

JOURNAL
- of the -
RAILWAY AND CANAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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DO IT NOW!

Members will be interested to read, elsewhere in this issue, an article entitled "Too Late!" in which the author admits that on more than one occasion he failed to get a photograph of an item of interest in the history of canals by putting off that occasion, for one reason or another, until what might seem to be a more favourable opportunity. Small blame can be attached to him for this, for do we not all do the same thing?

In this present age of hurry, of pulling down and setting up, of sprawling housing estates, and even of changes in the transport system itself, much is lost that is never recorded. Many items of interest on railways and canals may have been familiar sights all our lives and, therefore, are apparently as indestructible and imperishable as the ground on which they are set. To some of us it comes as a curious shock when we find they are not.

It is hoped that, as a Society, we can preserve as much as possible, in the way of photographic records or sketches, objects of interest that may one day suddenly disappear. You are asked to remember this when next something unusual catches your eye.

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THE FINDHORN RAILWAYBy H. A. Vallance

Long before the motor-bus sounded the death knell of so many branch lines, it sometimes happened that a railway was promoted and constructed in a spirit of over-optimism, only to be closed after a precarious existence of a few years. Railway development in Northern Scotland includes an instance of one of these unsuccessful ventures, the history of which is the more interesting in that it also records the decay of a small seaport and fishing haven.

The final link in the main line between Inverness and Aberdeen - the Inverness & Aberdeen Junction Railway - was authorized from Nairn to Keith on July 21, 1856, and completed on August 18, 1858.

From Nairn, the line ran inland, leaving several small fishing ports on the Moray Firth coast without a railway. Among these was Findhorn, on the eastern shores of the long and almost land-locked bay at the mouth of the River Findhorn, some five miles from the town of Forres.

On April 19, 1859, powers were obtained for a railway, three miles long, to link the village with the I. & A.J.R. at Kinloss, the first station east of Forres. The line passed through level and, for the most part, sandy country, and the works presented no difficulties. The line was opened on April 16, 1860, and was worked as an independent concern, but in less than two years the local company found itself in serious financial difficulties.

On March 1, 1862, the Findhorn Railway was taken over by the I. & A.J., and worked as a branch of that system. The amount of traffic continued to be insufficient to pay operating expenses, and regular services ceased at the end of 1868, although occasional goods trains ran until about 1880. The I. & A.J. had become a constituent of the Highland Railway in 1865, so that it was as a branch of that system that the Findhorn Railway ended its working life. The permanent way was removed a few years after the line had been closed completely.

The difficult approach to the harbour of Findhorn was largely responsible for the failure of the railway. A sand-bar, thrown up by the sea across the mouth of the bay, restricted the size of ships using the port, and was a constant source of danger. When the railway was opened, small fishing boats were able to get in and out, but the amount of traffic brought by them was very small, and never justified the construction of the line. The sand subsequently accumulated to such an extent that the harbour became almost unusable. Although its days as a fishing port have long since ended, Findhorn has become a holiday resort on a small scale. On the opposite side of the bay are the Culbin Sands, which overwhelmed a fertile estate in a great storm in 1694.

The present station at Kinloss was opened on May 30, 1904, and has a crossing-loop. The original station, which had only a single platform, was some distance to the east. The junction with the Findhorn Railway was at the western end, and faced towards Elgin. Leaving the main line, the branch curved sharply to the north on a low embankment. About a mile from the station the road from Forres to Burghead crossed the railway on a stone bridge. A similar bridge carried the Findhorn road over the line some distance from the terminus. Both these structures remained as reminders of the railway after it had been abandoned.

At Findhorn, the railway ran between the road and the shore, in a cutting which eventually became considerably overgrown. The terminus was beside the quay, and to facilitate the loading of

ships, a siding, approached by a wagon turntable, was laid on the pier. The platform and the station buildings were demolished after the railway had been closed, and some sheds were built on the site. Of the siding on the pier, nothing remained in after years except a large baulk of timber at the seaward end, which had been used as a wheel stop.

