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The Railways of Leicester

John Gough

This article is an unedited transcript of the Clinker Memorial Lecture given by Dr Gough at Loughborough on 29 April 2006, and so references are not quoted.

However, the lecture was based entirely on primary sources.

Charles Clinker, whom we remember today, holds a special place in the affections of those of us interested in Leicestershire's railways, for fifty years ago he wrote an account of the Leicester & Swannington Railway, a small company with local and national claims to fame on a number of fronts, and he was also the mentor of the Derby Railway History Research Group that produced the history, published by this Society, of the Midland Counties Railway, Leicestershire's first main line and one of the three companies that in the first of the great railway amalgamations came together to form the Midland Railway.

Leicestershire and its county town are both of greater interest than some might think. Jack Simmons pointed out that the county is structurally unusual, with its long history of a territory with its capital near the centre and unchallenged by other significant towns. Leicester itself grew up in a strategic position, where the Fosse Way crosses the Soar, and it is one of the relatively small group of places that have been continuously occupied since Roman times. The town inevitably became the principal transport node in its county and the focus of the roads network.

However, there were no water transport facilities: the Soar, the county's only major river, was not navigable. As early as 1622 William Burton noted of Leicester: 'Had it a navigable river whereby it might have trading and commerce, it might compare with many of no mean rank.' Not until 1778 was the river made navigable, and then only as far as Loughborough. Completion of the Erewash Canal the following year gave continuous water communication to Loughborough from the Derbyshire coalfield (and beyond). Before that, the whole of south and east Leicestershire obtained its coal by road from the Leicestershire coalfield. Water transport made Derbyshire coal competitive in areas it could not previously reach. Loughborough's general prosperity increased, the supply of other goods was improved, and new industries, connected with the needs of the water-transport business, developed.

Leicester drew its conclusions, and a campaign for waterways began in earnest in 1785, seeking not only an extension of the Soar Navigation, but also a link to the south. Despite considerable opposition (not least from the west Leicestershire coalowners), Acts for a number of canals were obtained in 1791. Leicester was linked with Loughborough early in 1794. Although it was another twenty years before the route southwards was finally complete, enough was in use by 1802 to bring significant benefits to the county town.

With the removal of the obstacles to trade due to poor communications, Leicester's industries began to grow and its population to increase. The 1801 census shewed just under 17,000 inhabitants. That of 1831, roughly when the railway came, has 39,904. By 1901, just after the completion of the town's railway network by the arrival of the Great Central, the figure was 212,000. The 1871 Census Report has a particularly interesting comment on the town:

The old manufactures in Leicester have not increased, but have rather diminished during the last ten years. About the year 1861 the strike at Northampton caused the removal of a large portion of its shoe trade to Leicester, and the depression at Coventry a year or two after brought a large number of ribbon weavers from that city and neighbourhood who were absorbed by the elastic web trade. Prior to 1861 the principal manufacture was hosiery. Since that time new trades have been introduced. The shoe trade has brought sewing machine and nail makers, and others have arisen in connection with the elastic web and other trades. There has been a large immigration from other places, and it is still going on. Houses are being rapidly built, and are no sooner finished than they are occupied. There is a small extension beyond the municipal limits, but this is mainly by the erection of villa residences, occupied by the employers of labour.

The frame-knitting of stockings had begun in Leicester in the latter part of the 17th century, and by the middle of the 18th century the town had become a major centre for hosiery and an important distribution centre. During the 19th century the town prospered as essentially a town of (relatively) small businesses (most of them without railway siding

connection and therefore relying on carting for their rail use). There were no huge and dominant establishments as in a number of other places, and no enormously wealthy families. Look rather at the Ellises of Belgrave Hall, or look at the residential development along the London Road and see the type of houses members of the prosperous business community built for themselves. Perhaps the finest is 'Brookfield', built in 1846 for the Burgess family, who were worsted spinners. This was sold in 1869 to another worsted spinner, Thomas Fielding Johnson. In the mid-1920s this house became the residence of the first Bishop of Leicester (and there could have been a 20th century cathedral just opposite!). Its prosperity built on a range of small businesses stood Leicester in good stead, and the town was reputed in the 1950s and 1960s to be amongst the wealthiest in Europe. Today, Greater Leicester has a population of 441,000, and a quick glance suggests to me that this puts it eleventh in England, losing out to Portsmouth by only about a thousand people. 'Greater Leicester' is here a useful concept, as the built-up area remains quite sharply defined.

The impact of the navigable waterways on the shape of the town was considerable. Since the 15th century there had been a general drift eastwards across the line formed by Church Gate, Gallowtree Gate, and Granby Street — the original eastern boundary. But for the quarter century after 1791 the most rapidly-growing area was the north-east corner of the town, where the navigation came and where the public wharf was sited. There was also a considerable in-filling of open spaces along the river through the town, now that such sites had acquired a commercial potential.

The Leicester & Swannington Railway

The introduction in the 1820s of steam-driven machinery for worsted spinning and other trades brought an increased demand for coal, and this revived interest in the west Leicestershire coalfields, which had been uncompetitive since the opening of the waterway. New reserves were discovered, better pumping machinery allowed the flooding problem encountered in the Coleorton area to be overcome, and activity began — hampered by reliance on road transport. And that was the spur for the promotion of the Leicester & Swannington Railway, for the detail of which we can look to Charles Clinker's 1954 account.

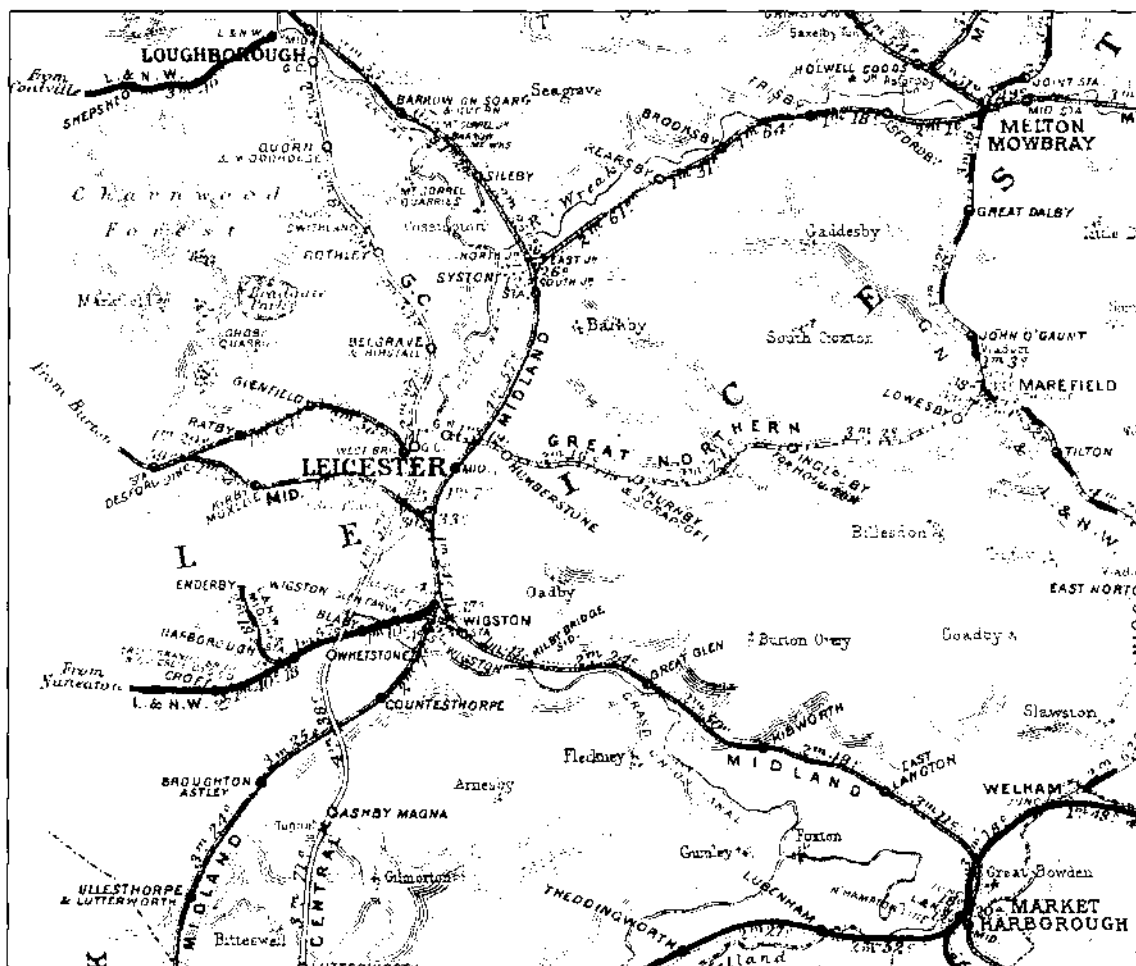
Suffice it to say here that in the autumn of 1828 William Stenson, one of the partners in the Whitwick mine, raised the idea of a railway after seeing the Stockton & Darlington during a visit to the north-east. John Ellis was brought in, and he it was who involved the Stephensons. An Act was obtained in 1830 and the first part of the line was opened two years later. Financial stresses meant that the company was unable to proceed with the branch it planned to connect with the navigation, but in due course powers were obtained for a substitute, and the Soar Lane Branch, opened in late 1834, provided a direct link with the waterway system.

At first there was no special provision for passengers. In November 1840 £79 was spent on alterations to accommodate them at West Bridge, and the resulting limited facilities remained in use until the new passenger station came into use in March 1893 — built not in response to any growth of traffic or out of any concern for passenger comfort, but to meet the requirements of the 1889 Regulation of Railways Act.

The Midland Counties Railway

Just as coal was the spur to the formation of the Swannington line, so it was to the creation of a line from the north. At the end of 1829 there was mention in the local press of a scheme for a line from Cromford and down the Erewash Valley (with a connection to the Mansfield & Pinxton Railway), and plans were deposited in November 1830. This line would have terminated in Leicester, on open land near Melton Street, just across Belgrave Gate from the canal wharf. There is no evidence to suggest ideas of any function other than the transport of goods, and for that purpose such a choice of terminus was entirely logical. Any interference with existing buildings would be avoided by ending the line on the outskirts of the town, and a site so close to the wharf would have made easy transfer of traffic possible between the railway and the canal which served the industrialised area of the town and led to the south. Nothing came of this scheme.

In August 1832 the Erewash Valley coalowners resolved that they really did need a railway to Leicester. By the end of the year their proposed line had been named the 'Midland Counties Railway' and had acquired branches to Derby and Nottingham in addition to its main line from Pinxton. This was now to be more than just a coal line. Liverpool investors were known to be planning a national network of



The Leicester area adapted from the 1922 RCH map

railways, and its promoters argued that the Midland Counties would fit very well into such a plan, not least since a relatively short extension from Leicester to Northampton would allow a junction to be made with the planned London & Birmingham Railway, creating a direct connection with the south. The proposed Leicester terminus remained on the 1830 site. Plans were deposited in November 1832, but the scheme did not come before parliament.

1833 saw a considerable shift in emphasis, with a focus on joining the towns of Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester with the now-authorised London & Birmingham Railway at Rugby (and not Northampton). It took some time to get sufficient financial backing to bring the Midland Counties scheme to parliament, and an act was not obtained until 1836. The 1835 revised plans shew significant differences

from the earlier ones in the route chosen, most importantly between Derby and Nottingham and between Thurmaston and Rugby, with a slightly more easterly course through Leicester itself and an entirely different course south of the town, taking a route through Wigston and Ilkeston instead of through Aylestone and Cosby, passing quite close to Lutterworth.

There was some debate both over the choice of Rugby as end-point and over the route through Leicester, with a suggestion that the line should pass on the west side, both for greater convenience and to avoid the impact on land values a route to the east might have. To take the line on the west side would of course have taken it through the industrial area and near to the existing Swannington line, which must have made the notion seem attractive. But the

railway's new engineer, Charles Vignoles, explained that this was not just a matter for Leicester. The planned railway should take the most direct end-to-end line for the benefit of all concerned. It was at the same meeting that what was to be the South Midland Counties Railway scheme came to public notice, with a plan for a line to run on the west side of Leicester, under the Swannington line, and then on to Market Harborough and Northampton.

The Midland Counties Bill had a slow passage through parliament — and emerged without the Pinxton section that had been the origin of the whole project. A very important change between the original plans and the line as built concerned the station in Leicester. The authorised plans envisaged a terminal station, with connecting curves north and south. After a great deal of debate at board level, concerned very much with the question of distance from the town centre, this scheme was replaced by one for a conventional through station. Nothing was done about plans for a link with the Swannington line.

The Midland Railway

Leicester's main-line railway was opened in 1840 and enjoyed four years' independence before becoming a part of the Midland Railway. The Swannington board began to discuss possible plans for the future, including both the promotion of a link to the Midland by a line from Desford to Broughton Astley and an approach from the London & Birmingham for the lease and possible purchase of their railway. In the event, the company accepted a Midland approach, and by an Act of 1846 the older line was purchased. Powers were swiftly obtained for a link in Leicester and an extension to the Derby-Birmingham line at Burton-on-Trent to create a through route, and for the improvement of parts of the original line.

The Leicester link from Knighton to Desford was very different from the short connections planned in 1836 and 1837. These would have involved the acquisition of expensive land under very varied ownership in Leicester itself, whereas the line actually built ran through land still largely open and agricultural. Moreover, the Midland wanted a double-track through line, and to make the connection in Leicester would have involved either the inconvenience of a single-track section through the narrow Glenfield tunnel or the expense of providing a new tunnel. Whilst dealing with the Swannington

line, the Midland also built its Syston & Peterborough line. Thus it was that at the end of the 1840s Leicester was a Midland town, with connections north and south, east and west over that company's lines. No other Mania schemes touching the town came to fruition.

The London & North Western Railway

In 1860 the Leicester Chamber of Commerce was founded. The meeting that formally adopted its rules and constitution discussed just two other matters: the duty on trade with France, and the intention of the London & North Western Railway to make the line between Leicester and Hinckley as a single line. There was duly a unanimous motion that this was totally inadequate and that the Lords should be petitioned for a double line. The South Leicestershire Railway Act 1860 authorised a scheme that had been around since the 1840s. It gave power to the London & North Western to use the Midland stations in Leicester; it authorised the Midland to require the LNWR to double the South Leicestershire line, and it gave the Midland access to Coventry, requiring the LNWR to build a curve at Nuneaton to allow through running.

The powers given to the Midland provided a good jumping-off point for a direct Leicester to Birmingham link, and a year later a new line from Whitacre to Nuneaton was authorised. It was opened some months later than the South Leicestershire line in 1864. The North Western ran passenger trains to Leicester from 1864 and goods trains from 1867. Its arrival brought a second major railway company into Leicester and completed the network serving the town's principal station.

Midland developments

Meanwhile, the Midland system was expanding and was thus incidentally offering Leicester a very much improved main-line through-train service. The Leicester & Hitchin line was opened in 1857 and saw through Midland trains to King's Cross a year later, giving an alternative route to London. A decade later the all-Midland route to St Pancras followed. Completion of the Midland route to Manchester gave Leicester through services to Lancashire, and the opening of the Settle & Carlisle line in 1876 put the town on a London to Scotland main line, with all Midland traffic between London and the north passing through. By the last quarter of the 19th

century Leicester was very well located in railway transport terms, even though one company had very much the dominant position in offering that transport.

The Great Northern Railway

The railway promotions of the 1870s had two consequences for Leicester. One was not to prove too significant, but the other had an impact for almost the next century. The arrival of the Great Northern Railway never really came up to expectations — either those of the company or those of the town. But the construction of the alternative Midland route from Kettering through Manton and Melton Mowbray to Nottingham and beyond meant that until the 1960s through Midland-line express passenger trains could serve either Nottingham or Leicester, but not both, on the way to Sheffield and the north.

The arrival of the Great Northern was pure competition. Its advent was strongly backed in Leicester, where many people appear to have believed that competition would bring them better services — a debatable topic. In preparing its Derbyshire & Staffordshire lines plans, to gain independent access to the East Midlands coalfield, the Great Northern established friendly relations with the London & North Western. Meanwhile, the attitudes of landowners in east Leicestershire towards the exploitation of ironstone changed and various railway companies shewed an interest in the territory. In the autumn of 1871 a group of men who had been responsible for a number of railway projects in the West Riding taken over by the Great Northern came up with plans for a line from Newark to Melton Mowbray.

Such a railway would give a good connection with Leicester, where the woollen trade was closely connected with Yorkshire and Scotland, and would also be capable of extension into the west Leicestershire coalfield. Naturally it would serve the abundant iron ore in east Leicestershire. Already in late 1871 it was also being noted that an extension of the proposed line from somewhere near Tilton through Thrapston to Sandy would give the Great Northern a better route to Nottingham, access into the very heart of the midland counties, and the possibility of a junction with the North Staffordshire. The real cost to the company of such an extension would not be too high, as its construction would obviate the need to quadruple between Sandy and Peterborough.

The most striking aspect of this initial debate is

the relatively insignificant role played by Leicester and Leicestershire. The scheme was taken up by the Great Northern in the spring of 1872, and the company talked to the London & North Western. The ideas that emerged were the future joint lines. Meanwhile, the Great Northern began to drum up support for its scheme. There was no hostility in Leicester, where it was argued that the town did not enjoy the healthy railway competition found elsewhere and did not get a decent goods-traffic service from the Midland, which was chronically short of space. A petition to parliament duly asked for '... greatly increased and much needed ... facilities with Lincolnshire, the West Riding, and North-east England'.

The Great Northern board was by now looking at the nature and level of traffic to be expected, and the focus was very much on the connection with Leicester — 'undoubtedly a large and prosperous City'. The general manager, Henry Oakley, thought that it might be advisable to consider a more central station than the one originally proposed on Belgrave Road (almost certainly chosen as the closest point to the town centre where there was still open land). He noted that as the intervening territory was occupied by poor-quality housing, it might not be too expensive to gain better access.

The argument on potential earnings is especially interesting, given the lack of information on this score for so many new lines. It seemed that £25 per mile per week might be reasonable for the 40 miles, and in support of this figure Oakley cited the earnings of a number of small railway companies. However, the best evidence he could offer from the Great Northern itself was an estimate of from £12 to £15 a month for the East Lincolnshire line — which suggests that no actual figures were easily available. The new line would give the best route from Leicester to the whole of the north and east of England. If its cost were put at £700,000, then £28,000 would be needed to pay 4%, and since the through traffic would in every case pass over a portion at least of the existing Great Northern system, often to an extent nearly equal to the length of the new line, the general results ought to shew a net profit. All in all, we can get an unusually clear picture of the processes that led to the submission of the Great Northern's bill.

The outcome of the 1872 session was an Act for a line from Newark to a junction with the Midland at Melton Mowbray, without onward running powers. The Great Northern's attempt to get to Leicester had

been thwarted by the hunting and land-owning interests. Leicester was not happy. A protest meeting in the mayor's parlour brought an impressive turnout. It was held to be 'of great importance to the town, and to manufacturers especially, they being large consumers of coal, that they should have a competing line of railway in Leicester'. One speaker maintained that it was vital for the interests of the town to be shewn publicly to be more important than those of the fox-hunting community. There was more comment on the inadequate Midland service for both passengers and goods. The Great Northern was urged to renew its application the next session.

In September 1872 the Great Northern looked at a line from Melton Mowbray to Leicester to complete the previous session's project, together with a spur from Marefield to reach the ironstone at Tilton — and a continuation southwards from Tilton to Market Harborough, together with an extension to the Great Northern main line at a point between Hitchin and Huntingdon to provide for traffic between Leicester and the south. The London & North Western was willing to join in building the line from Market Harborough to Melton Mowbray and would also be prepared to pay a share of the cost of the 1872 line between Melton and Bottesford, where it crossed the Grantham to Nottingham line. However, as the LNWR already had access to Leicester, a line in that direction was of interest. The general manager stressed that what the Leicester people wanted was not merely the connection northwards with the Great Northern, but also a good link southwards to get another route to London capable of competing with the Midland.

The board felt committed to the extension into Leicester, but was more hesitant about the connection south. A full survey of the route to Market Harborough was ordered, but only a preliminary one for that to the main line. The Leicester line was to make a triangular junction near Tilton with the Melton Mowbray to Market Harborough line and follow the general route of the previous year's proposal, avoiding the property of two particular landowners in order to keep clear of a repetition of the problems. As a better entry to Leicester was not practicable, the goods station should go on the Belgrave Road site, but the question of the passenger station remained open.

Bills were duly deposited. The strong support of the Leicester Chamber of Commerce was sustained. There was a huge parliamentary battle in the 1873

session — the longest since that for the Great Northern a generation earlier. The extension to Leicester was authorised, but the Joint Line was not. In the autumn of 1873 detailed attention was given to the question of the Leicester station. The central site of the Bell Inn was still for sale and could be reached by a line some 1,600 yards long from the Belgrave Road goods yard. Almost the whole length would have to be on bridges or viaducts, so it would be expensive. If there were to be no direct London route, then perhaps such a line could not be justified.

The question of better access to the various Leicester factories had also been re-examined. As we have noted, most of these lay on the west and south-west sides of the town, skirting the canal and river. This area could be reached at a reasonable cost and without disturbing too much property by a line taken round Leicester, through fields for most of its length. Such a line would provide for passenger and goods traffic from the manufacturing district and would allow a direct connection with the cattle market, solving the potential problem of having to drive cattle through the town from Belgrave Road.

And there was another point: an extension of such a line for a few miles up the river valley beyond Leicester would allow the Great Northern to make a junction with the LNWR near Narborough and so overcome the difficulty posed by that company's lack of powers to meet the Great Northern over the Midland line. The LNWR was consulted, a survey was made, a group of Great Northern directors visited Leicester, and they gave general approval to the plan. A survey was made, but nothing more was done. It is interesting to note in passing that in 1875 the Midland looked at a line round the west side of Leicester, apparently as an alternative to quadrupling through the station area and out to Knighton.

In 1874 the Act for the Joint Line was obtained. The Great Northern did not actually start work on the Leicester line till the end of the decade. The corporation was shewing interest in the idea of a joint passenger station again and in 1880 the Great Northern obtained powers to make an agreement with the Midland over station accommodation in Leicester — although the Midland made it abundantly clear during the proceedings that it had no intention whatsoever of making any sort of agreement on that particular topic. In 1881 the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture and the Leicestershire Trade Protection Society both approached the Great Northern about a joint station, and in April 1882 the corpora-

tion also agreed to contact the town's three railway companies, requesting all of them to receive a deputation. At this stage the Great Northern was still planning only a temporary passenger building. The Midland, however, had no intention of playing ball.

Excursion traffic on the new line began in October 1882, and regular passenger traffic at the start of the new year. Although some goods had run since May 1882, the general goods service did not start till March 1883. An office was set up in Gallowtree Gate, both to be a Great Northern presence in the middle of the town (where the Midland too had an office) and a good central location for taking in parcels. The station was connected to the telephone service. The permanent passenger station was opened at the end of May 1883. Grinling, a man well qualified to pass judgement on the Great Northern's financial affairs, wrote in 1898: 'With a foresight which may yet prove to have been enlightened, the directors ... had acquired no less than thirty-six acres of station ground at Leicester ...'. As for the curve linking the Great Northern to the Midland, which would have been the means by which the Great Northern would have reached a joint station, its history is briefly told. As I explained in an article the *Journal* in March 1982, it was built but never opened for traffic.

The initial passenger service offered trains to both Grantham and Newark, but as early as April 1885 the separate services were replaced by a simple Leicester to Grantham service, to save train mileage — an indication that traffic was not coming up to the levels expected. Then in June 1887 the Great Northern decided to make the station master responsible for goods as well as passengers. Three years later his annual salary went up from £200 to £225, a factor taken into account being that he was doing the work formerly done by two people with a combined salary of £410 per annum. Yet another pointer to a lack of passenger traffic was a decision in June 1887 to 'dispense with the services of Mr Winebloom, Steward of the Leicester Refreshment Rooms, and pay him £50 on his retirement'. There is no mention of any replacement. Small points — but taken together they do point to a failure of the passenger service to establish itself as hoped.

In July 1883 a weekday Peterborough service of four pairs of trains a day was introduced, but within four years this was down to three pairs, and by 1891 the Great Northern was considering the future of a

service recognised by both the Great Northern and the LNWR as unprofitable (because of which the LNWR accepted only half earnings as user charge instead of the normal two thirds). In response to the petitions, the service was kept on, and lasted until 1916.

Although from most points of view Belgrave Road has to be seen as a white elephant, for many years it did come into its own on at least one day of the week, for seaside traffic.

The station had been so generously laid out that there was never any need to expand — or even greatly to change — its facilities. The station that was finally closed differed very little from the station opened in 1883. It is interesting to note that the same can be said of the Great Central station in Leicester, although that was certainly not the same financial disaster that the Great Northern adventure was. Whereas the builders of early railway stations such as that in Leicester Campbell Street had often tended to underestimate the requirements that rising traffic would place on facilities, the builders of late stations often seem to have made the reverse mistake.

Whilst the Great Northern passenger traffic at Leicester seems to have been pretty unsatisfactory, there is frequent comment in the minutes on the growth of the goods trade. It is unfortunate that the available Midland statistics do not permit any ready comparison, because the companies generally quote on a different basis. We can see that for the six months to December 1892 the Great Northern brought 8,802 tons of coal to Leicester, 7,534 tons for the same period in 1893, and 12,122 tons for the same period in 1894. For the full year 1892 the Midland handled nearly 200,000 tons at its main premises in Leicester, with another 130,000 tons at West Bridge. This does put the Great Northern contribution in some sort of perspective. Parcels traffic at Belgrave Road increased from £3,967 in 1887 to about £5,247 in 1891. But again these figures are small, as the comparison with the Midland demonstrates all too clearly: in 1887 Campbell Street handled parcels traffic to the tune of almost £21,000, and by 1891 the figure getting on to £28,000. We can but speculate on whether the Great Northern would have done any better if a joint station had been developed and the connection with the Midland brought into full use.

The Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway

The last railway into Leicester was very different — not a branch, but a true main line, projected to serve the major towns and compete for main-line traffic. The Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway had been interested in a coal line through east Leicestershire at the beginning of the 1870s. Twenty years later it was back with very different ambitions. The first steps were taken in the summer of 1889, when the Sheffield's board decided to press on with its planned extension from Beighton to Annesley and to have plans and estimates prepared for an extension south to a junction with the Metropolitan.

By the start of 1890 the extent of Watkin's plans was known. The railway that would be most affected was, of course, the Great Northern. Despite their Fifty Years Agreement, still with twenty years to run, relations between the Sheffield and the Great Northern had never been exactly easy. Nevertheless, because the agreement existed, Watkin got in touch with his Great Northern opposite number to let him know what was up and see if matters could be squared. The planned new line was to leave the Annesley extension just before its junction with the Great Northern. Heading south, it would run under Nottingham, cross the Midland line at Loughborough, pass through Leicester on the western side, cross the London & North Western at Rugby, and then continue to the west of Daventry to join the Aylesbury & Buckingham line somewhere near Quainton. There was support for the line in Nottingham, where the proposal was for a tunnel under the town and a central station.

Watkin met Leicester Corporation's Parliamentary Committee in the summer of 1890 and was offered support for the new railway. He reported to his board that the committee had raised the question of a central station for Leicester and had asked him to talk to the other companies about it. The committee had suggested that the railway should come south into Leicester via Anstey rather than via Belgrave, and had offered corporation land on goods terms. It noted that the corporation should regard another main line through Leicester with considerable favour. The account in the Leicester records differs in one important respect from that in the railway minutes: according to the corporation, the question of a central station was raised not from its side but by Watkin. The committee certainly liked the idea, and resolved that it 'will be prepared to give all reasonable

assistance and support towards the achievement of that object'. Both the Leicester Chamber of Commerce and the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture came out in support of a central station, the latter trusting 'that the Castle and other historical remains in Leicester be not interfered with'.

Watkin duly approached the other companies. The Midland observed both that it was just about to enlarge its own station, incorporating corporation suggestions into the design, and that it did not in any case agree that there was any insufficiency of railway accommodation in the district through which the new line was to pass. Its chairman made a slighting reference to Watkin's moves in his 'Parliamentary Chess Game'. The London & North Western responded that it could but follow the Midland as it had access to Leicester only by that company. And the Great Northern was cool, recording that it was not interested in any connection with the proposed new line in Leicester or in the possibility of a central station there.

During 1891 the established companies seem to have recognised that opposition was not likely to succeed, and each sought to do the best deal possible. The most complicated exercise was the Great Northern's. This allowed that company to opt to share the stations in Nottingham and Leicester. There was an important difference between the two proposed arrangements: in Nottingham the GNR could join in only by taking part ownership of the station, but in Leicester there was the alternative that it might simply elect to use the Sheffield station rather than to become a full joint owner. Watkin suggested a similar arrangement to the Midland, and out of ensuing officer-level talks came a very curious suggestion: that the Midland might withdraw its opposition to the bill if the Sheffield would agree to use the Aylestone to Rugby section of the Midland line, which ran parallel to the proposed new line for some 13 to 14 miles, was almost level, and carried very little traffic. The topic was pursued, but nothing came of it. In due course the two companies agreed that neither would oppose the other's Bill.

