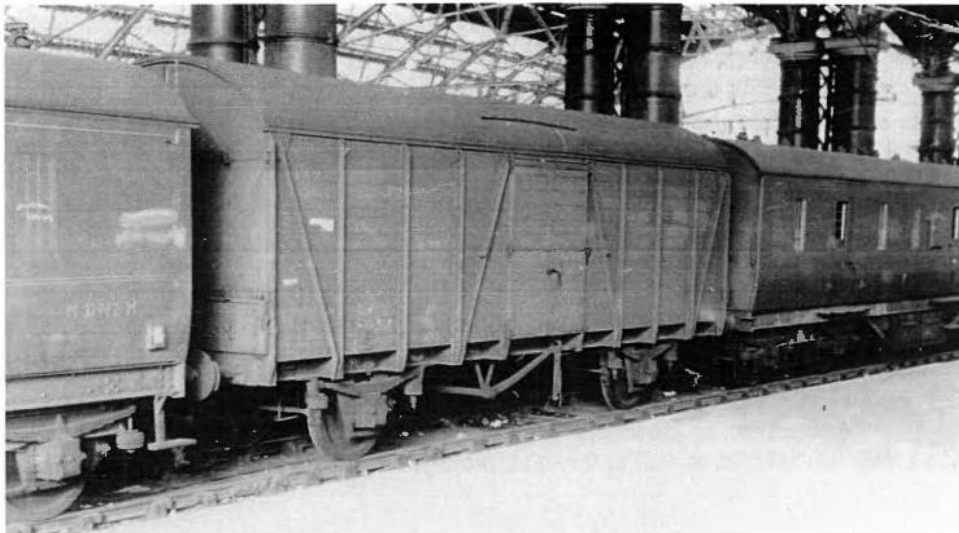
The third diagram mentioned, D1872, was an outside wooden framed vehicle built on recovered 6-wheel coach underframes; an excellent drawing is available [note 1] and a kit has been available in the Roger Chivers etched brass range, RC130. These vehicles did not last well in BR days due to the embargo on the use of six-wheeled vehicles in passenger trains.

A full description of all these vehicles has been published [note 2], but I hope my notes are of some assistance to modellers.

Notes: [1] *Historic carriage drawings, vol.3* by P.Tatlow. Pendragon.

[2] *LMS standard coaching stock, vol.1* by D.Jenkinson and B.Essery. OPC."

(Editors note: I must admit to making the mistake of looking at an out-of-date Parkside Dundas catalogue. We can now take steps to increase our vast stock of unmade kits when we next see Parkside at an exhibition!)



M37080 at Lime Street in April 1969; this van had been withdrawn by 1977.

E-mail from Jim Parrish of the Chester Club:

"David. Here is the link to the video clip we were talking about last night. Turn the sound up and listen to Radio Caroline!!

<http://www.veoh.com/users/MorrieGreenberg>
Jim"

E-mails from/to John Dixon of Saltney:

From: JOHN DIXON [mailto:jaygee.dee16@btopenworld.com]

Sent: 13 January 2010 11:41

To: David Goodwin

Subject: Chester 1903 accident

"Postman delivered accident report this morning and I found it very interesting, especially as has much signalling content! Only the Birkenhead crew come away with no blame! Pity it's too early for newspaper photos of new box being built.

Retired driver friend remembers Marjorie Causey working on 'Top line' at Shotton station c.1950. Thanks for report JGD"

--- On Thu, 31/12/09, pickardgeoff@aol.com <pickardgeoff@aol.com> wrote:

From: pickardgeoff@aol.com <pickardgeoff@aol.com>

Subject: Interesting film clips

To: Jaygee.Dee16@btopenworld.com

E-mail forwarded by John Dixon of Saltney:

"Hi John: Found these two short film clips on the Pathe web site. The first one shows Saughall signal box in operation and the second on the launch of R H Carr from Crichton's Saltney yard. Click on the links to watch them.

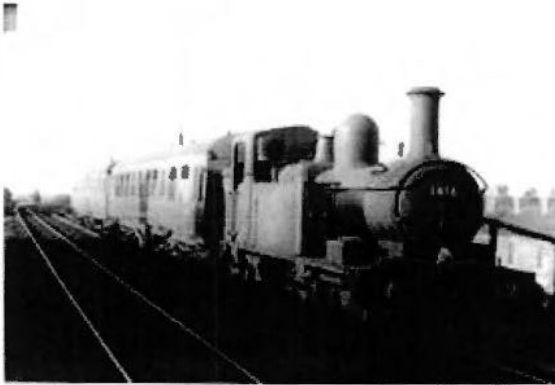
<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=51711>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=15320>

I have had several emails from a guy called Michael Knowles who is trying to get together a plan to bring the R H Carr back from South America to Connah's Quay. He pointed me in the direction of this other clip on You Tube which was taken of the R H Carr in her present state.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYxwygKV5yI>

Also found this attached photo of a train at Saltney halt taken in 1956. Pity you cannot see more of the station!



I'll now attempt to send these clips and photo to you. John D"

E-mail forwarded by Eddie Knorn:

See below a message from Chris Moxon of the **Churnet Valley 104 Group**. Note that he likes "other" DMU types as well...

<christophermoxon8@hotmail.com>
01/02/2010 15:54

To <Eddie.Knorn@firstgroup.com>
cc

Subject Re: Latest Rail Express

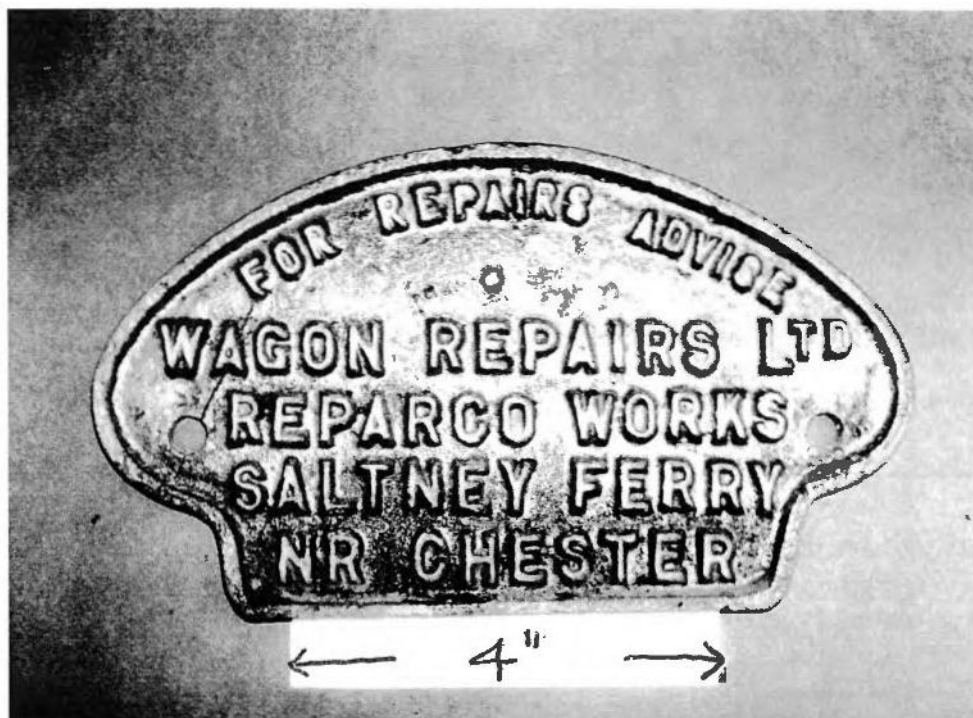
Eddie, Have read the modelling supplement [in *Rail Express*] and have to say I'm most impressed. Easily the best 104 model produced in that scale that I have ever seen! Even by looking at the images in the magazine you can tell they are a great credit to all involved. We will have to come and see them in the flesh sometime, which we have been meaning to do (for your other DMU's) anyway, as we have a soft spot for 128s as well... Many thanks for the kind words about our group and website. As discussed earlier, we would be keen to see a feature in our modelling section at some point in the future.

Cheers, Chris.

(Continued on page 17 ...)

Wagon plates: North Wales Carriage & Wagon Co. and Wagon Repairs Ltd., Saltney Ferry

Railway enthusiast Chris Dawson from Little Neston runs the Barbers Shop in Buckley (*see* the message from the Buckley Society in our *Letters* column) so I go up to his shop when my hair needs cutting: you tend to get a better standard of conversation compared with most gents' hairdressers who want to talk about football! When I was there in January, Chris loaned the wagon repair plate from the Wagon Repairs works at Saltney Ferry that appears here. Chris guessed that it was probably



from the 1960s and I would have agreed with this estimate, until I came across a photograph of a letterhead from 1938, reproduced below:

Telegrams "REPARCO CHESTER"
Telephone No. 333 Chester.

HEAD. & HEAD OFFICE:
IMPERIAL CHAMBERS, JOHN BRIGHT ST., BIRMINGHAM

LONDON OFFICE:
BUSH HOUSE, ALDWYCH, W.C.2

WAGON REPAIRS LIMITED.

Reparco Works,
SALTNEY FERRY,
Near Chester.

REFERENCES { OURS 3/6/WO.
YOURS

T. R. Jones Esq.,
30, Bridge-street,
Aldershot

14th July, 1938.

This includes the first printed reference to 'Reparco Works' that I have come across, so the date when the plate was cast remains doubtful.
At the same time, Chris mentioned that he had a photograph of a builder's plate from another local works, and that he would lend this to me for *BMRJ*:



Chris's covering letter includes the following background information:

"I took the photo some 15 years ago (at least) at a customer's house. As best I recall the story goes thus:-

The gentleman had taken the plate off some heavy timber (wooden wagon chassis) at his uncle's wood yard in the Lane End area of Buckley when he was a child, and had kept it ever since! This must have been in the late 20s – early 30s. I have a photo of the wagon works, which had closed by 1896. It occupied the site of the former Coppa Oil Works on the (LNWR) Ffrith branch. I believe the company also had a depot near Sandycroft? There was also a wagon works nearer to the Junction with the Chester/Mold line - this was the Flintshire Wagon Company.

My surmise is that the wood merchant would have purchased old wagon chassis to re-use the timber ..."

A reference book [note 1] records that the North Wales company was formed in 1878 and wound up in 1890.

Note:

[1] *British carriage & wagon builders & repairers 1830-2006* by Chris Sambrook. Lightmoor Press, 2007. ISBN 978 1 899889 27 3.

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CHESTER MODEL RAILWAY CLUB and
FFESTINIOG RAILWAY DEE & MERSEY GROUP
Present the



"THAMES VALLEY EXPRESS"

SATURDAY 24th APRIL 2010

A SPECIAL EXCURSION TRAIN TO WINDSOR & ETON

Or visit London by alighting at
KENSINGTON OLYMPIA

Join us on our special class 67 diesel-locomotive hauled tour with Riviera Trains air-conditioned carriages. We will start from HOOTON (large car park/M53) at around 07.00 and pick up at BACHE, CHESTER and CREWE. There is then a speedy journey south through the countryside of the English Midlands and the Chiltern Hills to the outskirts of London. Here we take the West London Line, stopping at KENSINGTON OLYMPIA, where passengers can leave the train and will have about five hours to explore London. We then cross the Thames and turn south west along the Thames valley to terminate at WINDSOR AND ETON (Riverside) where we have about four hours. Our return journey is by the same route, returning mid/late evening.

Kensington Olympia is an ideal dropping off point for Central London. The West End with its famous sights and shops is just a short hop by Underground or bus. The tourist sites of Westminster and the South Bank are only a little further afield.

Windsor and Eton station is at the heart of these interesting twin towns. The obvious attraction is Windsor Castle, but there are also various specialist shops, cafes and the chance to take an open top bus trip.

Expected arrival times are approximately 12.30 (Kensington), and 13.00 (Windsor). Leaving Windsor around 17.00, we will be back home mid/late evening.

