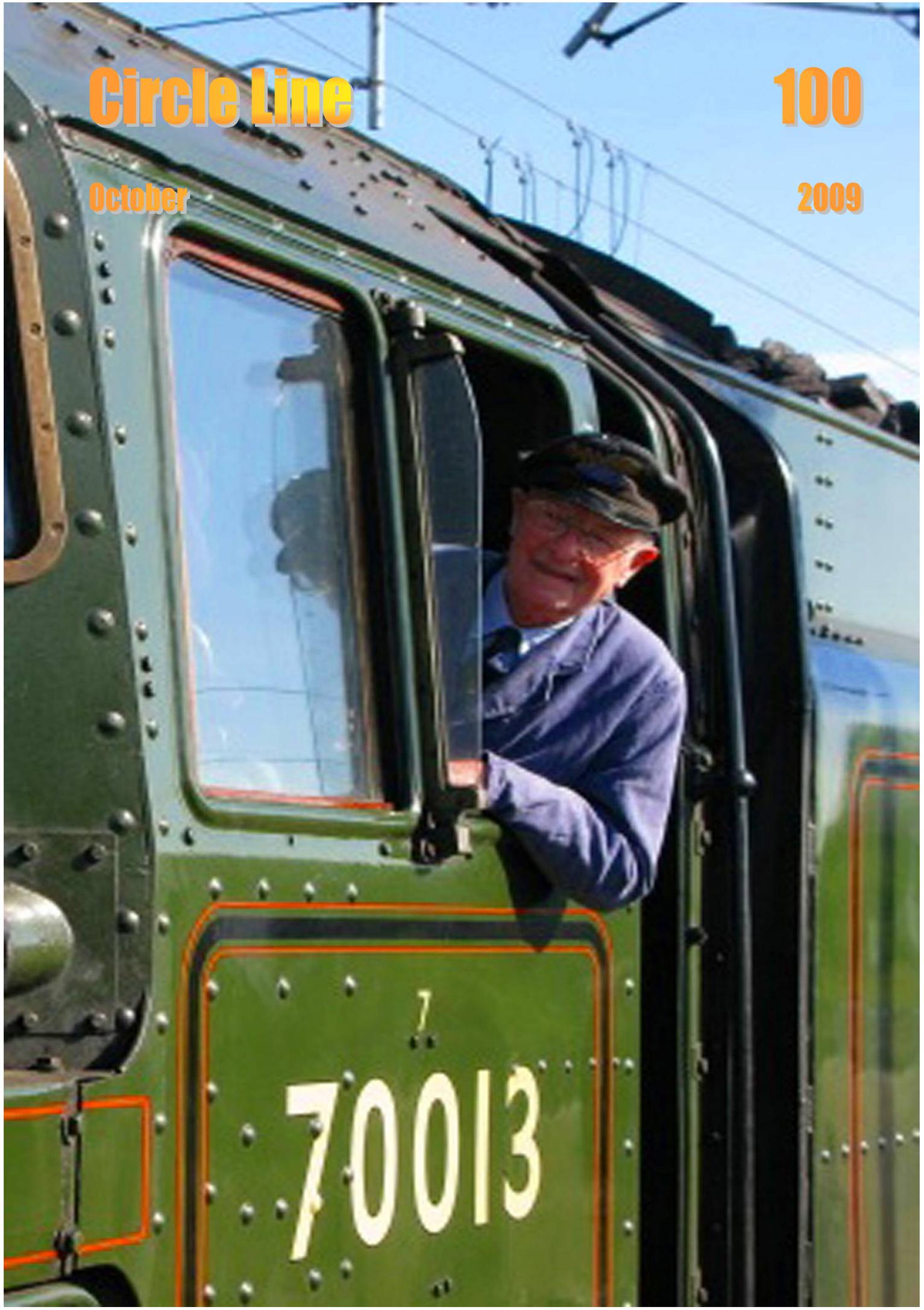


Circle Line

100

October

2009



CONTENTS: Circle Line No. 100, October 2009

Retired engineman regains the footplate of a ‘Britannia’

He ‘copped’ the lot!

A derailment – can anyone tell what happened and when?

Travelling to Poland through the iron curtain

OBITUARY: Joan Last

EVENTS and ‘SPECIAL’ TRAINS

October 3: GOYLIE GOSH IT’S LOWESTOFT: Barrow Hill to Lowestoft.
Two 31 diesel locomotives.

October 17: THE LONDON EXPLORER: Sheffield-London Kings Cross.
46233: Derby-Grantham-Kings Cross and return.

October 23: THE BUFFER PUSHER: Liverpool Street to Euston via Shenfield, Southend, etc.
Two 31 diesel locomotives.

November 26 & 27: THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS: London Kings Cross-York.
60163: Kings Cross-York and return.