It was in Leicestershire that the major changes between the 1890 plans and those of 1891 were made, shortening the route and overcoming Lord Lanesborough's opposition without adding to costs. A major deviation north of Loughborough moved the line to the east, avoiding the need for an 1,100-yard tunnel. South of Loughborough the original route to Leicester was to run south to Anstey and then swing south-east towards Leicester, entering the town along

the line of the Anstey Lane. Another 1,100-yard tunnel would have taken the railway pretty well underneath the Gilroes reservoir by Leicester Frith farm. The Leicester station would have been roughly on the site eventually used, but on a different axis. The 1891 plans brought the railway straight into Leicester from the north, through Belgrave, with no need for a tunnel. The chosen line entered the built-up area at the latest possible point. The new plans avoided the need to buy two large mills, as well as some damage to the castle for which compensation would have been due. The axis of the station shifted, and the Sheffield agreed to a corporation request for a £10,000 contribution to a road-widening scheme to give better access to it. A parliamentary accident meant that the Sheffield bill did not complete its passage in 1892, but it went through without difficulty in 1893.

The Great Northern decided to join in the Nottingham plans, but in reminding his directors that there was a similar right to join the new line at Leicester, and that this would extend running powers south to that town, its general manager noted:

There is, however, at the present time no pressure of any description requiring special attention to the Leicester connection.

A little later, he wrote:

With regard to Leicester the question is not so serious nor important to the Great Northern. We are not bound to become Joint Owners as we may use that Station without ownership on terms to be agreed. Our Leicester traffic is very insignificant at present and cannot, I think, increase so far as the South is concerned until the connecting line between Medbourne and the Great Northern Main Line at Huntingdon or St Neot's be constructed. We might therefore without much risk, intimate our decision to use this Station, and as we should pay only in proportion to user, the amount would be small, until by the construction of a Southern Extension we became serious Competitors for the South traffic.

The engineer noted of Leicester:

The question of forming a connection with the MS&LR at Leicester is a very difficult one. A line of Railway about 1¾ mile in length would be required, commencing at the Willow Walk overbridge at the entrance to the Passenger Station, to be continued in Viaduct over the Belgrave Road and the low lying land just North of the Abbey Park. North and South Junctions would be required with the MS&LR. This part of the question requires further careful consideration.

It is an interesting reflection on change during the Victorian era to note how much more interaction there

was between railway and corporation in the 1890s than there had been during earlier construction periods, over such matters as roads, bridges, corporation property, and so on. Leicester Corporation's Highways & Sewerage Committee even appointed an official, paid £2.10s a week, to look after the progress of the Sheffield from the town's point of view under the direction of the borough surveyor. However, it is worth remarking in passing that Nottingham required much more of the railway when it was built, in the provision of certain suburban stations and so on, than Leicester, where there were no similar pressures.

Competing services

The new railway was opened for passenger traffic on 15 March 1899. As for the opening day, 'Much interest was felt at Leicester in the event, for while the earlier trains were not very largely patronised, considerable numbers of people visited the new station in Great Central street, to witness the arrival and departure of the morning trains,' reported a local newspaper. So, fifty-nine years after the arrival of the Midland Counties line and the establishment of through communication with Euston Square, Leicester acquired its second main line. This was real competition for the Midland for the first time.

Virtually all Great Central main-line trains served Leicester, offering quite a wide range of destinations and some very creditable timings. From Leicester to London the line was longer and harder than the Midland's, and it served no significant centre save Rugby. However, the link that was soon built to the Great Western at Banbury meant that the Great Central was in a position to offer through fast services to south and south-western areas which were (and remain) only very awkwardly accessible to Midland travellers from Leicester. Northbound, all Great Central services ran to both Nottingham and Sheffield. Beyond Sheffield, most went on to Manchester, with some diverging for other Yorkshire destinations. On the Midland, because Manchester trains tended to run via Leicester and West Riding trains via Nottingham, with Scottish trains using both routes, Leicester had relatively poor Midland services to Nottingham, and a mediocre offering to Sheffield, Leeds, and Bradford. South of Leicester the Midland served more significant towns than the Great Central, but it had no such useful connection as its rival's Banbury line.

As everyone here knows, detailed railway traffic

information is hard to come by. One year when we can make a comparison for Leicester is 1903. That year the Midland station in Leicester booked 707,765 passengers, bringing in £117,003. Another £27,861 brought total coaching revenues to £144,864 (and the working expenses of the passenger station were £17,524). At Leicester Central 354,072 passengers were booked, the revenue being £25,877.6.2d, and the parcels office took another £10,255.4.11d, thus giving a total revenue of £36,132.11.1d. It is clear from these figures that each passenger on average paid the Great Central less than his equivalent on the Midland.

In 1903 the Great Central was running 13 trains from Marylebone to Leicester and beyond. Three were stopping services, taking about 3¼ hours for the journey, and one was a night train for Manchester. There were 9 daytime fast services from London, the star performer being the 3.25pm to Sheffield. This served Leicester by means of a slip-coach arriving at 5.22pm, thus offering a service in 117 minutes. The best of the 'regular' trains was the 1.40pm to Manchester (with through coaches to Huddersfield and Bradford) which took exactly two hours to Leicester. Times over this difficult route were certainly not discreditable.

A number of services actually began in Leicester, with express trains leaving at 6.55am for Manchester and York, at 8.20am for Manchester with a through coach to Blackpool, and at 5.25pm for Cleethorpes. A stopping service to Cleethorpes went out at 7.10am, and various other local services left for Nottingham and even Sheffield. Four trains came through on the cross-country route (over which later years were to see some even more interesting

workings). The most interesting was the Bournemouth to Newcastle via Sunderland train, arriving in Leicester at 4.30pm with through coaches to Bradford, Manchester, and Liverpool.

There were 16 northbound Midland trains in 1903, and they were on average a little faster than the Great Central's — over a slightly shorter and easier route. Leicester continued to be well served by both companies, and the fact that in the final pattern chosen for Grouping they went different ways ensured that competition would remain, even though neither line was to be its new parent company's principal area of interest. Midland services improved, with the time for London to Leicester coming down to 99 minutes in the latter part of the 1930s as part of the LMSR mile-a-minute campaign. On the Great Central services were a little thinned out, but there was certainly no sharp deterioration in standards — though unfortunately no great improvement either. After nationalisation the two routes went to different regions of the newly-formed British Railways, and each continued to offer parallel services, with rationalisation and closures not coming until the 1960s.

* * * * *

- Was the construction of the Great Northern justified? No, and probably would still not have been if either the direct connection to the south or the loop round Leicester had been built.
- Was the construction of the Great Central justified? Probably not, though it did provide Leicester with some very good and useful long-distance services.
- Did Leicester have good railway communications? Yes.

Publishing picture books

Peter Johnson

This is the fourth in a series of articles about writing for publication. Although it is principally concerned with books which comprise mainly photographs, most of the principles also apply to illustrations included within 'heavier' books and articles.

In some circles there appears to be a tendency to be dismissive of photograph albums, or even of books that contain photographs at all! This may have its

origins in the days when printing blocks were expensive and their use limited by cost. Today's modern high-speed printing technology facilitates

both the production of books and the reproduction of photographs in them. There is certainly a market for good books of well-chosen photographs. My Public Lending Right statement tells me that my most borrowed books are picture books and there are some publishers who only produce them.

Their popularity will give rise to the suggestion that they are produced to the lowest common denominator and whilst many are they need not be. Just which you produce will depend on the publisher, either by producing a specification following discussion or by taking a lead from an existing series. Most established publishers will have a standard specification: 64 pages, 64 colour photographs, 1,000 words or 128 pages, 250 monochrome photographs, 5,000 words, to cite two examples, the former for the mass market, the latter having scope for something more specialised.

Selecting the pictures

Having agreed the specification, now comes the difficult part, finding and choosing the pictures. For most of us it will be easiest and most profitable to use pictures of our own taking or pictures from our own collection. The next step is to turn to a friend, or several, with a collection who will bask in the reflected glory from contributing to your book. The publisher may have his own collection that you can draw on. Finally, there are the specialist photo libraries and agencies. These tend to be expensive, with their operators assuming that all publishing is done at London prices and charging accordingly, so you probably won't use them unless they have the one picture that you absolutely must use to complete your book and which therefore justifies a high fee.

If you require 250 photographs for your book and you have 250 pictures on your subject — don't do it! It's unlikely that you will have 250 gems and including make-weights will spoil your book. If you need 250 photographs you should start with about 1,000, nearer 1,500 would be better. In doing so you will stand a better chance of avoiding having to use those well known pictures that appear in 'every' book on your subject. Start to sort, select themes — locomotives, rolling stock, stations, infrastructure, gauges, places on the route — even a picture book must have a structure. Sorting will identify the strengths and weaknesses of your collection, the number of similar views of the same subject, for example: you can't use them all. Reject the out-of-focus, the poorly composed, the badly exposed. You

may grieve for every gem that goes on the discard pile, especially as you get closer to your target, but your book will be the better for it. At the end you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you've chosen the very best of those available to you.

Be aware that colour transparencies can be submitted even if reproduction will be monochrome.

Narratives

Then comes the writing. The introduction should both introduce the subject and set out your objectives. If you've only got 1,000 words consider referring the reader who seeks more information to a standard work. Use a few lines to acknowledge those who've helped you. With a larger word count you have more scope to go into greater depth; you might be able, depending on the format, to write introductions to each chapter or theme. There probably won't be scope for a full bibliography so consider providing a 'select bibliography' or 'further reading'. Your publisher should not object to this technicality as it gives the book more substance.

The length of captions will depend on the type of book. Generally, the bigger the pictures the shorter the captions but they still need structure. If yours is, say, an album about Welsh narrow gauge railways, you could order it geographically, alphabetically or by gauge. With the first picture of each line, incorporate a brief, very brief, outline history. The same goes for locomotives. Where there is scope for longer captions the publisher's designer should be able to cope with them being of unequal lengths; you are most unlikely to have the same amount of information to impart about every photograph. And if you get to one of your hard-fought-for gems and you can't think of anything to say about it, throw it out, don't use it, go back to the reject pile and choose another that fills the gap that you can say something about.

Submitting the package

Sort the pictures into the order in which you envisage them appearing in the book. Number them in that order and number your captions to match. Some publishers prefer to have a separate series for each chapter or section but usually one series will suffice.

Be aware that publishers and their designers often have strong ideas about what looks good and they might not be the same as yours. Photographs might be rejected or sequences might be changed — be

prepared to battle for things you feel strongly about.

Publishers also have strong ideas about what makes a good cover; you are not likely to have much input into this aspect of your book. You may be asked to supply a selection of suitable material or the designer will 'lift' an image, or several, from your package for the cover. In the latter scenario the pictures chosen may appear both on the cover and in the book, in which case captions need only appear in the body of the book. If pictures only appear on the cover don't forget the captions.

Nowadays you will submit your manuscript in some form of electronic media, be it floppy disc, CD or e-mail. Consult with your publisher to ensure that your word processor and his are compatible. You may be required to supply a print-out; in any event, make sure that the layout is well spaced so that it can be read quickly. The publisher will probably still expect you to supply him with real photographs but if you do supply any as computer files ensure that they are of sufficient resolution; 72dpi (dots per inch) may look good on your computer monitor but is nowhere near adequate for printed reproduction; 300dpi should be the minimum considered but if you haven't been given a figure use the largest you can get, as a computer image can always be reduced but it can never be satisfactorily increased. If the publisher, or his designer, feels the need to 'improve' an image you probably won't be consulted. Changes to contrast or repairs to tears or creases in the original can be tolerated but you may have strong feelings about the removal of 'intrusive' telegraph poles or similar.

Maps and diagrams

Most often, with picture books, you won't need maps or diagrams. Your publisher will tell you what he expects. If he does expect graphic art then he should have budgeted for it, and will pay for it. You may have to provide the source material for the graphic artist to work from. If you decide your book will be improved by a map or a plan then put the idea to your publisher. If you are able to produce the artwork yourself, or have a friend who can do it for you, so that it doesn't cost the publisher anything, you might find it easier to get your idea accepted.

Design

It is unlikely that you will be involved in your book's design. A publisher with a format is likely to have a

designer who will apply your submission to the format. You should get proofs, though, and they will give you the chance to comment on how things look. Keep an eye out for that *bête noir*, the reversed photograph, or the one that's been located with the wrong caption. If you've referred in a caption to some obscure essential detail that's right on the edge of your print, now's the time to make sure it's not been cropped by the designer. It is also the time to make sure that any linked captions that you carefully crafted still appear in the right sequence. In both cases you can either get the picture moved or correct the caption.

Contracts

The question of the contract can be a fraught one. Despite what you might expect from the media, there are no set contracts for authors. That is especially true at our end of the market, where we tend not to have agents going into battle for us. An established publisher will have a standard contract that he has used many times. It may be skewed in his favour but you will accept it, either in ignorance or because you feel that you don't have much influence. Most of us wouldn't want to miss out on the chance of publication because we couldn't agree terms.

The contract will define what the publisher expects of you, including the book's specification and when you are expected to deliver it. It will require you to take responsibility for content and, usually, to obtain copyright clearance for use of photographs. There may well be penalty clauses for failure to comply. Most publishers are likely to have them for use in case of serious problems but if, for example, you realise that you are going to miss your delivery deadline you are not likely to be hit by penalties providing you inform your publisher in reasonable time — he may be able to put another title into your slot in the programme.

For an author the most important part of the contract will be the section relating to money — the basis of and timing of payment. It could be 10% of the cover price on full-price sales, payable within 28 days of the end of the publisher's financial year — when is that vital date? It could mean that you are working on a project for two or three years before you see any return for your efforts. A publisher may, however, offer you a fee, payable by instalments, maybe even one just for signing the contract, the others on acceptance of the manuscript and on publication, that will cover a specified number of

copies and then a percentage on subsequent sales — be aware though, that whilst the trigger point for additional payments may be 4,000 copies the initial print run could be less than half that number; the benefit of a scheme like this is that you know when you will be paid and how much you are going to be paid, and that will not be affected by the number of copies sold.

I regret that I must mention a third scenario, one that appears to be prevalent when inexperienced author's are dealing with small publishers — where the author gives his book away, 'He's a friend, I just wanted to see the book published'. When everyone else in the chain is being paid the author should be as well. If the publisher is a friend and you don't want to appear too pushy, consider asking for a nominal contribution towards expenses or suggest deferring payment for an agreed period. If the author is not being paid either the book will be sold for less than it should be, which distorts the market, or the publisher is making a higher profit, which isn't fair.

The question of reproduction fees will also be covered by the contract. Is there a separate budget? Are you paying? If the latter will it come out of your fee or royalty as author? If the former are you constrained to offer the publisher's norm? At our end of the market the tendency is for publishing to exist in an inflation-free zone, so payments of £5 for monochrome and £10 or £15 for colour are still common. If the publisher has a fees budget you may be able to add your own photographs to the contributors' list, so increasing your earnings from the book.

Despite the author's natural inclination to concentrate on the financial aspects of the contract the most important aspect is the minefield that is copyright. Are you selling it to the publisher, the usual fee being £1, or retaining it? In our theoretical picture book, where the words may seem to play a minor role, it could be said that the author is being paid for his knowledge and skill in assembling the picture collection. That has a value and if at all possible the author should retain ownership of his contribution.

In some books copyright is attributed to both author and publisher. What this *should* mean is that the text is the author's copyright and that the design

belongs to the publisher — this can be put into context when considering established series, where the author has obviously made no contribution to the book's layout and appearance.

Copyright of the photographs, however, despite their significant contribution to the book, remains with the photographer or his heirs or assignees, according to a set of arcane rules. [See the next article.] This means that, unless agreed to the contrary, the photographs can be contributed to any other publication that wishes to use them.

Tax

Having stepped through this apparent minefield, signed a contract, written a book and seen it published and been paid, there is one final piece in the jigsaw to be considered, liability for tax!

Now, I am not an accountant but I can say this. Keep a record of your expenses: fares, accommodation, photocopies, film and processing, postage, stationery, reference materials; you can claim them against your income. For working from home you will be able to claim a percentage of your heating, lighting and telephone bills. If you use a car you can claim a percentage of its running costs according to your estimate of the amount that you used it on your project. Capital allowances can also be claimed against the value of your car, if used, and other equipment. Seek advice, a suitably qualified friend will be cheapest but if you are mathematically literate and keep good records then an accountant should save you more than he (or she) costs.

Personal

You may be asked to supply an 'about the author' paragraph, either for use in the book or for promotional purposes — be prepared to puff yourself up, if you don't no-one else will!

* * * * *

If you have an idea for a book, or have been given the opportunity to write one, go for it, it can be a lot of fun and the end result usually the same — what next?

An Introduction to Photographic Copyright

Peter Brown

Copyright law is a complex subject. The following notes are intended only as a general introduction, specifically in the context of publishing UK photographs. For further information the reader is recommended to consult the leading book on the subject: *Copyright for Archivists and Users of Archives* by Tim Padfield (published by Facet Publishing) — and if there are any doubts on a practical issue, advice should be sought from a specialist in intellectual property law.

What is copyright?

In the UK, copyright is regarded principally as the right of someone to benefit from the fruits of their skill, judgement and labour.

The first Copyright Act was in 1710; the current legislation is the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, as amended to take account of developments such as European Union initiatives and changing technology. The succession of Acts is partly responsible for the complex rules concerning the periods for which copyright applies. Infringement of copyright can lead to civil damages or (in certain limited circumstances) to criminal prosecution.

Copyright protects only a whole or a substantial part of a work, so an insubstantial part may be reproduced. What constitutes a 'substantial' part of a photograph depends on the nature of the photograph itself. For example, a locomotive might occupy only 5% of the area of a photograph, but if it is the central feature of interest, its image would probably be subject to copyright. However, a signal box (say) in the background, though also 5% of the area of the photograph, might be held to be insubstantial.

The period for which copyright lasts

For photographs taken before 1 June 1957, the general rules are:

- where the 'author' (photographer) is known, copyright lasts for 70 years after his or her death;
- where the photographer is not known and the photograph has not been made available to the public, copyright lasts for 70 years from the end of the year it was taken; and

- where the photographer is not known and the photograph has been made available to the public within 70 years of having been taken, copyright lasts for 70 years from the end of the year the photograph was first made available.

Photographs taken after 1 June 1957 will be in copyright for at least another couple of decades from now [2006]. A decision chart for copyright periods is given in the Appendix. Different rules apply to photographs which are subject to Crown copyright.

It will be noted that ownership of the copyright is irrelevant in determining its duration.

The copyright owner

The author (photographer) is usually, but not necessarily, the first owner of the copyright. It depends on the particular circumstances as well as on the law in force at that time. If the photograph was taken by an employee in the course of his or her employment, the employer would usually be the first owner of the copyright — this can be particularly relevant for postcards.

It is possible for two people to have a copyright interest in one image. If, for example, a photograph had been damaged and the image had been skilfully restored, both the photographer and the restorer would have a copyright interest in the restored image. Similarly, it would be unwise to copy an image from another book without permission, even if the original of that image was out of copyright.

Ownership of a photograph or a postcard does not imply ownership of the copyright of its image — the two are quite separate matters.

Copyright can be assigned or bequeathed. If no specific provision has been made in the first owner's will and if there is more than one residual beneficiary, they will become joint owners. The practical problem is that permission to reproduce should be obtained from *all* the owners; and by the time 70 years after the photographer's death approaches, there may be a multitude of joint owners.

If the copyright is owned by a corporate body, and that body is purchased or taken over by another, copyright ownership passes in the same way as any other asset.

Uncertain ownership

Where the photograph has been published (for example, as a postcard) and it has not been reasonably possible to ascertain the photographer's identity, the law presumes that the publisher is the first owner of the copyright unless other evidence is later found.

It is up to the person wishing to republish the photograph to decide what action to take in order to try to ascertain whether the photograph is still subject to copyright and, if so, who owns the copyright — and then to get the necessary permission. The Act gives absolute rights to the copyright owner; the republisher cannot avoid a claim merely because they considered they had taken reasonable steps. Hence it is a matter of balancing the benefit against the risk: does the benefit from inclusion of the photograph outweigh the chance of legal action?

One possibility is, after having taken reasonable steps to find the copyright owner, for the republisher to include a statement saying that all efforts have

been taken to identify the copyright owners, to apologise for any infringement, and to invite copyright owners to make contact. The courts are likely to be more sympathetic if this is done.

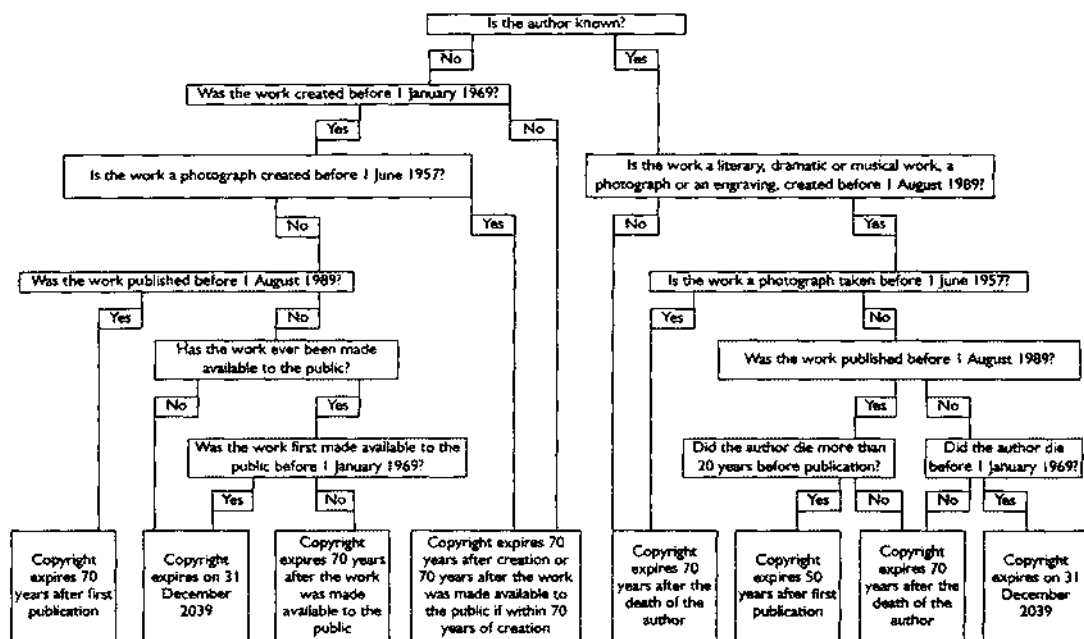
The payment for copyright

The amount of the payment is entirely a matter for the copyright owner and the person wishing to republish the image to negotiate. If the copyright owner asks for what is considered an excessive sum and will not accept a lower amount, the only alternatives are to pay what is asked or not to republish the photograph. There is no question of arbitration.

The real problem occurs if the owner has not been established and a claim is received after publication. This is a matter for lawyers — and lawyers are expensive and legal actions uncertain. The result is that one may have to settle at a figure far in excess of that which one would have agreed to prior to publication.

Appendix

Chart for the duration of copyright



*Duration of copyright (excluding Crown copyright) for literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works
(Chart reproduced with permission from Copyright for Archivists and Users of Archives by Tim Padfield,
published by Facet Publishing, 2004)*

A Rail-Air Excursion in 1933

Grahame Boyes

In May 1933 Thos Cook & Son, in conjunction with the LNER and Imperial Airways, organised a special train to take members of the Hull Municipal Technical College Old Boys Association, their ladies and friends on a visit to Croydon Aerodrome, where they embarked for a flight over London in some of Imperial Airways' latest airliners. The all-in price was 40 shillings (children under 14 years 32s), of which 10s was for the flight. This would have been beyond the pocket of most people, but an education at the Technical College seemed to have set its old boys on prosperous careers, as the excursion was well supported with over 200 in the party.¹

It is perhaps relevant that, following Britain's withdrawal from the gold standard in 1931, in the interest of the national economy the government had imposed a 'moral ban' on foreign holidays at this period. Even well-heeled Hull Old Technicalians felt obliged to find their pleasures in this country. Both Thos Cook and Imperial Airways were suffering severely from the ban and would have welcomed this opportunity to make some extra income.²

The special train, the *Croydon Flyer*, departed from Hull (Paragon) station at 8.20am on Saturday 20 May and ran directly to Waddon, the nearest station to Croydon Aerodrome. As the GWR was included in the Association's acknowledgements, it seems that the route from Doncaster was via the Great Central, Great Western and West London lines to Clapham Junction. It was composed of Pullman cars, so that morning refreshments and luncheon could be served to all passengers en route. It also included the LNER's cinema coach, which was regarded as a novel attraction, although it appears to have been in service since 1924.³ During the journey, free Players' cigarettes and tobacco were dispersed, while 'the fair members of the company were provided with beauty preparations by Pond's Extract Company Ltd and other perfumiers'.

The party was met by Imperial Airways' station superintendent, Mr G O Waters, and divided into groups for a 55–60 mile flight in 38-seat four-engined Handley Page bi-planes of the 'Heracles' class, then the largest civil aeroplanes in the world. The flight passed over London at a height of 4,000–5,000 feet, giving good aerial views of its principal buildings. As well as a commander, first officer and wireless

officer, the crew included two stewards, who served afternoon tea during the 30-minute flight. Back at the airport the party was conducted by Air Ministry guides to the roof of the administrative building to watch arrivals of planes from Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris and departures to Paris, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Rotterdam. The LNER's representative who accompanied the excursion reported that 'The Imperial Airways Limited have a fine organisation, and a day spent at the Croydon airport leaves the impression of a thoroughly well established and safe method of travel, comparable in efficiency to the British navy.'

The excursion fare included return by any train from Waddon up to London for an evening of 'individual leisure', before catching the return special train. This departed from Marylebone at 11.20pm, following which a 'substantial dinner' was served. Passengers were roused with tea or Bovril and biscuits at 3.15am prior to a series of request stops at Goole, Brough, Ferriby and Hessle and arrival at Hull at 3.56 on Sunday morning.

Six weeks previously, the Great Western Railway had inaugurated the first railway air service, between Cardiff and Plymouth. The *L&NER Magazine* could now claim that its company had been the first to arrange for the conveyance of a full train-load of passengers partly by rail and partly by air. This was certainly true of this country, but whether it was a world-wide first is not clear. It is also not known whether it was the forerunner of other combined rail-air excursions, as the magazine predicted.

Notes and references

This article was first published as Occasional Paper 31 of the Air Transport Special Interest Group.

1. The sources used for this paper were: the excursion handbill (courtesy of the Hon Sir William McAlpine); and reports of the excursion in the *Hull Daily Mail*, 22 May 1933, and the *L&NER Magazine*, July 1933. Surprisingly, there was no report in the *Railway Magazine*.
2. Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 years of popular tourism*, 1991, 269
3. Peter Hall, 'Cinema on the move', *Journal of the LNER Study Group*, no 3 (June 1998), 3; this reference was kindly provided by Murray Hughes.

The 'Potteries' Railway and How it Failed: Part 2

Brian Janes

The second part of a history of the speculation that was the Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway, later Shropshire Railways, from opening until the coming of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway.

Abandonment

An Abandonment Bill was sought by the Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway in 1881, naturally opposed by France (and his Trustees, for he was apparently bankrupt) and the lessee of the Criggion Quarry. It was also opposed by the Imperial Credit Company and Alexander Young, a well known City chartered accountant of the firm of Turquand & Young (who were on the Board of the London Financial Association), because the ordinary shareholders they represented would lose everything under the originally proposed arrangements. They were successful in securing something and the Bill was passed³² and a winding up order was made on 21 April 1882.

In July 1882 the Chancery judge chose Alexander Young to become liquidator. He was an active and imaginative man with extensive experience of railway matters and a director of several companies. On his own evidence he knew the chairman and general managers of most of the principal railway companies, but he proved unable to sell or lease the company to an existing company. This seems to have been because all the surrounding lines saw it as a competitor best kept out of commission. There were also substantial debts still owed to landowners whose land had been used for the railway and of course the substantial cost of restoring the line from its dilapidated state. He came to pay a key part in the next stage of the saga. The Abandonment Act was stringent in its terms particularly as Article 4 bound it to be sold to another railway company and did not permit the disposal of its line for scrap etc. This was the main reason for its continuance as a complete, if derelict, railway over the next six years.

The Cambrian interest in leasing the Potteries, first shown, according to France, in his discussions with George Lewis, Secretary of the Cambrian Railways, was an obvious move but the Cambrian of 1880 was financially very weak. Its primary concern was naturally to secure any Nantmawr quarry traffic but there must have been a secondary interest in securing

an independent access to Shrewsbury. If Lewis was seriously interested in such access, this seems to have evaporated when he was, first, supplanted by John Conacher in March 1882 and then left on 31 August. Any Cambrian interest would have died when that system went bankrupt in July 1884. Further interest came at the end of Conacher's time and was probably connected with further discussions on a Welsh Union running agreement.

Lewis however left an enduring mark on both the Cambrian and the Potteries railways by securing the, initially virtually worthless, lease on the Nantmawr branch. France had approached the Cambrian on 26 July to take over the operation of the branch. The Potteries management were amenable and a temporary arrangement was made on 26 January 1881, for two years certain, but with otherwise indefinite duration, with working beginning on 1 June. Presumably at this point the rails on the branch were restored, for the line was used for traffic in connection with the Vyrnwy dam construction. However the inclines to the quarry do not appear to have been so restored. Indeed the agreement specifically mentions the continued dispute about the ownership of the inclines and payments. France (or his trustees in receivership) was, as Quarry lessee, the principal potential beneficiary of this agreement but his continued intransigence and/or incompetence meant that he received no advantage. By early 1882 Cambrian traffic for the dam had fallen away dramatically.³³ The track seems to have deteriorated rapidly and the line was described as unfit to use by 1885, but on 24 July a running power agreement for seven years was made between the Potteries and the Cambrian, and a new quarry lessee paid for the necessary refurbishment. Although by 1899 the line was again deteriorating, the Cambrian had, since January 1896, been using the first few chains of the line to secure a better access to their Llanfyllin branch, and the long awaited Tanat Valley line was in the offing. The Cambrian then secured a further agreement on 1 July 1900 and, despite disputes and court cases, hung on to the branch and its traffic to

the detriment of the Potteries' successors.³⁴

The Criggion and adjacent quarries in the Briedden hills, with their excellent roadstone, had been worked during the Potteries operation but with the line's closure they practically shut down. Attempts were then made to use boats on the river Severn and a depot had been established by the river, but transport only proved possible when the river was high.