Fares: *Standard Class: Adults £50, Children (5-15) £30, Children under 5 sharing a seat, free.*
First Class: Adults £75, Children (5-15) £45, Children under 5 sharing a seat, free.

Each passenger will have a reserved seat, a free detailed route description and local plans. The first class is in open coaches around tables for two (first come, first served) and four. Most of the standard class is in fours around tables. Tickets, seat reservations and final timings will be sent a few days before the train runs.

Please enclose a large **SAE** with your booking,
(two if acknowledgement of booking is required),

Remember 61p stamp
if larger than 9"x6"

Telephone enquiries: 01244 678070
01244 329944

and send to: L J Wheeler, 12 Radnor Drive, Chester. CH4 7PT

Email enquiries to: laurence.wheeler@tesco.net

*** BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT! ***

Name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____
Telephone _____
Email _____

I/We will be joining at _____ station

Our train will be made up of entirely no smoking accommodation

Please state any special requirements/preferences (e.g. limited mobility)

To:
L.J.Wheeler
12 Radnor Drive
Chester
CH4 7PT

Please send the following tickets:

First	Standard
ad. @ £75 _____	ad. @ £50 _____
ch. @ £45 _____	ch. @ £30 _____

**BOOK ONLINE USING YOUR DEBIT/CREDIT
CARD OR PAYPAL ACCOUNT AT
chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours**

Total enclosed = £ _____

CHEQUES/P.O.'s PAYABLE PLEASE TO "CHESTER MODEL RAILWAY CLUB"
Please remember to enclose a large Stamped Addressed Envelope

BM

This is a paragraph from the *Newsletter* published by Chester Model Railway Club. The Editor has suggested to them that when they are nearer making the change from DC to DCC, they should come along to Barrowmore and seek advice:

4mm NARROW GAUGE. SECTION REPORT 2009

Work on our new layout [4mm scale, Irish 3ft gauge, County Donegal Railway] featuring **Castlefin(n)** County Donegal is proceeding just fine at the time of writing, mid December. Incidentally being on the UK / Ireland border the different spellings reflect which side of the political divide you support, the CDRJC being very diplomatic in having one of each on the two platforms. The layout is a continuous run, with the station at the front and the fiddle yard at the rear, raising the possibility of a different station at the front in years to come. The station and fiddle yard are all but finished, the connecting end boards are under construction (led by Robert), and may be complete as you read this. We intend to get the whole lot working conventionally first before taking the huge leap in to DCC control, pioneered by Mark on the N gauge, but new to us. That said, the layout has been designed from the outset for DCC, in particular the management of very varied train lengths in the fiddle yard. Outside of the clubroom, John and Simon have been fired up with scenic projects that they will start at home over Christmas.

Our existing layout. **Dingle** (County Kerry) remains in full working order. It crossed the Irish Sea again in May 2009 to be exhibited at Donegal Town at an exhibition organised by our friends at the County Donegal Railway Restoration Limited. Needless to say the visit was facilitated by the consumption of many pints of Guinness. We are attending the prestigious York Model Railway Exhibition at York Racecourse at Easter 2010, so make a weekend of it and come and see us.

Please pop upstairs to see how we are getting on.

Laurence Wheeler

Johnstown Road at the Darlington Model Railway Exhibition, 5th and 6th December 2009

by Norman Lee

Emlyn Davies, who owns the locomotives and rolling stock for "Johnstown Road", resigned from the Barrowmore club in the spring of 2009 and for some months it appeared unlikely that the layout would go to Darlington. By the autumn, Emlyn had mellowed - he said that BMRG could borrow whatever stock we wanted and so the Group was able to honour its commitment to the Darlington club.

Assembling an operating team was a further problem since "Mostyn" was booked to go to the Wigan exhibition the following weekend and members were loathe to be away for two consecutive weekends, particularly as that would mean taking leave from work on the Friday. Gavin, David F and Norman arranged to make the trip to the north east and then Emlyn decided that he would like to go too. We were still short of two operators but Norman had a friend in County Durham who had seen "Johnstown Road" at Wigan the previous year and was keen to have a dabble - he also offered to find some members from his local club to help during the weekend if necessary.

We packed the van on the Friday morning. Gavin and Dave F took it to Darlington whilst Norman, who it seems is too old and dodderly to be allowed to drive a hire van nowadays, went off by car to collect Emlyn and the rolling stock. We converged on Darlington College for around 17:00 - we were not allowed in earlier for otherwise

we would have needed certification to prove that we were fit to be near to the youngsters who normally occupy the building!

The college is a new building, only a couple of years old, and is on land which used to belong to the railways - part of the shed yard, we were told. The exhibition hall was circular, which was a little disorientating at first, but was light and spacious. We were able to park close to the entrance and it was quite easy to get all the layout into position. The floor was tiled and clean and the layout was erected and levelled quite quickly - perhaps Gavin and David could do this quicker by themselves than with lots of helpers to interfere.

Darlington proved to be a larger town than we had expected and we got lost in the evening when we set off to look for food. We eventually found an excellent Indian restaurant - two of them, in fact, next to each other, but both fairly full. Having worked out the street plan, we realised that the restaurant was quite near to our hotel. Gavin and David were thirsty afterwards and wandered off. The Stockton & Darlington Railway was founded by Quakers and it seems they left a pub behind - the Quaker Rooms. Gavin described it as being down a back alley, the likes of which he would not have dared to go down had it been in Birkenhead. The beer was good, though.

Saturday morning started well and Roger Stapleton (Norman's friend from Durham) arrived with two colleagues - Mike Sandell and Steve Fairley. Unfortunately, Roger announced that he had just been diagnosed as having a hernia and after a couple of hours bending over "Johnstown Road" he looked most uncomfortable - he was much worse after a rest at lunchtime and he had to go home in the afternoon without even being able to go out for a beer with us.

"Johnstown Road" ran very well and was admired by many visitors although the Cambrian Railways are not well known in the north east. There were few operating problems until we noticed a smell near Porth Nefyn during the afternoon - there was a whiff of hot electrics coming from somewhere but we couldn't identify the source. We stopped the narrow gauge and then the standard gauge - the smell subsided so we resumed and it got no worse.

Darlington Model Railway Society invited the operators of visiting layouts to their annual dinner on the Saturday evening. However, by the close of the exhibition, "Johnstown Road" had exhausted us and we decided to have an early meal (at an excellent Chinese restaurant) and, after a visit to the Quaker Rooms, a fairly early night. We walked back to the hotel and our only problem was Emlyn - he was frightened by some mini-clad girls with legs like prop forwards. Subsequently, we found that our hotel was opposite the main hospital and ambulances kept arriving with sirens howling throughout the night (much louder than on the Friday) - we had less sleep than we needed.

Mike Sandell turned out again on the Sunday and put in a full day's effort. Something in the Porth Nefyn electrics overheated again but not catastrophically (Dave Faulkner says it is the power supply unit) - it lasted the day but must be replaced before the layout is used again. Right at the end of the day, during dismantling, Norman got a

telephone call - his wife had fallen and broken her hip. Off he went, along with Emlyn, leaving Dave F and Gavin to clear up and load the van. Thank you both.

We thought that Darlington might have been "Johnstown Road's" swansong. Since then we have been asked to take it to the Epsom and Ewell exhibition on 24/5 April. Their organiser thought we had made a firmer commitment than we did and so we have agreed to go. Emlyn will let us take the engines and rolling stock so our main worry is to get a full set of operators for the weekend. "Johnstown Road" is a marvellous and much-admired layout and it would be a great pity to let it go.

Letters to the Editor (continued from page 11)

E-mail from Tony Robinson of Whitchurch ...

"David, It seems that Roger has unearthed a bit more on the Sea Venom incident (see below). We still don't know the exact identity of the loco though!

Regards, Tony.

P.S. I'm sure the spelling is incorrect and it should read Moston Hospital."

--- On Wed, 3/2/10, roger carvell <roger.carvell@googlemail.com> wrote:

From: roger carvell <roger.carvell@googlemail.com>

Subject: News reportage of Sea Venom crash at Hawarden

To: anthony.j.robinson.t21@btinternet.com

Date: Wednesday, 3 February, 2010, 22:45

"Tony Having a tidy up and so found my scribbled notes, written years ago in the British Newspaper Library at Colindale. Hope the following is of use/reference/checking. etc...

Cheers, Roger"

July 23 1954, *The Flintshire Leader*

JET 'SCRAPED' A TRAIN

And no lives were lost

The occupants of the Venom jet fighter which grazed a freight train at Hawarden on Friday afternoon are still detained at Mostyn Military Hospital, Chester with spinal injuries but both are making excellent progress. The incident occurred when the plane was coming in to land in difficulties at Hawarden aerodrome.

The train, carrying stone from Penmaenmawr to Hawarden Bridge steelworks was moving slowly along the line bordering the airfield which is used by planes of the de Havilland Co at Broughton. Mr J H Philips, a de Havilland test pilot who comes from London and Mr Anthony Chalk of Rhydymwyn near Mold, a test observer for the company were bringing the aircraft in low in an attempt to reach the airfield when they spotted the train.

SCRAPED OVER

Mr Philips lifted the plane sufficiently to scrape over the train and pancaked it on to the airfield. He and Mr Chalk were extricated by ground crew and taken to hospital with spinal injuries. The plane was extensively damaged. The driver of the engine, Mr William Williams of 15 Victoria Crescent, Llandudno Junction, and his fireman Mr William Roberts of Moranedd, Maeshyfryd, Glan Conway afterwards told of their remarkable escape. They said they were so sure the plane was going to hit the train that they flung themselves on the footplate and were burned by the hot coals.

[The crash is recorded in BMRJ issues no.9 (December 2006) and no.10 (March 2007)]

An e-mail from Stan Yates of Rhyl. The Editor was particularly interested in the allocation of Great Western shunting engines to Wirral Colliery in 1902/3; presumably there were on hire while the

colliery's own 0-6-0ST (Black Hawthorn no.518 of 1881, sold 1928 after the colliery closed) was out of action for some reason?

"David, While studying the GWR locomotive registers at the Public Record Office, Kew, I came across the following entries:

Birkenhead Gas Works

GWR 850/1901 0-6-0ST

No. 1904 From Birkenhead Shed to Birkenhead Gas Works 4w/e 26/07/02 then to Wolverhampton 4w/e 23/08/02

No. 862 From Birkenhead Shed to Birkenhead Gas Works 4w/e 23/08/02 then to Birkenhead Shed 4w/e 07/02/03

Florence Coal and Iron Company

ex Cornwall Mineral Railway 0-6-0ST

No. 1394 From Birkenhead Shed to Florence Coal and Iron Co. 4w/e 26/05/06 then to Birkenhead Shed 4w/e 13/10/06

Wirral Colliery

Various 0-4-0STs

No. 92 From Chester Shed to Wirral Colliery 2w/e 31/05/02 then to Wolverhampton 4w/e 26/07/02

No. 342 From Chester Shed to Wirral Colliery 4w/e 26/07/02 then to Croes Newydd Shed 4w/e 20/09/02

No. 95 (ex Birkenhead Railway) From Neath Shed to Wirral Colliery 4w/e 20/09/02 then to Wolverhampton 4w/e 07/02/03

(see Keith Beck 'The Great Western North of Wolverhampton' and the RCTS series on GWR locomotives for further information about these particular engines)

Wirral Railway (apparently to remedy shortages of their own motive power caused by problems with boiler water hardness):

GWR 517 0-4-2T

No. 1439 From Chester Shed to the Wirral Railway 4w/e 26/07/02 then to Chester Shed 4w/e 23/08/02

No. 527 From Chester Shed to the Wirral Railway 4w/e 23/08/02 then to Chester Shed 4w/e 18/10/02

All transfers up to 28/06/02 are shown as 2w/e and after that date as 4w/e.

The information might prompt a response from members.