November 28: THE LONDON CHRISTMAS EXPRESS: Newcastle-London Kings Cross.
60007: Newcastle-Kings Cross.

December 3: THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS: London Kings Cross-Lincoln.
60019: Kings Cross-Lincoln and return.

December 5: EDINBURGH CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: Stevenage to Edinburgh and return.
Two 47 diesel locomotives.

December 5: THE WESTERN WHITE ROSE: Kings Cross – Scarborough and return.
D1015 ‘Western’ class diesel hydraulic locomotive.

December 19: THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS CAROL CONCERT SPECIAL: London-Norwich.
60019: London-Norwich and return.

FRONT COVER

On the footplate again: Bill Last enjoys the driver’s seat again on the footplate of British Railways ‘Britannia’ Pacific 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*. The locomotive was heading the train *The East Anglian* on its return to London and Bill boarded the footplate at Ely (from a photo by Dave Theobald). *The East Anglian* was inaugurated by the LNER on the Liverpool Street-Norwich line during the Coronation Year of 1937. Two ‘B17’ 4-6-0s –engines that Bill was very familiar with in Cambridge during the 1950s – were streamlined in a similar fashion to the A4s. Both engines, *East Anglian* and *City of London*, were destreamlined by 1951. 61659 and 61670 spent their last days (1959) at Lowestoft Central (32C) and Yarmouth South Town (32D) respectively. The full story on Bill’s footplate experience is in this issue.

Next meetings planned for 2009/10

Friday 6th November 2009: Chris Green: Retrospective & Prospective (CG himself).

Friday 4th December 2009: Mike Page (Circle Line editor) A look at southern Ireland/ Christmas Draw.

Friday 8th January 2010 (NOT first Friday!): David Ward: Further Railway Reminiscences.

Friday 5th February 2010: Danny Hopkins of Steam Railway Magazine.

Editor's 'Rant'

Welcome to the second issue of 'Circle Line' for 2009. We need more contributors. Stories or short 'news' items can cover any railway topic you like, be it news from around the region, history, nostalgia, visits, railway holidays, even the Guided Busway, and so on. Also very welcome would be reports from the outings during the year.

If you were wondering what happened to the Government's promise of a 'Barbecue Summer' and you got soaked on the Settle and Carlisle or waiting to see a train near the golf course at Sheringham, don't ask me!

Happily, I saved most of my own trips for later on in the summer. I rely more on my big toe's reactions to that of the Government's when predicting the weather! I did get to see *Oliver Cromwell* a few times, including waving to Bill Last's train, *The East Anglian* and 70013, as the train drifted past me near Harston on May 23.

During late August, Dave Theobald and I met up with two other enthusiasts for a 'photo week' in Northumbria and North Yorkshire. The weather was mixed and we saw 70013 a number of times on the 'Scarborough Spa Express'. We also saw *Duchess of Sutherland*, *Princess Elizabeth* and Black 5, 45231 in action. Early September proved to be a good time to enjoy southern Ireland (visiting relatives) as I had nine days of dry weather – still couldn't believe it!

How many of you remember the ace trainspotter 'Tweedie'? We have a story in this issue. Also as it is now the 20th Anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall I have included a piece about my own experiences when I used to travel to Eastern Europe during the mid-late 1970s and early 1980s.

Sadly missed by all is Joan Last. My apologies that the June issue was printed too early to include it, but an obituary to Joan is published in this issue.

So autumn is now with us and still there is no sign of the wonderful 'Guided Busway' service (didn't the Cambridge County Council say 'end of the summer' for a service start-up?). Ah well.

Anyway, the Cambridge Railway Circle has a good programme of meetings lined up for the winter to take our minds off things!

Mike Page

Retired engineman regains the footplate of a 'Britannia'



Here is how retired engine driver and President of the Cambridge Railway Circle, Bill Last, once more enjoyed sitting in the driver's seat of 'Oliver Cromwell' at the head of 'The East Anglian'.

By David Pepperell, Chairman of the Cambridge Railway Circle.

The first occasion this year Bill had a visit to the footplate of 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" was on the RTC trip from Norwich to Poole on 23 May named The Dorset Coast Express. Through the kind co-operation of Nigel Dobbing and the 5305 Association (custodian of 70013 from NRM), a visit to the footplate at Ely was arranged during the 8-minute stopover. Bill was duly adorned in his former railway overalls and cap, awaiting our arrival at Ely, together with Anthony and family friends.

It was a very emotional experience for the 92 year old, and us watching too, to see him get up on the footplate in such a sprightly fashion and make for the driver's seat. All too soon, after photos were taken, it was time to get down. What he did

not know at that stage was that I had managed to get Bill and his escorts a ride in the locomotive support coach through to Royston where water was to be taken from a road tanker adjacent to Platform 1.