A new company: the Shropshire Railways

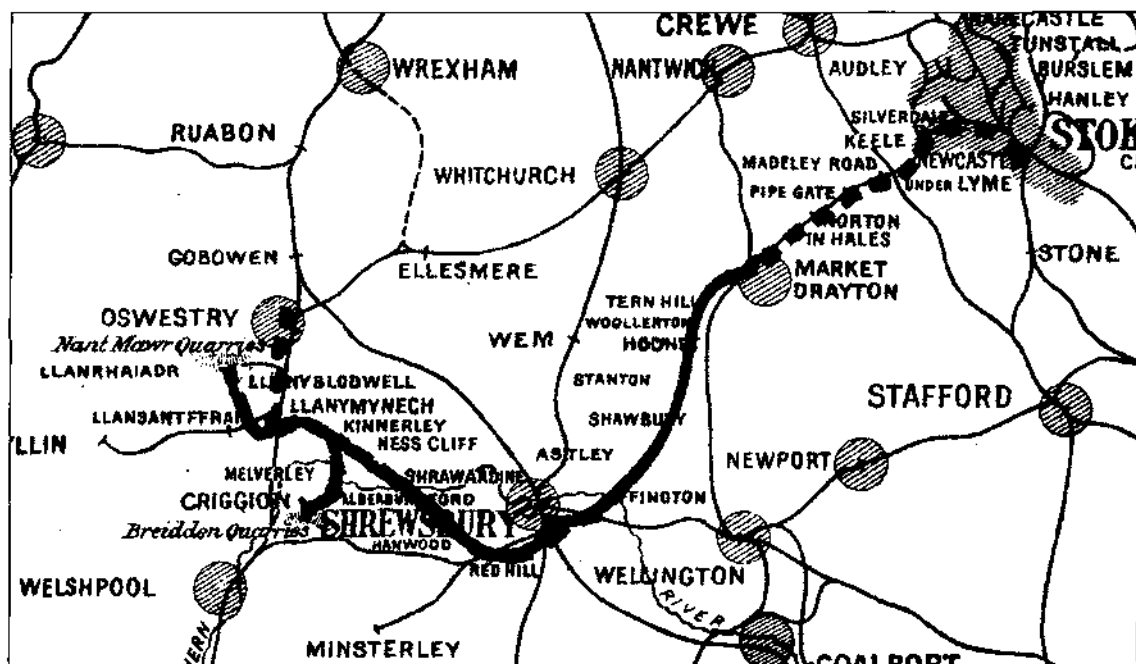
Earlier attempts to establish a new company were opposed by France, but one was eventually set up around 1887. It is possible this became easier as a result of his death which probably occurred around 1885.

Alexander Young had come to the conclusion that the only way of realising any of the assets in his care was to form a new company. He conceived the idea of swapping shares in the new company for interests in the old. The 1881 Act had envisaged cash returns for all these interests but Young was able to use his standing to persuade the Court that this was the most advantageous course of action. He seems to have worked behind the scenes to find persons willing to promote the new company and obtain the necessary powers, and he found one in Sir Richard Green-Price.

Green-Price was an ambitious but not particularly successful landowner and part-time businessman who took an interest in Marches railways, including the Golden Valley Railway and the Kington & Leominster Railway, without notable success. He had moved to Shrewsbury in about 1883 and become interested in reviving the Potteries in 1886.

Green-Price and Young signed an agreement on 16 November 1887 to divide the initial costs: £250 from Young and £150 from Green-Price.³⁵

It is not clear how these two came together but after their initial agreement the new company was established under the chairmanship of Green-Price. It seems that the first promoters were mainly Shrewsbury interests centred on him, and it was they who largely found the money to promote the Bill. One of the most important of these interests, and possibly someone who prompted Green-Price's interest in the first place, was John Parson Smith, who had acquired the reversionary rights to Nantmawr quarry from France. Parson Smith had reached an agreement with the Cambrian in 1885 on the further operation of the branch but he was seeking a better service. He had spent £2-3,000 in the previous two years and a similar sum in France's time. Output in 1888 from Nantmawr was only 25,000 tons of limestone consigned to Darlaston and Bilston.



Part of the map accompanying the Shropshire Railways' prospectus

The new company and Young, as Receiver of the old, had to agree terms to purchase the Potteries which swapped shares in the new Company for the debenture and land purchase debt with cash for some old debts. This was in accordance with the conditions laid down in the 1881 Act. This appears to have been thought at the time to be an original and novel concept.³⁶ The transfer proved a longer job than anyone expected.

Like its predecessor the new company was to be built on expectations of profitable quarry traffic to the Wellington district, the Black Country and, particularly, the Stoke district. It thus relied for real profitability on the Market Drayton extension as much as the existing line. It was however seen by the Joint Companies (the Great Western and London & North Western Railways), with considerable justification, as purely a speculation seeking takeover by another company with an interest in breaking their duopoly in Shrewsbury. The Cambrian being closely involved with the LNWR, the new company first looked to the North Staffordshire, which had some years before actually built a speculative connection to Market Drayton to join the failed Potteries line. To drive up interest Green-Price had, during 1888, heavily hinted at the supposed interest of both the Midland and the Great Northern companies in the line. The real extent of such interest is unknown but they did not demonstrate any active interest in the Act. It is more probable that those companies were unconnected with the speculation.

Well-attended meetings were held in support of the promotion of a new company at Shrewsbury on 10 January, Nesscliffe on 23 February, and Market Drayton on 4 March 1888. A Bill was then sought for the new company, to be named the Shropshire Railways, to take over the property and aspirations of the Potteries. It was obtained with relative ease despite the opposition of the Joint Companies.

Finding contractors and money

Alexander Young at some stage in his negotiations approached a then well-respected contractor, largely of overseas railways, Messrs Cutbill, Son and de Lungo ('Cuttill'), to find the parliamentary deposit for the Bill to revive the railway. This they were willing to do. The offering of a deposit had become, as explained in Part I, a normal practice for contractors but in this case was to lead to ongoing problems for the new company. The bulk of the deposit of £11,503.2s.11d was required for the railway's 'new

undertaking' (known as the 'Market Drayton Separate Undertaking') with £1,553.3s.4d for the existing Railway (the 'Shrewsbury Separate Undertaking') which required a limited deposit because the only new work was in raising the level of Abbey station. Young, perhaps in consultation with the LFA, had put forward on brief acquaintance a Paris-based liquidator or financier named Captain John Inman. This man seems to have been genuinely interested in reviving the railway for profit and also seems to have had connections with Cutbill.

A contract for reconstruction of the railway by Cutbill was signed on 2 August 1889 for £70,000; £54,200 in cash, £10,000 in shares and the balance in the form of existing track materials.³⁷ This was substantially in excess of the £41,000 predicted in Parliament and bit deeply into the £100,000 maximum originally permitted for debentures. No rehabilitation work could at that stage actually be undertaken as the purchase of the Potteries' assets was not completed till 17 August 1890. Under the sale, A Debentures with £64,147 received ordinary shares at 60% of the value, B Debentures with £333,816 received 40%, C Debentures with £134,371 received 25%, and Ordinary Shares with £820,250 received 7%. In addition £21,881.7s.1d of old cash debt received 20%. So a railway that had cost investors a face value of £1,352,584 was sold for £4,376.10s.6d in cash and £263,024.19s.4d in new paper.

The new company did not wish to take over the existing rolling stock, probably because they were not really looking to operate the railway themselves, and this was sold at auction in August 1888. For some reason two of the locomotives were still at Shrewsbury in September 1890, for at the first Board meeting their sale to a B P Blockley (although the writing is indistinct) is recorded. Possibly one of these was *Hope*, for the Receiver's accounts show payments to the financiers totalling £195 for this engine on 3 December 1891. In any event such were the complications of ownership of the old company that it was not until 7 August 1895 that Young was able to finish his work. The old company was wound up on 7 November 1895.

The Cutbill faction were subsequently to produce an agreement, which they proved unable to enforce through the courts, that they had advanced the parliamentary deposit for the Market Drayton Undertaking on the understanding that they were granted a cash contract to build that line and rebuild

the Potteries one. If the line was not built within two years then the directors would seek an abandonment order and they would get their deposit back. This, they said, was about to happen in the summer of 1891, for great difficulty was being experienced in raising capital to pay for reconstruction. Inman (with his close connection with Cutbill and Young) seems to have invested as much as he wished at start-up and became the director primarily responsible for raising cash through a debenture issue. He concentrated on the shareholders, who were of course the old Potteries owners, and he was not making progress.

Green-Price had through his connections with the Golden Valley Railway a close relationship with a contractor, Mr Charles Chambers, who had built that Railway's Hay extension. This extension and its aborted Monmouth Extension had been financed, to their great profit, by the efforts of a firm of 'influential agents, brokers and financiers of the City of London', Whadcoat Brothers and Co ('Whadcoats')³⁸, and they now also joined Green-Price. There are uncanny echoes in the actions of this group of persons, not only with France and his probable associates, but

also with the contemporary conduct of the business of the Golden Valley. Financiers and contractors and even legal representation in Parliament (C A Cripps, father of the later Chancellor of the Exchequer) were the same for both railways. Further the Shrewsbury Railways Act 1888 split the Potteries into two undertakings to encourage investment in the same way as the Golden Valley 1889 extension Act.

Green-Price undertook negotiations for financing with Whadcoats through the months of March–June 1890, and on 3 June they signed a formal agreement to find cash for reconstruction. This they did to the tune of £50,000, £15,000 to meet old debts etc and the balance to the contractor, with only some £15–16,000 coming from all other sources to help finance the reconstruction. In August the brothers were issued with debentures and shares to secure their advances. Two further supplementary agreements followed on 1 August and 10 December 1890. J H Whadcoat was soon to become dominant in the affairs of the company.

The stage was set to change contractors and on 25 July 1890, owing to the Cutbill contract being



Maesbrook Station survived in its PS&NWR form into the modern age. The station house, building and platform are probably from the former period. The stop sign was added in the Stephens' era; the track was laid by the military after 1941.

(RCHS: Greville Collection, September 1956)

'unsatisfactory', a new contract for £74,000 in cash, stock and Lloyds bonds was awarded to Charles Chambers.

Disputes and more disputes

With two sets of financiers involving two closely tied contractors the scene was set for conflict and it duly came. The company now became mired in the first of a series of legal disputes that were to end their efforts to reopen the line.

Disputes with Inman and Cutbill over breach of contract and the return of the parliamentary deposit (of £13,056.6s.3d) were to persist in one form or another for nearly 20 years.³⁹ Inman finally resigned from the Board on 13 December 1890 and pursued his interests almost until his death on 28 November 1912. Green-Price might have been finding it difficult to cope with the developing complications and tried to follow him on 15 January citing disbarment by reason of employment by the Local Government Board but he was assured he was not disbarred and stayed on. However his troubles simply got worse, very largely due to a loss of confidence between him and his financiers.⁴⁰

A Bill had been promoted to get an extension of time for rebuilding the old line (secured on 15 July 1891). And foolishly, given the financial situation, the Company had also sought powers for a Tanat Valley line which then had to be abandoned when the London Linen Bank withdrew an undertaking to put up the £5,000 deposit. A debenture prospectus was issued on 19 January 1891 but seems to have been ineffectual.

More trouble was brewing: Whadcoats had been pressing for £1,000 for debenture interest and other costs, and there were disagreements about payments to Chambers for work done. This dispute was immediately lost by the company at arbitration. On 2 April 1891 the Board took some measures that led to terminal infighting with financiers and the contractor. Whadcoats now asked for and got changes in the financial settlements with the contractor, who was clearly getting more cash than they felt appropriate. In addition, the Board agreed a further debenture prospectus to be issued on 6 April aimed at bondholders in larger railway companies, in an attempt to raise more funds and probably to reduce their almost total reliance on Whadcoats for cash.

The Chambers contract now fell apart, as payments to the contractor ceased. He had thus far received

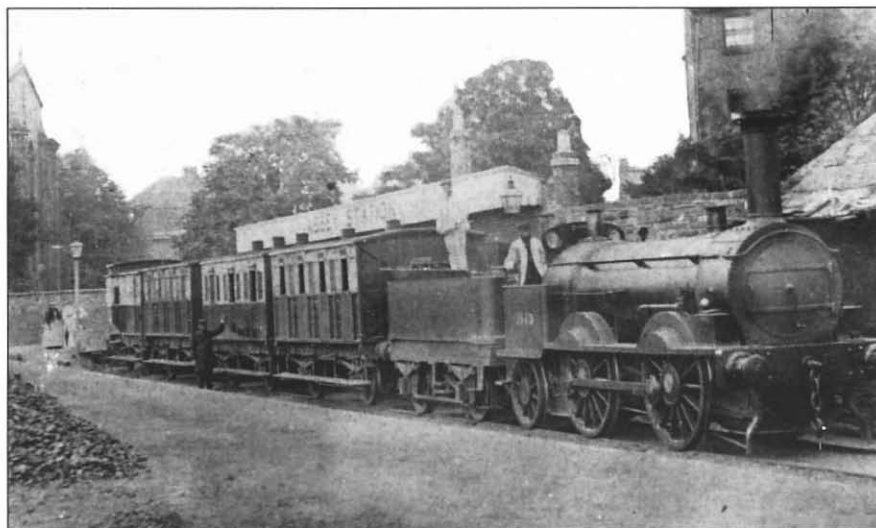
£19,662 in cash and £11,734 in stock with, on 3 June, written agreement to £8,700 assigned from scheduled payments from Whadcoats. This money never materialised. Having advanced some £39,116 over the period from 5 August 1890 to 21 March 1891, on which they were already owed £5,304 interest, Whadcoats had had enough and in May stopped forwarding advances. Their representative, Robert Ullmer (Whadcoats' company secretary), was excluded from the Board meeting on 21 May and all correspondence was conducted through solicitors. With no funds available Chambers stopped work on 15 July with the work certified as 54% complete, although later it was found that much of the work was poorly done, including the use of untreated sleepers. The Board then claimed Whadcoats were defaulting on their obligations, and sued; and later on 25 November they were also to agree to financial support for Chambers to sue the financiers.

Company optimism that things would come right was evident in that the company had given the Board of Trade forward notice on 26 June 1891 of their intention to reopen the line, but this was perhaps typical of the Green-Price faction's over-optimism. The half year report for the first half of 1891 stated the problems, but went further and said

The Directors are of opinion that Messrs Whadcoat should be held strictly to the performance of those engagements, more especially as there is no question of their financial ability. ... So long as Messrs Whadcoat continue in default in respect to those engagements any attempt on their part to place their nominees on the Board should, in the opinion of your Directors, be strenuously resisted, as manifestly it cannot be to the interest of the Shareholders that Messrs Whadcoat should obtain control of the Law Proceedings now pending against themselves. ... Messrs Whadcoat have recently added to their own holding by purchasing some £60,000 worth of Stock, which they have divided up so as to command the maximum number of votes.

The statements about Whadcoats in the report resulted in an action for libel by J H Whadcoat. His brother then proceeded to use the finance company to put the railway into receivership again, when they would, as sole debenture holders, effectively control the company, and on 31 July they called in the receivers. One Robert Rabbidge was appointed on 11 November 1891, and was to personally remain in that office for most, if not all, of the next 30 years.

Almost unbelievably the Board continued to plan more construction and opened an account to issue shares in the Market Drayton Undertaking on 28



Shrewsbury Abbey Station in the 1872–4 period. Ex-LNWR locomotive no 1859, was built by Bury, Curtis & Kennedy in 1848. Sold to the PS&NWR on 31 May 1872 for £500, and reputedly their no 10 known by the nickname 'Black Tom'. (Colonel Stephens Museum Archive: W H Austen Collection)

November 1891. By October 1892 the truth that the enterprise was finished must have finally seeped in and their engineer was ordered to stop his planning work. On 3 November too they reached provisional agreement to renew the Nantmawr branch agreement with the Cambrian, although it was never signed. Green-Price had finally given up.

The Shropshire Railways project under Green-Price, despite his dubious competence, so nearly revived the railway. Not only had the contractor been well on the way to finishing his work but talks had been initiated with the Cambrian's general manager, Conacher, in November 1890, for them to operate the line. They had inspected the line on 25 April 1891 and were reported close to agreement when reconstruction stopped. The Cambrian was so near to direct access to Shrewsbury, over a line which could easily be brought to main line standards if desired.

Trying to sort out the mess

The law suits were now really flying and dogged the company for a long and unproductive three years.

Cutbill had made no attempt to obstruct the 1891 Bill but had tried, and failed, to get the courts to enforce their agreement with the company in respect of the abandonment of the Market Drayton Undertaking. Then in 1892 they promoted a North Salop Bill to take over that Undertaking from the Shropshire Railways. Again they tried in May 1894 to obtain an Abandonment Bill so that the Market Drayton Undertaking could be formally abandoned rather than

simply be out of time, but this was rejected by the House of Lords Select Committee in June.

Charles Chambers had instituted a law suit for work done but unpaid; the company sued Whadcoats for advances they said were due and they in turn counter-sued.

Although, with receivership, the railway was effectively in J H Whadcoat's hands, he did not take over as Chairman till February 1893. Green-Price left on the 13 July. Whadcoat now tried to get the company back on its feet. He brought in Robert Ullmer as a director, who then became the railway's Secretary in November 1893, a post he was destined to fill until his death on 5 February 1927. He also brought in F C Matthews⁴¹ as Solicitor on 6 November. J H Whadcoat, unlike his predecessor, turned out to be efficient. On 23 July 1893 Chambers was formally served with a notice to 'proceed with his contract', probably as a procedural device, and the development of bad blood between financier and his former associate was evident in reports of Chambers' 'trespassing' (probably trying to retrieve plant left on the line) as late as August. The suit was finally settled on 31 December 1894 when Whadcoats transferred £15,000 worth of stock and £12,500 cash to Chambers, who finally got his hands on his abandoned plant including the locomotive *The Wye*. This was part of a comprehensive settlement of all the suits then outstanding between Chambers, the company and the bankers (Chambers' suit against Whadcoats having been largely lost during 1893). Whadcoats received reimbursement from the company of £54,600 of 5% debentures and £7,600

Lloyds Bonds including their own claims and costs under earlier actions.⁴²

For reasons unknown J H Whadcoat, having brought the company back from oblivion, resigned as Chairman and as a director on 7 January 1895. He was given a formal vote of thanks by the Board (which included former apparent antagonists) for the 'eminently satisfactory manner in which he has brought about the settlement of the company's tangled financial position and its enormous and ruinous law suits'.

Another start?

This was not quite the end of the Shropshire's reconstruction efforts for they still had the necessary Parliamentary power to reconstruct the line which was not due to expire until August 1896. A further contract was signed with a W E Clayton Smith at the January Board meeting to finish the reconstruction and finance it through the sale of stock, with Debentures guaranteed by Whadcoats. A new prospectus to finance the completion and clear debts was issued on 25 March 1895, but it had made, perhaps on poor legal advice, a cardinal error in not specifically declaring that the company was in receivership. To use a modern term, this 'mis-selling' was rapidly picked up by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the railway's response was copied to *The Times* which, on 20 March, subjected the prospectus to severe attack in their 'The Money Market' column. With no real defence, except that they had expected the receivership to be lifted when the prospectus was successful, the Board withdrew the prospectus on 5 April 1895. As a result the Chairman (James Irvine) resigned on 22 May, Board meetings ceased, nothing was done, and the powers expired.

Whadcoats retained control of the receivership and a sale document, perhaps a draft, exists⁴³ apparently from late in 1895 offering their controlling share in

the undertaking (that is, effectively the whole railway) for sale. It sets out in particular that reconstruction would cost £12,000, that the contract was lined up, and that the Cambrian was willing to operate the line. A sale did not materialise, and the railway stayed in the condition it was left in by Chambers in 1891.

The Shropshire Railways company continued in enfeebled form. No directors were paid nor was the Secretary, although he was still engaged in the vestiges of business arising from the still active Nantmawr branch used by the Cambrian. But its next meeting was not recorded until 6 June 1900 when J H Whadcoat rejoined as a director and was then formally noted as Chairman.

An unsung hero of the Shropshire Railways was William Greer Barcroft of Mold who had been made a director of the company at its initial meeting. He not only stuck to his duties all through shifting alliances of the 1880s and 1890s but with Whadcoat spent the years of abandonment working, unpaid, to resurrect the railway, acting as chairman on several occasions. He then continued under the Stephens' regime until finally retiring on 22 February 1923. Truly a devotion to duty.

At the next meeting on 22 November 1906 the Board were at last considering selling off the rails and other fittings etc but then at the same meeting Whadcoat announced that he had been approached by Holman F Stephens whom he then met at Shrewsbury on 20 December. This was the start of what turned out to be a complex but successful proposal to revive the line. J H Whadcoat and his family gave or sold all their many holdings to Stephens on 15 July 1909. As a result the Shropshire Railways company continued in being, with the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway as the operating company, till nationalisation, when it was bought by the British Transport Commission for £29,764.1s.9d.

Notes and references

32. The Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway Act, 1881
33. John Wade, affidavit to Court, June 1882: Kew, National Archive (PRO), C26/510
34. B M Janes, 'Stopped at Llanymynech', *The Tenterden Terrier*, No 96, 2004, and its revision on the internet at www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk/pages/topics/llanymynech/stopped_at_llanymynech.htm
35. Shropshire Railways Company deed of arrangement, winding up of Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway accounts, and other documents: PRO, RAIL 258/293
36. A Young's Affidavit of 11 February 1885: PRO, C26/510
37. Shropshire Railways Board Minutes: PRO, RAIL 622/1

38. John Henry Whadcoat and his brother William Edward worked together, presumably as a partnership, but on 3 January 1889 got some of their key employees to form a company, Whadcoat Brothers and Co, and got them to grant 5,000 shares to each brother. It appears to be modelled on an earlier company formed on 12 February 1884, The Railways and Public Companies Finance Association Ltd, which became a subsidiary to Whadcoats when that company was formed. For a relatively brief period ending in December 1895 John Henry had no shares, but control was still in the family. This may have been a tactic so that he could claim, as he did, during the passage of a bill in 1894 that the company had no direct connection with him. The company was apparently voluntarily liquidated in March 1896 with John Henry as liquidator. William Edward died on 22 November 1906. Nevertheless the company remained on the Companies Register until struck off by administrative action on 22 July 1922. [Companies Registration and returns: PRO, BT 31/27968]
39. Correspondence on Shropshire Railways deposits: PRO, MT 6/1603/1
40. Running disputes with Chambers were also a characteristic of the Golden Valley Railway at this period. Green-Price had resigned from the Golden Valley by letter on 15 January 1891 when he joined the Local Government Board auditorship for Shropshire, but this was again not accepted and he hung on till 1892. He died in 1909 with heavy debts incurred by his railway promotions. (See C L Mowat, *The Golden Valley Railway*)
41. Francis Claughton Matthews of the firm of Matthews & Browne, Solicitors, 151 Cannon Street, was to prove to have a long running association with the railway. He was very active with H F Stephens in its Shropshire & Montgomeryshire manifestation and he also worked with Stephens on the many planned East Kent light railways.
42. Copy of Agreement: PRO, RAIL 1057/363/9
43. Colonel Stephens Museum Archive, Tenterden, 2006/002/B



Shrewsbury Abbey Station in use as a coalyard, about 1900. The building survived and is at present [summer 2006] being conserved as a heritage centre for the railway.

(Colonel Stephens Museum Archive: W H Austen Collection)



Llanymynech in the second period of dereliction, 1903. The Cambrian platform on the right can be seen to have been extended. This was done in 1895/96 without the Shropshire's agreement, severing an early connection between the two railways. The resulting dispute was not settled until 1916.

(Colonel Stephens Museum Archive: W H Austen Collection)

The Patents of W and W H James

5. Patent No 5176 (1825): Apparatus for Diving under Water

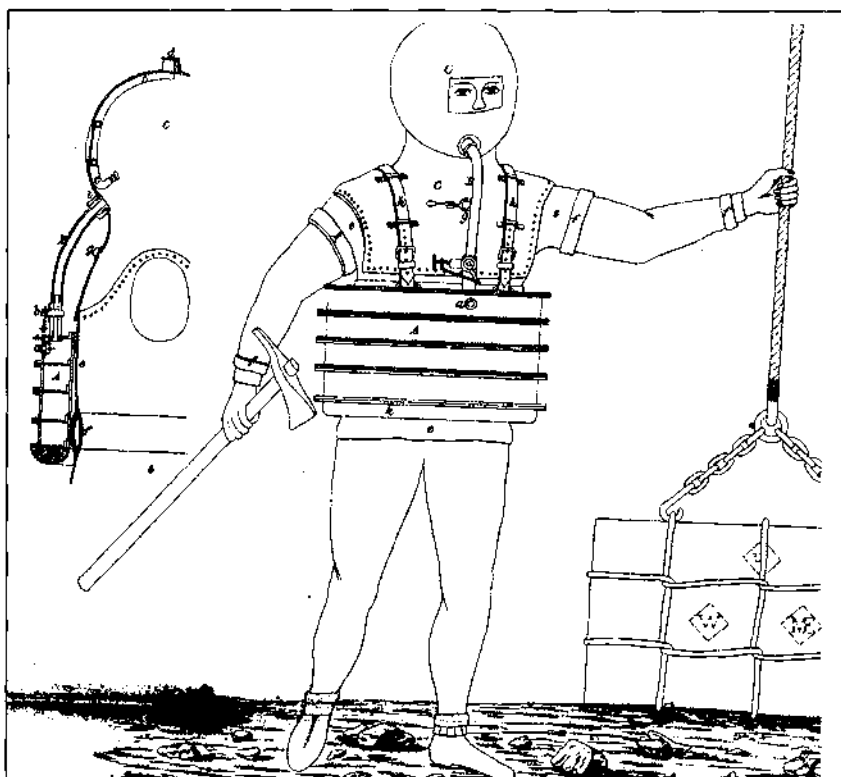
Miles Macnair

The construction of docks, harbours and large bridges would be facilitated if men could actually work beneath the surface of the water. The use of diving 'bells' was well established by the 1820s, but they restricted any work to the small area of the sea or river bed immediately beneath the bell. What was needed was a personal diving suit with its own built-in supply of breathable air, independent of air-lines to the surface, and this is what William Henry James patented in 1825. The diver would wear an integral copper helmet and rubberised jacket, supposedly made water-tight by elasticated bands around the waist and the upper arms. Compressed air was contained in a doughnut shaped iron cylinder that was strapped around the diver's waist, with a breathing tube connected (via a valve at the diver's manual control) to a mouth piece in the helmet. A spring loaded valve on the top of the helmet was supposed to allow 'exhausted' air to be blown out.

Analysis

This is in fact the precursor of the modern scuba-diving, air-bottle apparatus, but one has to doubt the practicality of the design using materials available at the time and without an automatic two-way breathing valve. There would certainly be problems of stability, balancing the weight and buoyancy of the (cast-iron) pressure tank. The specification stated that the apparatus 'may be employed with perfect safety and great advantage in mines or other places filled with deliterious gases', but on land the weight of the compressed air vessel would have been intolerable. However, the principle foresaw the modern breathing apparatus used by fire-fighters and rescuers in mining accidents.

There is no record of any trials being carried out. (Or does any reader knows better?)



Elegy on the Death of Eight Hundred Railways

Reprinted from the *Illustrated London News*, 17 January 1846

Once Cowper's Muse was heard to sing,
By tune of Cowper's pen,
How "gallant Kempenfeldt went down
With twice four hundred men."¹

Now we have got a Railway Muse
Who's haunted in her dreams,
Because the Panic has gone down
With twice four hundred schemes.

The *Royal George* may be got up
Tho' it was doomed to drown,
But a Company that's *been* got up
And afterwards got down,

Is lost along with all its scrip.
One drinks a bitter cup,
In losing shares, yet so it is,
Once *down* it is *all up*.

Eight hundred Railway Schemes are dead —
Let Gamblers pipe their eye,
They may be sure their *die* was *cast*
When they were *cast to die*.

Eight-hundred Schemes that once bade fair
To bring a brave amount,
Are gone — to the Accountant's? No,
But to their *last account* !

Mourn, gentles, mourn, Eight-hundred Schemes
That to the grave have past;
They *funk'd* so long upon their way,
They are *de funct* at last !

Poor Schemes ! Their birth was very fair —
They play'd their pretty tricks
One morning in the newspapers,
As soon as half-past six !

We seldom see at one grand burst
So many advertisers,
Put out no doubt to hunt the blunt
Of low sirs and of high sirs !

Eight hundred Railways ! How they rose
In general estimation —
It was their noble end to link
The ends of all the nation !

Their end is now one Railway grave —
No Kensal-green of clover —
Ended is all they *undertook*;
In fact, it is all *over* !

At first they skip'd like things alive,
To over-run and vermin us; —
In their *beginning* all was life,
But death was at the *terminus* !

At first on flags in Capel-court,
You never saw a frown fall;
But, oh, my eyes ! how *down* they look'd
When they perceived their *downfall* !