Regards – Stan"

The Chester accident of 1903: the official report:-

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN AND GREAT WESTERN JOINT RAILWAYS.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.
14th March 1904.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the order of the 2nd January, the result of my inquiry into the collision that occurred at Chester, at 7.51 a.m. on 31st December, 1903.

In this case, as the 7 a.m. passenger train from Birkenhead was approaching Chester Station with clear signals, it came into collision near No. 4 signal-box with an engine and brake van which were standing foul of the line on which it was travelling.

The passenger train consisted of an eight wheeled tank engine, five eight wheeled carriages, and an eight wheeled brake van. It was fitted throughout with the automatic

vacuum brake, which was in proper order. The engine with which it collided was a six-wheels-coupled goods tender engine with a ballast van attached.

Six passengers and three servants of the Companies were injured by the collision, and one servant of the Companies, viz., ballast guard Cowap, was killed. Both engines were a good deal knocked about and all the passenger carriages and the ballast van were damaged. Several chairs and one rail of the permanent way were broken. For full particulars of damage to rolling stock, &c., see Appendix.

Description. The collision occurred at a spot about 100 yards west of Chester Station and about 50 yards east of the junction between the lines to Holyhead and Birkenhead. The engine and van were standing on the down main line, which at the place named is crossed by the line giving access to the arrival platforms. Signal-box number 4 is situated on the north side of the junction between the Holyhead and Birkenhead lines, and under ordinary circumstances the engine and van would have been within the view of the signalmen.

Extensive alterations, however, are being carried out at Chester, involving, among other things, the erection of a new signal-box in extension, and to the east, of the existing box. This new box interferes very considerably with the direct view of the lines to the east of the old box, including the line upon which the engine and van were standing. In order to compensate for this loss of view provision had been made in the signal-box, by the construction of some steps below the window, for enabling the signalmen to lean out and see for themselves whether the lines were clear. Moreover, the district superintendent had, about six weeks prior to the accident, caused a flagman to be stationed on the ground in front of the signal-box to assist the signalmen in any way that might be necessary, and to keep them informed as to whether the lines were clear.

The engine and van had been properly signalled from No. 3 box to No. 4, and had been accepted by the men in the latter, who lowered the junction signal to permit them to proceed along the down main line. The driver, however, required to proceed along the down Birkenhead line to a siding at Brook Lane a short distance away. He therefore stopped his engine in the position described, where, as already stated, he was out of the direct view of the signalmen, and waited for the signal referring to the Birkenhead line to be lowered.

I attach a diagram which indicates approximately the relative positions of the engine and van, and signal-box, from which it will be observed that not only were the engine and van out of sight of the signalmen, but that, owing to the curve of the Birkenhead line, they were also screened by the signal-box from the view of the driver of the Birkenhead train while the latter was approaching the junction.

The following rule (No. 55 in the book of General Rules and Regulations) should be noted :-

“(a) In case of detention at a home, starting, or advanced starting signal, the engine driver must immediately sound his whistle, and if still detained the guard, shunter, or fireman must go into the signal-box, and remind the signalman of the position of the train.

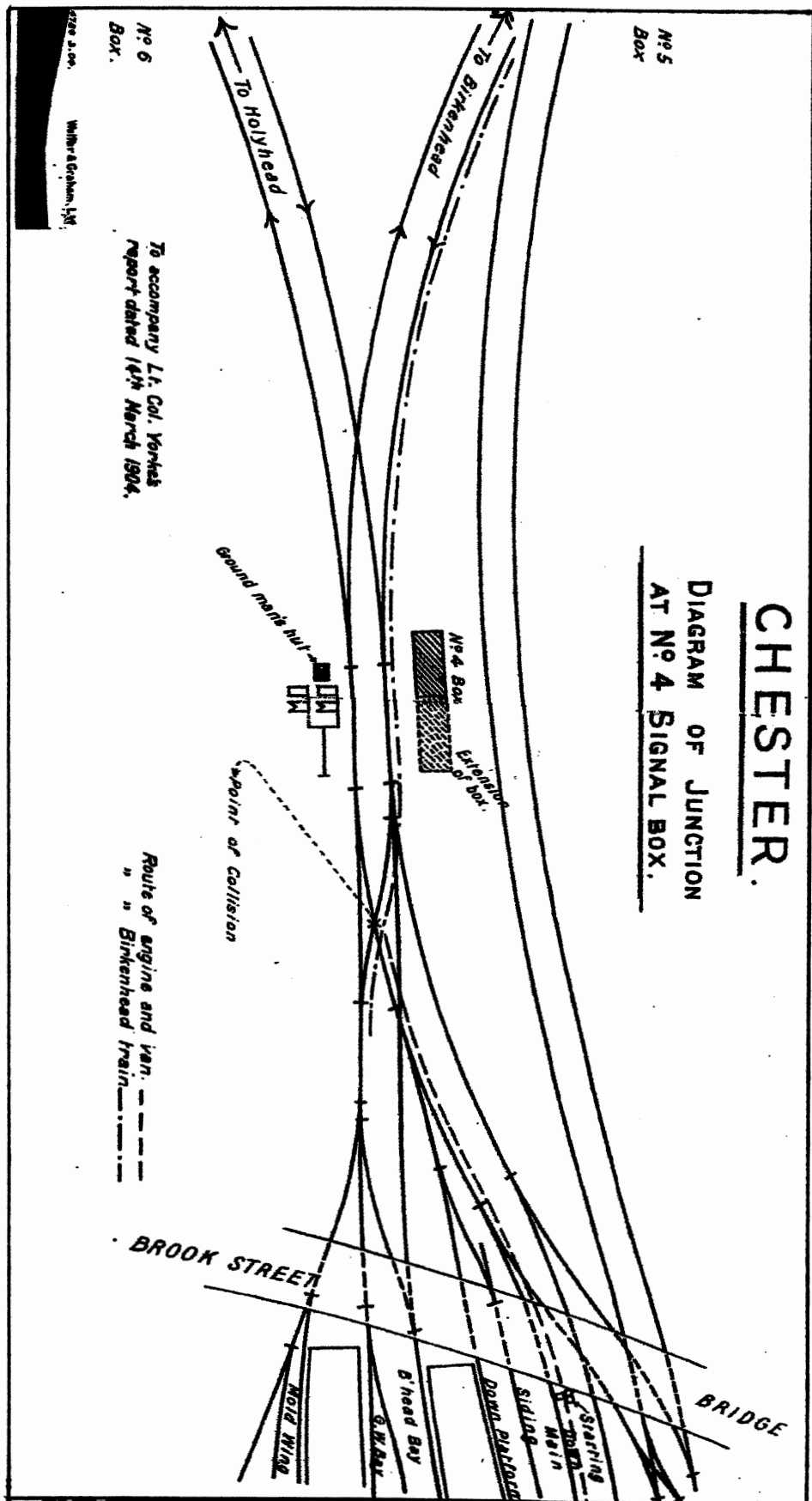
“(c) The duty of going to the signal must be performed as under :-

“(i) In the case of a light engine, or of a passenger train with only one guard by the fireman

“(d) The guard in charge of the train must satisfy himself that the man whose duty it is to do so has gone to the signal-box. ...”

CHESTER.

DIAGRAM OF JUNCTION AT N° 4 SIGNAL BOX.



N° 6
Box.
To accompany Lt. Col. Yorke's
report dated 14th March 1904.

W. H. & G. H. M.
Size 2.00.

Evidence. *A.D. Scott*, driver, stated : I came on duty on 31st December at 4.15 a.m., and left Chester about 6.35 a.m., with a goods brake van to convey platelayers from Frodsham and intermediate points to Chester. I left Frodsham about 7.10 a.m., and approaching Chester was stopped at No. 1 box whilst a goods train with 35 waggons passed out. When this was cleared we proceeded over the down main line through the station to No. 4 box, where we came to a stand about an engine and tender's length from the Junction signals. The signal was off for the direction of No. 6 box, but I did not take that route as guard Rowe told me on the journey he did not know definitely, but expected we should have to go to Brook Lane. As soon as we came to a stand the guard said "I do not know the whistle, but blow for Brook Lane and I will go to the box." I replied, "I will look after the whistling if you will go to the box." I gave two whistles. The signal at this time was off for No. 6, and was not immediately reversed. I repeated the whistle and the signal was put to danger a few seconds afterwards. I concluded the signalman knew the position of our engine and van, as the guard left me to go to the box and inform the signalman, and I blew the whistle again. The guard left the engine to go to the box under two minutes after our arrival, and about eight minutes afterwards I heard a voice which I thought to be our guard's, and asked my mate if it was not so, and he said it was. I replied then, "He cannot have gone to the box." My fireman said, "He has a mate, and I expect he has sent him." Immediately afterwards guard Rowe came on to the engine, and he said to my mate, "I thought you had gone to the box." My mate replied to the effect that it was of no use my going when he (Rowe) had gone. The guard replied, "I am off now," meaning that he was going to the signal-box, and the collision occurred about a minute afterwards. He alighted on the side of the engine farthest from the signal-box, and I cannot say that he would have had time to reach the signal-box before the collision took place. Immediately the guard left the engine a second time I blew the whistle again, making the fourth time I had whistled for Brook Lane. I did not see the approaching train until it was close to me, when I attempted to reverse the engine, with the view to setting back, but the engine was struck before I got the lever back. The weather was clear. I have been in the Great Western Railway service 33 years, 14 of which I have been a driver. I booked off duty at 4 p.m. the previous day. The engine was a six-wheels-coupled goods tender engine. I stopped about 15 yards from the signal because I could get a better view of the signals, and I was allowing room for the locking bar. I have frequently worked between Chester and Birkenhead, I have only been to Chester once since July, 1902, but I know Chester Station well. I usually worked from Chester to South Wales. I did not know I was standing on the Birkenhead main line. I was standing there 10 minutes. I consider it was the guard's duty to go to the signal-box to warn the signalman. I saw the guard get off the engine, but I did not watch where he went. I received instructions during the journey that I should probably have to go to Brook Lane, and for this reason I did not take the signal for the Holyhead line. There were a number of men in the van for general ballast purposes. The signal which was off was No. 4 junction home signal. The road has been altered, and I did not know I was on the main line. I know the junction quite well, and I knew the signals quite well, but I did not know I was on the main line from Birkenhead. There were three men on my footplate when reaching Chester, viz., myself, fireman, and guard Rowe.

R. Batchelor, fireman, stated : I have been in the service of the Great Western Company for nine years, and five years a fireman. I came on duty at 4.15 a.m. at Chester and finished the previous day at 4 p.m. I was fireman to Scott and we worked a trip with a brake-van to Frodsham and back, and on approaching Chester the signals at No. 1 box were at danger. We stood there about six minutes, and the next stop made was at No. 4 signals, the one for the Holyhead line being off. The guard, who was on the engine, when alighting told the driver to whistle for Brook Lane, and he told me he would go to the signal box. This statement was made on the footplate first, and repeated as he got down from the engine. Five minutes afterwards the guard called up from the ground and asked me if I had been to the signal box. I told him, "No." The driver asked me if that was not the guard's voice. I replied, "Yes." The driver said he thought Rowe had gone to the box. I replied that perhaps he had sent his mate Cowap, whom I saw at No. 4 box when we stopped, and where he appeared to have been waiting for us. I adhere to my statement that guard Rowe did inform the driver and myself that he would go to the signal box.