The 35-minute journey was full of nostalgia with the locomotive sounds, smoke and soot particles bringing back many memories of his 49 3/4 years of railway service. Bill even joined the footplate of 70013 again at Royston during the 20-minute booked stop, before we departed on our journey south. The noise of the exhaust beat and rapid acceleration away must have brought tears to his eyes!

No 70013 was to come through Cambridge again on 23 August, working a Steam Dreams charter train The Cathedrals Express from Kings Cross to Norwich and return. Bill and Anthony this time joined the train at Cambridge and enjoyed the trip from the comfort of a reserved seat. Not to miss an opportunity, I managed to have a word with the loco crew at Norwich so Bill was able to make yet another visit to his rightful seat!

Who would have ever imagined that in 2009, Cambridge still has regular visits from mainline steam locomotives with the A4 locomotive 60019 "Bittern" scheduled to pass through Cambridge twice in December en route to Ely and Norwich respectively. However, the very thought of A4 60007 "Sir Nigel Gresley" starting from Cambridge on 12 December to travel to York and back will surely have Bill reaching for his folded overalls once again!



It's a 'Brit'! Britannia Pacific 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' arrives at Ely on May 23, 2009, with the southbound 'East Anglian'. The 'Britannias', based at Stratford (30A) and Norwich Thorpe (32A) traveled both London to Norwich routes via Colchester and Cambridge up until 1961 or so – Dave Theobald.

About 'Oliver Cromwell' – the *Railway Observer* noted that 70013 had emerged from Crewe Works to be seen complete and painted outside the paint shop on May 17, 1951. The first sighting of 70013 pulling a train was on the 13.45 Birmingham to Manchester at Crewe on May 31, 1951.

According to the *Railway Observer*, the first sighting of 70013 on the old Great Eastern was on the down *Broadsman* on June 8, 1951. Later in the year, Norwich held a Railway Exhibition where 70013 was on display along with 'B1' 61059 (from Ipswich).

Like most of her 55 sisters, 70013 finished up working freight, parcels and passenger trains on the West Coast and Settle and Carlisle main lines from 1963 onwards. She was the last loco to be overhauled at Crewe Works in 1967 and hauled British Rail's *15 Guinea Special* from Manchester to Carlisle on August 13, 1968. 70013 retired to Bressingham Gardens where Bill drove her for a number of years. The engine was restored to the main line in 2008 after a four-year overhaul. The National Railway Museum (NRM), *Steam Railway*, the Great Central Railway (GCR) the 5305 Locomotive Association and Loughborough Standard Locomotive Group sponsor the locomotive's overhaul and operation – *Mike Page*.

He 'copped' the lot!

Occasionally, when train spotting, you met someone who had 'copped the lot'. Such a person was Gerald Tweedie, who for his perseverance was recognised officially by British Railways in 1961, writes *Chris Burton*, and awarded a footplate ride on an 'A4' no less!



Have we got the road? 'Tweedie' sits in the driver's seat of world speed record holder, 60022 'Mallard' at King's Cross on April 6, 1961.

Advance information of special events is usually much valued. For train spotters, absolutely so. Yet, whilst today's internet 'gen' sites and mobile telephones offer us precious little excuse for not being 'in the know' about train movements, most 'Circle' members will well recall a time when total surprise featured a little too strongly in the train spotter's life.

Forty years ago, aside from Providence guiding you to the right place at the right time, it was railway grapevine gossip that revealed the golden nuggets of 'spotter' opportunity! And one or two of the gossipers were seriously knowledgeable. One Gerald Tweedie was just such a person. A diffident, rather nervous character, Gerald, or Gerry as he was known to us all, literally travelled the every-which-way of Britain's railway system, when not earning his honest crust at Heffer's printing works in Cambridge. Gerry was the sort of guy who was invariably ahead of the game of what was likely to power a certain working on certain day into our area.

If it had left, shall we say, mythical Quaint Gardens depot at 3pm on Monday heading for Grimyard Junction, there was a pretty good chance it would be sidling through Sootacre district on the 10.22am pick-up freight from Grimyard on Tuesday. On this sort of forecast Gerry was remarkably accurate. Indeed, there's more than a few of us who, from time to time, who sloped of work or school to witness one of these predictions. Just occasionally with dire consequences, when our 'spotting' was itself spotted by a superior!

Using the train and his high mileage touring bicycle, Gerry pretty soon outstripped all of us when it came to the number of British Railway locomotives 'copped'. To such an extent that on Tuesday 14 March 1961, the *Cambridge Daily News* proclaimed 'Our Gerry' as "Britain's Number One Train

spotter". At last he had done it: he had seen the lot! And in early April 1961, British Railways acknowledged this with a special prize for such ceaseless endeavour.