The Findhorn Railway possessed only one locomotive, a small 0-4-0 saddle tank, with outside cylinders, built by Neilson & Co. of Glasgow, in 1860. This engine was acquired by the I. & A.J. in 1862, and was sold to a contractor after regular service to Findhorn had ceased. It is by no means certain whether the Findhorn Company had its own rolling stock, or hired coaches and wagons from the I. & A.J. Apart from a photograph of the locomotive (taken after it had become a contractor's engine) there appear to be no pictorial records of this remote railway byway, long since consigned to the limbo of forgotten ventures.

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TOO LATE!

By E. A. Wilson, M.A.

By the White Bridge over the canal at Ellesmere there stood a two-storey building over a dock inlet from the canal. I could not get any reliable information as to its age or purpose, but there was one story that it was originally a boat-building dock. It was disused, and in a very ruinous state. "Sometime I must photograph it," I decided.

One Sunday morning, as I was cycling along a nearby road, I was startled to see some men on the roof of this building stripping off the tiles. At high speed I cycled home, snatched up my camera, and returned. My luck was in, as I was able to take a photograph from the best viewpoint which did not include the workmen or their ladder. By the next day the building was roofless, and a week later had completely disappeared.

On that occasion I obtained my record at the eleventh hour, but at other times I have been less fortunate. At the Ellesmere wharf, I had photographed a number of buildings and installations, but postponed recording an old weighbridge building until it was too late. Now it has been demolished, and all I can do is to point out the site.

On another occasion, I was exploring a part of the canal new to me, and came upon a bridge which had the longest approach slope which I had ever seen, on either side. There were several workmen sitting by it as I passed, but as I had only a few exposures left

on my film I decided to leave photographing it until later. Little did I realize that those workmen were about to demolish the bridge! A week later it was gone.

A picture I secured "by the skin of my teeth" was that of Shade Oak Bridge, on the Weston branch of the old Ellesmere Canal. When I arrived, it was in the process of demolition, showing its construction extremely well. The arch consisted of a single layer of brick covered by rubble, and the parapet was gone. A bulldozer was at work filling in the canal so that, in this case, the canal itself was fast disappearing.

One more example will show the importance of "doing it now." Near the lime works at Vroncysylte, a tramway ran parallel with the canal, and then penetrated the embankment at Cross Street Aqueduct to continue parallel to the canal on its far side. The trucks loaded with lime were turned round on small turntables, 15 feet in diameter on each side of the "aqueduct" tunnel. These were in a ruinous condition, but on one of them I could make out the information "Cowans Sheldon & Co. 1905. Carlisle," and the number "2696."

I took a photograph, but the sun was in the wrong position and it was evening, so the result was not very good. I decided to take another photograph when next I visited the neighbourhood. When I arrived there eventually, the turntable had been destroyed and filled in with rubble.

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OVERALL STATION ROOFS

By E. A. Course

Great attention has been paid to the imminent changes in motive power on British Railways, but perhaps less attention has been paid to other developments of no less drastic a nature. For instance, the decline of the semaphore signal and the steady wastage of signal boxes are not being recorded with the same meticulous care which is bestowed on the departing steam locomotive. (Even now it is only at two London terminals that it is possible to begin a journey under the control of semaphore signals).

The present note is concerned with what may be considered one of the lesser elements in the changing railway scene - the overall station roof. Many of these antedate the ubiquitous cantilevered canopy of later Victorian times, and increased maintenance costs coupled with advancing corrosion - especially where they are subjected to the exhaust from steam locomotives - is speeding their demise. One of the earliest forms of roof, perhaps not strictly

of the overall variety, was supplied on one side by the station buildings, and on the other by pillars placed outside of the platform road. Examples of this type survive - or at least until recently survived - at Lincoln, Boston, Aylesbury and St. Albans. There used to be a number in the south of England, and older members may remember those at Deal and Canterbury West. When there were station buildings on either side of the line, and only two tracks, then roofs of this kind would meet in the middle, sharing a common row of pillars between the tracks, as at Louth.