A. Rowe, ballast guard, stated :- I am ballast guard on the Joint London and North-Western and Great Western Railways, and have been in the service 24 years, 12 of which I have been ballast guard. I came on duty at 5.15 a.m. and shunted out a brake van for the purpose of conveying workmen from Frodsham and intermediate points to Chester. We left Chester with engine and van about 6.30 a.m., and on arrival at Frodsham the engine was run round the van and we returned to Chester, where we were brought to a stand by signals at Chester No. 1 box. We stood about five minutes, after which we went forward with a clear road, and came to a stand near No. 4 box. I rode on the engine from Frodsham to

point out to the driver where to stop to pick the men up, and when leaving Frodsham I told the driver we were to go to Brook Lane. On arrival at No. 4 Junction signals, the signal for No. 6 box was off, *i.e.*, for the Holyhead main line. The driver brought the engine to a stand, and I got down on to the ground and then told the driver to whistle up for Brook Lane, which he did. I went to the brake van and waited until the men alighted; then I got into the van, where ganger Tweedle had remained. Cowap, who was afterwards killed, followed me into the van. I asked if he had any orders, and he replied "Yes, to remove excavation from No. 4 signal box." I asked Tweedle how many waggons would be required, and he replied "Two or three." I then got out of the van and proceeded to No. 4 box, and on going up the steps of the signal box I observed the passenger train coming between the ticket stage and the signal box. I ran down and shouted and also put up my arms and gave a stop signal. I think my signal was seen as I observed sparks flying from the brakes, but the collision took place before a stop could be made. It was about five minutes after the engine came to a stand before I started for the signal box. The reason I was so long in starting for the box was owing to my making the enquiries previously mentioned, and as the signal was off for No. 6, I expected this to be reversed and the one for Brook Lane taken off. I saw the signalmen in the box, but was not able to give them any warning. I saw a man in uniform in the ground signalman's hut, and he was getting something to eat. He did not speak to me, neither did I say anything to him. I did not make any promise to the enginemen to go to the signal box. The engine was running chimney in front. I know Chester Station as it is now. I knew the van was standing foul of the Birkenhead line. Cowap was an assistant ballast-guard but was not on duty that morning. He was coming with me to Brook Lane to assist me in forming a train to deal with the excavation. I do not know why ganger Tweedle ordered the men out of the van. The whole gang was to go to Brook Lane for work. On leaving the van I passed the engine and looked up to the fireman and said "Have you not gone to the box?". He said "No, I thought you had gone." I then said "Then I will go." I consider that under the rule it was the duty of the fireman to have gone to the signal box. It is, however, the guard's duty to satisfy himself that the proper person has gone to the box. I saw the signal go up, and I expected that the signalman would then reverse the points and let us go. I knew the Birkenhead train was about due. I heard my driver whistle and the signal was then reversed. I told the driver to whistle two and he did so. This was before I went to the van, and the signal was put to danger soon afterwards. There were 25 or 26 men in the van. I left two men of the gang in the van, and then Cowap joined me. When I tried to stop the Birkenhead train it was 40 or 50 yards from the signal box. *Joseph Tweedle*, foreman platelayer, stated: I have been in the service of the Joint Companies 22 years, and 17 as a foreman platelayer. On the morning of the 31st December I left Helsby in the brake van attached to a Great Western engine about 7 a.m., and ran to Chester. The engine and van came to a stand a little short of the Junction signals at Chester No. 4 box. I instructed the men to get out, which they did, and then Cowap came in and had a conversation with me about what was intended to be done, and whilst we were so engaged guard Rowe got on to the step for a minute or two and then went away. He said nothing to me. I knew the men were going to work where I told them to get out. Cowap was in the act of getting out when the collision occurred, and I did not see him again until he was found fast under the engine. The last I saw of him was with one foot on the top step and the other foot on the floor of the van. As near as I can tell the engine and van had been standing about five minutes when the collision occurred. I did not hear any whistles. I was in the van all the time. The men were in my charge. The guard knew where we wanted to go. I was in the van when the collision occurred. The whole gang of 22 men were going to work in the neighbourhood of No. 4 box - between No. 6 and No. 3a. We originally intended to go on to Brook Lane and get out there, but as the train stopped at No. 4 box we got out there. We have been working in that neighbourhood for 12 months. We usually get out of the van near No. 4 box, sometimes on the Chester side and sometimes on the Birkenhead side of it. I gave the instructions for the men to get out at that place simply because the van happened to stop there. Sometimes the van passes behind the box and sometimes in front of the box. I do not know where we stopped the day before, but I have been stopped at the same place as on the day in question on previous occasions. I ordered the men out as soon as the van stopped.

D. Wilson, porter, stated: I came on duty at 6.25 a.m. on the 31st December, and took up my position as ground flagman opposite No. 4 box, and after the 7.25 a.m. Birkenhead train went out I went into the hut to get my breakfast, and before I had finished doing so a platelayer came to the hut. I had been inside the hut about 10 minutes before the mishap occurred. The only words that passed between me and the Platelayer was my asking him whether the Birkenhead train was signalled, as I was thinking it was about due, and he replied "Yes!" by which I understood the signals were off for it, but he did not say anything about the engine and van on the main line. When the train was coming round the ticket platform I came out of the hut, and then I observed the engine and van. I at once signalled the driver by

hand to stop, and the brakes were applied immediately. Driver Tomlinson jumped from the engine, but, whether the collision had actually taken place at that time I cannot say. I assisted him up. I have been in the service six years as porter. I finished duty at 4 p.m. on the 30th December. I did not see the engine and van until I came out of the hut, neither did I hear any engine whistle. I have been ground man at No. 4 box for five or six weeks. My instructions were to place myself under the orders of the signalman. I was appointed by the stationmaster. The signalmen told me to tell them if the bays were clear, and if so to shout out "Clear". I had flags and hand lamps. The hut is placed opposite the signal box. I never heard the engine and van approach the hut, nor did I hear the driver whistle. I did not ask the platelayer where he was going to work. I assumed he was going to work near my hut. He and others had been working near my hut for some days previously. If I had seen the ballast engine standing there I should have told the signalman about it, and perhaps asked the driver where he wanted to go.

Ben Inglefield, platelayer, stated : I am a platelayer, and have been five years in the service of the Joint Companies. I came on duty at 7.40 a.m. on 31st December. I arrived at Chester with the gang in the van from Frodsham, and went to fetch my shovel, which was close to the ground signalman's hut, and when I got it I held it by the fire to thaw the frost. The ground signalman said, "Good morning, Tommy." I bid him good morning back. He then said, "Has the Birkenhead run in yet ?" I replied I did not know, and that is all that passed between us. I heard the driver of the engine and van whistle twice. I was about six yards from the hut. I had been there three or four minutes. After I left the hut I heard guard Rowe at the bottom of the signal-box steps shouting "Stop," and immediately afterwards the collision took place. When I left the hut the groundman was still inside.

William Tomlinson, driver, stated : I live at Birkenhead, and I am driver in the service of the Great Western Railway. I have been 37 years in their service. I came on duty at 5.45 a.m. on the 31st December. I was driver of the 7 a.m. train from Birkenhead to Chester. The last stopping place was Mollington. I received a green flag from the guard at Mollington, and the starting signal was off for me to proceed. I cannot say that I saw anything of the engine and van until I struck them. I believe my fireman saw them first. He shouted "Whoa, whoa," to me. I was knocked off the footplate on to the ground. I remember, someone helping me to my feet. On approaching Chester the distant signal for No. 5 box was at danger. I applied the brake and checked the train. When I reached the home signal it was "off." The distant signals for No. 4 box were both "on." I was running about six or seven miles an hour. When I saw the home signal for No. 4 box it was "off." That is the last signal I should receive before entering the station. On account of the curve of the line I was unable to see the engine and van. The driver's place is on the right side of the engine. When approaching No. 4 box my fireman called out "Whoa," and I at once did all I could to stop. I had not steam on at that time. I applied the brake with full force. The brake was in good order. It had been tested before leaving Birkenhead. I was running about seven miles an hour. There was hardly time for any reduction of speed before the collision occurred. I saw no hand signal from anyone. The home signal of No. 4 was off when I first saw it. The time was about 7.49 a.m. : it was between light and dark. I was due at Chester Station at 7.50, and we were running right time. I was either knocked off the engine or fell off. The rails were somewhat greasy.

John Thomas Jones, fireman, stated : I have been in the service of the Great Western Company eight years, and six years a fireman. I came on duty at Birkenhead December 31st, 1903, at 5.45 a.m., and was fireman to driver Tomlinson working the 7.0 a.m. passenger train Birkenhead to Chester. We were not stopped by signals approaching Chester, and when close to No. 4 box I observed an engine and van standing ahead in our way on the main line. I called out "Whoa," and my mate at once applied the brakes and I then jumped off on to the ballast. I did not see anyone giving a hand signal to stop. The distant signal of No. 5 box was "on," and the home signal was "off." The distant signal for No. 4 box was also "on," and the home signal was "off" when I first saw them. I was somewhere near the signal box when I saw the engine and van in our way. Steam was already shut off. We were then running at about six miles an hour. There was a reduction of speed before the collision occurred. I think the speed then was two or three miles an hour. I was not hurt but only shaken. The engine of my train was derailed, and a good deal damaged. I cannot say how far ahead I could have seen the engine and van. I do not think I could have seen the engine 40 or 50 yards away. It was not quite daylight. It was a clear morning. I saw the engine itself, and I did not notice any head lights. The signal-box No. 4 somewhat obstructed my view.

R. Millman, signalman, stated : I came on duty in No. 4 box at 6.0 a.m., and at about 7.36 the "Is line clear" signal was received for a ballast engine and van from No. 3, and soon afterwards the signals were taken off for it to proceed from the down main line in the station towards No. 4 box. The 7 a.m.

passenger train from Birkenhead was signalled about 7.40, and at 7.43 my assistant Morris placed to danger the signals which had been taken off for the ballast engine and van, and told me that it was not coming out. He then assisted me to set the road for the Birkenhead train to run into the Great Western Bay. I lowered the signals for the train to run there, and the first intimation I had of anything being wrong was when I heard a man calling out, and this man appears to have been the guard of the ballast train. The collision took place instantly after the shout. I lowered the signals for the Birkenhead train to run in thinking all was clear. The engine and van stopped some distance away from the signal-box, and the new box stood between it and the box in use. I did not see the ground signalman at the time, and I knew that nothing else had been admitted on the line except the signal being taken off for the ballast engine and van, and in regard to this I accepted the word of my assistant that it was remaining in the station. I have been in the service 29 years, and 27 years a signalman. I finished duty at 2 p.m. on the day previous. I did not hear the engine whistle whilst it was standing at No. 4. My assistant dealt with the signals as far as the engine and van were concerned. Morris placed the signals at danger because he thought the engine and van were remaining in the station. There are two men in the signal-box, and Morris takes the work at the east end and I take the west end. It was Morris who received the "Is line clear" signal for the engine and van, and he set the road and pulled off the signals for them. It was described as a "light engine," and this why he pulled off the Holyhead signal. We thought it was the engine to work the 8.5 train Chester to Birkenhead, and it has to pass the junction in order to back on to the train. The 8.5 was standing in the Mold Bay. Permissive block is worked through the station. There are "train describers" in the cabin, and on it an engine and van are described as a light engine - an engine and two vans would be described as a train. The engine and ballast van usually come down the goods yard. It is very rare for them to come down the main line. I do not know why they came down the main line. The ground man is not under our orders. He was appointed by the assistant station master. I never made a practice of asking him any questions. He was put there to tell us if the bays and the junction were clear. I did not ascertain whether the man understood his instructions or not. Before making the road and lowering the signals for the Birkenhead train, I did not look out to see if all was clear. I do not know whether Morris looked out. If either Morris or I had leaned out of the window I believe we could have seen the engine. I believe Morris looked out of the back window. If an engine or train is signalled and does not arrive, it is our duty to telephone to the box in rear to ask about it. I do not know whether Morris telephoned or not. We both helped to make the road for the Birkenhead train to come in. We each pulled some of the locking bars and points, and I pulled off the signals. There are about eight or ten levers to be pulled for the Birkenhead train. If the driver had whistled, I should have heard him; there was no friction whatever between Morris and myself.