At first, in every man there shone
A boaster and a bragger,
But, ah ! you saw the very stags,
At last turn round and stagger.

Panic came forth with haggard brow,
Her palsying and her pale ways;
Tin wouldn't stump, and not a dump
Of Premium cheer'd the Railways.

Deposit day swept gauntly on —
It wouldn't bear inspection,
And you might see *directors* fly
In every *direction*.

Call went unanswer'd — money down
Forsook the human vision;
Provisional Committees now
Were quite without *provision* !

The 30th came: ah ! yes it did,
And everybody knows it did —
For want of the deposits then,
The plans were not deposited.²

Eight Hundred schemes ! how blank they look,
As though to-day were Gloom's day;
They're registered in Doomsday Book,
And wont come out till doomsday !

Eight hundred fetters knock'd away
From limbs of Speculation,
To some may be a 'nation loss,
But not loss to the Nation !

Notes — To best 'appreciate' the puns, the poem needs to be read aloud.

1. The *Royal George* sank at Spithead on 29 August 1782, and William Cowper's poem was written the following month. The ship was raised in 1840 and souvenirs made from the materials found aboard.
2. Private Bills with their plans etc had to be deposited by 30 November.

Linton Lock Navigation in the 20th Century

Pat Jones

Linton Lock Navigation may be said to extend from Nun Monkton,¹ on the river Ouse eight miles above the city of York, for two miles upstream to Linton Lock, and then for a further 7¼ miles to Swale Nab, the confluence of the river Swale and the Ure Navigation. The navigation works at Naburn (six miles below York) for the Ouse Navigation Trustees, at Linton-on-Ouse for the Linton Lock Navigation Commissioners, and at Milby (twenty miles above York) for the Ure Navigation Commissioners, had all been built to meet the demands of trade in the eighteenth century by the same engineer: John Smith junior.²

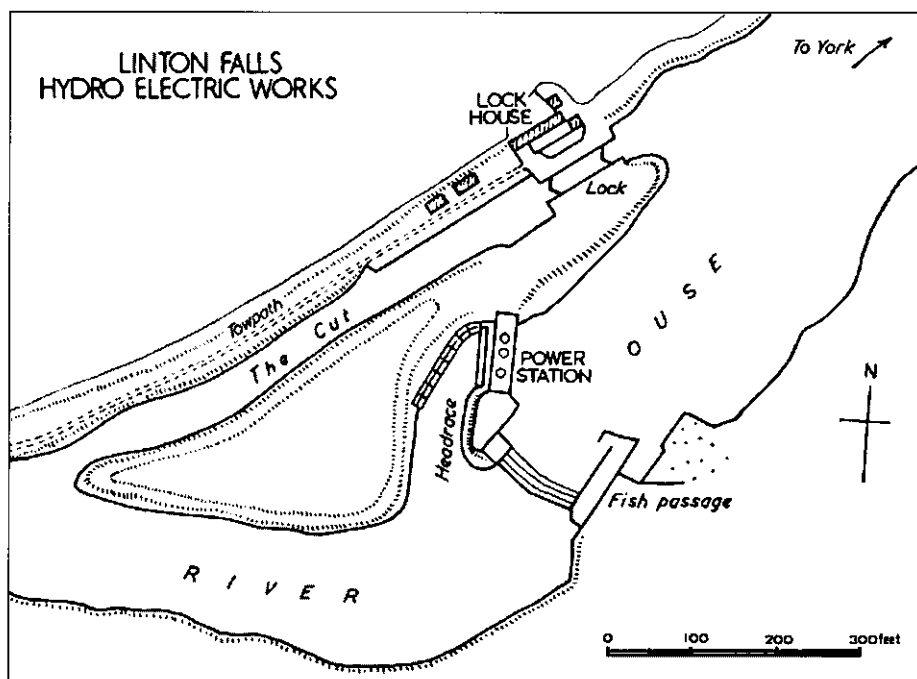
At the dawn of the 20th century there was still a great deal of river traffic to York, much of it serving industrial users beside the river Foss. The York United Gas Company was situated beside that river, and had received its coal by barge until the North Eastern Railway's Foss Islands branch opened on 1 January 1880. York Corporation's Foss Islands power station was established by 1900, and it too received its coal by rail.³ The prosperity of the Linton Lock and Ure Navigations had depended upon their coal trade, but the North Eastern Railway could deliver coal from the Durham coalfields to York, Boroughbridge and Ripon etc more cheaply than barges could bring it from the Yorkshire coalfields, consequently little regular trade remained on the rivers Ouse and Ure above York.

The perceived glamour and excitement of the war that had broken-out in 1914 attracted many young miners into the army, with the result that coal was soon in very short supply. By the autumn of 1918 coal stocks at York's Foss Islands power station were 'so low as to cause anxiety', and it was realised that the insatiable demands of trench warfare would prevent post-war colliery manpower from quickly returning to its pre-war level. At a meeting on 3 September the city's Electricity and Tramways Committee decided to investigate possible sites for a hydroelectric power station. It later emerged that in the year ending 31 March 1919 the city's coal-fired station had generated 10,025,745 units, consuming 20,349 tons of coal, costing £21,197. An investigation of the waterpower resources in the vicinity resulted in the following estimates:

River	Site	Units obtainable	Saving in coal	Value of coal
Ouse	Linton	3,300,000	4,430 tons	£4,891
Ouse	Naburn	2,500,000	3,363 tons	£3,741
Derwent	Stamford Br	1,500,000	2,000 tons	£2,225

The flow of the Ouse is augmented by the minor rivers Nidd and Foss between Linton and Naburn, but the river is tidal below Naburn weir, hence the significant reduction in the power obtainable there. A more efficient turbine had replaced the old water wheel at Naburn mill in 1913, but the mill was still inoperable each day when the tide was high. It was decided to proceed with a scheme at Linton, and so on the last day of 1920 a 21 year lease was signed with the Linton Lock Commissioners, but an option to purchase Stamford Bridge mill from Lord Leconfield was also negotiated. York Corporation agreed to pay the Commissioners £5 per quarter until work commenced, £12.10s.0d per quarter until generating commenced, and £37.10s.0d per quarter thereafter. Construction had in fact already begun, but the conclusion of formalities had not been hastened by the actions of the Commissioners' Clerk & Treasurer, who had in the meanwhile decamped with all their funds.

When the locks and weirs at Naburn and Linton had been built river craft were usually loaded to draw between three and four feet, but by the mid-1830s region-wide navigation improvements had resulted in the introduction of deeper draughted craft. It became necessary to raise both weirs, and crest boards were fitted which raised the water level by 18 inches. By 1920 traffic through Linton lock to the Ure Navigation had declined greatly, but its owners, the North Eastern Railway Company, were anxious to safeguard such income as they still had. They objected to the scheme, and only withdrew their objection after York Corporation undertook to indemnify them 'against being placed in a worse position'. Compliance with that undertaking would have prevented the power station from drawing down the upper river below the level of the crest boards. Since the flow of the river in normal conditions varied between 50,000 and 200,000 cubic feet per minute, and the turbines consumed 87,850 cubic feet per minute at their rated output, it was necessary to create



Linton Lock and power station

a reserve above that level. York Corporation, as the Electricity Supply Authority, was given authority (by an Order under the Defence of the Realm Act) to raise the level with moveable boards by an additional 15 inches, subject to an understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Electricity Commissioners, namely:

- 1 That when the boards are down, the total height of the weir, including the moveable boards and their hinges, shall not be more than 12 inches above the stone crest of the weir.
- 2 That the working of the boards shall be so arranged that the water shall not be held up by them at any time to a greater extent than is requisite for the purposes of the Power Station.⁴

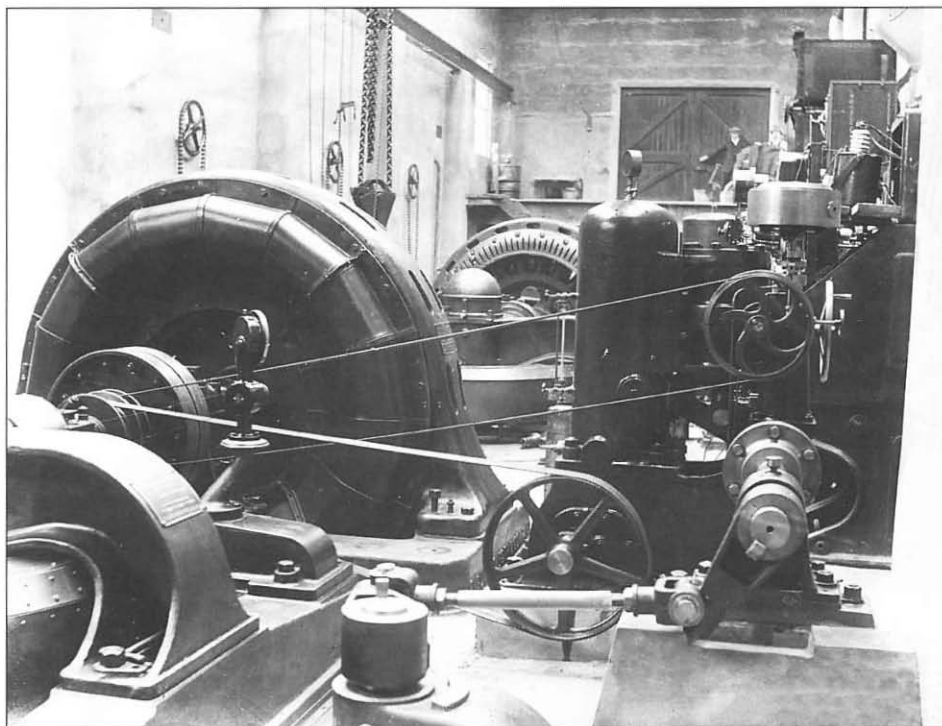
It was at first intended to raise the level of water impounded in normal conditions by means of manually operated shutters, but a simple and effective automatic control was evolved which is believed to have been unique. The old crest boards were removed and replaced by two tilting shutters (manufactured by Ransome & Rapier) each 50 feet long and 2 feet 9 inches high. They were held up against the normal flow of the river by counterweights, which were blocks of pumice-stone concrete (made of 1 part by volume cement, 1½ parts river sand, 3 parts pumice-stone, and the whole rendered water tight

with cement). In high flow conditions the level below the weir would rise and immerse the counterweights, reducing their effective weight, allowing the shutters to fall, and thereby preventing the swollen river from over-topping its banks.⁵ [See diagram on page 421.]

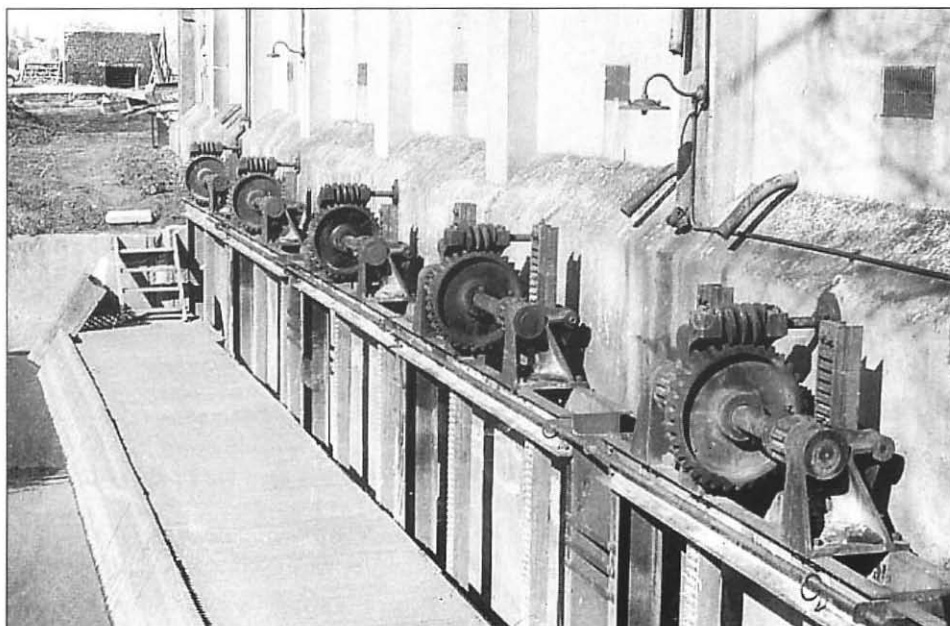
Linton hydroelectric power station

Linton hydroelectric power station was formally opened on 1 August 1923, although many details were incomplete, and the station was not finally accepted from the contractors, the English Electric Co Ltd, until July 1928, at an agreed cost of £55,905.5s.6d. The station delivered 3 phase 50 cycle AC at 6,000 volts to York and the villages en route, and had a rated output of 750 kVA, with a permissible overload of up to 50% for five minutes. There were two alternators. One of 210 kVA was driven through bevel-gears at 428 rpm by a vertical shaft turbine designed to deliver 410 bhp at 81 rpm, but capable of operating under conditions of reduced head (down to 4 feet). The second alternator, of 540 kVA, was driven through bevel-gears and clutches at 575 rpm by either or both of two vertical shaft turbines designed to deliver 560 bhp at 68 rpm. Under reduced load conditions either turbine could be de-clutched from the alternator and shut down.

In high flow conditions it is usual for the river level



*Above: Linton Power Station's 210 kVA alternator and part of the 410 bhp turbine. Note the speed control gear, and the chain-driven sluice control on the upstream wall.
Below: Linton Power Station sluice gear, and access platform above the strainer rack.
(Stanley Tyson collection)*



below a weir to rise more than the level above it, thereby reducing the differential head. The weir shutter arrangement exacerbated this characteristic, and although one of the turbines had been designed to operate down to a head of 4 feet, there were days when the station could not produce power. In February 1924 it generated 139,400 units, while in the same period the city's coal-fired station generated 1,200,000 units. In low-flow conditions the station could not operate continuously, and only came on line to meet peak demands. The operation of the station in this way materially affected the level of the river for a couple of miles downstream, which would suddenly rise or fall 9 to 18 inches, to the considerable surprise of unwary crews of visiting pleasure craft, temporarily moored to the river bank.

The station was, however, financially viable, and employed three men on shift-work, and one maintenance man on day work, for whom homes were provided in Linton village by York Corporation. The station lease was extended for a further 21 years in 1941 at the increased rental of £50 per quarter, and taken over by the Central Electricity Generating Board on 1 April 1948 following nationalisation. After difficulties had been experienced with the automatic weir shutter mechanism, the shutters were permanently fixed in the 'up' position circa 1952;⁶ an irresponsible act which should have been challenged at the time, and which was destined to cause a great deal of trouble 20 years later.

By 1960 the only regular commercial traffic through Linton lock was sand and gravel, and the Commissioner's annual revenue from tolls had fallen to about £125, out of which they had to pay £1.2s.6d per week wages to their lock keeper. Repairs to the lock's bottom gates during that year absorbed all their reserves — and more — plunging them deeply into debt. Early in 1962 it became evident that the lock's upper gates were becoming unsafe; since it had also become evident that the Commissioners needed more income they advised the CEGB 'that an increase in rental would be required when their lease was renewed at the end of the year'. On 14 December 1961 the CEGB had taken over the homes of their Linton employees from York Corporation; clearly they had no reason to question the future viability of their power station at that time. Now, however, they gave notice that they would not be renewing their lease 'owing to the unfavourable increase in generating costs'. At their meeting on 10 May 1962 the Commissioners decided they must close Linton lock 'in the interests of public safety'. And 'as they

were faced with an insuperable task in trying to run a transport concern on a 1767 income in the year 1962, they would refuse to act further'.⁷

Linton power station ceased to generate on 28 September 1962, and the CEGB's lease was formally terminated on 30 December 1962. The terms of the original lease did not require the site to be restored to its original condition, and although the station's plant was removed and sold for scrap, the shell of the station still stands, and, apart from a few cracks, is in surprisingly good condition. In due course new Commissioners were sworn in, and a new 'Clerk, Treasurer, and Solicitor' was appointed;⁸ by December 1965 Linton Lock Supporters' Club had raised £1,800 and local boat club members had guaranteed as much again, so that the Commissioners were able to instruct British Waterways to commence repairs. Work began in May, and was completed in June 1966.

In 1966 the local Internal Drainage Board had written to the Ministry of Agriculture asking for Linton weir to be reduced to its original height, on the grounds that agreement to the installation of the shutter had been subject to the proviso that 'water shall not be held up by it at any time to a greater extent than is requisite for the purposes of the Power Station'. The raised water table resulted in some 200 acres of land being water-logged; the station was no longer producing power, and 'it was in the national interest that water-logged land should be released for agriculture'. The Minister considered that the crest-boards could not be removed without the consent of the lock's Commissioners, 'who were concerned to ensure that the removal of the boards would not be detrimental to navigation'. The Ministry therefore asked the River Authority to find out how much dredging would be needed to maintain navigation, and how much it would cost. At their meeting on 11 February 1967 the Commissioners resolved that 'if [drainage] authorities wish to remove the crest-boards the Commissioners insist that a depth of 6 feet be maintained along the navigable channel at the expense of the authorities wishing to remove the crest-boards'. But in the meanwhile leakage under the lock's lower gates had required the lock to be closed again, and it was not possible to admit the River Authority's survey launch in order to establish the extent to which dredging would be required. By July 1967 the lock had reopened. The River Authority's launch could have surveyed the river, but apparently did not do so, nor were the Commissioners told of any decisions that may have been taken.

On 9 November 1966 the *Yorkshire Post* carried a picture of Linton Lock over a caption reading: 'Linton Lock ... has been suggested as a marina and inland holiday centre. North Riding County Council is being asked to approve a £10,000 development plan, which includes converting the lockkeeper's cottage into a club house, with a riverside caravan park, swimming pool and boat yard with 300 moorings'. Linton Lock Commissioners held their land on a 999-year lease dated 22 May 1800 from University College Oxford (the local landowner) at an annual rental of £25.4s.8d. After much negotiation, on 19 September 1968 they sub-leased their land (but not the navigation rights) to Linton Lock Marina Limited for a term of 21 years from 1 January 1967, at £125 for the first year, £150 for the second to seventh years, £200 for the eighth to fifteenth years, and £200 plus annual increments for inflation thereafter.

The battle of Linton weir

In the autumn of 1970 a local farmer, impatient presumably with the lack of official action, took matters into his own hands and ripped all the remaining boards off the weir shutters, putting the craft moored in the cut hard aground and rendering the lock inaccessible to all but the smallest craft. At a meeting of the Commissioners on 26 May 1971 it was agreed they would meet the cost of replacing the shutters with steel sheets, and that the work should be put in hand as soon as possible. The river users — among whom the writer was numbered — were delighted with the outcome, but the River Authority complained bitterly that the repairs had been carried out without their consent, which they alleged (very questionably) was required by Section 31(2) of the 1961 Land Drainage Act.⁹ The Commissioners replied to the effect that they had done no more than preserve the status quo in pursuance of their statutory duty. In November it was reported, that 'two of the steel plates had been removed by some unauthorised person operating from the farmer's land on the opposite bank to the lock, and the matter had been reported to the police'.¹⁰ The water level had dropped and craft in Linton cut had grounded and heeled over, but within 24 hours volunteers had replaced the plates and welded them in position. In the circumstances the Commissioners decided not to prosecute.

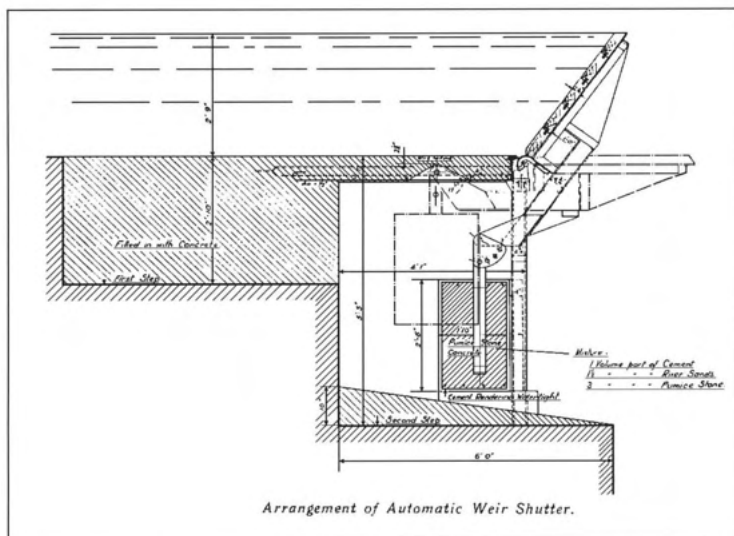
Negotiations during 1972 resulted in an *ex gratia* offer from the CEGB of £600 towards the cost of dredging and cutting down the weir crest plates to

the pre-1920 level, and the Internal Drainage Board undertook to make up the balance. By the end of that year some dredging had been done, but due in part to yet another closure of Linton Lock it was not completed by the end of the following year, despite the fact that the Commissioners had sought assistance from the River Authority, British Waterways, and two dredger-owning sand and gravel merchants. By this time the members of the Internal Drainage Board had lost all patience with the rate of progress, and decided — against the advice of their clerk — to take matters into their own hands. They instructed a land drainage contractor, who over the Easter holiday (12–14 April 1974) removed the plates above the weir in their entirety.

At their meeting on 15 May 1974 the Commissioners were told that a scheme that would restore the river to its pre-1920 level had been produced by a local firm of civil engineering contractors, and agreed by the newly created Yorkshire Water Authority. The work was put in hand immediately and completed by June, as the result of guarantees of financial support being received from the clubs using the river. The cost of the work totalled £1,592.18, and was borne equally by the Commissioners, the Internal Drainage Board, and the Water Authority. The total cost of dredging eventually reached £2,218.69, and the CEGB's *ex gratia* payment of £600 was made up to that figure by equal contributions from the Internal Drainage Board and the Water Authority.¹¹

Both commercial interests and individual river users had been injured or inconvenienced as a result of the Internal Drainage Board's action, and the Commissioners were urged to institute legal proceedings against them. The matter had been reported to the Police, who refused to take action, and so the Commissioners sought the advice of Counsel. In a lengthy written opinion he set out his reasons for believing the action of the Internal Drainage Board to be unlawful, and noted that by their Act of 1767 the Commissioners were expressly empowered to bring an action against any person disturbing property in their possession.¹² He also noted that the criminal penalty at the time the Act was passed for damaging or destroying the works was seven years transportation.¹³ But in the event no action was taken, and river users met the Commissioners quite considerable legal costs.

The Commissioners were not empowered by their Act of 1767 to levy tolls from pleasure craft using their navigation; by 1977 it was very evident that



Pre-existing 18in crest-boards on Linton Weir were replaced by two Ransome & Rapier automatic tilting shutters, each 50ft long, which normally raised the river 2ft 9in. They were held up by counter-weights of pumice stone concrete, until in high flow conditions rising levels below the weir reduced their effective weight, allowing the shutters to fall.

(From the English Electric
Co's Opening Ceremony
Commemorative Booklet, 1923
[York Local Studies Library])



Linton weir shutters and (part of) the salmon ladder, which was rebuilt by the Yorkshire Fisheries Board following the installation of the weir shutters. This directed a stream of water towards the lock island's tail, causing serious erosion later halted by extensive piling. By summer 1970 all the top boards of the weir shutters were missing, as were most of the second boards (and one third board), reducing the navigable depth in Linton Cut of barely three feet. (Stanley Tyson, August 1970)



Linton Power Station and forebay from upstream, showing the sluice gear and strainer rack. Following the closure of the station on 28 September 1962, the forebay soon filled with silt. In 1967 the land was leased to Linton Lock Marina Ltd, who dredged the forebay to provide additional mooring space. The silt soon returned, and it was tenable for only one season. (Stanley Tyson, August 1970)

their income was still hopelessly inadequate, and British Waterways suggested to the Commissioners that under Section 43(3) of the Transport Act 1962 they would be entitled to charge for the services and facilities they provide.¹⁴ At their meeting on 1 June 1977 the Commissioners signed a Byelaw instituting charges for passage through their lock, for the year 1 July 1977 to 30 June 1978 of £1 for a single passage, or £10 for an Annual Licence.

Exit the Linton Lock Commissioners

Following a prolonged closure in 1987/8 a period of intensive fund-raising partially financed extensive repairs undertaken in the belief that British Waterways would take over Linton Lock Navigation when the lock was in good order. But then the Department of the Environment ruled that BW could only take it over if certain conditions were met. BW inspected the lock, and decided it did not meet those conditions because of doubts about its long-term stability. However, after prolonged discussions, BW entered into a management contract to operate and maintain Linton lock on behalf of the Commissioners, for a period of one year commencing August 1993.

On 28 October 1993 it was announced that the Commissioners had asked the Department of the Environment to relieve them of their responsibilities, their Clerk was reported as saying: 'the Commissioners are in the position of being responsible for a

structure for which they can never have sufficient resources to properly maintain'. (The estimated repair cost exceeded £1 million.) It was suggested that Grant Aid should be sought from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the Commissioner's application was eventually successful; a sum amounting to 75% of the estimated cost was made available. The remainder had to be found from other sources. Repair work commenced in September 1997 and Linton Lock re-opened on Friday 15 May 1998. When the contractor's accounts were settled, the conditions imposed by the Department of the Environment were fulfilled, and the transfer to British Waterways took effect on 18 June 1999.¹⁵

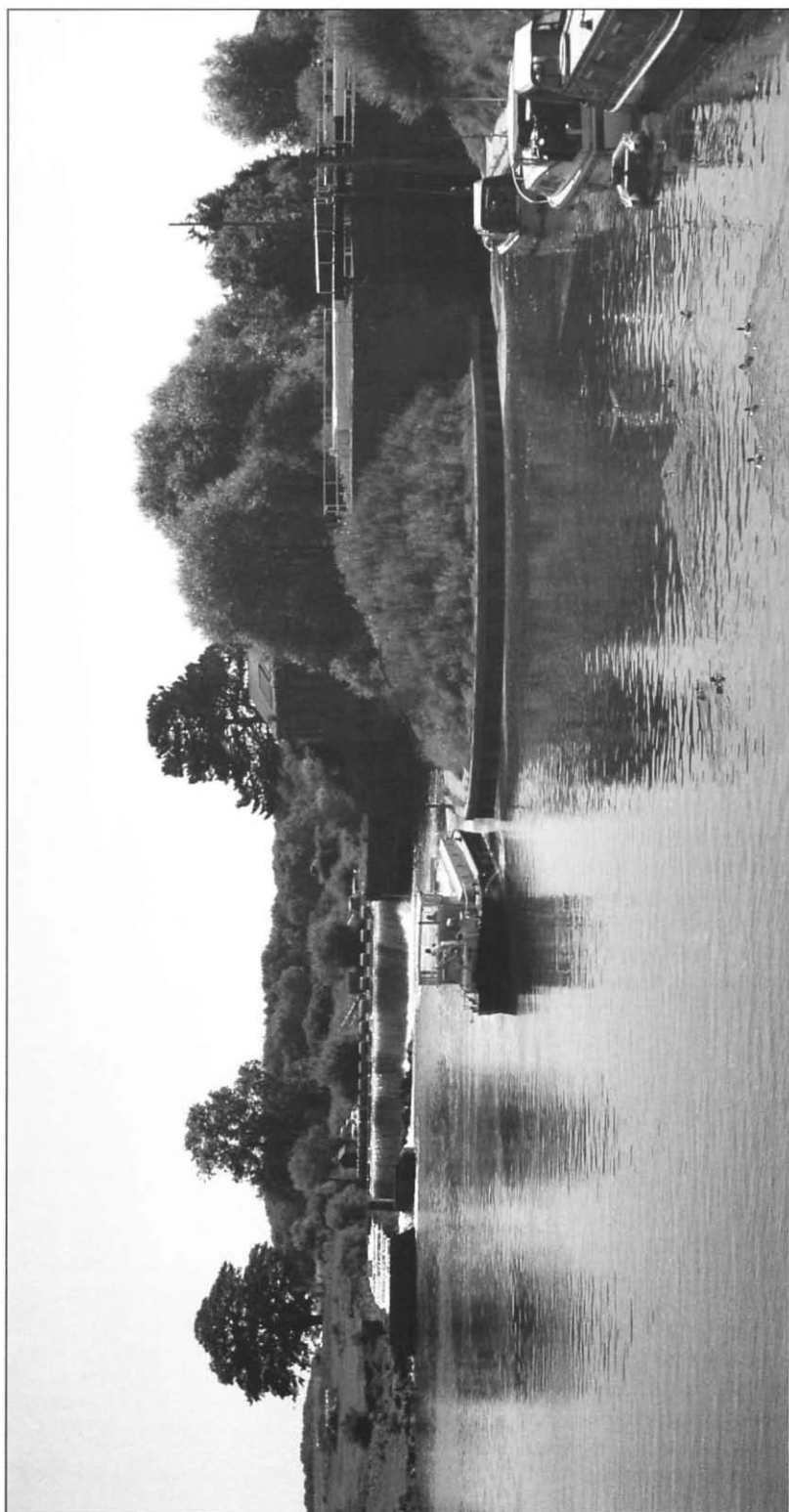
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A short version of the foregoing account appeared in Ripon Motor Boat Club's *Cruising Guide to the North East Waterways*, 1996. In that account I wrote: 'On 30 October 1993 it was announced that British Waterways had drawn up a list of 23 potentially suitable sites (including Linton) for hydroelectric generation "to take advantage of Government subsidies for producing environmentally friendly power". Linton Lock island with its derelict power station would become a valuable asset in the ownership of an organisation with access to development capital.' But in the event it was the owner of the land on the river's west bank who built a small modern replacement for York Corporation's hydroelectric power station.