By the 1850s, iron ribs and trusses had been developed, capable of bridging the entire width of the station without the intervention of pillars. One of the finest collections of arched roofs were those erected by the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways in the 1860s. The last to go on the District was at Sloane Square, although a small portion of the Charing Cross roof survives (completely screened by a false ceiling). The last Metropolitan survivor of the arched roofs was removed last year from Aldersgate station. It must be stressed, however, that a number of overall roofs of later date remain on the London Transport System, for example at Earl's Court, and even at such modern stations as the new Uxbridge.

Much of the London, Chatham & Dover Railway was opened between 1858 and 1866, and so included many examples of overall roofs, although they were not usually of the arched variety. On the Metropolitan Extension, for instance, they were provided at Elephant & Castle, Blackfriars and Ludgate Hill. All these have now gone. That at Elephant & Castle was bombed - there is a very good picture of it, collapsed on the track, in Timetable for Victory, by E. John. The Blackfriars roof went when the station was closed to make way for the new lines to St. Paul's; and that at Ludgate Hill was removed when the station was rebuilt. Holborn Viaduct and St. Paul's (now Blackfriars) both retain their roofs, but as these date from 1876 and 1886 respectively, they are not originals. Further down the line, the roof at Sittingbourne & Milton Regis was replaced by conventional umbrella canopies after the last war, whilst Dover Priory succumbed to rebuilding, and Dover Harbour to station closure. Ramsgate Harbour has also gone, so that the sole survivor of the original Chatham roofs is Canterbury East. Its future is doubtful, and it is understood from the station staff that, although it keeps the platforms dry, it also acts as a wind tunnel. This objection may well apply to a through station with this type of roof, but not to terminals where one end (or even both ends) provides only limited possibilities for the movement of air. Crystal Palace (High Level), now closed, and Dover Marine are alike in being almost complete boxes with holes at one end for the passage of trains.

It is not intended to imply, by this note, that the overall roof is necessarily on the way out, although such stations as New Street (L. & N.W. side), Derby and Sunderland have all changed over to umbrella type canopies. However, while the days of such fine examples as the roof of Cannon Street are numbered, the best of them all, that of St. Pancras, will probably remain for many years to come.

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THE VICTORIA DOCK LINE, HULL

By M. D. Greville

When the Hull & Selby Railway was opened on July 2, 1840, the Hull terminus was situated close to the Humber Dock. After some years it became apparent that this site was too far from the centre of the town for passenger purposes, and in 1847 application was made to Parliament for an extension to a more central station - the present Paragon. This was made by the York & North Midland Railway, which had leased the H. & S. R. from July 1, 1845; under 9 and 10 Vic. cap. 241, July 27, 1846 this lease was confirmed, and eventually, by powers under the same Act, the line was purchased by the North Eastern Railway on March 1, 1872.

The lines leading to Paragon station branched off the Bridlington line, for which the H. & S.R. had obtained powers on June 30, 1845 (8 and 9 Vic. cap 51), and which was opened formally on October 6, 1846. (It is not quite clear whether public traffic started on this day).

Very little time was wasted in building the line which, being only local, presented few difficulties, and on May 8, 1848, Paragon Station was opened; the old station (Manor House Street - sometimes also called Kingston Street) being closed for passenger traffic.

A few years later, it was thought desirable to build a line to serve the docks on the eastern side of the River Hull, and, on June 30, 1852 (15 and 16 Vic. cap. 127) powers were obtained for a line from near Paragon Station, running in a half circle rightround the town and terminating at Victoria Dock, only a mile to the east of Manor House Street. This line also was constructed rapidly and, on May 13, 1853, it was reported to the Y. & N.M.R. Board that it was intended to open the line for goods traffic on May 16 and for passengers on June 1. At the old station there were to be provided a wooden box for booking passengers and a short platform. It was recommended that one engine should be used for passenger traffic, "running passenger trains in connection with goods, to start from the termini

every hour and to take up and set down passengers at each station." It was added, "should the traffic, as I fully expect, necessitate the running of more than one engine on the branch, special directions, as in the case of the Malton & Thirsk Branch, will be given, to avoid the possibility of accidents."