H. Morris, signalman, stated : I came on duty at 6.30 a.m., in No. 4 box, Chester, and at 7.33 or 7.34 a.m. I received the "Is line clear?" signal for an engine. About two minutes after the engine had been signalled down to me, I lowered the down main home signal and the advance signal for No. 6 box. I thought it was the engine for the 8.5 train, and did not know it was the ballast engine and van. When the "Is line clear?" signal was received for the Birkenhead passenger train, nothing having passed the box, I put the down main home and the junction signals back to danger, and went to the Great Western shed side of the box to see if anything was coming, but I could not see anything, and I therefore came to the conclusion that the engine was being kept in the station to do some work. When I put the signals back to danger there was plenty of time to see that all was clear before the Birkenhead train passed in; and I was not aware that the engine and van had come up and was standing near to the box. I did not hear anything from the man on the ground, and the driver of the ballast engine did not whistle for Brook Lane, where it appears the engine was required to go. I assisted signalman Millman to make the road for the Birkenhead train to run into the Great Western bay. After placing the signals to danger, I told signalman Millman that I could not see anything of the engine and van coming out of the station. I looked out on the Great Western engine shed side of the box, from which point I could see right into the station, and it appears that at this time the engine had come out of the station and was standing on the down main line. I could not see it from where I stood in the box, and did not open the window to look out on the other side. I did not enquire from No. 3 box what had become of the engine, as I was under the impression it was the engine of the 8.5 a.m. Birkenhead passenger train, and had been kept in the station to do work which happens sometimes with the engine referred to. Although I reversed the signals for the engine and van, I allowed it to remain in the block. After the mishap I asked the ground signalman how long the engine and van had been standing there, and he said he did not know, and therefore could not say. I trusted to the man on the ground to advise us if the engine and van arrived, and this is why I did not put my head out through the windows in the front of the box to look for myself. I have been in the service nearly 13 years, and have been a signalman 12 years. I finished duty

at 3 p.m. on the day previous to the mishap. If I had leant out over the bar of the window I could have seen the engine. I kept the engine in block because I thought it was still in the station. I thought that the engine was detained in the station, because it was so long in coming down to us, and it often happens that an engine is detained. The ballast engine comes down every morning, but sometimes it comes on the goods line and sometimes on the main line. I did not hear any whistle from the driver of the ballast engine. It would have rested with me to lower the signals for Brook Lane if I had heard the whistle. There was nothing to stop us from enquiring of the ground man about anything as to which we were in doubt.

William Lambert, assistant stationmaster, stated : I am assistant stationmaster at Chester, I have been in that position for 12 months. Before that for three years I was night stationmaster. I was instructed by Mr. Thorne to appoint a ground man outside No. 4 box for the purpose of acting in conjunction with the signalman on duty at No. 4 junction, and to inform the signalman when the train which ran into the bay lines had cleared the converging point for the adjacent bay line, and also to watch the shunting operation and give the signalman on duty any information that he asked for concerning engines or trains that would be obscured from the signalman's sight by the erection of the new signal-box. I explained this to the ground man and also to the signalman on duty at the time. This was about six weeks ago. The man was placed there to give the signalmen every assistance in his power. He was to tell them at once if he saw anything wrong, and if they were in doubt they should ask him. I do not think it was any dereliction of duty for the ground man to be sitting inside his box at the time the engine and van arrived. There were no instructions given him in writing, nor were there any given to the signalman. There is no ground man at all between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. The man was an experienced porter, and was quite competent for the purpose. It is quite usual for a temporary purpose for the instructions not to be in writing. If the man had seen the train standing there it would have been his duty to have advised the signalman.

Conclusion.

This fatal collision was due to a combination of blundering and negligence on the part of several men.

The engine and van had been sent out from Chester to Frodsham to collect the men employed by the engineering department in carrying out some permanent way alterations at the former place. About 25 men were picked up, and these returned in the van to Chester, where they arrived at about 7.35 a.m. The engine and van had been stopped on the down main line for a short time at the west end of Chester Station, while the usual signals on the block telegraph instruments were exchanged between No. 3 and No. 4 signal-boxes, and the platform starting signal was then lowered to allow them to proceed towards No. 4 signal-box, which controls the junction between the Holyhead and Birkenhead lines. The signalmen in the latter box, not knowing exactly what engine it was, assumed that it required to proceed along the main (Holyhead) line in order to get across to another part of the station, and they therefore set the junction points and lowered the signal for the Holyhead line. The driver of the engine, however, required to proceed along the down Birkenhead line in order to reach a siding near Brook Lane, and finding, when he approached the junction, that the wrong signal was off for him, he stopped his engine and van, and (as he says) whistled for the signal for Brook Lane. The engine and van were then standing on the down main line, where the latter crosses the arrival line. In this position the engine and van were screened from the signalmen's sight by the new box which is being built at the east end of the existing one. Driver Scott has no valid reason to offer for stopping at this spot, and his action can only be attributed to want of thought. Had he moved forward only a few yards he would have been in full view of the signal-box, in which case the signalmen would have been aware of his presence, and could have ascertained without difficulty where he wanted to go, or had he stopped a few yards further back, he would have been clear of the arrival line. As it was, he stopped in the worst possible place that he could have chosen, and stood there for at least 10 minutes without taking any steps to communicate with the signalmen. Having stopped where

he did, he should, according to the rule already quoted, have sent his fireman to the signal-box to tell the men there of the position of the engine and van. But he did nothing of the sort, nor did the fireman move from the footplate of the engine, although he was as well acquainted with the rule, as the driver. Scott says that he whistled two or three times after coming to a stand but this is doubtful, as the signalmen and the flagman concur in saying that they heard no whistle. Ballast guard Rowe, who had travelled from Frodsham to Chester on the footplate of the engine, got down on to the ground as soon as the engine stopped, and is said by the driver and fireman to have undertaken to go to the signal-box. This he denies, but his denial does not lessen his responsibility, for whichever version is correct, it was Rowe's duty, according to the rule, to "satisfy himself that the man (*i.e.*, the fireman) whose duty it was to do so had gone to the signal-box." Instead of doing this Rowe went to the van, where he was joined by guard Cowap (the unfortunate man who was killed). These two men then got into the van, where they found foreman platelayer Tweedle, the other men having been directed by Tweedle to alight. After wasting 10 minutes in conversation with Tweedle and Cowap, Rowe seems to have thought that it was time he went to the signal-box, but while he was on his way there the passenger train from Birkenhead arrived and collided with the engine and van, which were standing across its track, with fatal results. Cowap, who at the moment of the collision was alighting from the van, was thrown under the ballast engine and killed on the spot; but Tweedle who was inside the van escaped with a few bruises. It was a fortunate circumstance that Tweedle had told the men to alight as soon as the engine and van came to a standstill. Had the men remained in the van the results of the collision would have undoubtedly been very much more serious. To guard Rowe's neglect of duty the collision must to a large extent be attributed.

Although the driver, fireman and brakesman in charge of the engine and van were, as stated above, remiss in their duty, this does not absolve the signalmen from their share of responsibility. Number 4 signal-box is manned by two signalmen, namely, R. Millman and H. Morris. It appears from their statement that Morris "accepted" the engine and van from No. 3 box at about 7.34 a.m., and lowered the down main home and advance signals to allow the engine to proceed to the Holyhead line. Six minutes later, *viz.*, at 7.40, the passenger train from Birkenhead was offered to No. 1 box from No. 5. It was not at once accepted, because owing to the fact that the down main signals were off for the engine and van, the interlocking arrangements would not allow the signalmen to make the road and lower the signals for the incoming Birkenhead train. After waiting two or three minutes the signalmen came to the conclusion that the engine and van had remained in the station, and they therefore put back the down main signals to danger, and enabled themselves to make the road for the Birkenhead train, for which at 7.43 they gave the "Line clear" signal to No. 5 box. They made no inquiries of No. 3 box as to what had become of the engine, although there is telephonic communication between the two boxes, nor did they cancel the acceptance of the engine and van on the block instruments. If they had gone to the window of the box they could have seen the engine and van standing across the up line; or if they had inquired of the flagman, whose hut was immediately outside the windows of the signal-box, he would have been able to tell them where the engine and van were standing. Without taking any steps whatever to ascertain what had become of the engine they lowered the signals for the Birkenhead train, with the result that the driver of that train was completely misled, and was approaching the station under the impression that he had a clear road in front of him. As regards flagman D. Wilson, although he can hardly be blamed for having gone into his hut to take his breakfast, it

must be said that he was not keeping a good look-out. It was his business to keep himself acquainted with all that was going on, but he was unaware of the presence of the engine and van until, upon hearing the Birkenhead train approach, he came out of his hut. He then for the first time saw the engine and van and at once tried to signal to the driver of the Birkenhead train to stop, but before anything could be done the collision took place.

The driver of the Birkenhead train is not responsible in any way for what happened. He was approaching Chester station with clear signals, and owing to the curve of the line and the position of No. 4 signal-box he was unable to see the engine and van standing across the line on which he was travelling until he was close to them. When he passed the corner of the signal box his fireman observed the obstruction in front, and called out to him to stop. Steam at that time was shut off, and the driver at once applied the brakes with full force, but there was not time for any appreciable reduction of speed before the train struck the engine. The driver says he was running at about seven miles an hour, but this is probably considerably below the mark.

It will be seen from the above narrative that the responsibility for the collision must be divided between driver Scott, fireman Batchelor, and guard Rowe of the ballast train, signalmen Millman and Morris in No. 4 box, and, to a lesser degree, flagman Wilson. Of these I consider that the two signalmen are chiefly to blame.

I have, &c.,

H.A.Yorke.

Railway Department, Board of Trade.

APPENDIX.. Details of damage to stock.

Great Western Engine, No. 11.- Front buffer beam badly bent ; framing from buffer beam to smokebox badly bent inwards ; right-hand leading spring bracket and pin knocked off ; steam chest and right-hand cylinder cover broken ; leading drawbar and shackle broken ; vacuum pipe, leading and trailing ends broken off ; both whistle valves broken off ; two lamp stands knocked off the back of bunker ; left-hand trailing buffer spring broken ; trailing shackle bent ; left trailing life guard broken off ; left trailing spring pin bracket bolt broken ; release valve in right-hand cylinder broken off.

Passenger Brake Van, No. 1,107.- One buffer rod guide broken ; two buffer rods bent.

Third, No. 221.-One buffer rod guide broken ; one buffer rod bent.

Composite, No. 1,206. - One steel headstock bent.

Composite, No. 1,481. - One steel headstock bent; one buffer rod bent and one broken; one buffer rod guide broken.

Third, No. 3,144.-Two buffer rods broken ; one buffer rod guide broken ; one stepboard broken ; one corridor gangway frame broken ; one india rubber coupling pipe broken.

Brake Third, No. 3,377. - Four buffer rods broken; four buffer rod guides broken; two steel headstocks broken; two stepboards broken; two corridor gangway frames broken; one draw-bar broken; continuous vacuum pipe broken; continuous steam pipe broken; electrical communication pipe broken.

Great Western Engine, No. 598.- Front buffer beam smashed ; front drawbar buffers and vacuum connections broken off ; both cylinder and steam chest covers broken ; steam chest waste water cock broken off ; continuous vacuum pipe broken off ; both leading life guards and stays bent ; one cylinder bolt broken; both tender feed pipes bent; left hand injector waste water pipe bent; intermediate buffer plungers bent ; left trailing buffer plunger broken ; oil plug on right-hand front cylinder broken off; both outside spindle glands broken ; driving axle badly bent.

Joint Engineering Department Goods Brake Van, No. 17,761.- One headstock broken ; one buffer guide broken ; one buffer rod bent.

Damage to Permanent Way.

Eighteen point and crossing chairs broken ; eight B1 8-inch chairs broken ; one 14-ft. rail broken ; six other rails badly bent.