Notes and references

For over thirty years the writer cruised on the rivers Ouse and Ure, and became very familiar with Linton Lock and its problems. I am grateful to York Central (Local Studies) Library for access to their files regarding Linton hydroelectric power station. To the late Stanley Tyson for the loan of his slides and a copy of his paper 'The Linton Lock Hydro-Electric Power Station', *Industrial Archaeology*, Vol 9, No 1, February 1972. And to the late H.B. Sanders, who was a Linton Navigation Commissioner from 1962, and made his correspondence file available to me, after he ceased to act as a Commissioner in 1980.

1. Pat Jones, 'An ill-defined boundary', *RCHS Journal*, November 1997, 418-23.
2. Pat Jones, 'John Smith, and England's First Iron Bridge', *RCHS Journal*, November 1996, 178-85
3. Michael Fife and Peter Walls, *Yearsley Village to York The River Foss — its History and Natural History*, William Sessions, York, 1981, 22
4. Minutes of Linton Lock Navigation Commissioners (LLNC) meeting, 17 February 1971
5. English Electric Company, *Opening Ceremony Commemorative Booklet*, 1923, 8
6. F Maw-Johnson, Counsel's Opinion, 14 January 1975
7. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 11 May 1962, 11
8. *Yorkshire Post*, 25 October 1963
9. Yorkshire River Authority, letter dated 12 October 1971 to A B Anderson (Solicitor and Clerk, LLNC)
10. Minutes of LLNC meeting, 19 November 1971
11. *Ibid*, 22 October 1975
12. F Maw-Johnson, Counsel's Opinion, 14 January 1975
13. 7 Geo III c96, paragraph 72
14. Minutes of LLNC meeting, 20 April 1977
15. British Waterways Board (Transfer of Undertakings) Order 1999



Linton weir and lock in July 2006. The former power station building is to the right of the weir; and its small modern replacement can just be seen to the left of the weir. Note the extensive sheet piling installed to prevent erosion to the tail of the lock island.

(Gareth Foster)

Hospital Wagons

John Horne

Some observations prompted by Philip Scowcroft's article on Doncaster Infirmary's Charity Wagon in the July 2006 issue of the RCHS Journal (p337)

Cardiff Royal Infirmary

Perhaps the use of a coal wagon to earn money for a charity was unique, but Henry Gethin Lewis *may* also have done the same thing in his home town of Cardiff in 1927. The Cardiff Royal Infirmary acquired two 12-ton coal wagons in 1927; No 1 was built by E G Ireland Ltd of Newport in January 1927 and registered by the GWR, while No 2 was built by Hall, Lewis & Co Ltd in March 1927 and registered by the LMS.

I cannot say whether the Cardiff Royal was 'presented' with one or both wagons but the coincidence of dates and the involvement of Lewis are significant, especially as it was so uncommon for hospitals to own wagons.

Other hospitals

Considering the number of large hospitals and asylums which had their own branch lines, bringing coal for boilers, gas works and electricity plants, it might be thought that many would have their own wagons. But having searched all the records that I can (including all post-1923 registrations and the Railway Clearing House lists of 1926 and 1933), I am able to offer only two more examples, the Napsbury Mental Hospital (Visiting Committee) of St Albans and the Three Counties Hospital, near Hitchin.

Napsbury was running wagons in both 1926 and 1933 since they appear on both RCH lists. Three Counties bought ten new wagons from W Rigley of Bulwell Forest in 1930 and although they were numbered 1 to 10 they may have replaced an earlier fleet, since the hospital and its branch line dated from about 1890. There is no suggestion of charitable input in either case, although the role of the Visiting Committee may not have been entirely supervisory. At Three Counties it seems clear that the wagons were bringing coal to the hospital, whereas the Doncaster wagon appears not to have done this, but rather earned money for hospital funds. If other hospitals ran coal wagons I should be grateful for

the information.

Major coal users with private sidings found cost savings beyond wagon hire in running their own wagons. Coal stored in wagons did not need double-handling, both into and out of storage, once the penalties of demurrage and siding rent were eliminated. The railways often delivered wagons at inconvenient times or in groups which were too large to unload economically. In times of coal shortage one was more likely to get the attention of a hard-pressed colliery if empty wagons could be sent. So it is all the more surprising that so few large hospitals and similar institutions seem to have owned coal wagons. The uniformity is such that one wonders if central government policy was involved. Did the Board of Health frown on the necessary capital provision, for example?

Some ownership may be masked by hospitals coming under County Council control. The London County Council had a large wagon fleet, for example, and some could have been inherited from the Metropolitan Asylums Board, but this is speculation. The LCC bought more than 50 new wagons between the wars although the individual Departments involved are unknown to me.

Doncaster Infirmary

Returning to the Doncaster Infirmary wagon, no new wagon was registered by the LMS or the LNER in the Infirmary's name, although both the Cardiff wagons were registered, suggesting that either the Doncaster wagon was secondhand (nearly new?) or remained in the ownership of the Doncaster Wagon Co. So far as I can see, and despite the press report, the Doncaster Wagon Co built no wagons between 1923 and 1947, if ever, although confirmation would be welcome. The registered wagons as built by Hall Lewis that year seem to be accounted for. No 1 could have come from the batch of 20 built in 1926 by Central Wagon Co of Wigan on their own account, since Central was another H G Lewis company.

The Doncaster Wagon Co, of Danum Works,

Hexthorpe, had ten out-stations in 1953, where wagons now owned by BR could be repaired. Seven of these were at local collieries, including Bullcroft and Markham. Many large collieries had wagon shops which later passed into the hands of specialist wagon repairing firms. By the time the wagon was photographed, both Markham Main and Bullcroft had lost their independence and were part of Doncaster Amalgamated Collieries Ltd. It would not be surprising if the wagon's lettering included Markham on one side and Bullcroft on the other. Hall, Lewis & Co Ltd had also disappeared. They were briefly a subsidiary of the Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Co before liquidation in 1931. The hyper-active Henry Gethin Lewis continued in business, however. The Central Wagon Co, which he chaired from its creation in c1912, controlled the Doncaster Wagon Co and some of the Doncaster outstations later traded under the Central name.

The Wagon Pool

Mr Scowcroft asks 'what happened with the war'. The Wagon Pool for mineral wagons of 1939 saw the government paying owners a regular rent for their wagons, via the Railway Clearing House who acted as its agent. There was sometimes difficulty in distinguishing owners from tenants and sub-tenants, and one wonders if the Doncaster wagon might have caused a little head-scratching in this respect. Wagons which were damaged or became unfit for main-line use were taken out of the pool and either returned to their owners or repaired (sometimes by the main-line company) according to the owner's preference. Normal business rules continued to prevail, in general. War Damage claims were dealt with much as for blitzed buildings, some compensation, much delay and even (at first) the involvement of the District Valuer. Wagon owners usually had the option of reclaiming the wreckage, if they wanted it, and often did so because materials were scarce. In extreme cases, a good set of wheels and ironwork might re-emerge as a new wagon and return to the Pool to earn top rental! More often, the wagon was held while the owner was found and agreed to the damage being repaired (at the owner's cost) by the main-line company or some wagon repairing firm in whose yard the cripple was languishing. Rental ceased at the time of the air raid or shunting accident, to resume only when the wagon was returned to traffic.

As a rule, the wagon owner did not see the damaged wagon or the repair, he just paid the bill. H G Lewis was among those who sometimes reclaimed the cripple and had it repaired by a firm with whom he had an arrangement. This was an approved option, the pressures of war notwithstanding.

New wooden wagons and some steel examples were built for private owners throughout the Wagon Pool years, right up to railway nationalisation. Until about 1943 some new wagons were even fully lettered but the 'utility style' then became universal, albeit with a choice of body colour. Those who invested in these new wagons probably never saw them, since the wagons went straight into the Pool. A number of wagons were built for people who seem to have been private investors, not users of wagons, although some were related to users. Existing wagons kept their full lettering unless a repair interfered with it. Owners' names and numbers were unchanged until 1949 when BR issued blocks of 'P' numbers to wagon repairers and others, which they applied randomly and (presumably) reported back which old number and owner's name had been obliterated by the new patch, applied in the bottom left hand corner of each wagon side.

Requisitioned wagons were nationalised at the same time as the railways, although special arrangements must have applied to pooled colliery-owned wagons since the National Coal Board was formed earlier. Compensation was paid according to the age and capacity of the wagon. The last published accounts of those gas companies which had owned wagons sometimes show an appropriate credit on the capital balance sheets for 1948 and 1949, for example.

The operation of the Wagon Pool is a big subject but it is worth noting that while most private owner wagons wandered far and wide, a minority remained in virtual circuit working for many years, even into the mid-1950s. The Doncaster Infirmary wagon could have fallen into either category. Let us hope that the New Royal Infirmary continued to receive to receive a rental from wagon No 1 until the National Health Service made hospital charity less crucial.

These are very general observations and many exceptions can be found. The wagon trade is full of surprises and I am most grateful to Mr Scowcroft for discovering another. As usually happens, new information raises yet more questions!

'I am astonished'

The Rector recalls the arrival of the railway at Finningley

Tim Edmonds

I recently sorted through several boxes of old books and documents from the maternal side of the family, a substantial part which originated with one man, the Revd Gervas Harvey Woodhouse (hereafter GHW) who was from 1836 until his death in 1882 the Rector of Finningley, in the extreme northern tip of Nottinghamshire to the east of Doncaster. His lifetime saw great changes in economic and social life, both nationally and locally, and the documents that survive show that GHW was himself not just fascinated by them, but directly involved. A man with family roots in the area, he was a student of family and local history, much of which he published in a privately-printed volume in 1877, from which come the quotes below.¹ It is based on his researches in various ecclesiastical and public records, as well as the family documents, parish and estate records to which he had access.

One of the major changes that he saw during his incumbency was the arrival of the railway in his parish, and he includes a short chapter in which he comments on its genesis and effect on the local community. It begins thus: 'When I look upon our Railway Station, with all its appliances for regularity and security of rapid travel and communication, I am astonished.' The reminiscences which follow this statement are of historical interest, both as a contemporary record of the impact of the railway on a village community and of the part played by the parson as a representative of that community.

When GHW arrived in 1836, railways did not feature in the local transport scene. Finningley's transport centre was Bawtry, on the Great North Road some four miles to the south. He recalled that in those days:

we had at Bawtry sixteen coaches and mails daily passing; when it cost us a pound a month to obtain our letters; those for the inhabitants being generally brought and sent by the Scrooby miller;² there were scarcely any railways in the kingdom; no electric telegraphs; scarcely any gas in the streets; scarcely any photographs; no steam thrashing machines; no agricultural machinery ... I did not even dream of such improvements as are now familiar to us all.

The Railway Mania of 1844-5 brought many competing schemes for railways through the area,

from which the Great Northern (GNR) emerged the winner. It completed the line from Peterborough to Doncaster via Lincoln in 1849, followed in 1852 by its direct line from Peterborough via Grantham and Newark, which met the loop at Retford. A station was provided at Bawtry.

In the 1860s and 1870s the area east of the GNR main line saw conflict between the GNR and Great Eastern (GER), the latter eager to get a share of the coal traffic from Yorkshire to London. The line that was ultimately built was that of the GNR direct from Doncaster to Gainsborough, which was opened to goods on 1 July 1867 and to passengers on 15 July 1867. A station was provided at Finningley, 7¼ miles from Doncaster, and the initial passenger service was four trains a day each way on weekdays, with one on Sundays.

The controversies surrounding the various competing railway schemes would still have been fresh in the minds of the people for whom GHW was writing, with the consequence that in his book he omits details that would help our understanding today. For example, he tells of his support for one railway proposal, but we are not told which one:

It may have been unknown or forgotten how many railways have been projected to run from the South to Doncaster through our Parish, during the period of the Railway mania. ... One of these I earnestly recommended, which was to pass by Nurseryhouses. This would have left all our main roads untouched; but it was powerfully opposed, and the bill was thrown out on the second reading.

There were some buildings called 'Nursery Cottages' on the Bawtry Road about a mile south of Finningley, until the development of the airfield and the realignment of the road isolated them. These are likely to be the 'Nurseryhouses' referred to and, if so, they would have been close to a proposed deviation of the GNR's loop line that was part of the company's 1848 Parliamentary campaign. Opposition to this line was orchestrated by Lord Galway of Serlby Hall near Bawtry, and resulted in the Bill failing its second reading. Thus Galway, described by Grinling as 'one of the most violent of the fox-hunting opponents of railways', was doubtless the powerful opposition referred to by GHW.

Perhaps the plans for this deviation made provision for a bridge at the Bawtry Road, rather than a level crossing, hence the comment about leaving roads 'untouched'. This was clearly a local issue with the GNR line as built — three level crossings were provided in the vicinity of Finningley, one of them over the road to the neighbouring village of Wroot:

At last came two Railway companies, the Great Northern and Great Eastern, proposing to pass over our main roads on the level, schemes which were far more objectionable on that ground, but in other respects more advantageous to Finningley and Wroot.

GHW recognised that the railway could bring improvements and, as a man of some standing in the community, he took the lead in getting support. Of the competing GNR and GER proposals he wrote:

I saw the benefit which must be derived from either of these schemes, and wrote to my friends in the villages through which they were to pass; and formed a Committee here, which worked very vigorously. We petitioned the Legislature, and communicated with all our Members of Parliament, and pleaded, not for any one scheme, but for such a railway as they should approve.³

There was again some unspecified opposition to these railway proposals, but GHW felt that his independence was an important factor in gaining support in Parliament:

I privately represented the unanimity which prevailed in this neighbourhood as to a railway, which ought not to be disregarded by our representatives. The

feelings of the constituency were acknowledged, and they took up the case and carried it. Had the Great Eastern carried its points, the railway would never have been made; but, happily, the Great Northern gained.

He does not elaborate on the GER's 'points', but the conflicts between the two railways in the whole region to the east of the GNR Main Line continued until 1879, when various parts of both systems were vested in the two companies jointly. Included was the GNR between Gainsborough and Doncaster.⁴ However, in 1877 it was effectively the GNR alone that provided Finningley with its railway. In his closing words to the chapter in his book, GHW's view of this was that:

we now have an excellent and accommodating railway and a Station with a Post-office Telegraph. Only one thing is wanting, an early train to Doncaster on Tuesdays at least. I trust that this may be obtained and then the railway will be profitable to all concerned.

He had a point. In 1877 the first train to Doncaster left Finningley at 11.2am, Mondays to Fridays, while on Saturday there was a departure at 8.23am. Tuesday and Saturday were market days in Doncaster, so the lack of the early Tuesday train would have been a serious inconvenience. Happily for market-goers the situation was soon rectified, and the Rector must also have been pleased when the GNR provided a Tuesdays-only train to Doncaster which made an 8.13am call at Finningley.



Revd Gervas Harvey Woodhouse (1801–82),
photographed in 1879
(Edmonds family collection)

Notes and references

I would like to thank the staff of the Brunel University Transport Collection and Doncaster Local History Library for their assistance, and to Malcolm Margetts for access to his collection of OS maps. However, my main thanks must go to my great-great-grandfather, Gervas Harvey Woodhouse, for his documentary legacy.

- The main sources used for the railway background are:
- Charles H Grinling, *The History of the Great Northern Railway 1845–1922*, rev edition 1966 (the reference on page 21 to 'Tinningley' must surely be to 'Finningley');
 - John Wrottesley, *The Great Northern Railway Vol 1: Origins and Development*, 1979; and
 - Bradshaw's Guide, March 1877 and August 1880.

1. The Revd Gervas Harvey Woodhouse, *Finningley: a memorial addressed to his friends and parishioners*, published by the author, Doncaster, 1877.
2. Scrooby is a village just south of Bawtry.
3. Unfortunately no documents relating directly to GHW's railway activities appear to have survived.
4. The GER had already paid half of the construction costs of this line.

Some English Railway Might-Have-Beens

Charles Klapper

The 50th Anniversary Journal, published in May 2004, contained the extracts dealing with Wales, the Border Counties and Scotland from Klapper's paper 'Some Railway Might-Have-Beens', which had been presented to a meeting of the Society on 18 January 1964 and published in the Journal of September–November 1964. Below is the remainder of the paper. Some minor rearrangement of the order and slight editing has been necessary, and sub-headings have been added.

Having spent much time in the quite unprofitable but extremely fascinating occupation of examining the possible effects of endings to historical episodes different from those that took place in fact, I have been persuaded by the programme secretary to place some of those in relation to railway history before you. Many of them raise questions that could perhaps justify further research by those with time or the inclination to pursue such lines; some raise matters directly connected with problems of today. For example, had Gladstone's machinery of railway nationalisation under his 1844 Act been put into operation, should we have had a logically planned railway system that would not have needed drastic pruning as we plunge further into the motoring-for-all era of the latter part of the 20th century? Moreover, if George Hudson had had a little better fortune and had been able to secure his grand scheme of amalgamation would we have arrived at a similar result?

Speculation on the whole course of electric traction in Southern England — and perhaps throughout the country — can be based on the alleged offer of the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway to operate certain of the South Eastern & Chatham suburban routes by its 25-cycle 6,600 volt single-phase alternating current electric traction system. Did this rumoured proposal ever take any definite shape and was it concerned mainly with former London Chatham & Dover routes? If it was made it was in the pre-1914 period when the South Eastern & Chatham board was enthused by the prospects of cultivating long-distance commuter business and was disenchanted with suburban operations. Had the Brighton been able to encompass its own main-line electrification before the 1914 war the whole of Kent and Sussex might have had the benefit of an electric service long before it did simply because the Brighton AC system, although not perfect, was well adapted to economic long-distance wide-headway operation, whereas until many years later DC traction as

employed on the London & South Western required manned substations at frequent intervals, and thus was suited only to short-range intensive exploitation.

Another electric traction possibility which also would have had a marked effect on present-day finances is the consequences one might have anticipated from implementation of the Weir report. Had the railways taken a bold line and sought to raise new capital, and observed the partisan warnings of their coal-owning friends rather less, we should have had much electric traction at 1,500 volts DC and might now, 35 years later, have had a complete electric railway system far less vulnerable to road and air competition. On the other hand one suspects that the process would have been rather like electrifying the windlass and failing to observe the better means of emptying the well by an electric pump; it is only in extremely recent times that thought has been given to the prospects of rethinking the entire complex railway system provided by simultaneous application of electric traction and resignalling.

Unfulfilled schemes

Omitting consideration of the possible results from completion of early tramroad schemes such as the southward projection of the Surrey Iron as a route via Reigate to, of all unlikely destinations, Portsmouth, as a means of combatting Napoleon, or the major proposals of William James, the so-called father of railways, one may sample some of the grandiose projects of the Railway Mania, the aftermath of which, to quote Lewin, was making itself felt half a century later; then there were many branch and connecting line schemes on a smaller scale which sometimes held considerable importance; London schemes have a savour of their own; finally I propose to deal with a few light railway projects out of the scores authorised which would have had interesting influences on the national network had they been

implemented.

Taking first the Railway Mania group it is apparent that there were several areas of the country which attracted successive schemes designed to accomplish similar objects; it would be interesting to discover how far this persistence was due to geographical considerations providing a natural railway route, to the same groups of persons or their business descendants pressing projects which had previously failed to impress either at Westminster or in Throgmorton Street, or to a reflection merely of 19th century loathing for railway monopoly. The latter possibly accounts for various proposals to break into the territory of the North Eastern Railway and for endeavours to interest the Midland and the Great Western Railways, through minor companies, in traffic to the port of Southampton, where the London & South Western reigned arbitrary and undisturbed. The Blackpool interests of the London & North Western and Lancashire & Yorkshire were obvious targets for attack and Irish shipping routes and the GWR interest in London and South Wales traffic were others, the latter linked with the wedge of attractive country between the LNWR and GWR main lines west of London.

One can admire the old-time railway project planner for his intrepidity in thinking of a feasible route, raising some money, getting powers, and hoping for traffic. A typical prospectus of a rural line in Southern England claimed revenue on the same scale per mile as the average for 1895 of all the railways south of the Thames and then modestly reduced it by 33% because it had no London terminal, no London district traffic, no Continental steamboat traffic and a fewer number of populated country towns. This piece of market unresearch was propounded by the Portsmouth, Basingstoke & Godalming promoters just half a century after the mania.

The north of England

Manchester, from early in the 19th century, had the urge for communication with the sea developed to a high degree. The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was a happy result and, later, the Ship Canal became a hallmark of Victorian achievement. Some other ventures ended queerly, however. The Railway Mania produced schemes for connecting Manchester with Poole Harbour, Southampton Water, Milford Haven and with the Tyne, none of which came off and none of which had any great intention of starting on their own tracks in Manchester. The Manchester

& Southampton was a George Hudson project, for a line from the Birmingham & Gloucester at Cheltenham roughly over the route followed nearly forty years later by the Midland & South Western Junction, taking the narrow gauge from north to south across broad gauge territory. It had a great tussle of 46 days before a Commons Committee and came to terms with the hostile LSWR. The GWR renewed its opposition in the Lords and got away with providing a narrow gauge Oxford–Basingstoke link. The Manchester & Southampton had another try in 1847, but was thrown out owing to a surveying error and then lost heart.

The Hudson-sponsored Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne Junction Railway (LM&NJR) obtained its powers in 1846, upon adopting the route of a similar scheme known as the Lancashire & North Yorkshire Railway (L&NYR). The main line was to comprise only the 54 miles from Elslack just west of Skipton and a favourite taking off place for this type of project, through Grassington and Wharfedale to the Richmond branch of the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway (later altered to a junction with the YN&BR main line at Cowtan). There was to have been a branch to Hawes (9 miles) and a junction line at Burnley. No construction was carried out by the LM&NJR, but some of the earthworks of the Skipton & Colne line near Elslack may actually have been thrown up by the L&NYR. The company was sick of its idea and thought its prospects dim by 1847; an abandonment Act then prepared was thrown out by Parliament in the following year. So the directors paid back 10s a share to the shareholders in the end of 1848, 1s a little later and another 2s.4d in 1850. As £2.10s had been paid on each £20 share, the shareholders still lost some money by venturing into this moorland undertaking. The Skipton and Grassington section of the Yorkshire Dales Railway — itself intended to make a Lancashire–Durham link 30 miles shorter than existing routes — in 1902 replaced an 8¼ mile section of it, under an Act of 1897.

Another moorland railway, authorised over the same ground as the LM&NJR between Aysgarth and Bedale, so that that section would have become, by agreement, joint property, was the Northern Counties Union Railway (NCUR). This was to cross the Pennines in X formation, from Tebay via Kirkby Stephen to Bishop Auckland and from Clifton (Penrith) via Kirkby Stephen and through Wensleydale to Bedale and Thirsk, with a branch from Bedale to Wath (now Melmerby) en route to Ripon. This scheme of 1846 would have done for the railway system what the

A66 road from Scotch Corner on A1, the Great North Road, to Penrith on A6 does for road transport. Indeed, it incorporated a previous scheme to go across Stainmoor by such a route rather than Wensleydale. A portion was constructed between Melmerby and Burneston. The greater part of this was sold to the Leeds & Thirsk (later Leeds Northern) but an abandoned piece of cutting exists from the junction point south of the existing Sinderby Station towards Burneston, parallel with the Great North Road. The Masham-Thirsk road, B6267, appears to represent the northern limit of construction. A photograph of this — taken with one eye on a fine specimen of a bull which was taking his ease further down the cutting — shows it in April 1955. Some £131,000 was spent to provide the 2¼ miles of completed railway that was later used!

Clause 26 of the NCUR Act was the cause of its downfall; it required both parts of the undertaking to be carried out equally, an impossibility in a time of depression. So none was finished and Great Northern hopes in 1851 of getting a through service to Glasgow by the G&SWR (in any event not very palatable to the LNWR which controlled the Penrith-Carlisle link) faded with great rapidity under LNWR hostility. It would to-day have provided a route of about 410 miles from London to Glasgow suited to high-speed electric traction and with gradients not steeper than 1 in 100 in England.

A peculiar relic of George Hudson still stands at Tadcaster in the shape of a £35,000 viaduct built under the York & North Midland Railway Bill of 26 June 1846 for a line from Copmanthorpe to Tadcaster and Garforth, making a York-Leeds short cut. Work was stopped by order of the Y&NMR investigation committee in 1849.

The Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Act of 1891 provided for 170 miles of lines, but its proposals for linking Warrington, Macclesfield and the Lincolnshire Coast are well-known. The most striking feature was the 272ft high viaduct across Monsal Dale; it is worth looking down from Monsal Head to try to visualise the scene in the Dale had it been carried out.

Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Hampshire

The 'drang nach Southampton' upon the Mancunian mind seems to have persisted and to have been reflected in the Midland & South Western Junction (M&SWJR) and the Didcot Newbury & Southampton (DN&SR). The former was begun in the 1870s

and completed in the following decade; early through coach workings coupled Southampton with Birmingham and Sheffield, later Manchester was served. It linked Andover on the LSWR and Andoversford on the GWR, a basic Southampton-Cheltenham service being operated. Independent extension southwards was attempted by the South Hampshire Railway & Pier Company of 1886.

There is a delightful confusion of embankments around Andoversford, a fair puzzle for an archaeologist of centuries hence, some belonging to the East Gloucestershire Railway and some to ideas of the Midland & South Western Junction, which about 1895 proposed to avoid its approach to Cheltenham over the GWR and to go direct to Ashchurch on the Midland. A prospectus map of 1898 shows an even more fundamental design: that of reaching Stratford-on-Avon and entering Birmingham by the metals of the Birmingham & North Warwickshire Railway (B&NWR). Before the last-mentioned company definitely threw in its lot with the GWR, it had planned its Moor Street terminus, and the Great Central was persuaded it ought to go to Birmingham via Woodford Halse, the East & West Junction and the B&NWR. But the Great Central had no money to spare for such a venture, whereas for the Great Western, it formed a good start for its short cut to Cheltenham. Needless to say, the through route from the M&SWJR did not prosper.

The M&SWJR at one time hoped to connect Cirencester with the Witney-Fairford line of the East Gloucestershire Railway (EGR), rump of a project of 1861 connecting Cheltenham to Farringdon and the GWR main line at Uffington and various modifications thereafter. The more interesting part of the EGR story centres on proposals by the Midland to build and work it; simultaneously, the Midland was trying to extend its influence from Nailsworth to Malmesbury and Salisbury. Some work is reported to have been done at Malmesbury on an authorised scheme and some tunnelling in the Cotswolds for the EGR. Successive schemes are reputed to have involved a steam tramway on the roadside, a steam bus, and a railway from Cirencester to Fairford.

Another grandiose scheme of the 1880s was the Didcot, Newbury & Southampton Railway (DN&SR) which constituted yet a further threat to the integrity of Great Western territory — to protect which it laid mixed gauge in 1856 from Oxford to Basingstoke — and yet another to the LSWR monopoly of Southampton port traffic. Its first Act was passed in 1873, to build a line from Didcot to Micheldever.

An Act to reach Southampton and reclaim foreshore there was obtained nine years later.

To obtain a mental picture of what Southampton would have been like had its southern end been completed south of Winchester under its Act of 1882, stand north of Central Station and think that the Clock Tower affair on top of the station building was set up by the LSWR to cause the maximum trouble to the DN&SR, the viaduct of which had been partially built exactly on that alignment across what was then Southampton West. The foundations of the arches came to light when a row of houses subsequently built on the site was demolished. There are also earthworks in Southampton football ground, at a point where the Bournemouth and Poole branch — note the old Manchester–Poole scheme rearing its head — would have bifurcated under an 1883 Bill which aroused the ire of friends of the New Forest.

The LSWR had hoped to divert DN&SR traffic at Whitchurch via its Hurstbourne–Fullerton Junction line (opened on 1 June 1885) but the DN&SR refused to complete its loop at that point. It reached Winchester Cheesehill on 1 May 1885 and connected with the LSWR at Shawford on 1 October 1891. It was not until 1 October 1910 that GWR through workings to Southampton began by agreement with the LSWR. In the meantime the Great Central had been sustaining the DN&SR traffic office in Southampton and had even prompted talks on the prospects of a DN&SR connection from Didcot to the GCR at Quainton Road. Needless to say the prospect of the GCR lifting Southampton traffic by such a route to Manchester in its own trains was never implemented.

Kent and Sussex

Two schemes in the South have been of some interest to me at various times in the past. Both originated in the early 1860s and both have left their spoor, although construction was never started on one of them. This paradox is explained by the fact that it caused a railway then planned to be diverted. This was the Mid Kent Railway, which turned east at New Beckenham to run to Beckenham Junction. The directors were so enthusiastic for a scheme to link their line to Brighton that the direct alignment southward from New Beckenham to Park Langley was reserved for the Brighton project and in its own Act for an Addiscombe extension, obtained on 17 July 1862, a sharp reverse curve to the west was inserted before Clock House station to strike off south-westward to the neighbourhood of Croydon.

The earliest proposal of which I know of the Mid Kent connection to the South Coast was that of the Beckenham, Lewes & Brighton Railway, which was, however, not issued until 1863. It provided for a line from New Beckenham, with a spur from Kent House on the LC&DR, via Park Langley, Biggin Hill, Limsfield, East Grinstead, Newick and Lewes to a terminus at Kemp Town. The LB&SCR promptly obtained powers for a Brighton and Kemp Town branch in 1864 so as to protect its flank, and this blocking line was opened on 2 August 1869. This scheme was estimated to cost £2,250,000, and Cannon Street to Brighton was claimed to have been 56 miles; the prospectus contained a somewhat specious table of distances.