The line was duly opened on the dates proposed, the service being, as indicated above, not from Paragon but from the old station. Stations were provided on the branch at Cemetery, Stepney, Sculcoates, and Southcoates, together with two on the older portion of the route, at Hassle Road* and Anlaby Road. Trains were run from Manor House Street every two hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and from Victoria Dock every two hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. (this is presumably what was meant by "from the termini every hour").

Three weeks later extra Saturday trains were put on: 9 p.m. from Manor House Street, returning from Victoria Dock at 9.30 p.m. The fares were 3d. first class and 2d. second class for any distance.

This service is of particular interest as (apart from London) a very early example of a purely suburban service - and undoubtedly the first interurban. All went well at first and traffic returns appear to have been satisfactory. One station certainly seems to have done a very brisk trade as, on July 9, 1853, a letter was received from the Secretary of the Hull Cemetery stating that, in consequence of the great number of visitors brought by the Victoria Dock branch, the Directors had resolved to keep the grounds open until 8 o'clock in the evening, provided the railway company would furnish a person to assist the officers in keeping order at the gates after 6 o'clock, and closing the grounds. This was agreed to.

However, it would appear that the early enthusiasm soon abated (or perhaps there was a waning of the necrophilic tastes of the people of Hull) as in November the service was reduced to four trains a day from Manor House Street, and three from Victoria Dock. (This lack of balance was remedied next month by an extra train from Victoria Dock) The following June the service was increased by one train each way.

On August 11, 1854, it was resolved that three trains be run daily from the Paragon station, in connection with the Hull and Holderness trains. The Hull & Holderness Railway, connecting Hull with Withernsea, and using the Victoria Dock station, had been opened on June 27 (authorized July 8, 1853: 16 and 17 Vic. cap. 93). In September, only two trains were advertised to run between Paragon and Victoria Dock, and the service to and from Manor House Street was withdrawn, involving, of course, the closing of Anlaby Road. This, however, does not

seem to have been a success; the service was withdrawn at the end of October, and the Victoria Dock Line remained without passenger trains for ten years.

By Act of July 7, 1862 (25 and 26 Vic. cap 120), the Hull & Holderness Railway was vested in the North Eastern**, which had worked it since 1860. The Victoria Dock Line, having been doubled, and the short necessary curve made, the Withernsea trains were diverted to Paragon on June 1, 1864, and Victoria Dock closed for passengers. Southcoates and Stepney stations were reopened at this time, but Sculcoates not until August 1865, and Cemetery in September 1866 - as Cemetery Gates, its present more euphonious title of Botanic Gardens being bestowed on it in November, 1881.

On July 1, 1864, the Hull & Hornsea Railway's trains also started to run to Paragon. The Hull & Hornsea (authorised June 30, 1862: 25 and 26 Vic. cap. 100) had been opened on March 28, 1864, but until the opening of the short connection to the Victoria Dock line in July, terminated at Wilmington. This station was retained in the same position until July 1, 1912, when it was moved westwards to a site on the main branch; as it was thus brought very near to Sculcoates, the latter was closed on the same date. Finally, on July 16, 1866 (29 and 30 Vic. cap. 187) the Hull & Hornsea Railway was dissolved and vested in the North Eastern Railway.

The sources from which this account has been compiled are contemporary local and railway press, companies' Minute Books and Reports, timetables and Railway Clearing House records.

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* Hessle Road had a very brief existence; trains ceased to call there after October, 1853.

** In 1854, the York, Newcastle & Berwick had changed its name to North Eastern Railway, and the York & North Midland, together with the Leeds Northern, had been vested in this company.