[Printed copies of the above Report were forwarded to the London and North- Western and Great Western Railway Companies on the 14th April 1904]

[Reader Stan Yates of Rhyl, who first suggested that this accident report would be of interest to local railway enthusiasts, has provided some extra information on the motive power involved:]

"David, here are a few notes about no. 11 and the 36xx class.

No. 11 was a Birkenhead engine and had been at Birkenhead since September 1903. No. 598 was a Chester engine and had been at Chester since January 1903.

Part Six in the RCTS series of "The Locomotives of the Great Western Railway" says of the 36xx class:

"These engines were designed for fast suburban work, more especially in the Birmingham area, which for many years employed about half of them. The remainder were in their early years in the south, but by 1923 about half a dozen were used on the Chester to Birkenhead services and the number in the south was correspondingly reduced. The only important development in later years was an increase in the number employed on the Birkenhead services."

However, an engine of the 36xx class was stationed at Birkenhead and Chester between 1902 and 1905. No. 3602 arrived at Chester in the four week period ending 14th June 1902 and was then sent to Birkenhead in the period ending 26th July 1902. No. 11 (renumbered 3600 in December 1912) arrived at Birkenhead in the period ending 19th September 1903 and no. 3602 returned to Wolverhampton in the period ending 17th October 1903. After the accident, no. 11 is returned to Wolverhampton for repair in the period ending 9th January 1904 and is replaced by no. 3628, brand new, fresh out of Swindon Works, first allocation Birkenhead. No. 3628 returns to Wolverhampton in the period ending 4th February 1905 and the class is not seen again at Birkenhead or Chester until the 1920s.

The purpose of stationing a 36xx locomotive at Birkenhead in the early 1900s is something of a mystery but the duties must have been sufficiently important since the 2-4-2Ts were the most powerful passenger engines, with a tractive effort of 17,116 lbs, of any type stationed at Birkenhead at that time.

No.s 3607, 3608, 3611, 3616, 3618, 3624, 3627 and 3630 are known to have been shedded at Birkenhead between 1929 and 1934, and nos 3603, 3604, 3609, 3618, 3620 and 3629 at Chester between 1931 and 1934. (No. 3618 was transferred between Birkenhead and Chester on several occasions in 1931/2)

There are photographs of no. 3627 at Birkenhead Woodside (G. Coltas) and no. 3629 at Hooton (H. Tidey) in "The Great Western North of Wolverhampton" by Keith Beck.

The Accident Report identifies the passenger train involved in the accident as the 7am service from Birkenhead to Chester, stopping at Mollington and due at Chester at 7.50am, with the collision occurring at or about 7.49am (if you believe the train driver) or 7.51am (if you accept the word of the Assistant Secretary).

The GWR working timetable for January to June 1900 includes an all stations stopping train departing Birkenhead Woodside at 7.05am, departing Mollington at 7.44am and arriving Chester at 7.50am. The February 1901 edition of Bradshaw's Guide provides the same information. Between March 1901 and December 1903, the service is retimed to depart Birkenhead Woodside at the earlier time of 7am but

still arriving Chester at 7.50am (evidence of train driver). The next timetable in my collection, the GWR public timetable for October 1907, indicates further slight adjustments to the timing of the service, the train departing Birkenhead Woodside at 7am, Mollington at 7.45am and arriving Chester at 7.52am.

There is no record of no. 598 returning to Wolverhampton for repair after the accident and the engine remained at Chester until 1906, returning to Wolverhampton in the four week period ending 13th October 1906.

Regards – Stan Yates”

Northgate Reflections (1)

by Eric Gent

Sometime early in 1952 a friend told me about the horse box trains that arrived at Northgate in the first week in May for the Chester race week hauled by rare locos. This fitted in with the sand I had seen spread the previous year from Northgate goods yard up to Northgate Street, along to the Cross and then down Watergate Street to the race stables near to the Watergate and the Racecourse. For May 1952 I was prepared for more than the large traction engines on the Little Roodee funfair. On Shed on 6th May were 61658 *The Essex Regiment* and 61666 *Nottingham Forest*. The next day 61641 *Gayton Hall* arrived. These were really big LNER passenger locos in the humble setting of Northgate depot. From the shed staff we were told that the first loco to arrive on the Monday with the horses for Tuesday's races was parked up alongside the depot and was used for the last departure on Friday. Tuesday's arrival left with the horses from Tuesday's races some time on Wednesday, whilst Wednesday's arrival left on Thursday. As the locos were from March 31B depot, the trains had started from Newmarket, presumably travelling by Lincoln, Sheffield, Woodhead and on to the CLC in the Manchester area to reach Chester.

In 1953 I only saw 61866 on May 5th and 61886 on the 6th May, again both 31B locos. They seemed a let down after having three 'Sandringhams' the previous year and also as K3s from Gorton occasionally visited the depot. 1954 had 61202 from Lincoln 40A arrive on 3rd May (had the Sandringham failed en route?) and departed on the 6th, with 61621 *Hatfield Hall* arriving on the 4th and 61635 *Milton* on the 5th. This seemed to confirm the early story I had heard about the horse box trains.

1955 it seems I forgot about the trains as I have nothing recorded at Northgate during Race Week. In 1956 I did call in at the depot to find that on 7 May the arrival was behind 44407 from 9F (Heaton Mersey) and the next day the arrival was 42932 also from 9F. This suggested that the B1, B17, K3 had been removed in the south Manchester area.

It would also seem that this was the last year of the horse box trains.

If anyone has any further information to add to the above, for example the times of arrival and departure, earlier workings, etc it would be great to have them added into a future edition of the magazine.

[Editor's note: Eric Gent is Librarian of the Historical Model Railway Society, and author of the definitive book on *British Railways brakevans & ballast ploughs* (HMRS, 1999. ISBN 0 902835 16 5); this book proved very useful to us when modelling B.R. standard 25 ton brakes and 'Shark' ballast ploughs for our "Mostyn" layout. Eric was born in Blacon in 1939, and it was his home until 1966 – he still regularly visits his sister there.]

Mostyn at Alexandra Palace 27th-28th March 2010

by Richard Oldfield

“Forward the Mostyn Crew
Was there a man dismay’d?
Not tho’ the operator knew
Some one had blunder’d:
Their’s not to make reply,
Their’s not to reason why,
Their’s but to do and die:
Into the Pally of Ally
Rode the six ~~hundred~~”

With apologies to Alfred, Lord Tennyson

The silence on our e-group probably reflects the tiredness of the operating team following a long and hectic weekend at Alexandra Palace. It is certain now that there are no circumstances in which we can sensibly operate the extended form of “Mostyn” without a minimum of eight and, preferably, up to ten people available.

If everything is running smoothly then the minimum requirement is four operators at any one time (Up Main Scenic, Up Main Fiddle Yard, Down Main and Exchange Sidings/Dock Reception Sidings). To this must be added a presence at the repairs table plus someone to field questions from the general public. The second fiddle yard is due to make its debut at Chatham in June and this will only add to the challenge.

At Ally Pally we had seven people on Friday set-up, six people all day Saturday and seven people on Sunday. It is an understatement to say that the Saturday session was intense. The crowds around the layout were phenomenal (four-five deep at times around the entire scenic perimeter) and no-one got away for lunch - the best we could manage was to release one operator to get drinks and sandwiches for the rest. I remember going into the centre of the layout at 8.00am (to start circling trains whilst the locomotives and fiddle yard roads were cleaned) and was finally relieved from operating the Up Fiddle Yard at 3.00pm. Everyone else will have similar stories to tell. An added complicating factor was unreliable performance from certain locomotives/DMUs only at certain locations which was steadily resolved throughout the weekend by the replacement of ageing '1025E' chips with more modern decoders. The 1025Es worked well enough elsewhere on the layout and our best guess is that there was some interference from the nearby radio/tv transmitter.

Despite all of this we managed to deliver a superb performance (judging by the reaction on various forums) and eliminated the 'own-goal' problems that made the better-manned Wigan exhibition so stressful. Tiredness I can live with but unnecessary damage and carelessness send my blood pressure soaring. So the 'Ally Pally Six', step forward and take a bow, it was brilliant stuff, we showed what “Mostyn” can really deliver. The people manning the Scalefour Society stand were glowing in their praise and frequently visited the layout.

Sunday saw the relative luxury of an additional operator (when Simon Stevens returned from a railtour to Swanage) and yet another day of hard work but reliable and enjoyable running.

Sunday dismantling went very smoothly but the edge was taken off by the selfishness of an adjoining layout who obstructed the loading area for an inordinate time and had to be 'encouraged' to depart. The 7-tonne truck finally arrived back at the clubrooms at 12.45am, we off-loaded the layout slowly and carefully and I finally walked through my front door at 2.30am

Your crew for the weekend was David F., Dave M, Eddie, Gavin, Philip, Simon Stevens (Friday plus Sunday) and myself.

There is an urgent need to recruit extra competent operators for “Mostyn” at exhibitions. Finding people who want to do an odd operating session is easy but we need operators committed to the entire weekend – warts, tedious bits, and all. We can (just) field a full team from within BMRG resources but it's too much to hope that no-one is on holiday, away working or has other commitments.

Dave Millward is lining up some new potential contributors and one of Philip Sutton's suggested contacts has already responded positively so we can look forward to some new names in exhibition reports.

MAXWELL DUNN'S "1054" STORY

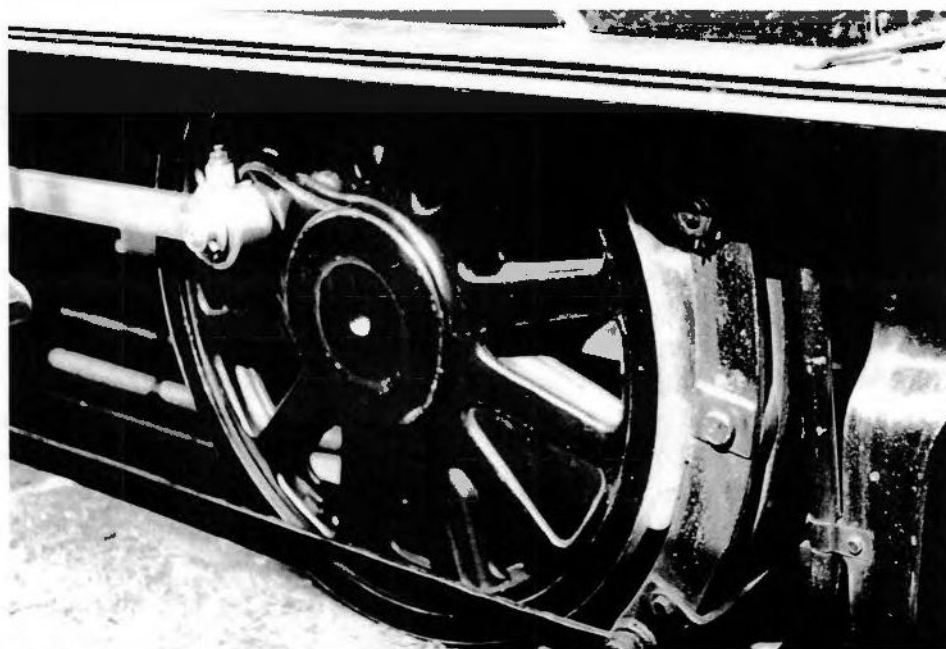
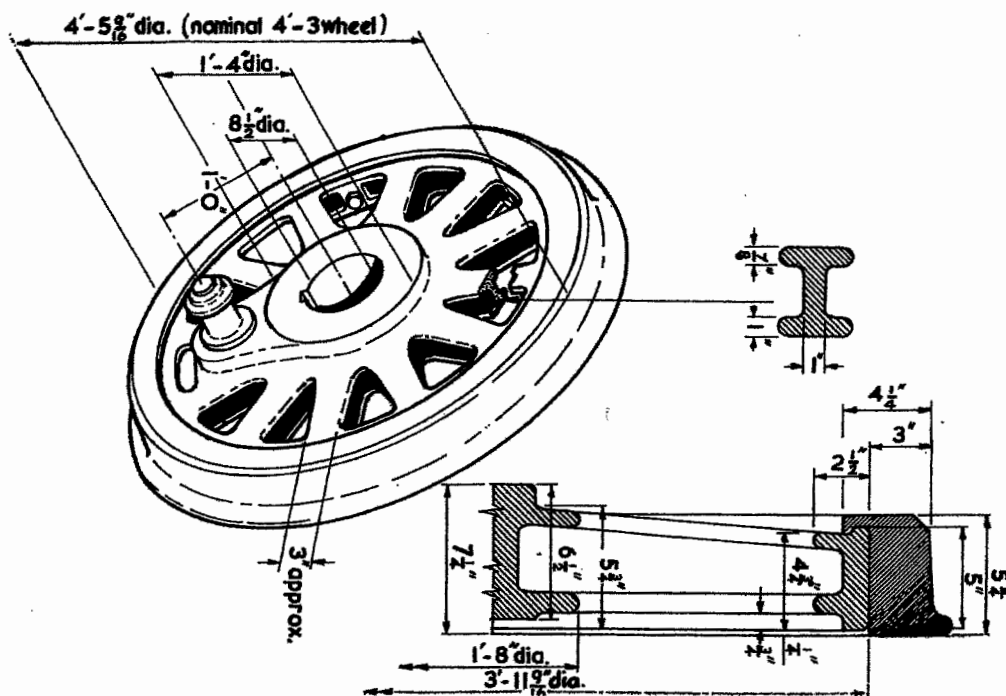
British Railways last remaining 'Coal tank', laid up in the paint shop yard in Crewe Works. Photo by Syd Wainwright on 22 November 1959. This engine (one of a class of 300) had entered service with the London & North Western Railway as their no.1054, in 1888. Passed into L.M.S. ownership, as no.7799, at the Grouping in 1923. Temporarily withdrawn from service in 1939 and then reinstated in 1940. Finally withdrawn as British Railways no.58926 in 1958.