In 1841 the population of Brighton was 38,000; with the coming of the railway the figure rose in twenty years to 87,000, and during the next two decades to 110,000. It is not surprising, therefore, that although the Beckenham, Lewes & Brighton, despite LC&DR support, did not obtain its Act — the House of Commons committee sat for 25 days — it made another endeavour, this time with branches to Westerham and Eastbourne added to the plans. But in 1864 the Bill was negatived without a division.

It was not long before another scheme was tabled. This time, marvellous to relate, it was presented as a joint South Eastern and Chatham & Dover venture, and furthermore, it obtained its Act. On 6 August 1866 the London, Lewes & Brighton Act was passed, and authorised the South Eastern and the London Chatham & Dover to construct a line from Beckenham to Lewes and Brighton and to work the same without cost until the shareholders in the new company received a dividend of 6%. The Chatham & Dover board promptly announced that it did not recognise the scheme and the South Eastern stated that it would not be able to entertain it until the latter part of 1867. The financial crisis of 1866 made the prospect of raising £2,250,000 of capital and £750,000 loans very doubtful. The mileage authorised was 55, including junctions, and the route was generally similar to that of the Beckenham, Lewes & Brighton. This scheme, left unsupported by the SER and LC&DR, duly faded out, but was succeeded by an attempt to associate the Metropolitan Railway with London by the Sea.

The Metropolitan & Brighton Railway was thought of in 1876, when the SER and Metropolitan directorates had a common chairman in Sir Edward Watkin, and sought to operate from Moorgate Street via

Blackfriars and the LC&DR or via the connection to the South Eastern at Metropolitan Junction (authorised in 1872 and opened in 1878) to Kent House or New Beckenham respectively and thence by new line to Beckenham High Street, West Wickham, Warlingham, Caterham, Godstone, Blindley Heath, East Grinstead, West Hoathly, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, Hurstpierpoint, Newtimber and Patcham to a Pavilion station at Brighton, approached by viaduct. This also came to nothing and the area south of Hayes down to the old SE main line is still not penetrated by rail except for the Westerham branch and the Croydon and Oxted Joint Line. It is, indeed, very difficult country, rising to the escarpment of the North Downs, which is 880ft high at Botley Hill, and broken by steep-sided combs. The only recent proposal for serving it has been Colonel Stephens' Southern Heights Light Railway of 1925 from Sanderstead to Orpington, over which Mid Kent Line electric trains were to have run.

The other south country scheme to which I referred earlier was the LB&SCR Ouse Valley Line, authorised on 23 June 1864, to run 20 miles from just south of the Ouse Valley viaduct on the Brighton main line to Uckfield, where it would have run through the station on the Lewes-Eridge line in the London direction, taking off again across country to Hailsham. It was intended to give an improved approach to Eastbourne. In 1865 the St Leonards undertaking was authorised to build an 18 mile railway from St Leonards to the Ouse Valley and the Tunbridge Wells and Eastbourne, two triangular junctions being formed north and south of Hellingly Station. In 1866 both lines were modified. By 1868 formal abandonment powers were obtained.

The financial crisis of 1866, plus the insistence of Brighton shareholders that the capital account should be closed, combined to kill these schemes, which in any event, do not look very valuable as traffic producers or short cuts when set out on the map. Signs of the work carried out are still visible south of the Ouse viaduct where bridge 109 across the Haywards Heath – Balcombe road has alongside it the abutments of the Ouse Valley line bridge. Across the Haywards Heath – Horsted Keynes branch is a wood concealing the completed embankment. There are bridge abutments on the road past Copyhold Farm and on the lane from Haywards Heath to Ardingly; at Kenwards Farm the embankment has become a cutting in which at the time of my visit, 25 years or so ago, the farm duckpond was fairly established.

London

Many abortive schemes have been associated with the London area. There was a Lord Ebury who was a most fertile planner of railways from Rickmansworth to Amersham, Rickmansworth to Uxbridge and so on, and although the first was eventually covered by the Metropolitan, the second was never implemented. The GWR branch to Uxbridge High Street in part represented it. That branch in itself was intended to join the branch from West Drayton, whereafter Vine Street could have been closed, but the scheme gradually became less attractive to the GWR, although at one time girders for the bridge were erected across the High Street. In the same area the Metropolitan & GCR Watford branch was cut off short of Cassiobury Park but the Metropolitan always hankered for a High Street address and there followed the erection of a typical Metropolitan station building complete with pavement canopy used as a restaurant and later as a furniture shop, which made a handy poster site for Metropolitan posters advertising buses between Watford (Mct) and the High Street.

Several papers could be read on inter-railway junctions, especially the Northern Junction Railway scheme that last came up before the war of 1914 for a Brentford–Tottenham connection between all the main lines crossed. Powerful opposition arose against one Bill because it would have cut through Hampstead Garden Suburb and there were great scenes of rejoicing upon its rejection.

The underground system has provided many abortive projects. The City & Brixton intended to use the City & South London's abandoned King William Street terminus and tunnels under the River Thames. The North East London was killed by the Great Eastern, but drove that company into the Decapod experiments; the Central London Railway (CLR) proposal to go to Chertsey excited the LSWR intensely and caused production of that company's electrification scheme, with electric traction to Shepperton high on the list of objectives. Later CLR schemes were to run under Goldhawk Road to Gunnersbury, thence over the LSWR to Richmond — that got on to an underground map — and then in 1920 to use the abandoned Addison Road – The Grove line for a similar purpose.

In the same part of London, the never-completed Latimer Road and Acton Railway of 1882 left some traces — a bridge over the West London and another over the North & South West Junction were visible for many years. The alignment was close to that of

Western Avenue.

Piccadilly trains between Barons Court and South Kensington use the tunnels of the Deep Level District Railway (DLDR), which was to proceed with stations only at Victoria and Charing Cross to the Mansion House. Electric traction on the District itself rendered this unnecessary, but the powers came in useful to get the Great Northern & Strand and Brompton & Piccadilly Circus combined schemes to an outlet westward and to their original car shed at Lillie Bridge. At South Kensington, the flying junction was laid out for the DLDR and one of the otherwise useless platforms was built, to be used for some years as the venue of the Underground school of signalling.

The most extraordinary story of London schemes was that of the Watford & Edgware, authorised as an independent project in 1897 and carefully nurtured by the Underground group over a period of years. Land was bought, bridges were made over the cutting site, cables were diverted and under the 1935 plan it was intended that the Northern Line should go on from Edgware to Bushey Heath, as would the ex-GNR Edgware branch, with a car shed near the terminus. After the Second World War all the effort of half a century proved vain, as it was declared to be Green Belt territory. The car shed is nevertheless industrialising the area as the London Transport Aldenham bus overhaul works.

From South Wales to London

The Metropolitan District Railway (MDR) was to some extent hooked up in a scheme for invasion of Great Western territory apparently hatched by the Barry. In November 1895 the London & South Wales proposals came out for a line from Cogan Junction and Cardiff to an Aust crossing of the Severn, Cricklade, Oxford and Great Missenden, with access to the Metropolis by the Metropolitan & Great Central Joint. As an alternative a branch from Bledlow via High Wycombe and Denham to the Midland at Hendon was proposed; the MDR proposed to revive its favourite Pelham Place terminus scheme at South Kensington (previously deployed for the Guildford, Kingston & London Railway) and to build a line via the Ealing & South Harrow to Uxbridge, High Wycombe and the London & South Wales route. The Barry proposed connection westward by the Vale of Glamorgan Company to Neath and by the Rhondda & Swansea Bay into Swansea. Then the LSWR dropped its Bledlow-Hendon connection and compounded with the Great Western which arranged

to build the Badminton line to South Wales, to give shorter Cardiff times. Subsequently the GWR filled the gap in High Wycombe communications by building the direct Birmingham line from Old Oak through Bicester to Aynho — another unnecessary railway by today's standards.

A remaining influence on District thought was that it ought to have coal yards at suitable suburban stations, fed either via the abortive spur from the Great Central at Sudbury Hill or via the South Acton junction. Some sites were, I believe, examined on the South Harrow line and Hounslow Town was also allocated to the purpose. Then Albert Stanley obtained control of the London General Omnibus Company and it was decided to dismantle the Hounslow Town station spur so as to build a bus garage on the spot.

Light railway schemes

One of the most interesting light railway schemes under the 1896 Act was that of the Mid Suffolk, authorised in 1900 to connect Haughley with Halesworth, with a branch from Kenton to Debenham and Ipswich. The main line was opened from Haughley to Laxfield in 1904 for freight and 1908 for passengers. The line actually ran for a mile beyond Laxfield Station in the direction of Halesworth to Cratfield, and the Debenham branch was completed from Kenton to the village before money ran out; the earthworks are prominent just north of Debenham. A receiver was appointed as early as 1907. In 1914 the Halesworth Light Railway was approved to build the Cratfield-Halesworth link.

Two electric light railway schemes of some note were the Southern Heights from Sanderstead to Orpington, to be electrically operated by the Southern Railway, and the Kearney tube from North to South Shields. The latter secured a provisional order in 1927 but Parliament did not confirm it in 1928.

Lest one should imagine that the wars of construction between the SER and the LC&DR left Kent with too many railways, the Light Railway Commissioners in their wisdom decided otherwise. Apart from any others, there were lines authorised from Pevensy to Robertsbridge (in East Sussex), the Headcorn & Maidstone Junction, with its 1 in 47 bank up the escarpment of the hills by Sutton Valence, and the Maidstone & Sittingbourne. With the Kent & East Sussex as link between Robertsbridge and Headcorn a through service from Pevensy to Sittingbourne would thus have become possible. Whoever would want to go from one to the other is another matter.

From the RCHS Photographic Collection

No 28: TT51/3-5

Three photographs of a building in the Manchester area. The sign says 'Rusholme Theatre'. What was its original function?

Please send any comments to Stephen Duffell, Hillcroft, Ford, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 9LZ or e-mail sjd@duffell7.wanadoo.co.uk.



Query No 27: July 2006, page 372

These three photographs show the former swing bridge (bridge number 8) over the River Don on the Adwick to Stainforth section of the West Riding & Grimsby Joint Railway (ex-Great Northern / Great Central). The grid reference for the bridge is SE608100. The upper photo is taken looking in a north easterly direction and shows the signal cabin that controlled the opening of bridge. The signalling arrangements were described in an article by Geoffrey Oates in *Trains Illustrated* for February 1953, pages 53–5. The bridge, together with the adjacent bridges numbers 6 and 7, the latter over the River Don, were replaced by three new fixed span bridges on a deviation line on an embankment to the north of the original line, which was brought into use in November 1955. The Don Bridge box was abolished at this time. The signal box nameplate ended up at the Doncaster Grammar School Railway Society museum, together with a distant signal arm that had weathered from yellow back to the original red colour.

The photographs were not all taken on the date stated in the accompanying text. The middle picture was taken on 9 January 1951 looking east from in front of the signal cabin. The signal on the left is the Kirk Bramwith up distant, that was slotted with the Don Bridge signal cabin. The telegraph pole is next to this signal. The lower photo was taken on 26 March 1954, again looking east. The Kirk Bramwith

distant has been removed and the telegraph pole is now on the opposite (south) bank, with a temporary line strung between two poles across the canal. On the north bank there is evidence of recent earth deposition for the new embankment. The running line had been singled at this date to allow spoil wagons to stand on the northern line for unloading. There appears to be a vehicle stationary on this line in the cutting in the distance. The upper picture was taken on 17 June 1954 and there is a crane between the signal cabin and the canal.

The canal was the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation, River Dun Navigation. The swing bridge does not receive a mention in either *Bradshaw's Canals and Navigations* (1904) or *Inland Waterways of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* (1950), but lies between Barnby Dun Wharf to the south (26 miles 6½ furlongs from Sheffield) and Bramwith Junction, with the Aire & Calder and Sheffield & South Yorkshire Junction Canal (28m 0½f), to the north.

The prints are part of a series taken by the British Railways, Eastern Region Civil Engineers, to record progress on the deviation and bridge rebuilding, but they are copies made at some date with no reference numbers on them.

I am grateful to Grahame Boyes, Andy Rush, Anthony Ross and J Neve for their replies on these pictures.

Stephen Duffell

Errata (July 2006)

p361: The 'Potteries' Railway

In the first paragraph on this page, the date of the opening of the branches should be 1866 not 1865 as stated.

p375: GNR and LNWR Joint Lines in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire

The first line of the final paragraph should read: 'Eaton Siding to Waltham-on-the-Wold and Scalford closed 4 May 1964.'

p380: The Hejaz Railway

The publisher of this book is Stacey International, 128 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4BH.

George Ottley (1916–2006)

George Ottley died peacefully on 1 July in his 90th year.

As Andrew Scott remarked in his foreword to the Second Supplement to *A Bibliography of British Railway History*, 'It falls to few of us to give our name to an institution'. Yet soon after the original volume appeared in 1966, it became known amongst railway historians and book dealers simply as 'Ottley'. It is difficult now to envisage the scale of the task that George set himself and the single-minded dedication required to bring it to fruition, at a time when the most advanced technology then available to librarians was the index card and the typewriter. The first volume was built up from 20,000 cards — 8,000 for the entries themselves and 12,000 for the index — which then had to be sorted and transcribed.

Ottley's Bibliography was designed for researchers, such as those whom he had tried to help when he was working on the enquiries desk in the Round Room of the old British Museum Library. He ignored multiple imprints and the fine detail of a book's layout given in bibliographies designed for book collectors; but he did try to give a 'feel' for the type of book being described, by quoting the extent of its illustrations, references, bibliography and appendices, and by a well-chosen descriptive phrase (or occasionally a complete paragraph), in order to help users make their own selection to suit their particular needs. He aimed for completeness, believing that it was not the role of the bibliographer to exercise value judgements and weed out titles considered less worthy. (Although very occasionally he did allow himself to say that 'This work contains many errors and omissions' after it had received an exceptionally critical review.) He gave great thought to the sequence in which the entries were set out, firstly by subject, then by dividing contemporaneous from historical literature, then by date of publication, so that the way that each subject has developed over time is readily apparent. However, many books might be allocated to two, three or more subjects, so an important feature is the careful attention given to the subject entries in the extensive index. It is these characteristics of 'Ottley' that make it so useful and user-friendly. Researchers of railway history are better served than almost any other group of historians, and to George Ottley goes much credit for the continuing flow of well-researched railway history.

The first volume of the Bibliography, containing 7,950 entries for books and pamphlets published up to 1963, was not published until 1966, partly because of the publisher's difficulty in getting the type-setting done to George's exacting standards. At this point George would wish acknowledgement to be made to the strong support he received from Professor Jack Simmons and Philip Unwin of the publisher, George Allen & Unwin. Having now spent 14 years on the project, George was already accumulating cards for a Supplement. With the help of Jack Simmons's influence, this was eventually published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office for the Science Museum / National Railway Museum in 1988, containing a further 5,006 entries with a cut-off date of 1980. This was preceded in 1983 by a second edition of the original volume, with minor misprints corrected, also published by HMSO.

Meanwhile, George, who had joined the RCHS in 1961, asked if the Society was able to continue his work. This would probably not have happened if Amstrad had not introduced in 1984 the first budget-priced home computer with a specification high enough to handle the volume of data involved (albeit with much manipulation of disks, each of which had capacity for only about one hundred records). This greatly facilitated the task and enabled it to be undertaken as a group effort. The first annual bibliography appeared in the *Journal* in 1986.

George's other contributions to transport bibliography included: 'Publications on transport studies in current [non-transport] British periodicals', published in the *Journal of Transport History*, which George compiled from 1966 to 1977 (latterly in conjunction with Stephen Rawlinson); and *Railway History: a guide to 61 collections in libraries and archives in Great Britain* (Library Association, 1973).

The exceptional importance of George's achievement was duly recognised by his peers. C P Corney, Deputy Librarian of the London School of Economics, celebrated the publication of the original volume by penning a sonnet, *On the Completion of a Railway Bibliography* (printed on p 544 of the first Supplement); and in 1967 George was made a Fellow of the Library Association. In 1999 he was honoured by the Association by the presentation of the Walford Award, which recognises 'an individual who has

made a sustained and continual contribution to the science and art of bibliography in the UK'. But he perhaps felt that his greatest honour was the entry by his old friend Jack Simmons, titled just 'Ottley', in *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History* (1997).

George was born in north London on 13 December 1916 and his formative early memories included watching the busy railway scene beside Finsbury Park, where his father was a gardener. In 1934, after leaving school, he worked in the library of University College, London. Then in 1937, having become a member of the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers) and with war approaching, he joined the Friends Ambulance Unit as a conscientious objector. However, he became progressively uncomfortable with the pacifist position and from 1941 served in the RAF. In 1951 he joined the Department of Printed

Books (the Library) of the British Museum. In 1967 he was persuaded by Jack Simmons to move to the Leicester University Library, where he had special care of its Transport History Collection, which was intended to serve, but regrettably never did, a Transport History Department. He retired to Fairlight, East Sussex in 1983, but after the death of his wife, Kay, in 1999, returned to Leicester.

He was a devoted family man, acknowledging in the Bibliography the help of his father-in-law, sisters-in-law, and teenage daughters, as well as Kay, 'his fireman on this journey'; and then in the Supplement his grandsons. However, in later life he was regretful of the effect that his commitment to the task had on family life. At the very least, eating must have been difficult when the dining room was being used to sort the cards. His other active interest was the organ, playing both classical works and music-hall songs on his own theatre organ in his living room. He enjoyed debate, but approached it with an enquiring, rather than a dogmatic, mind. This applied to religion too; he regularly attended the Quaker Meeting, but played the organ at the Methodist church.

George was never a train spotter; nor was his interest based on nostalgia and he would not like to be thought of as a 'railway enthusiast'. Rather, he was a railway devotee; he simply had a life-long love of railways. He warmly appreciated his membership of the Society and gave prominence to his acknowledgement of the support he had received from our members (see for example the title page of the original volume). Yet he never attended our meetings and visits; his interest was firmly rooted in his armchair.

GAB



*George Ottley at the launch of the Second Supplement to 'Ottley' at the National Railway Museum in 1998
(Matthew Searle)*

Correspondence

Indexes and attributions

(*RCHS Journal*, July 2006, 373)

Few would disagree with Gordon Biddle over the importance of indicating sources, since history is basically about discovering and assessing them. Endnotes are preferable to footnotes: they disrupt the sense of the text less than footnotes which provide problems in the layout of pages. I would also agree that short articles intended for the layman do not need specific attributions if they are not claiming to present new information; but they should embody in the text, or state at the end, some of the sources consulted in the hope that the reader may be stimulated to follow up the article.

I would agree that all too often the contents of books cannot be fully explored for lack of an index. Gordon Biddle and his fellow co-editor, the late Jack Simmons, must have been as disappointed as readers at the failure of Oxford University Press to provide an index to *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History*. The arrangement is, of course, alphabetical, but many of the articles are long and need to be indexed. The editors' use of asterisks to indicate separate entries for topics and people mentioned helps to some extent, as do the references to related topics at the end of some articles. The absence of entries under some subjects as, for example, W S Moorsom and James Morrison, would make an enquirer think that there is no information on them. To find it one would have to know in the one case that he was an engineer and with which railways he was involved; and, in the other, that he was an MP interested in state control of railways and then imagine which articles are likely to contain references to him. Most readers would also have expected there to be a means of locating information on particular stations, or on industrial organisations, such as collieries and breweries, maintaining lines and sidings of their own. There are good articles on architecture and architects, music, literature, and art mentioning names and titles which, while not deserving separate entries, could be mentioned in an index.

Incidentally, I sometimes find that browsing through an index is a good way of assessing and getting into a book.

Robert Sephton

I am struck by Gordon Biddle's words about the lack of indexes in recent books. So often have I had to trawl page-by-page through an unindexed book in search of some half-remembered item, cursing the author. But I am also stricken — with guilt — as the writer of a 300-page railway book which contains no index.

The book was quite rightly criticised for this (in an otherwise favourable review) and with hindsight I know I should have insisted more forcefully on my original scheme of including an index. But I was working — at a distance — with another society's publications committee. After six years of that I was worn out. Arguing with these people for an index was a chore too far; I was simply very glad to see the thing published at last, promising myself I'd never deal with such a committee again.

I suppose the only way to influence publishers, and railway society publications committees, though that may take far longer, is for reviewers to keep on loudly complaining: 'No index!'

On the matter of giving details of sources, this is tricky, as Gordon Biddle says. I was very impressed by a railway book published in 1972 which contained masses of footnotes and a long bibliography, which included *everything*, down — almost — to *The Wonder Book of Trains* and (of course) Clement Stretton. The book itself was trash, but the abundant notes looked impressive, no doubt purposely so. At the other extreme, I once asked a prolific author what his source was for a hitherto unknown — but plausible — date in his unsourced book. He replied that he *thought* he had found it somewhere in his local library, but had thrown away his notes because, as he explained: 'You can't keep everything!'

In my own book, knowing at an early stage that I would face trouble trying to add footnotes or endnotes and that, if I gave chapter and verse for every fact mentioned, the notes would have been almost as long as the text, I tried to write in a way which made my sources obvious, at least for anything even mildly surprising or contentious. I am glad the result does not look like some of the old Victoria County Histories, where page after page is half-filled with lists of footnotes: 'ibid. p123' etc.

Harry Jack

Gordon Biddle's letter is currently of interest to me. Having only recently resurrected the task of editing into publishable form an overly long study of Richard Moon, I am still undecided over how to show sources and have yet to face the 'chore' of indexing. With regard to the latter, apart from the mechanics of the actual compilation I foresee two difficulties: how comprehensive should an index be and how should it be laid out? The complexity or breadth of any subject will presumably determine the volume of items, but what of the cross-listings and order in which they are shown? Perhaps I could quote a couple of actual book examples to illustrate a point.

David Hodgkins's biography of Sir Edward Watkin, *The Second Railway King*, has an admirably detailed index of over forty pages. However nearly a quarter of these pages follow under *W*, specifically *Watkin, Sir Edward William Bt* — the subject of the whole book. Under this reference are grouped alphabetically twenty odd subjects which in turn are subdivided further (for example to find all the references to Moon, it is necessary to search not only under *M*, but additionally *W*, viz, *Watkin: Relationships with other railway chairmen*). Now I have no quarrel with this, once you suss the system, as the index is so comprehensive and clearly conforms to some professional historian practice. However such a system seems to go far beyond a simple list of page numbers where references to a specific subject can be found. It can even require the setting of an agenda different in emphasis from the one outlined by the book's contents. I have therefore a simple question. Should the subject of a whole book appear as an item in its index?

Take another example, Malcolm Reed's *London & North Western Railway*. Again one of the items listed in a comprehensive index is the L&NWR itself. Although in this case the sub-references are relatively brief, the principle is the same. Do I include *Moon, Richard*, as an item in my index for a proposed book on Moon, and, if so, what do I show under it that I can not refer to in the index overall?

Now as to the subject of attributing sources. I have to confess that in reading a text I find constant references to notes distracting, irritating even. However I do accept they can be necessary, except where authors so transparently litter their work with them to give an impression of academia.

This particularly applies where a sprinkling of only secondary sources is swamped by references to the author's own work and snippets of additional information which, if relevant, should have been in the main text anyway. Full acknowledgements and a relevant bibliography would suffice in many of these cases. The real problem seems to be one of demonstrating credibility where works are based on original research. And undoubtedly one of the most telling ways of showing this is by the quality of the references. However whether the method used has to be so detailed that it also provides a means for others to probe further is another matter.

Which raises yet another question: is the RCHS primarily a body for 'academic' enthusiasts or enthusiastic academics? But I won't go down that road. (I seem to recall some years ago having a discussion with Graham Boyes on this or a similar theme.) As an amateur whose research has been only a spare time activity, I make no claim to have produced an authoritative or definitive study of Moon, yet I recognise I may have information that needs to be put on record and, in doing so, will have a duty to show how it was obtained.

It is interesting to see how different an author or publisher's approach can be. Take for example the two books mentioned above. Both are patently well researched and can stand comparison with any study in their respective fields. As far as I can recall Malcolm Reed's narrative (incidentally published by David Joy) contains not a single footnote or reference to an endnote in the main text, yet the exacting lists of sources and bibliographies given at the end of the book amply demonstrate the quality and traceability of the research. The study by David Hodgkins on the other hand is extensively annotated with the sources given in footnotes to each page. References are numbered sequentially and are unique to each page (the method I believe required by the publisher but a nightmare if final editing shifts the contents of a page!). However can anyone say, from the point of view of the reader, which is the more preferable approach? To say that the answer lies in the target audience is perhaps to beg the question; both books were published as commercial ventures, not as academic research projects. I have a cabinet full of primary source material on Moon. Any advice on how I might show this?

Peter Braine

The pound lock at New Weir on the River Wye

(RCHS Journal, July 2006, 348–355)

I found Peter King's explanation of the the rights of navigation, and his discussion of the use of flash and pound locks, on the Severn and its tributaries very interesting. It is a most clear and helpful survey of the subject.

Being particularly interested in the River Wye navigation and the vessels which used it, my attention was first caught by his Fig 1 (page 350), showing part of a 1779 survey of New Weir on the Wye, of which I was previously unaware. I had, however, come across another, slightly earlier, survey of New Weir and its lock which may be of interest to Dr King and other readers of the *Journal*.

This is a plan entitled:

*An Exact Map
of
New Wear Works and Lands Allotted
thereto for Building Workmen's Houses,
being part of the Estate of the Hon^{ble}
Thomas Griffin Esquire within his Manor
or Lordship of Goodrich in the County of
Hereford and
part of Wear Hill.
Surveyed
by Dan^l Williams
1758.*

Two versions of this survey are in the collection of Monmouth Museum¹, one appearing to be a preliminary draft of the other — the latter, for example, using a much neater, more elaborate script, a more elaborate compass rose, and different decorative sketches of vessels and fish on the Wye; in short, a much more 'finished' document. There are also differences (corrections?) in the run of the tailrace from the millwheels of the forge, and in the boundaries of the garden and orchard of the big house at the works. The 'final' version has been folded and has suffered wear along the folds, and parts of the edge of the plan have been lost. The other is complete. The weir, the lock and the capstan beside the lock are the same on both documents.

As is the case with the 1779 map, the lock is clearly shown as a pound lock with a pair of mitred gates at each end.

A nice touch is a decorative sketch of a single-masted, square-sailed barge being bow-hauled upstream by a gang of seven men. (On the 'draft' map the bow-hauliers were placed in mid-stream,

on the 'final' version they are shown correctly on the river bank.) Incidentally, it was this sketch which first caused Mr Andrew Helme, the museum curator, to draw the survey to my attention when we were looking for material on which to base a model of the 19th century River Wye barges.²

I enclose a scan of the part of the survey showing the weir and lock so that readers can compare it with the 1779 plan.³

This part of the Wye Valley, just beneath Symonds Yat rock, is very picturesque and frequently features in 18th and 19th century paintings, sketches and engravings. There are several such pictures in the Monmouth Museum collection and some give useful views of the lock, showing, for example, the balance arms on the downstream gates. There is also a large, unfinished painting of about 1810 by Thomas Tudor, an accomplished local amateur artist, of the lock with a boat in it, and part of the weir, seen from upstream. This shows the upstream gates clearly, but with no balance arms or any obvious means of opening and closing these gates. The painting also shows men working on the weir, either repairing it, or, possibly, beginning its demolition.

For anyone on a casual visit to Monmouth, this picture is on display in the little upstairs gallery of the Museum. Anyone wanting to make a more serious study of the material in the Museum's collection will find Andrew Helme, the curator, to be very knowledgeable and helpful.

Angus Watkins

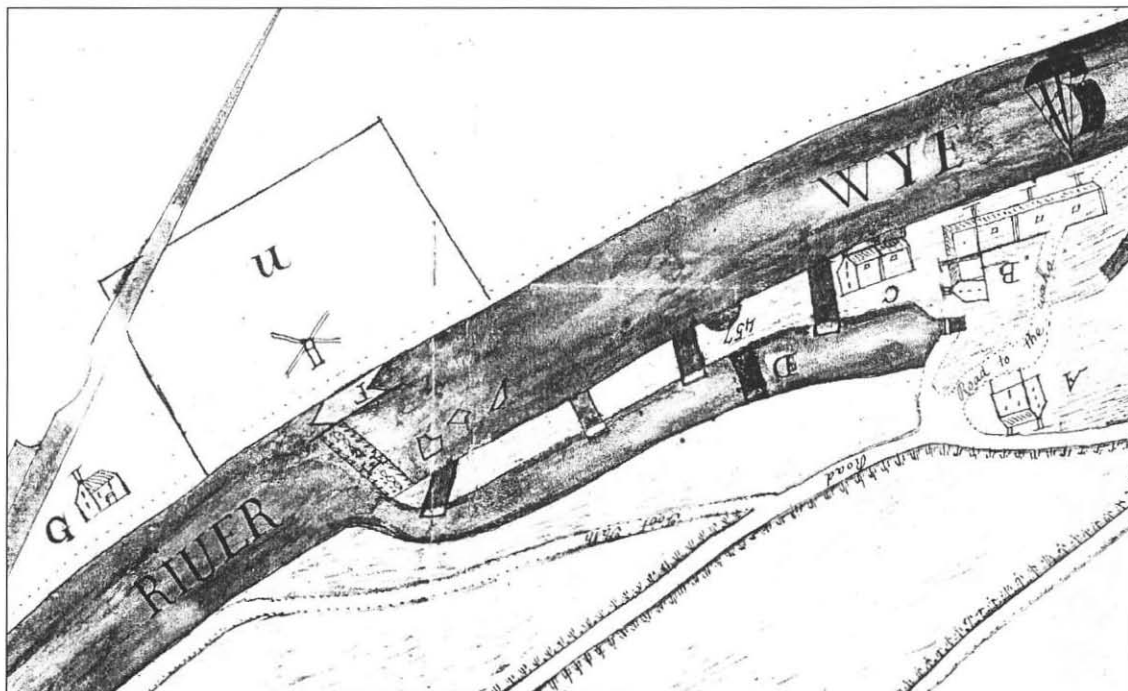
1. The Nelson Museum and Local History Centre, Priory Street, Monmouth, NP5 3XA (telephone: 01600 710630)
2. Angus Watkins, 'The up-river trow: modelling a River Wye sailing barge', *Model Shipwright*, 113, 2001, 24–32
3. The OS map reference of the weir is SO560157.