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"EARLY BRITISH RAILWAYS," by H. GROTE LEWIN

Some errors which occurred in this book have been noted by Mr. M. D. Greville, whose list of errors in The Railway Mania and its Aftermath was published in the last issue of the Journal. Mr. Greville asks any member who has found errors in Early British Railways to send them to him, together with the source of the information, for publication at a later date.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sir, - I was extremely interested in Mr. Biddle's stimulating article in the January issue of the Journal. I have for some time felt that many works of railway history, major and minor, have hitherto contained too little "leavening." A railway is affected from two directions, the "scenic details," or more properly the physique and structure, and the economy of the area which it traverses. No line can be fully studied in vacuo, but only in the light of these influences. Let me select a few random examples, though without the benefit of access to references, which you will realize is scarcely possible at this address.

If the earlier historians had paid more attention to large scale topographic maps, the "Northampton" myth would have been exploded long before Miss Wake's admirable exposé. A glance at such a map would show that to negotiate the barrier of the oolite ridge at Kilsby, it would have been impossible for the London & Birmingham to descend into the Nene Valley, in which Northampton stands, and to climb out again and still retain the moderate gradients Stephenson was aiming at. The canal also connects the town only by a branch on which numerous locks betray the gradient. Again, could it be a contributory cause of the downfall of the London, Chatham & Dover that, baulked of the natural route to North-east Kent along the shore of the Thames, it embarked on that monstrosity of a line to Chatham 300 feet higher up the dip slope of the North Downs, the climb from Shortlands, the ferocious saw-toothed profile across the "grain" of the country and the long descent from Sole Street? Was the extra capital cost and operating expenses involved, not to mention the virtual traffic desert compared with the industrial wealth of north Kent, just too much for this "marginal" main line? The 1" or 25:000 map is an indispensable tool for the railway historian.

A railway is a means to an end, the further development of the economy of an area. The history of the L.B. & S.C.R. cannot be studied in isolation from the growth of Brighton and the sea-side holiday habit of the Victorian industrial classes. All too few references are made to the contemporary industries of the Wandle Valley in connection with the Surrey Iron Railway. It is important to remember that shelly sea sand from the Camel estuary has long been in demand for ameliorating the infertile soil of the Cornish uplands when considering the Bodmin & Wadebridge. It was the silting of Canterbury's port of Fordwich on the Stour which turned the city's thoughts to Whitstable on the Thames and railways. Otherwise James's would have been a voice in the wilderness.

A study of traffics is therefore vital and, incidentally, so is that of the working timetable. Let us have analyses of them in railway histories, for they are some of the few ways of measuring traffic flow. I prepared contemporary maps on such a

basis for a Survey of South East Scotland and found how instructive it was to compare them with others I did privately for 1906. How much more so would a whole series have been.

In short, I feel that the rapidly developing discipline of railway history can well take heed of the methodology of two others which have emerged in recent years, economic history and historical geography, as well as that of the orthodox historian, which it must be clearly understood I am not attempting to belittle in any way.

University of the Gold Coast.

Yours, &c.
H. P. WHITE.

Sir, - I should like to make a few comments on Mr. Biddle's interesting and provocative article in the January Journal.

Taking his first two points together, I am strongly of the opinion that historical writing should be made as readable and humanly interesting as possible, consistent with accuracy. It is true that certain writers do sacrifice accuracy to style, but there is no reason why this should be; an attractive style of writing, together with the descriptive, economic, etc., details to which Mr. Biddle refers, and even, at times, a little humour, adds to, rather than detracts from, the value of the writing. Moreover, the limitation of space imposed by railway journals on historical articles is likely to be less severe if the subject is dealt with on these lines.

As to the vexed question of annotations and sources, this is largely a matter of individual taste. Personally, I am inclined to be repelled by a mass of footnotes. My own preference is, in a short article, for the bulk of the details to appear in the text, but I consider that in every full-sized work, appendices should be provided with complete lists of dates, distances, etc.; in this case, it should not be necessary to give all of these fully in the text.