For a year or two prior to 1960 people had been writing to the railway press advocating the preservation of B.R. engine No. 58926, the last of the 300 L.N.W. 4ft. 3ins. side tank coal engines, originally L.N.W.R. No. 1054. I was not particularly interested as I had spent at least half my working life with them and they were not all that good companions so I kept silent on the subject. Anyway in April 1960 a friend* wrote and asked me point-blank if I would undertake the task of saving old 58926 as time was running short and he did not know who else he might ask – furthermore I had retired and it would be something for me to do! I had not the heart to refuse and replied that if no one else could be found I would do so.

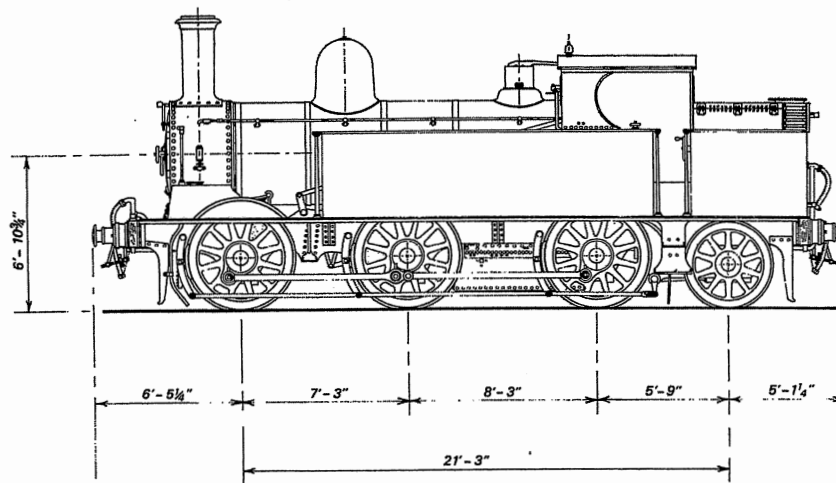
I thus started without any great enthusiasm and more intent on pleasing my friends than on the actual cause I had espoused. However, as I went on, my interest increased as I realised how much the lives of these engines and my own had been intertwined and that it would be something of a romantic personal achievement if I could be the means of preserving the last of them, though what I was going to do with it when I had bought it I had not the foggiest idea.

I had a leaflet prepared and sent out, about a quarter of which brought replies with contributions, and the railway press and enthusiast societies very readily gave prominence to the project in their publications. Contributions towards the needed scrap price of £666 were received from all four continents and by the end of September 1960 the last of the four instalments was paid.



1054 driving wheel, 28.6.86. This distinctive wheel design was typical of L.N.W.R. engines for many years. The diagram above is by the late Jack Nelson.

The next thing was to find somewhere to put it and I had several valued offers of accommodation but when the time came that the engine could no longer be kept in Crewe Works, the only covered site available was at the Hednesford depot of the West Midland Area of the Railway Preservation Society which very generously gave



From a drawing by Ian Beattie, first published in "Railway modeller" in February 1982

it full hospitality until a permanent home could be found. This came like a 'bolt from the blue' in April 1963 when the National Trust having, at the instance of the Industrial Locomotive Preservation Joint Committee, agreed to set up an Industrial Railway Museum at Penrhyn Castle, Bangor, I wrote and asked if they would consider No. 1054/58926 as eligible for their collection? To my intense relief – 34 tons 7 cwt, of locomotive more or less in one's pocket is not exactly a joke! – the suggestion was enthusiastically received by both bodies who said there was an apartment in the Castle with large doors opening on to the Stable Court which would just take it – and so it did.

I then purchased 34 feet of old L.N.W.R. track which I had installed, properly ballasted, at the Castle where No. 1054 was delivered by Pickford's by road from Menai Bridge on 12th March 1964. Following this my associates and I presented the engine and the track on which it stood to The National Trust for permanent preservation and exhibition.

By the time the job was finished in 1964 I had written not far short of 1,000 letters of various lengths. Several people wrote and asked me to organise efforts to preserve other locomotives but enough was as good as a feast and although I thoroughly enjoyed the '1054' job I declined to take on any more.

(The following note is largely taken from www.coaltank.co.uk/past.html :

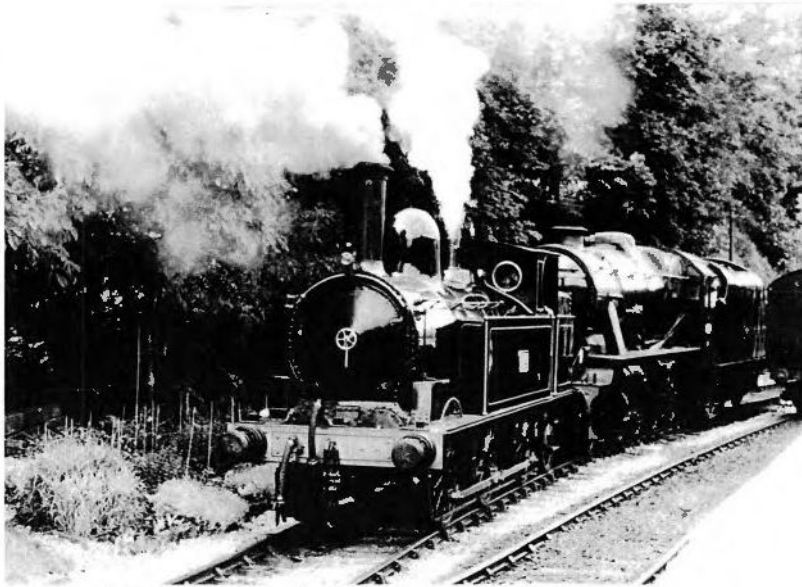
"Although Penrhyn provided public access in safe and secure surroundings, facilities for effectively exhibiting the locomotive were limited – the stables had been built for horses, not mainline railway engines! After nine years at Penrhyn, and with the growth of railway preservation groups providing improved facilities, some of the locomotive's original trustees arranged for the engine to be cared for by the 'Bahamas' Locomotive Society at their Dinting Railway Centre near Glossop in Derbyshire. In 1980 the engine was overhauled, put into working order, and restored to the LNWR condition in which it would have appeared just prior to the First World War. In May



A photograph by D.E.Sutcliffe from the R.T.Ellis and L.N.W.R.Society collection. No.1054 is seen on temporary track used for unloading/loading the engine from the Pickford's transporter, in the Penrhyn Castle gateway.

that year it attended the great exhibition at Rainhill near Liverpool. This was held to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 'trials' won by George Stephenson's famous "Rocket", and the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830.

In the years since, 1054 has performed reliably and well. As well as its use on brake van rides at the Dinting Railway Centre before closure in 1990, and on Vintage trains on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, it has worked on several heritage railways



1054 and 48431 at Haworth, 28.6.86

including the Severn Valley Railway, Llangollen Railway, and the Battlefield Line.

1054 was taken out of service in 1999 for its third and most extensive overhaul since it was bought for preservation over 45 years ago. This work, at Ingrow on the K.&W.V.R. has proved to be more complex and time consuming than anticipated, and completion and return to service is likely to be only within the next year, if all goes well”.

Notes by Tony Robinson:

* Believed to be Geoffrey Platt.

** The nickname ‘Gadget’ was bestowed on the Coal Tank by the men who worked them and was always used by my father – J.E. (‘Jack’) Robinson – to distinguish them from the 0-6-0 Webb Coal (tender) engines. Before retirement, Max Dunn was shed-master at Bangor in North Wales.

(An excerpt from the un-published manuscript by J. M. Dunn entitled “Further Reflections on a Railway Career”- further edited, for the Bahamas Locomotive Society, by Tony Robinson.)

The Dee Bridge accident, 1847: part 5

by David Goodwin

This fifth instalment in the story of the Dee Bridge was intended to include more transcripts from the local newspaper, but the time-consuming identification of relevant text, and the transliteration from microfilm has been curtailed by shortage of time on the Editor’s part: my wife has been unwell, necessitating a new role for me – that of ‘chief cook and bottle-washer’! So this must be considered somewhat as a ‘stop-gap’.

Readers have kindly drawn my attention to several items of interest – including one old, and one new. The old one is a report (*The Dee Bridge failure*) in *The civil engineer and architects journal* issue for July 1847, which is much as the newspaper reports, as far as content is concerned.

The newer one is an article by James Sutherland *The birth of prestressing? Iron bridges for railways 1830 to 1850* which appeared in the *International journal for the history of engineering and technology* (formerly known as the "Newcomen Society Journal") for January 2009, vol.79 part 1. A relevant paragraph from this article is printed here:

"Once it was established that the Dee Bridge failed because of the 'insufficient strength' of the girders, Stephenson's position must have been far from enviable, especially in view of his many related responsibilities. He was not just the engineer of a failed bridge, but the Chief Engineer to the whole railway. What is more this was the Chester & Holyhead Railway, including the Britannia and Conway tubular bridges, then in an early stage of construction, and using a far more innovative, and as yet unproved, form of construction. Furthermore he was the Engineer to the Leopold Railway from Florence to Leghorn with bridges over the Ombrone and Bisenzio rivers, virtually identical to the Dee Bridge, apparently completed and awaiting the opening of the line. Then there were many other trussed compound girder bridges for which Stephenson was at least partially responsible. He must have had all these in mind when dealing with the aftermath of the inquest, but he faced his responsibilities with integrity and never made any attempt to divert blame on to others".

Some relevant excerpts from the *Chester Chronicle* had already been identified and copied. This is from their issue dated 16 July 1847:

"THE LATE RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT CHESTER.

It will be in the recollection of our readers that the government, after the late accident at the Dee Viaduct instituted an enquiry into the strength of the existing girder bridges for the duty they have to perform.

With respect to the Trent Valley line, the government specially referred an enquiry to Captain Coddington as to the iron girder bridges on that line. There are two kinds of flat-girder iron bridges, – the *simple*, where the girder is all in one casting or piece, and is not trussed; and the *compound* where the girder is in two or more castings (those on the Dee bridge were in three castings), bolted together at the meeting flanges, and clipped underneath, and strengthened by wrought-iron rods, or trusses.