Right:

*Part of the 1758 survey of New Weir:
the 'fair copy' version (south at top)*

Part of key:

D – Forge	E – Slitting Mill
F – Forge Pond	I – The Wear
K – Lock	X – The Lock House

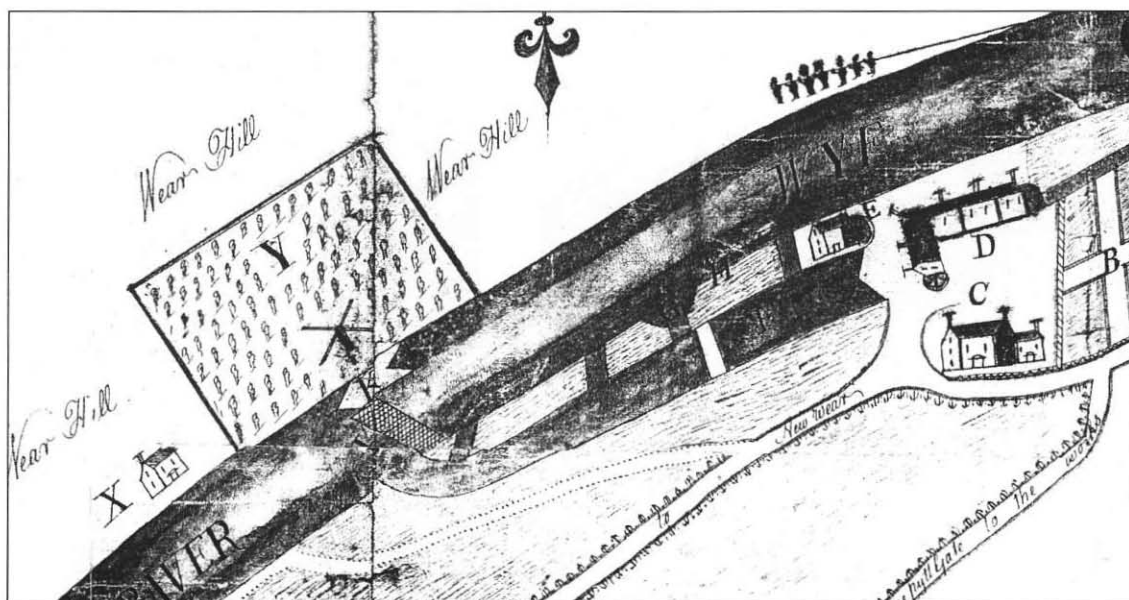


Above:

Part of the 1758 survey of New Weir:
the 'draft version' (south at top)

Part of key — some of the letters are inverted on the map

B — Forge	C — Sliting Mill (sic)	D — Forge Pond
E — Weir	F — Lock	G — Lock House



The River Teme

(*RCHS Journal*, March 2006, 294–300, and July 2006, 348–355)

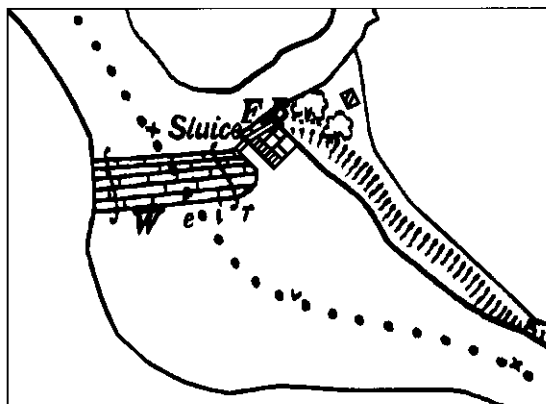
As Peter King rightly comments in his interesting article, ‘It is always much harder to prove a negative than a positive’ (p354). The revelation that commercial navigation based at Stanford may have continued into the 20th century is particularly interesting (p354). But his conclusion that the river had never been navigable through Powick weir appears to have been unduly influenced by the following:

- That ‘L T C Rolt did not know of any case of any watergate that was used to pass a mill’ (p349);
- That ‘there was no tradition of using flashlocks in aid of navigation in the Midlands’ (p352);
- And his belief that ‘Powick weir is still some 10–12 feet high, and may formerly have been higher. This is a far greater height than could be safely navigated by a boat without first draining the river above of an enormous quantity of water’ (p352).

According to M J T Lewis, W N Statcher and P N Jarvis in ‘Flashlocks on English Waterways: a Survey’, *Industrial Archaeology* Vol 6 No 3, August 1969: ‘Flashlocks were used in three main areas of the country — the Thames basin, some tributaries of the Severn, and the rivers fringing the Fens’ (p211). ... Rarely, as at Thorney on the Parrett, they were built alongside watermills, but at such places the pound lock became the norm’ (p213). ... Thorney halflock ... with its huge fall of 10ft and a top cill, ... is a compromise between a halflock and a pound lock’ (p235).

Appendix 1 to my article (p298) listed the river levels above and below Powick weir in 1913 as 41.0ft and 31.5ft AOD respectively (these figures were published in *Engineering*, 23 May 1913). It is likely that the original 15th century weir had been rebuilt, but there is no reason to suppose that it ‘may formerly have been higher’; it may well have been lower. Before the bed of the Severn below Diglis was lowered in the mid 19th century the normal surface level below Powick weir would have been higher, and in the moderately high-flow conditions in which I suggest through navigation would have been possible, the fall at the weir would have been very materially less.

An old photograph of Powick weir appears to show that its sluice gate comprised a version of the medieval ‘beam, paddle, and rimer’ flashlock.¹



Powick weir, from OS 1:2,500 sheet 33-11, 1904

Drawing its paddles would result in the river’s level rising to a much greater extent below the weir, than it would fall above the weir. When required for navigation upstream the boat’s head rope would be led to a capstan winch situated above the lock; the torrent that had initially foamed between the sidewalls of the sluice (and given rise to the term ‘flash’) would soon subside, the differential head would become something like two or three feet, and it would then be possible to draw the boat up the ramp of water to the winch.

A capstan winch was usually an essential part of flashlock navigation; part of the caption to Peter King’s ‘Figure 1’ reads: ‘i was “the capstan that is now used to draw barges against the stream up to the [pound] lock”,’ which seems to imply that the capstan was formerly used for some other purpose. Drawing craft against the stream up to and through a flashlock perhaps? According to Lewis & Co in ‘Flashlocks on English Waterways’ (fig 1) the Wye was a river which once had flashlocks.

We do not know exactly what use was made of Edmund Bury’s boat; no doubt it served Stanford Mill, but it seems unlikely it was merely used between weirs at harvest time, and disused for the rest of the year. It seems equally unlikely that it would have been advertised for sale in the *Worcester Journal* if there were no means by which a purchaser could have taken it away. I still consider it is reasonable to conclude that Edmund Bury’s boat probably carried his (and possibly his neighbours’) surplus produce ‘down to Worcester, and possibly up to Ludford (for Ludlow), when river conditions were favourable’ (p295).

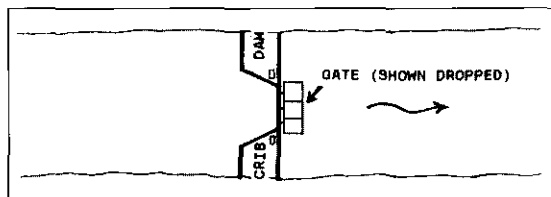
Pat Jones

1. Contributed by Max Sinclair.

Flash locks

(RCHS Journal, July 2006, 348–355)

Peter King's article on Midland Navigations has a very interesting discussion of 'flash locks'. Here in Virginia we have found remains of locks on the Willis's River which we have called 'Willis's River Flash Locks'. Each has a timber crib abutment about four feet high on each bank, and between these a falling gate ten feet wide and two to three feet high, hinged on the bottom to a wooden sill, like the tailgate of a pickup truck.



The gate was winched shut to hold back the river flow, and dropped to provide a flash of water for navigation by whitewater freighters known as 'James River Batteaux'. These were double-ended open boats like Indian canoes, up to 8 feet wide and 60 feet long — about the size of an English narrow boat — powered up and down river by men with poles. More about batteaux and the American Batteau Revival is on the Virginia Canals and Navigations Society's web site, www.batteau.org. More about these flash locks is in the Society's *Slate & Willis's Rivers Atlas*.

We know that locks of the Willis's River type, with a single falling gate instead of flash planks, appeared here by the 1820s, but so far we know of examples only on two small rivers in Virginia. It is such a simple and economical device that it must have been used elsewhere around the world, perhaps for millenia! Did Virginia engineers get the idea from England? Are examples known there — or anywhere?

Bill Trout

A train seized for debt

(RCHS Journal, July 2006, 364)

If *The Times*, which gave its version as events unfolded, is to be believed, Appendix B to Brian Janes's informative article about the Potteries Railway needs some modification. The *Railway Times*, which wisely provided a warning about the accuracy of newspapers, seems to have compressed a week's events into one day; or was it the paper it copied from? or the paper that one copied

from? or ...?

The Times of Wednesday 28 November 1866 said that the train had been seized 'yesterday' (Tuesday 27 November). Whilst 'yesterday' can cause problems of interpretation, in this case it is safe to assume a literal one since the item went on to say that it was likely to cause much inconvenience to the large numbers who had return tickets, it being fair day at Shrewsbury. The *National Gazetteer* of 1868 says that Shrewsbury markets were held on Wednesday and Saturday of each week and fairs for horses, cattle and sheep on alternate Tuesdays. One return train was allowed later that day but 'at the time of the despatch of our parcel' the acting-sheriff had refused to make further concessions.

The paper of Tuesday 4 December said the line had reopened 'yesterday morning' (clearly the Monday), 'clogged by the condition that the trains shall remain in Shrewsbury all night ... entailing the expense and inconvenience of an extra 36 miles per day'. A sale for the auction of the company's property had been fixed for 'today' but local opinion 'is that that the matter will be otherwise arranged with the creditor, who, it appears, is a member of a well-known private banking firm in the metropolis'.

On 11 December it described the bailiff's misfortunes, ascribing them to the first day of resumed working. From 'This condition' (line 18) to the end the wording is identical in the items in *The Times* and the *Railway Times*. Who copied from whom is not known.

Michael Quick

The RCHS at Pontcysyllte, 1956

(RCHS Journal, July 2006, 376–7)

I was unable to attend the weekend, which was organised by the late Edward Wilson of Ellesmere, but as Hon Secretary I had a hand in organising it. Looking at the photograph through a magnifying glass, I can recognise Martin Palmer (I think), the Hon Treasurer Geoffrey Holt, his wife Margaret, and Charles Hadfield. I think the man at the tiller is Edward Wilson, and the figure standing in front of him looks like the back of Alan Voce, while I'm pretty sure the man sitting on the cabin top in front of him is John Sheldon. After the event Geoffrey sent me a full account of it, something we both did when one of us could not attend.

Gordon Biddle

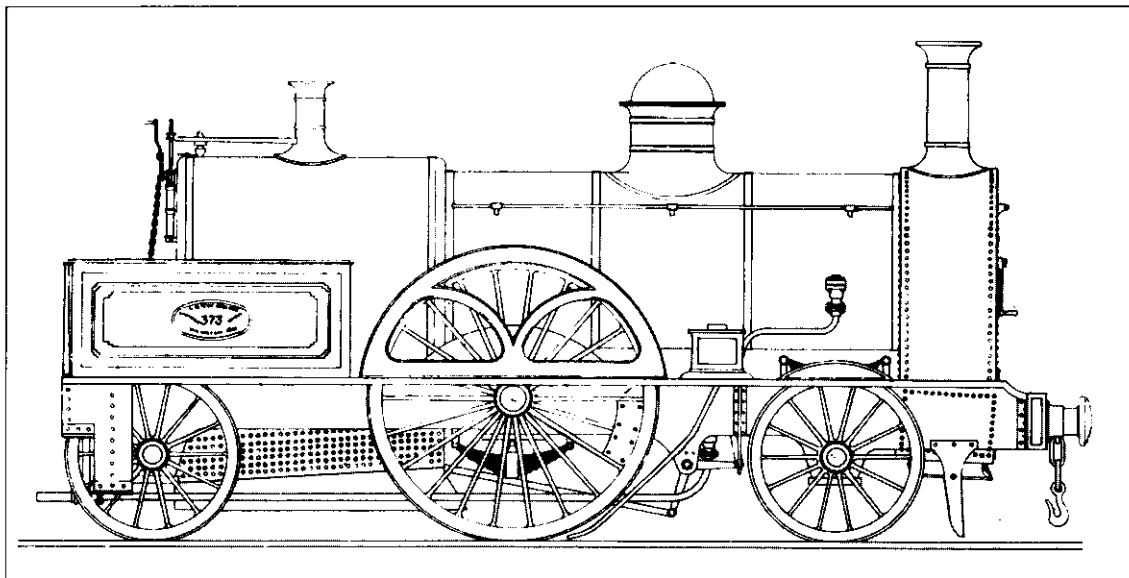
Clement E Stretton

(*RCHS Journal*, November 2005, 162–169)

Stephen Duffell's fascinating and fair-minded article gives some interesting facts about the useful side of Stretton's career, such as his energetic activities on behalf of overworked railwaymen, his writing on brakes, and his rescuing of pieces of ancient railway track. We should all be grateful to

Stretton for these.

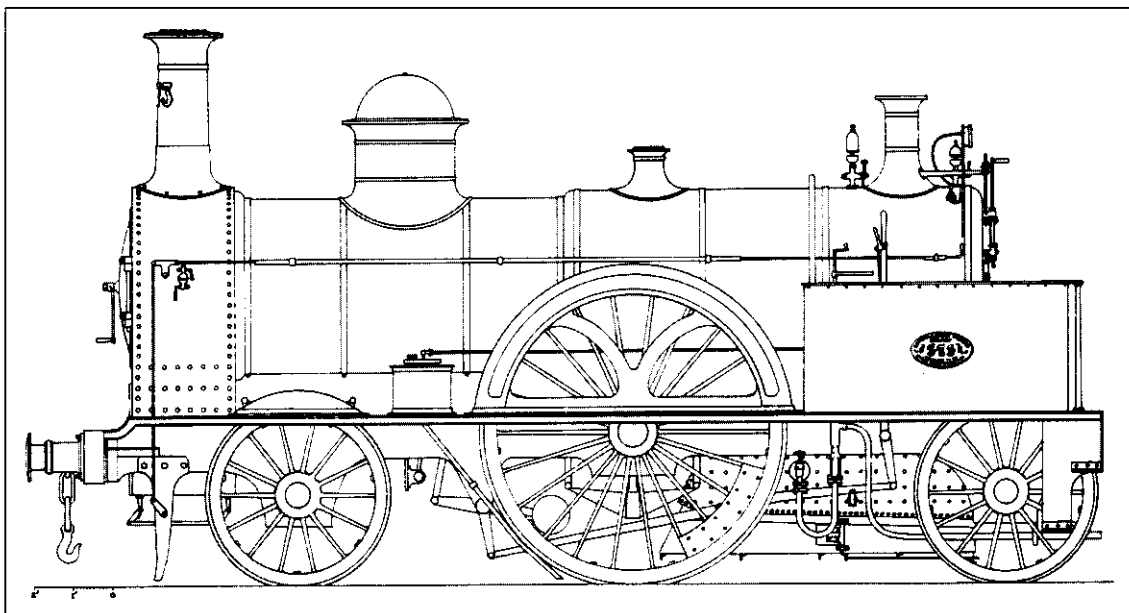
On his writings about railway history Mr Duffell mentions my suggestion that Stretton 'invented engines to fill gaps in works lists and *simply made up* what he did not know'. This is quite true, and can be demonstrated with the benefit of railway company records which were inaccessible in the 1890s, but it would be a wearisome process to go



Drawings of London & North Western Railway H class 'Extra-large Bloomer'

Above, Fig 1 : Stretton

Below, Fig 2 : Jack



through his lists one by one to itemise his many errors and obvious inventions.

Another of Stretton's activities was the production of drawings of locomotives, and this provides an easier demonstration of his habit of making things up. Let two examples suffice.

He sent drawings, which he claimed were based on original source material, to the Science Museum, where they were neatly copied.

Photographs of the redrawn copies were sold and have appeared in various books, putting what can now be seen as faulty information into circulation.

One of them (Science Museum I147/52) purports to show Bury, Curtis & Kennedy's 2-2-2 built for the LNWR in 1848; Stretton repeatedly claimed to have had access to that firm's records. A copy of this drawing was printed in the *Locomotive Magazine* in 1897 (p144), and it has appeared elsewhere since then. But surprisingly in 1978 one of BC&K's original drawings turned up in 'The Art of the Engineer' exhibition. This showed a much bigger engine, different in many respects from Stretton's version, but verifiable by drawings made in 1848 and 1849 by E T Lane.¹ It was now obvious that Stretton had simply cobbled together a sketch of what he imagined the engine looked like.

In the 1890s there was some discussion in periodicals about the recently scrapped LNWR engines which E L Ahrons facetiously described as 'Extra-large Bloomers'. In October 1892 someone calling himself 'North Western' wrote in the *English Mechanic*: 'there are no official drawings of these engines in existence'. In the following August, Stretton's drawing (Fig 1) appeared in the *EM*, repeated in the *Railway World* (August 1895), the *Locomotive Engineers & Firemen's Journal* (September 1895) and in the fifth edition of his *Development of the Locomotive* (1896).

Correspondents suggested that the drawing was wrong in certain details, but Stretton remained adamant: his drawing was authentic! Then the publication of a photograph of one of the engines showed that his critics were correct.² Again it was obvious that his drawing was merely a crude and inaccurate sketch, but Stretton included it in the sixth edition of his book in 1903. Perhaps he would have been pleased to see it back in circulation — as recently as 1989 — in a reprint of his fifth edition.

My own drawing (Fig 2) was based on dimensions given in LNWR Locomotive Supt John

Ramsbottom's Letter Book, an official drawing of the engine's firebox, and the photograph taken in 1861 — which remains the only one known. I cannot claim that it is 100% accurate, but it is somewhat more reliable than Stretton's imaginative effort.

The last published work by Stretton that I have seen includes his strange claim that the long stones on Telford's Holyhead road (the A5) near Weedon were laid by the Romans as part of Watling Street. This appeared in the *Locomotive Magazine* — of all places — in September 1913 (p219) and was quickly followed by letters to the editor, one of which (November, p268) gave many details of the construction of the road in 1837. Naturally, Stretton replied with his usual 'my statement is perfectly correct' letter, which appeared in January 1914 (p42). To the end, he had to have the last word.

Harry Jack

1. E T Lane was a pupil at Swindon Works who died in 1850, aged 20. His drawings are now in the Science Museum.
2. The photograph, taken in 1861 when the engine was new, was published in the Christmas 1899 number of the *Locomotive Magazine*.

The Guildford Barge Inn

In the course of my research into Victorian crime I came across the rather unusually named 'Guildford Barge Inn' in Belvedere Road, Borough, London in 1841. We have occasionally had articles about pubs and transport in the past, but this one appears to have been unusual in the degree of specificity of its name and the fact that it was hardly on the beaten track for a barge going to Guildford.

Has anyone any suggestions about how this might have originated or, indeed, if there are other examples of very precise waterways-related namings? Incidentally, the landlord was summonsed under the Mutiny Act of 1741 for refusing to billet soldiers and was fined ten shillings.

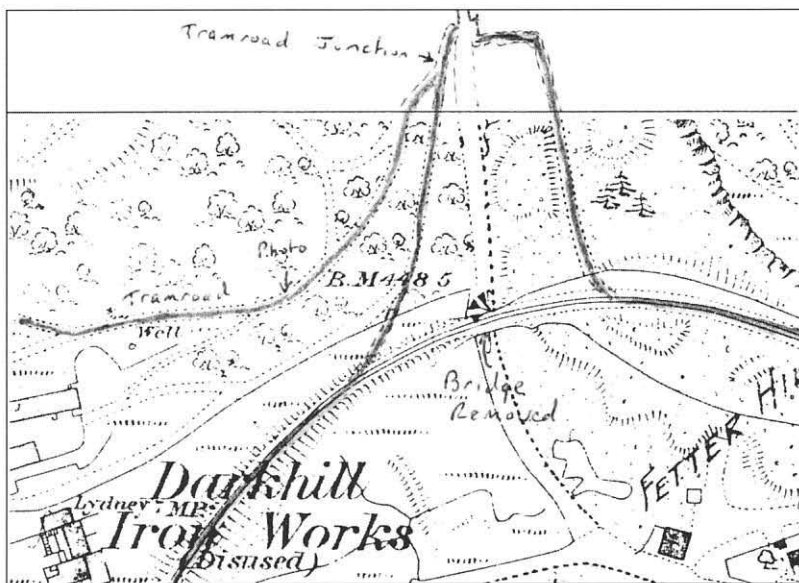
Adrian Gray

Editor's note: This query prompts me to add one of my own. Does anybody know why there is a 'Wharf Inn' at Felindre on the B4355 between Knighton and Newtown (SO169812)? I have seen this used as evidence for navigation on the Teme above Ludlow, but this does not seem a plausible explanation. Was there a tramroad in this area — but if so, what was its route? **PJB**

Cycling old tramroads

On a recent walk along the cycleway in the Forest of Dean which uses the old Coleford branch of the Severn & Wye Railway, I noticed a tramroad branching to the right and clearly used by cyclists.

An extract from the 1878 25 inch OS map shows the railway as newly built in 1875 but no sign of any tramroads. The Severn & Wye branch was built along the line of the Milkwall tramroad as far as Milkwall. The new line crossed the Parkhead to Coleford road by Birch Hill bridge. I doubt the old tramroad had a bridge but probably deviated to the right to cross the same road higher up on the level. Now the railway bridge has been removed, the cycleway seems to use the track shown on the map to the east of the bridge and to rejoin the railway branch further west. Before doing so, it meets the tramroad I have shown on the map at a junction. Cyclists are obviously using the tramroad branch which probably served the ironworks, abandoned before 1875.



*1878 OS 25in map, extended by hand.
The cycleways are shown shaded.*

Can there be many locations where the modern cyclist has a choice of tramroads, both of which were abandoned long before James Stanley perfected the modern bicycle by 1885?

Bill Crosbie-Hill



Course of tramroad used by cyclists as a branch from the Coleford Branch cycleway, just north of the site of Darkhill Ironworks. Mind those blocks! (SO591088)

Portsmouth & Arundel Canal

I am indebted to Peter Brown for sending me a recently discovered document addressed to Lord Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty, in May 1823 in response to a request that a comparison should be made of the cost of transporting goods from London to Portsmouth by canal and by sea.

William Wilkinson, the superintendent of the Victualling Yard at Deptford, replied the week before the navigation was officially opened. His calculations showed that the cost of freighting Government Stores from Deptford to Portsmouth by inland waterway would be treble, 24/- a ton compared with 8/- by coaster. This was without taking into account the expense of maintaining barges and land carriage charges from Halfway Houses to the Victualling Yard at Portsmouth.

In *London's Lost Route to Portsmouth* (reviewed in the *RCHS Journal* in March 2006) it was stated (page 54) that before the navigation had opened the canal company had realized that Government was unwilling to change its normal method of transportation. Nevertheless they believed that the canal could beat the coaster out of the field if toll rates between the connecting navigations were reduced.

However the company remained blind to the main problem which was the circuitous nature of the inland route involving six different navigational authorities, the passage of 52 locks and a narrow tunnel. Only the resumption of the war with France might have improved the company's prospects.

P A L Vine

The Dee at Chester

(*RCHS Journal*, July 2006, 366)

Pat Jones's excellent article refers to a '17th century Grant of Navigation Rights', but quotes no source for this. I would suggest that there was not such grant. The Private Act of 1550 would still have been in force, and would still have authorised navigation in Yarranton's time. Indeed, it is probably why Chester City Council remains the navigation authority up to Farndon Bridge to this day. However, should that not be 'to Corwen'?

Peter King

Rewriting history

Recently I had the pleasure of travelling along the Göta Canal. Sweden is rightly proud of this 118 mile long navigation, and it has been officially declared 'the Swedish Construction of the Millenium'.

The English language version of the official tourism brochure *The Göta Canal 2006*, produced jointly by the canal company and the local authorities, states under the heading 'The Göta Canal, Sweden's biggest cultural historical construction': 'The canal was built between 1810 and 1832, employing a total of 58,000 conscripted soldiers. Construction was initiated and headed by Baltzar von Platen.' Nowhere in the 40 page brochure is there a hint that this was anything except an exclusively Swedish triumph.

But von Platen had an adviser: Thomas Telford. Although Telford visited Sweden only twice, in 1808 and 1813), they were two periods of intense surveys and discussions. He and von Platen then corresponded regularly until the latter's death in 1829, with Telford giving practical answers to specific problems. As a recognition of Telford's role, he was made a Knight of the Royal Order of Vasa — he actually declined the honour but by then it was too late, the King having approved it.

Crucially, Telford left behind him fifteen skilled and experienced foremen. These acted both as supervisors and trainers, Sweden having at that time little experience of large-scale civil engineering. The first arrived in 1813 and some stayed for more than a decade. Thomas Carlisle, for example, stayed from 1814 until 1832. They were better paid than their Swedish counterparts, and on several occasions the Göta Canal Company wanted to dismiss them, but the local managers persuaded the Company that the British men were too valuable, especially as trainers. In addition, some of the Swedish engineers on the project spent several months in Scotland being trained by Telford.

It is ironic that just as William Jessop has been written out of popular British canal history in favour of Telford, Telford himself has been written out of popular Swedish canal history.

Dora Penny

Reviews

North Eastern Railway Atlas 1922 — Stephen Bragg

199pp, A4, 19 key maps, 125 detailed maps, ring bound, hard covers, Industrialogical Associates, 4 Oliver Road, Shenfield, Brentwood, Essex CM15 8QD, 2005, no ISBN, £30 (plus £9 p&p), available by order form only obtainable from the publisher

This is a monumental work of detailed scholarship by Dr Stephen Bragg, former president of the RCHS. The core of the book is 125 pages of hand-drawn maps of the North Eastern Railway system as it was on 31 December 1922, immediately before it became part of the LNER. They are at the familiar scale of 1:50,000 with the more complicated areas also drawn at 1:25,000. There are key maps which show the relationship of each detailed map to the current OS Landranger map series. There are also indexes of the official names of each line (over 300), of stations (over 750) and of about 1,500 other sites.

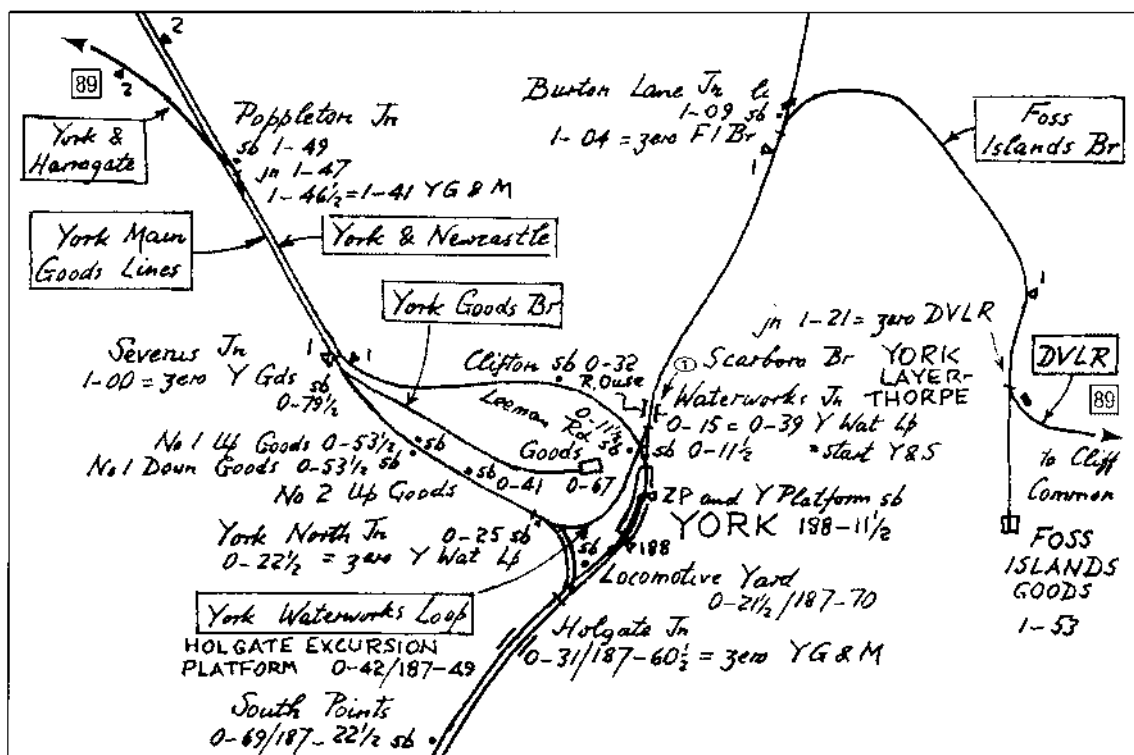
The maps show each line with junctions, passenger stations, goods stations, signal boxes, ground frames, level crossings, tunnels and viaducts depicted — all with their chainages. Mileposts are shown and the positions of the platforms at passenger stations indicated. Despite the awesome detail included on each map, they are drawn and lettered with such

precision that everything is clear. This should be apparent from the example illustrated below which is from the map of York, slightly reduced from the 1:25,000 scale at which it appears in the book.