As regards sources, it is cumbersome and, I think, unnecessary to give the original source for every statement and date, but there should be a bibliography of sources, with the author's assurance that, in every possible case, direct statements of facts - and dates - have been taken from original and not secondhand sources. In special cases, such as new discoveries and disputed points, the quotation of sources is desirable.

Yours, &c.
M. D. GREVILLE

Sir, - In his most interesting article "Dickens and the Iron Road" which was published in the January Journal, Mr. Chase mentioned the "Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices" and said it refers to the L. & N.W.R. in the Chester district. The reference is, as I feel sure Mr. Chase knows, to the Carlisle district. The date 1857 is given in the text, and the railway concerned is, therefore, the Lancaster & Carlisle.

Yours, &c.,
G. O. HOLT.

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A NEW RAILWAY BIBLIOGRAPHY

William J. Skillern

"A TENTATIVE CHECK-LIST OF EARLY EUROPEAN RAILWAY LITERATURE, 1831-1848," by Daniel C. Haskell. Published by the Baker Library, Soldiers Field, Boston 63, Mass. 1955. \$5 or 35/-.

Through the good offices of the National Central Library, I have been privileged to examine this American work at length, and the following description is given for the benefit of members.

The bibliography includes books, pamphlets, periodicals, maps, reports, prospectuses, specifications, rule-books, broadsides, timetables and dividend notices. There is at least one manuscript item - the Book of Reference of the Midland Counties Railway, 1835. The work runs to 4,171 numbered entries, a number that is slightly swollen by the various editions of certain titles and the different annual volumes of periodicals. There are several gaps in the numbers, and a few items are given the same number as the previous entry, with the addition of a letter. The year 1846 has the most entries, and its 488 items divide by language as follows:

English 235. French 154, (including 15 Belgium and 3 Luxembourg). German 47. Italian 47. Dutch 5.

Throughout the book, about 60% of the entries include a note giving the location of the item in up to six American libraries. The index covers 24 pages of double columns and includes Airey, Bradshaw, Cruchley, Herapath, Priestley, Wood and many other names familiar to the railway historian.

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The Amateur Historian for February contains an article on the R. & C.H.S. by Mr. C. R. Clinker. This well-written essay sets out the aims and objects of the Society, and will, it is hoped, attract more members.

SUMMER COURSES

Buxton. A residential course, arranged by the University of Nottingham, will be held at Buxton from August 18 to 25. The course will be directed by Mr. C. R. Clinker, and there will be, in addition, lectures by Professor Jack Simmons and Mr. Charles Hadfield. A study will be made of railway history and sources in local records, and of the Cromford and Peak Forest Canals and their tramroads. Visits will be made to the Cromford & High Peak Railway and the Peak Forest Canal tramroads. For costs and further information, application should be made to Mr. J. T. Rhodes, Secretary for Summer Courses, 16, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.

Attingham Park. A weekend course on Railway and Canal History will be held at Attingham Park from June 22 to 24. There will be lectures on the early history of industry in the Coalbrookdale area by Michael Rix, canals and tramroads in East Shropshire by Charles Hadfield, and sources for railway history by C. R. Clinker. There will be a visit to tramroads and canals in the Horsehay, Coalport and Donington Wood areas. The charge will be 50/-. Application should be made to the Warden, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury.

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THE HARTLEPOOL MYSTERY

The Stockton & Hartlepool Railway, opened February 9, 1842, provides a mystery the solution of which, despite search in what contemporary newspapers were available, remains elusive.

Between Seaton (Carew) and Hartlepool was a station called Stranton. In January, 1846, there were trains shown on weekdays to and from Stockton and Stranton and Hartlepool, but on Sundays to and from Stockton and Stranton only - with fares for Hartlepool only. By January, 1847, the weekday service had been withdrawn from Stranton, while the Sunday service still terminated there, and fares were shown for this service. In September, Stranton disappeared altogether from the tables, weekdays and Sundays.