The report made by Captain Coddington is too lengthy for our columns; but the following are the passages chiefly interesting in this district.

"Questions proposed by the Commissioners of Railways to Captain Coddington, after perusing his Report.

"Are you of opinion that, after the accident to the Dee Bridge, and a full consideration of all the evidence and reports given upon that subject, and after the government has decided that owing to insufficient data to guide engineers in constructing bridges exposed to the transit of heavy weights at high velocities, it is desirable for a government commission to be appointed to consider the subject, that you can recommend the opening of the Trent Valley Railway with bridges constructed on similar principles to that across the Dee, as not attended with danger to the public using it?

“Memorandum. – In reply to the question contained in the accompanying note, as to whether, in the face of the accident to the Dee Bridge at Chester, and to the admitted insufficiency of data for calculating the proper proportions of such bridges, and that a commission is about to issue to investigate the subject, I am prepared to recommend the opening of the Trent Valley Railway, with bridges constructed on similar principles:-

“I have to state my opinion, that the bridges on the Trent Valley Railway, though constructed on similar principles to that over the Dee, cannot be considered as similar bridges; the proportions of the top and bottom flanges differ materially, and their calculated strength (as far as can be at present calculated) exceeds that of the Dee by a proportion of from 50 to 100 per cent; the proportion between the central load and breaking weight of the Dee Bridge being lower than as one to two, while the Trent Valley Bridges range from 1 to 3 up to 1 to 4½. While fully admitting that with the present data sufficient knowledge does not exist to calculate with accuracy the various forces brought to bear upon these bridges, and that it is most desirable that such knowledge be obtained, still I think the subject one of degree, and that the main question to determine, is to what extent of span a plain flat girder can be made safe for railway transit. To illustrate my meaning, it appears to me that experience has fully proved that for short spans 35 to 40 feet, a simple iron girder, without trussing of any kind, if made of proper form and according to the strength given by established formula, is sufficient to ensure safety as a railway bridge. I look upon the application of the compound trussed girders, as an attempt to carry the principle out to a greater span; accordingly they have been made of 50, 60, 66, 70 feet in span; and such bridges are in daily work, and no failure ever occurred that I have heard of. The bridge over the Dee, the last constructed, is a large increase above the widest of the foregoing spans, having been 98 feet; it has failed; and the failure opens up the question as to whether the limit to such constructions has not been passed, or whether the failure has arisen from deficient strength in that individual bridge.

“In the same manner that I consider experience to have proved the sufficiency of a simple girder up to 40 feet, I consider it has also proved the sufficiency of the compound girder up to 70 feet.

“Had any of the bridges on the Trent Valley Railway exceeded or nearly approached the latter dimension, I could at once have stated in my report that I was not in a condition to give an opinion on them; but seeing that the largest span is but 60 feet, the others even less, and that calculated strength is equal to 70 feet now working, -

“I come to the conclusion that they were within the limits to which experience has shown such a mode of construction to be applicable; and in recommending that the Trent Valley Railway be permitted to open for public traffic, I felt and do feel that I am borne out by the experience to be derived from actual existing results.

“I feel that I am placed in a difficult position in having to give a decision upon practice unsupported by theory; but for myself I have no apprehension of the result; still, in the present state of knowledge upon the subject, it behoves the company to traverse those bridges with caution, until the commission by its labours shall have proved them to be free from hazard.”

We think this report quite conclusive against the *details* of the Dee Bridge. It is completely confirmatory of all independent engineering evidence – particularly that of Major Robe.

We have heard that the Chester Bridge is to be strengthened. It ought to be pulled down. *Nothing less will or shall satisfy us, and we have as much to say on this question as most people.* We give Mr. Robert Stephenson this fair warning.

[Editor's note: This forthright editorial note presumably gives voice to much 'anti-Stephenson' opinion in Chester. But work obviously continued on the railway infrastructure, as reported in the same newspaper the following week:-]

"RAILWAY BRIDGES. – Captain Simmons, the Government Inspector of Railways, was in this city on (Tuesday [20 July 1847]), for the purpose of examining the Railway Bridges over the Canal and the river Dee at Chester." [Chester Chronicle, 23 July 1847].

[The result of his inspection is revealed in editorial report as well as a public notice in the paper's issue dated 30 July 1847:-]

"SHREWSBURY AND CHESTER RAILWAY. – The Directors having received a communication from the Commissioners of Railways, stating that in consequence of the favourable report made to them by the Government Inspector, Captain Simmons, as to the present stability of the bridges of the canal and river Dee at Chester, the line might be re opened for public traffic; the trains now run from Brook-street station [the first site of Chester station] over the Roodee to Ruabon. We may also add, that in order to test most satisfactorily the security of the supports now made to the Dee Bridge, the Directors have reports affirming its safety from their own Engineer, from the Engineer of the Holyhead Company, and from Mr. Cubitt (whom they specially engaged to examine the bridge)."

SHREWSBURY AND CHESTER RAILWAY,

THE BRIDGES OVER THE DEE and
the CANAL, AT CHESTER, having been IN-
SPECTED by CAPT. SIMMONS, R.E. on behalf of the
Commissioners of Railways, and a Report having been
received by the Directors of the Shrewsbury and Chester
Railway approving of the same,

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,

that on and after MONDAY, the 26th instant, the
TRAINS will run from the **STATION AT CHESTER**
OVER THE BRIDGES, at the hours stated in the Time
Table.

R. ROY, Secretary.

Chester, Foregate-street,
24th July, 1847.

THE OLD RAILWAY

[Editor's note: presumably this refers to strengthening struts applied to the remaining bridge girders – the part that had fallen had not yet been replaced.]

The *Chester Chronicle* for 6 August 1847 recorded the half-yearly meeting of the S.&C.R. thus:

"SHREWSBURY AND CHESTER RAILWAY COMPANY.

The half-yearly General Meeting of the Shareholders of this railway, was held at the Royal Hotel, on Wednesday last, at two o'clock, W.C.Gore, Esq. in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN briefly opened the proceedings, and then called upon the Secretary, who read the reports, which were of considerable length. With respect to the late accident at the Dee Bridge, the Directors state that 'it will be satisfactory to their shareholders to learn that it arose without any fault or neglect whatever on the part of the servants of the Company, or from any defect in their engine or carriages'.

Several resolutions were then moved by the Chairman embodying in substantive propositions the recommendation of the report, which were unanimously adopted.

On the motion of the CHAIRMAN, a donation of £100 [worth about £7000 today (Ed.)], with a subscription of five guineas, to be continued annually, was voted to the Chester Infirmary, the former sum being in consideration of the services rendered by that Institution, to the persons injured by the accident at the new railway bridge over the Dee.

The sum of five guineas to the Chester Infirmary, and three guineas each to the Wrexham and Oswestry Dispensaries (also to be continued annually), were then unanimously voted.

A donation of £100 to the Secretary for additional services was proposed and carried without dissent.

Votes of thanks to the Mayor of Chester, the medical officers of the Infirmary, the detachment of the 90th Regiment, and the Royal Artillery, were also passed, and ordered to be forthwith transmitted.

The proceedings closed with the usual vote of thanks to the Chairman and Board of Directors".

(to be continued ...)

Editor's page

Apologies are due to our readers for the lateness of this issue of *Barrowmore Model Railway Journal*. This is due to circumstances largely out of the Editor's control, the main reason being a spell in hospital for the Editor's wife: she has been discharged now, but in a very much weakened state due to 'a viral infection' (i.e. the medical profession didn't really know what was wrong). While she makes an extremely slow recovery, the dog still needs walking, the cats need looking after, shopping needs to be done, people need feeding. And so on.

Several articles in recent issues of modelling magazines are of possible interest to our readers: *Model rail* January 2010 issue includes an article on the Merseyside M.R.S. 4mm G.W.R. layout "Cwmbach-yn-Triardd", while the March issue of the same periodical features "Rockingham" by former Group member Ian Clark. The February 2010 issue of *Rail express* has our definitive description of modelling Class 104 DMUs (mentioned in our 'Letters to the Editor' column on page 11 of this issue of *BMRJ*).

Recent books (and C.D.s/DVDs):

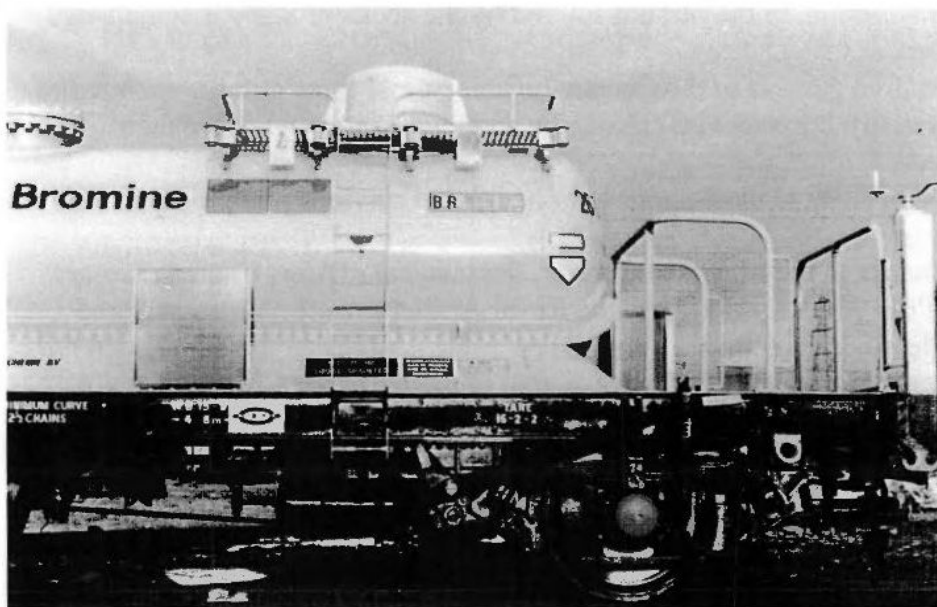
The Wrexham & Ellesmere Railway by Stanley C. Jenkins and John M. Strange. Oakwood Press, 2004. ISBN 0 85361 617 5. £10.95p.

The Chester to Denbigh Railway by Roger Carvell. Irwell Press, 2009. ISBN 978 1 903266 47 2. £17.95p.

The County Donegal Railways companion: a handbook for railway modellers and historians by Roger Crombleholme. Midland, 2005. ISBN 1 85780 205 5. £14.99p.

The Buckley Railway album and associated industries [DVD version of the book published in 2007]. The Buckley Society, 2009. £9.95p. (See letter on pp8/9).

Petroleum rail tank wagons of Britain by R.Tourret. Revised ed., 2009. ISBN 978 0 905878 09 6. £33. (This considerably enlarged new edition includes Associated Octel's tank traffic which ran past Mostyn in the 1970s).



Detail of
Associated
Octel's 26 70
0785 359-6,
photographed
in 1975.

Contents: (No.22, March 2010)

Next issue; Cover illustration	2
Forthcoming events	2/3
"Mostyn at Wigan ..." by Gavin Liddiard and Richard Oldfield	3/6
Christleton accident	6/7
Letters (Robinson, Buckley, Lawson, Dixon, Moxon, Yates)	7/11, 17/18
Wagon plates	12/13
Thames Valley Express rail tour	14
Chester M.R.C. narrow gauge layout	15
"Johnstown Road at Darlington ..." by Norman Lee	15/17
Chester accident 1903	18/29
"Northgate reflections (1)" by Eric Gent	29
"Alexandra Palace exhibition" by Richard Oldfield	30
"Maxwell Dunn's '1054' story"	31/35
Dee Bridge accident 1847, part 5.....	35/39
Editor's page	39/40
Associated Octel bromine ferry tank wagon	40