The maps show, literally in a graphic way, just how important the NER was to the area it served. Although it had a monopoly on transport in the area, it is apparent that it was prepared to build lines and branches, to open goods facilities and sidings to tap and to stimulate the intense industrialisation of its territory throughout the company's life. The complexity and density of the lines, sidings and connections in the industrial areas show up impressively on the maps.

This first edition of the maps is referred to as a 'pilot'. There is a hope to publish them formally in due course, but RCHS members would be well advised to acquire a copy of the pilot edition just in case.

MARTIN BARNES



***The Railway Dictionary* — Alan A Jackson**

xi+404 pp, 235x155mm, 42 diagrams, hardback, Sutton Publishing, Phoenix Mill, Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2BU, 4th edition, 2006, 0 7509 4218 5, £25

It is a mark of how rapid changes in railway operation and organisation have been since the third edition of the *Dictionary* (2000) that a fourth has become necessary. Thus recent modifications to the UK franchising structure are recorded but even Mr Jackson is unable to define what 'c2c' (the former London, Tilbury & Southend) and 'one' actually mean; for both, incidentally, lower rather than upper-case would seem to be the preferred form. One or two private rolling stock owners, such as the curiously-named Harry Needle Railroad Company, escape notice, but recent railway slang ('Sheds',

'Dreds' and 'Fred's') does not.

The EU-ordained separation of railway infrastructure from operation is well-covered: so, for example, in the case of Belgium, Infrabel and B-Rail make their first appearances (but not B-Cargo). However, there are some European omissions: why no RhB?

The book remains an essential reference work. Mr Jackson acknowledges the help he has received from fellow-members of the RCHS: dare it be hoped that he will further enlist the help of this erudite band of 'railwayacs' (obs) to explore etymology in the fifth edition?

TONY KIRBY

***The Spey Viaduct* — John Ross**

35pp, A4, 23 illustrations, 2 maps, paperback, Great North of Scotland Railway Association, 7 Sutors Park, Nairn IV12 5BQ, ISBN 0 902343 15 7, £4.95 plus £1 p&p

The Spey Viaduct has the distinction of having the third longest single span in the UK, expressly designed to cross the diverted main channel of the river near its mouth. Unfortunately, almost from the beginning in 1866 the Spey persisted in reverting to its original course beneath side spans, where it still flows, leaving the great hog-back iron centre span over dry land except during floods. The builders'

difficulties are examined, using contemporary sources, and the story is continued up to the present. There are interesting photographs taken during construction. The chapter headings are somewhat uninformative and a larger site plan would have been useful. Even so, the book ably recounts the story of a remarkable and little-known bridge.

GORDON BIDDLE

***Early Railways 3* — Michael Bailey (editor)**

308pp, 242x172mm, various b&w illustrations, hardback, Six Martlets Publishing, PO Box 7480, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 9WP, no ISBN, £29.50 (incl p&p)

This publication is a compilation of the papers presented at the Third International Early Railway Conference held in 2004. The format is the same as the previous two volumes (published by the Newcomen Society in 2001 and 2003), though the publishers apologise for the fact that the paper used here is of a slightly lower quality. Original publication was on a 'subscription' basis and the list of over 200 subscribers is included. All the papers are written by recognised specialists and the quality of research is assured, submissions being vetted by a committee under the editorship of Michael Bailey, who is also responsible for a comprehensive index.

The subjects covered are divided into three categories; 'History' (7 papers, 37% of pages); 'Development' (4 papers, 22%); 'Mechanical' (7 papers, 41%). Most are illustrated with maps,

drawings, tables or photographs. Four papers are concerned with early railways outside the UK.

With such a diversity of scholarly material, it is difficult to make a selection, but the following are particularly recommended: 'Richard Trevithick and pioneering locomotives' by Jim Rees & Andy Guy (most provocative); 'Development of machine tools in the early railway era' by Richard Hills (most neglected subject); the three papers on restaging the Rainhill Trials in October 2002 (most new information); and 'How America discovered the railway' by Alan Levitt (notes and sources longer than the original paper).

Few books fully justify the conclusion that they are 'essential' to the study of a particular aspect of transport history — this is one of them.

MILES MACNAIR

***The Channel Tunnel and its High Speed Links* — Nicholas Comfort**

256pp, A5, 106 photographs, 14 maps and diagrams (many in colour), paperback, Oakwood Press, PO Box 13, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1YS, 2006, ISBN 0 85361 644 2, £19.95

The first 60 per cent of this tour de force of 115,000 words is a history and description of the tunnel itself: its prehistory, the award of the Anglo-French governmental concession to Eurotunnel, its construction (including the construction railways), opening and operation, and the Eurotunnel shuttle services. The rest of the book deals with the through passenger and freight services and the facilities provided for them by British Railways, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, and the high-speed lines in France and Belgium. The story is brought right up to date to early 2006 and ends with the current uncertainties and prospects for the future.

The author is a journalist who has been writing about these matters for over 20 years and this book is effectively a digest of what has been published in the British and French railway press during these years. The text is well written, but at times so densely packed with facts that it becomes indigestible. It would have been easier to read and to use for refer-

ence if some of the description had been presented diagrammatically and the data in tabular format. Nevertheless, we must be grateful to the author for bringing together this useful, detailed chronicle of this momentous project in a single volume. Yet it is essentially a descriptive account, with little analysis of *why* things happened and important underlying issues. For example, the whole question of safe operation of the tunnel, which was not fully evaluated until contracts had been signed and became a significant cause of time and cost over-runs, receives scant attention and no mention in the index. Regrettably, the modern myth that the Great Central extension to Marylebone was built to a Continental loading gauge is perpetuated.

The book is deservedly dedicated to Sir Alastair Morton, 'without [whose] leadership and determination there is every likelihood that the tunnel would not have been brought to fruition'.

GRAHAME BOYES

***The County Donegal Railways Companion* — Roger Crombleholme**

112pp, 282x212mm, 160 illustration, 40 maps & plans, paperback, Midland Publishing, an imprint of Ian Allan, 4 Watling Drive, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 3EY, 2005, ISBN 1 85780 205 5, £14.95

'Companion' is the right word for this well-written and delightfully-illustrated history of one of the most individual and enterprising of smaller systems. It combines the essential history with a series of thematic chapters which give a real flavour of what life was like under the successive legendary managers. For good measure, there are substantial ingredients including scale plans for modellers, and today's preservation scheme is well covered.

There are four reasons why most of the extensive system survived until the birth of the 1960s: it straddled the border and could therefore not be taken over by the nationalised systems on either side; roads

were poor; economy was sought with religious zest by that great pioneer of railcars, Henry Forbes; and, until the end, there was a keen search for traffic. Steam-hauled excursion and mixed trains remained common.

Anyone who enjoyed Dr E M Patterson's history published by David & Charles many moons ago should not hesitate to acquire this book, whose main function will be to introduce the railways' (always plural) delights to a new generation. It brings back vivid memories of stations, trains, operating practice and, above all, staff quite different from anything found in Britain.

DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS

***London Railway Atlas* — Joe Brown**

96pp, 244x172mm, 56pp of maps, hardback, Ian Allan Publishing, 4 Watling Drive, Hinckley LE10 3EY, 2006, ISBN 0 7110 3137 1, £14.99

This is a brave and commendable endeavour to map the existing and abandoned passenger and freight lines of Greater London, including the Underground and new works currently in progress. Some historical

data is also provided. In a disarmingly frank preface, Joe Brown admits 'there are quite probably many omissions, particularly regarding freight facilities' and he invites further information and confirmation

of a number of dates he has left with question marks. Forward the Society's Railway Chronology Group!

The maps record names of junctions and tunnels and the names and sites of all stations, open and closed. Deep level tubes are given distinctive marking and each Underground line has a separate colour, a device particularly helpful in the central area, where the correct geographical relationship with other railways is often difficult to distinguish on existing maps. In the preface, the compiler gives reasons for omitting 'temporary, excursion and unadvertised stations', also the now closed underground mail-carrying lines and the Surrey Iron Railway. Although mention is made of 'many hours research', there is

no indication of the sources consulted for the vast amount of information provided.

Lavish use is made of colour and the neat presentation of the maps is attractive but the chosen page size often limits available space for the many explanatory notes, leading to the adoption throughout of a very small font.

Despite its shortcomings, this reasonably priced book will be useful to have at hand when researching or reading about one of the world's most complicated rail networks. Its 35-page index not only provides quick access to the map showing any given location but includes dates, name changes, the original owners and, in many cases, additional data.

ALAN A JACKSON

***The History of Canal & River Navigations* — Edward Paget-Tomlinson**

384pp A4, 122 b&w photographs, 118 line drawings & diagrams, 26 maps, paperback, Landmark Publishing, Ashbourne Hall, Cokayne Avenue, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 1EJ, 2006, ISBN 1 84306 207 0, £24.99

The Illustrated History of Canal and River Navigations is now in a new, third edition. With each new version, this essential inland waterways and engineering reference book has improved.

This volume is better illustrated, both with new photographs and line illustrations. Improved digital techniques have also raised the quality of presentation. The illustrations are important additions to

the text. For those who do not have a copy, the illustrated history is the most important source of information. It does not just recapitulate information from other sources but adds immense amounts of information which is not otherwise published. It was researched and written from the memories of people who had worked on the waterways in all capacities as well as drawing history from the widest sources.

TONY CONDER

***Scottish Region: A History 1948–1973* — Alexander J Mullan**

192pp, 235x155mm, 64 photographs, paperback, Tempus Publishing, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2QC, 2006, ISBN 0 7524 3686 4, £17.99 (plus £1.79 p&p)

The politics of postwar rail nationalisation led inevitably to the establishment of a separate British Railways region for Scotland, comprising the relevant areas of the LMS and LNER. Alexander Mullan's survey of the first 25 years of the Scottish Region sets out the challenges facing those concerned with the management of the Region, in their relations with the headquarters departments based in London, and their efforts to operate (and modernise where possible) the railways and other services in their charge. At first, the Board concerned itself mainly with internal matters including line closures until, faced with airline competition, a new generation of cross-border high-speed trains was introduced. But the 1947 Transport Act was not the only statute the Region had to live with. Others followed, notably

involving the 1955 modernisation plan. Of course, Dr Richard Beeching's influence was to become felt, albeit minimally, in Scotland.

The author does not look only at politics and management. He is at his most interesting in dealing with operating problems, not least the floods of 1948 when railwaymen demonstrated their dedication to the job in keeping the trains running in severely adverse circumstances. Locomotives and coaching stock are dealt with at length with comments on the replacement of steam by diesel and electric traction. The photographs illustrate the changing scene over the period of the book and there are useful tables of finance and performance. Altogether a comprehensive, well informed and well argued contribution to the literature of Scotland's railways.

GEOFFREY HUGHES

***Dow's Dictionary of Railway Quotations* — Andrew Dow**

384pp, 234x173mm, hardback, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218-4363, USA, ISBN 0 8018 8292 3, 2006, available in the UK from John Wiley & Sons Distribution Centre, 1 Oldlands Way, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 9SA, £30

Andrew Dow's abiding interest in railway history is well known. What this book reveals is that, for many years, he must have been collecting quotations about railways from a phenomenal variety of sources, well beyond most people's capacity to read widely. There over 3,500 quotations covering almost 800 subjects and the words originate from more than 1,100 people. They all appear to originate either from the UK or from North America.

The quotations have been chosen either for giving a new slant on a situation, for coming from a well-known person, for being informative, or for being intriguing in their own right — from the early unperceptive (the Duke of Wellington, of steam locomotives: 'I see no reason to suppose that these machines will ever force themselves into general use') to the recent perceptive (Margaret Thatcher: 'Railway privatisation will be the Waterloo of this

government. Please never mention the railways to me again'). All the great people of railway history are here and many unexpected contributors. It is striking how many of the great authors had pertinent things to say about railways. Dickens has 24 entries and Kipling 14. A quote from Kipling which is surprisingly technical yet entertaining is a conversation between a group of American locomotives resting in a roundhouse in which they muse about hot boxes, their incidence and effect. Quotations from the railway writers are, of course, copious but so are the sayings of working railwaymen.

Finding things is easy because there is a full index by writer and speaker and another by subject and key word. A most fascinating and distinctive book encompassing the whole of railway history in the words of the people who were making it and observing it.

MARTIN BARNES

***Waterways Past and Present* — Derek Pratt**

160pp, 255x265 mm, 234 photographs, hardback, Adlard Coles Nautical, 38 Soho Square, London W1D 3HB, ISBN 0 7136 7634 5, £19.99

One would not normally expect to recommend a book of photographs, no matter how lavish, to RCHS members, but this is an exception. Derek Pratt has specialised in taking photographs of Britain's waterways for around 40 years and this book shows the fruits of his efforts. It is therefore an important record of the often dramatic changes that have been wrought on the system in that time. Perhaps the most surprising fact is the amount of commercial traffic he was able to record in his early years, everything

from the famous Tom Puddings of the Aire and Calder to the end of narrow boat carrying on the Midland canals. And it seems remarkable to see cars being exported from Limehouse Basin, but there they are, lined up on the quay. Equally memorable are the rather forlorn illustrations of derelict canals, contrasting with their reappearance after restoration. The illustrations are in both colour and black & white and the standard of reproduction is absolutely first class.

ANTHONY BURTON

***The Life & Labours of Thomas Brassey* — Sir Arthur Helps**

233pp, 200x120mm, no illustrations, 4 maps, paperback, Nonsuch Publishing, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2QG, 2006, ISBN 1 84588 011 0, £12

The author, Sir Arthur Helps (1813–75), was one of the most brilliant historians of his time. The text of this book, in immaculate English, is divided into introductory material and 23 chapters. This is a reprint of the 'modern' edition, first published in 1894. Every aspect of Brassey's life as the foremost railway builder of his age and his character are examined, in particular his strict personal discipline and honesty. This even extended to the rebuilding,

at his own expense, of a major viaduct in France, when its collapse could hardly be described as Brassey's fault. He was a great delegator with a flair for selecting the right man for a particular job.

Chapter 12, 'railway and other contracts', is a tabular list of all the contracts with which Brassey was involved. His many overseas contracts are well covered. There are three appendices and an index.

JOHN MARSHALL

***The Worcester & Birmingham Canal: Chronicles of the Cut* — Revd Alan White**

395pp, 250x180mm, 96 b&w photographs, 25 maps, hardback, Brewin Books, 56 Alcester Road, Studley, Warwickshire B80 7LG, 2005, ISBN 1 85858 261 X, £19.95

This is a detailed and comprehensive historical account of one of the Midlands' more interesting canals. The subtitle indicates that this is less a dry-as-dust history than studies of various historical topics related to the canal. It includes much about the adjacent Droitwich Canals, and briefly discusses the Coombe Hill Canal and the Lower Avon Navigation, with which the Worcester & Birmingham was involved at various periods.

Much of the account is based on the minutes of the company and of the Sharpness New Docks Company, that took this canal over with the Droitwich Canals from 1874. There is an excellent detailed account of construction, including much material on the experimental lift at Tardebigge, which worked for four years until the decision was taken to complete the canal with 58 locks. There is much about the management of the canal, especially the problems

over water supply, and the company itself.

The chronological account in the first twelve chapters is followed by a further ten which deal with matters such as tramroads and railways, carrying, canal-served industries and recreation. Three long chapters provide much fascinating detail about the canal route commenting on engineering works, canalside properties and a range of personalities.

Oddly, given that the author is the historian to the Worcester & Birmingham Canal Society, which was founded in 1969, there is much less about the post-war period than might be expected. He is also the author of three volumes relating to Worcestershire history. This explains the tendency for the book to focus closely on local developments rather than to set this canal within a national context. This is a very well presented book and very reasonably priced for a substantial hardback. JOSEPH BOUGHEY

***Brunel: A Pocket Biography* — L T C Rolt**

114pp, 195x125mm, 11 illustrations, paperback, Sutton Publishing, Phoenix Mill, Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2BU, ISBN 0 7509 4294 0, £6.95

The photographer who in 1850 took that famous picture of the cigar-smoking mud-begrimed Brunel did posterity a favour. And Tom Rolt, in condensing his biography of Brunel for the American reader did a similar favour for the present-day reader. In 114 pages we are given the salient features of the life of this 19th century genius. Rolt tells us that 'throughout his life he loved to live dangerously'. He wasn't afraid to experiment, not always successfully, as his South Devon atmospheric railway demonstrates. His

genius manifested itself in non-railway matters. The book tells us that in six days he designed a thousand-bed hospital for the Crimean War wounded and set the contracts for its construction to the amazement of Whitehall who thought only in terms of months for such a project. It goes without comment that the Great Western Railway with its fanciful maritime extension to America was his brain-child. This book encapsulates the Brunel we admire. It is a short but very rewarding read. BILL HOLLINSON

***Brunel's Kingdom: in the Footsteps of Britain's Greatest Engineer* — John Christopher**

192pp, 225x124mm, 58 b&w and 42 colour illustrations, paperback, Tempus Publishers, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2QG, 2006, ISBN 0 7524 3697 X, £12.99

Numerous books have been written about the man himself but few about his structures, buildings and legacy. (*Brunel: a Railtour of His Achievements*, also reviewed in this issue, depicts only his railway structures and buildings.) In *Brunel's Kingdom* the reader is taken on a tour through the country, showing and describing the many places and structures with a Brunel connection. Each chapter contains a useful guide to the sites described and concludes with round-trip itineraries for those who may wish to take

in several places at one time. There are also details of collections, museums and universities with collections and exhibits of interest.

While possibly of limited interest to those with a deep knowledge of Brunel and his works, it should prove of much use to those who wish to visit the many sites throughout the country which have a connection with him. Published in a useful pocket sized guide-book style the book has a good bibliography, chronology and index. RODNEY HARTLEY

***Railways of the Caribbean* — David Rollinson**

128pp, 255x220mm, 121 illustrations (33 in colour), 22 maps, hardback, Macmillan Distribution, Brunel Road, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, 2001, ISBN 0 333 73042 9, £15.50

Many might be forgiven for regarding the Caribbean as a railway backwater, but the first line there (in Cuba) dated from 1837, just seven years after the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester. Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana were not far behind.

The prime influence in Caribbean railway development was usually sugar cane, though on some islands — and the adjoining mainland areas of Belize and Guyana covered in the book — timber, extractive industries, even bananas, were also encouraged by railways. Only on Bermuda, between 1931 and 1947, was tourism the stimulus. Many railways were informally operated; locomotive and rolling stock

showed varied influences, American, British and French. The author summarises developments (and problems of climate and, sometimes, civil unrest) in persuasive detail with the aid of maps and often evocative, generally well produced, photographs.

Cuba's railways still flourish, both for passengers and freight, but most of these Caribbean railways (and street tramways, given a separate chapter) are no more; besides Cuba, only Belize, Puerto Rica and St Kitts still retain some railways.

This pleasant, well-researched study is recommended for its unusual interest.

PHILIP SCOWCROFT

***The Torrington & Marland Light Railway* — Rod Garner**

98pp, 272x215mm, 64 b&w photographs, 13 figures, 13 facsimile documents, 4 maps, paperback, Kestrel Railway Books, PO Box 269, Southampton SO30 4XR, 2006, ISBN 0 9544859 7 1, £14

This book is about a 3ft gauge railway opened in 1881 to serve clay workings in North Devon. Its main line was replaced by the standard gauge North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway in 1925, but the truncated parts survived until 1971. The story is told in the context of local and national transport developments and makes particular reference to the involvement of the engineer John Barraclough Fell, to whose family papers the author had access. There is a short bibliography of major published works but, although it is clear that the author has made use of a variety of primary sources, apart from a few textual references these are not documented. There is no

index and no list of illustrations.

This work cannot be reviewed without comparison to M J Messenger's book *North Devon Clay* (Truro, 1982) with which there is a considerable overlap. Both books use the same cover photograph, but Garner has unearthed new images so there is little further duplication of pictorial content. Messenger has more and better maps, and better coverage of post-1925 history, but Garner's additional pictures and new material on Fell mean that those possessing Messenger's book will probably want this one as well.

TIM EDMONDS

***Two Centuries of Service: the Story of the Canal at Stoke Bruerne and Blisworth* — David Blagrove**

128pp, A5, 79 illustrations (13 colour), 3 maps, hardback, Wharfside Publications, The Wharf, Stoke Bruerne, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 7SE, 2005, ISBN 1 8719 1813 8, £9.95

The ancient village of Stoke Bruerne, mentioned in the Domesday Book, has the singular distinction of being bisected by the construction of the Grand Union Canal. For 40 years the author has accumulated facts and details of the canal and its effects on the settlements at each end of the two-mile long Blisworth Tunnel and presents them here. Beginning with a portrait of Stoke Bruerne and Blisworth prior to the advent of the canal, chapters follow on the construction of the waterway, the tunnel, the boom years and competition from the railway. The

concluding section on the canal in the 20th century brings the story up to date. The book is enhanced by detailed notes and list of sources. It is a comprehensive study of a relatively small locale and as such may have limited appeal to readers from further afield. The layout is unusual; with narrow margins there is almost too much text on each page. Some of the black and white photographs are murky and the justification of the photographs is inconsistent. However, the rather untidy look does not detract from the content.

JOHN HOWAT

***Life on the Lancaster Canal* — Janet Rigby**

112pp, A5, 3 maps, 6 sketches/drawings, 67 photographs, paperback, Landy Publishing, 'Acorns', 3 Staining Rise, Staining, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 0BU, 2006, ISBN 1 872895 66 2, £8 (post free if a cheque accompanies the order)

The author's interest in canals began when she married a Preston man whose ancestors had worked on the Lancaster Canal from its early beginning, in the 1790s, up to the outbreak of the First World War. The book is a cameo describing the lives of the people who worked on the Lancaster Canal until commercial carrying ceased in 1947. It focuses on boatmen who worked from and lived with their families in the area around the Preston canal basin. Many aspects of canal life are covered including descriptions of the day to day working of boats, types of boat, working with horses, the lives of the boat families, their

housing, social conditions and education. The book provides an insight into a way of life that now no longer exists.

Research for the book comprised obtaining information from local archives, newspaper reports and talking to people involved with the canal. It provides an interesting and enjoyable read and contains a very good selection of photographs. Regrettably a number, particularly some with scenes of working boats, are reproduced in a format that is far too small to interpret the detail.

GERALD LEACH

***Brunel: a Railtour of His Achievements* — Vic Mitchell**

96pp, 240x172mm, 161 b&w illustrations, 7 maps, hardback, Middleton Press, Easebourne Lane, Midhurst, W. Sussex GU29 9AZ, 2006, ISBN 1 904474 74 8, £14.95

This is probably the only Brunel picture book that concentrates on railway structures. A brief introduction is followed by six chapters, each recording an itinerary along a particular line, with Bristol to Gloucester omitted. The coverage of illustrations does not claim to be comprehensive and reference is made to a further 71 of the publisher's volumes. The author recommends using the book as an adjunct to a biography and it serves this purpose well, although longer captions might sometimes be useful.

Many of the photographs are more than a century

old and there are over forty artists' impressions — not all of which appear trustworthy. A majority of the structures depicted, including wooden viaducts and country stations, have long vanished, so we are here provided with a convenient overview of the lines as they originally appeared. For instance there were several general types of small station, having subtle variations within a class. There are many unusual photographs, but the impressive and once important houses at Steventon are not mentioned.

DENNIS HADLEY

***Reservoir Builders of South Wales* — Harold D Bowtell & Geoffrey Hill**

130+vi pp, 235x170mm, 93 b&w photographs, 18 maps and plans, endpaper maps, hardback, Industrial Locomotive Society, 77 Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8AR, ISBN 0 9540726 2 6, £14.95 (plus £2 p&p)

This is the sixth book in the series 'Dam Builders in the Age of Steam' which have all been written by the late Harold Bowtell although under the imprint of a number of publishers. His previous books were on the reservoir railways in the North of England; now the research work he carried out on the construction of the numerous reservoirs in South Wales has been completed and brought to publication by Geoffrey Hill.

A number of the construction projects described were major and lasted for several years. Many of these contractors' railways were comparatively short-

lived and the locomotives tended to be moved round the various sites, sometimes with a change of name and ownership, making the identification of some of them difficult.

This is a specialist subject but anyone with an interest in industrial railways or South Wales will find this book fascinating. There are opportunities for further research to fill in some of the gaps and resolve any uncertainties. The photographs are excellent as are the detailed and clear maps by Arthur Chambers. Recommended.

RICHARD COULTHURST

***Severn Valley Railway: a View from the Past* — Michael A Vanns**

96pp, 250x210mm, 140 illustrations, hardback, Ian Allan Publishing, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG, 2006, ISBN 0 7110 2599 8, £15.99

This is a reprint of a book first published in 1998. 'The seeds of the line's ultimate failure were sown in the 17 years between 1845 and 1862 *before* the line opened'; an unusual ante-mortem epitaph on the part of the author. Nevertheless there is considerable truth in it. The plan was originally to build a main line, a double-track through route, but despite its proximity to the Black Country this never happened. It remained a minor line through largely unspoiled and beautiful country as this book illustrates

admirably.

There are many evocative photographs yet it would be inappropriate to call it a picture book. The author is painstakingly accurate in his descriptions and he quotes from no less than 16 authorities. Happily, about half of the original line has been opened as the Severn Valley Railway — but that's another story. The book can be enthusiastically commended. It is well worth reading and taking its place on the bookshelf.

BILL HOLLINSON

Short reviews

***Newcastle to Hexham* — Roger R Darsley**

96pp, 240x170mm, 121 b&w illustrations, 28 maps, hardback, Middleton Press, Easebourne Lane, Midhurst GU29 9AZ, 2005, ISBN 1 904474 69 1, £14.95

The Middleton Press series of books has reached Tyneside. Rail routes on both sides of the river are described by the customary mixture of large scale maps and photographs of different eras. This is particularly useful in guiding readers through the complexities of the layout between Newcastle and Blaydon. The Hexham–Allendale branch is also included. This book has a larger historical introduction than usual. A bigger overall map would have been helpful.

***Monmouthshire Eastern Valleys, featuring Newport Docks* — Vic Mitchell & Keith Smith in association with David Edge**

96pp, 240x170mm, 120 b&w photographs, 4 timetables, one gradient profile & 35 maps, laminated hardback, Middleton Press, 2006, ISBN 1 904474 71 3, £14.95

Middleton's 'rail encyclopaedia' is making controlled incursions into South Wales. Of this eighth Welsh volume, a third covers Newport docks to Mill Street with many unfamiliar images and cleverly avoiding repetition with its earlier monographs that touched the town. Similarly, the attention given to Pontypool complements what's gone before. North to Brynmawr, most passenger stations and some industrial branches are visually explained. Preservation is represented by the splendid Griffithstown railway museum, the Big Pit mining museum and the Pontypool & Blaenafon Railway.

Bromsgrove to Gloucester, including Ashchurch to Great Malvern

— Vic Mitchell & Keith Smith

96pp, 240x170mm, 120 b&w illustrations, 29 maps, hardback, Middleton Press, 2006, ISBN 1 904474 73 X, £14.95

An interesting volume with good coverage of a main line on which some stations had closed by 1855. The Ashchurch to Malvern branch provided an exiguous service for very few passengers beyond Tewkesbury, but had delightful station buildings that resembled gothic estate cottages. Many of the photographs are of historical interest and the maps are generally very informative, although the complicated sequence of changes at Gloucester is inadequately explained.

The Perth and Dunkeld Railway

— Keith Fenwick & Neil T Sinclair

47pp, A5, 33 illustrations, 7 maps, paperback, The Highland Railway Society, 31 Brackley Lane, Abthorpe, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8QJ, 2006, ISBN 0 9545484 2 3, £4.95 (post free)

To mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of what became the first section of the Highland Railway main line from Perth to Inverness, the Highland Railway Society has produced a modestly-priced booklet describing the promotion, construction and operation of the line from its early days through successive ownerships to the present time. It is well produced, with clear maps and illustrations, including some interesting period views, four on the back cover in colour.

[Pages 457-496 see Bibliography]



NEW PUBLICATION from the
RAILWAY & CANAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Register of British Railway and Tramroad Companies
incorporated before 1948 (also Joint Committees)**

compiled by Anthony R Warren, 2005, wire-bound, A4, pp154

This might be described as a register of 'births, marriages and deaths' of 1,525 railway companies, of which 375 were legally abandoned or allowed their powers to lapse. It was initially compiled by Tony Warren (the Society's Research Officer 1991-2002) when he was working in the Personnel Department at the British Railways Board headquarters at Marylebone and had access during his lunch breaks to the collections of Acts and Statutory Orders in the Legal Department's library.

The register is in tabular format and shows for each company the dates of: incorporation; change of name; working and/or leasing by another company; and abandonment, lapse of powers, or vesting in another company. This is preceded by a very useful introduction which explains the varied ways in which railway companies could be created and abandoned. These included deeds of settlement, Board of Trade certificates under the Railway Facilities Acts, orders issued under the Military Tramways Act 1887 and Naval Works Act 1899, abandonment warrants and abandonment orders, as well as the more familiar Acts of Parliament and Light Railway Orders. Appendices include lists of railways controlled by the Government during the two world wars.

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