But why this "Sunday only" terminal oddity? It is possible that some strong sabbatarian movement in Hartlepool forbade the use of the Hartlepool station on Sundays, and forced them to terminate in what was then an adjacent parish, but it would be interesting to know if any member has a theory or solution.

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"Voltaire defines a bore as a person who is unable to leave anything out. It is the duty of the historian to sift and select.."

Cyril Connolly: The Sunday Times.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY

THE JOURNAL

It has been decided that the Journal will henceforth be published every other month, starting with this issue. The Editor would like to draw the attention of members to the fact that this will only be possible if enough material can be built up to carry on regularly. Members are, therefore, urged to send him articles. If they maintain that they cannot write easily (or even coherently) they may send notes on any subject of railway or canal historical interest, and the Editorial staff (one) will try and help.

HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES

New Members. The following names should be added to the January, 1956 Membership List:

HART, H. W.	"Ryelands" 65 Pilgrim's Way West, Otford, Kent.
LASCELLES, T. S.	Bradbourne Vale House, 110, Bradbourne Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.
LOMAX, E. S.	8, Craigmont View, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, 12.

Council. The Council has accepted with regret the resignation of Mr. R. A. Cook, who has commenced two years delayed National service.

REPORTS ON EVENTS

Birmingham. Owing to illness, Mr. M. D. Greville was unable to give his paper "Some Pitfalls of Research into Railway History" to the Local Group on January 17. The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. G. O. Holt, very kindly took his place at short notice, and gave his talk "A Short Railway History of Preston" which North-west members heard for the first time last year. That it was appreciated by Midlands members was evident from the number of questions that followed.

Carnforth and Derby. As these meetings were held shortly after going to press, reports will be given in the next issue.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Details of events for the year were given in the 1956 Programme and a recent circular. Members are reminded of the following meetings during March:

London. March 17. 6 for 6.30 p.m. L.T.E. Library, 55, Broadway, S.W.1. Mr. Charles E. Lee will give a paper on "The Early Development of the London Tube Railways, 1856 to 1918." This meeting falls within a few days of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the first section of the Bakerloo tube.

Birmingham. March 17. 7.45 p.m. Chamber of Commerce, 95A, New Street. Mr. M. D. Greville will give his talk on "Some Pitfalls of Research into Railway History," postponed from January.

Annual General Meeting. As announced in the 1956 Programme, it has not been possible to arrange the Forest of Dean tour for Saturday, May 5. Instead, portions of the Birmingham & Gloucester Railway will be visited, including the site of the original terminus at Gloucester, Gloucester "T" station, Cheltenham (Lansdown), Ashchurch and Tewkesbury. In addition, parts of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Tramroad site will be inspected. The approximate cost, including tea, will be 8/- per head.

The visit to the Thames & Severn Canal on Sunday, May 6 will take place as advertised. Full details of both tours, together with booking arrangements, will be sent to each member with the A.G.M. agenda in mid-March. The cost will be approximately 8/- per head for the Thames and Severn outing.

LOCAL GROUPS

The Birmingham Group is now thriving, and details of its recent and forthcoming activities are given elsewhere.

A new Group is being set up in the Manchester area by Mr. B. Baxter, and Groups in the London, North-west and East Midlands areas are now well in hand.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS

The Society has decided to maintain a record library of photographs. This will start with the canal section. Mr. Charles Hadfield, 28, Newton Road, London, W.2., has agreed to keep this library on behalf of the Society. Any subject relating to canals or navigable rivers within the British Isles is acceptable.

Members are asked to send one print (any size not larger than post card) to him, with the following information:- (a) SUBJECT, described as accurately as possible, (b) DATE TAKEN, and (c) OWNER OF COPYRIGHT. Enquiries regarding the existence or use of any photographs should be sent to Mr. Hadfield, with a stamped, addressed envelope.

The railway section of photographs, a wider and more complicated subject, will be considered at a later date.

QUERIES SCHEME

This has been suspended, owing to lack of support. Members may, however, send any queries of general interest to the Editor, and they will be published in the Journal, subject to his discretion.