And boy, what a prize it was: no less than a ride in the cab of an East Coast Main Line Pacific from Kings Cross to Grantham.....and back. And if we enthusiast colleagues near salivated at the thought of such a trip, just imagine the reaction when told that the locomotive he 'footplated' was none other than Mallard, herself, holder of the speed record for steam locomotives. Envy was barely the word!

Apparently, his accomplice on this occasion was a Mr John Moore from Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, who himself was only 66 numbers away from claiming a similar honour. And how do I know all this? Well that's a mini story in itself and certainly not down to my increasingly feeble memory. But it is down to a quite unexpected telephone call back in April this year.

The call came from a chap called Mike Warlow, hitherto quite unknown to me. Mike had been a fireman (then driver) at Kings Cross from 1959-69, and was firing Mallard the very day that Gerry Tweedie took the ride of his life. Mike had been in touch with Brian Sharpe of Heritage Railway (who, you may remember, was snowed-off his talk to the 'Circle, but is having another go in 2010). Brian knew nothing of this 'No1 Train spotter' thing, but he did know me, hence the telephone call.

Mike had seen press photographs of Mr Tweedie beaming mightily from the cab, but none, which included him. And he knew some had been taken. Could I help? Immediately I got in touch with the Milton Road Library, who archive the microfiche Cambridge Daily News of that vintage. They were charmingly helpful, checking every reference to Tweedie of which there were four. I read through these and then acquired photocopies. But no sign in any picture of the fireman. So I then contacted Cambridge Newspapers, who still had all the negatives, which they then dug out for me. Success! There indeed was the shot which Mike Warlow recalled and which you too can now see.



Right Away! Fireman Mike Warlow looks on as 'Tweedie' acknowledges the green flag at King's Cross. Note the old signal box above 'Mallard'.

Gerry's celebratory trip on Mallard was reported in the *Cambridge Daily News* on Monday 10 April 1961, but actually took place four days earlier. He also hit some of the national newspapers. By now Gerry was something of a minor celebrity dispensing knowledge with renewed vigour

and intent on 'copping' all the diesel and electric traction, then rapidly replacing steam. This he came pretty close to achieving when death intervened in July 1972, and duly reported in *Cambridge Daily News*. For an ostensibly fit, lean built, cyclist, it seemed especially tragic to be 'withdrawn from service' at the mere age of 50. But there again, Gerry did love his roll-ups!

So RIP, Gerald Tweedie: probably the doyen of the Cambridge Cattle Market 'railings brigade'!

As an aside: although not directly relevant, the driver on Tweedie's triumphal trip was Edward 'Ted' Baur. Not as well known as Sparshatt, Hoole, Hailstone, and other Kings Cross alumni, he did none the less have one claim to fame, so I am reliably informed by David Percival, a long-time GN observer.

Driver Baur was at the regulator of 9F 92184 on 16 August 1958 when it substituted at Grantham for something far grander, on the 1.10pm Edinburgh to Kings Cross. Also travelling in the train, probably unknown to the crew, was another Gerry, only this time it was Eastern Region General Manager, Gerry Fiennes. Having breasted Stoke summit, Baur then ran this 5ft 0in (1524mm) wheeled locomotive up to 91mph (149 km/h) down the incline to Peterborough. He was six minutes early through Hitchin!

As Fiennes recalled in his book, *I Tried to run a Railway*, he started to ask questions about safety and morale. "I came to the conclusion that the Top Link men.....knew very precisely what they were up to." So no real worries there. But, oh, to have been near Essendine when this Class 9 locomotive whizzed past with its connecting rods flailing around at 91mph! And I bet the fireman was a few pounds lighter too, on arrival at Kings Cross. But it wasn't Mike Warlow!

A derailment – can anyone tell what happened and when?

Not long after we had moved to Cambridge, (about 1973) I was on my way back from Liverpool Street one evening when I got into conversation with a gentlemen, who turned out to be the retiring editor of the *Cambridge Daily News*.

He mentioned that he was moving out from his house in the Hills Road and had a number of photographs and books he wanted to dispose of. The books were both from American publishers. One was about the named trains in the USA, published about 1949 and the other was about Loewy, an industrial designer.

Loewy was responsible for designing the streamlining of USA steam and electric locomotives. Some of you may be familiar with the Pennsylvania Railroad's 'GG1' electric locomotives, the K4 pacifics and that ambitious, 'duplex-drive' 6-4-4-6 developed in the mid/late 1940s. Loewy designed the then very futuristic streamlining for these engines.

Among the photographs was the one shown below. It appears to be a modified D16 4-4-0 Does anyone know the story behind this local derailment, if indeed it was in Cambridge? The loco's number appears to be 62575– *Mike Page*.



Travelling to Poland through the iron curtain

It is almost twenty years ago in 1989 that the 'Iron Curtain' was opened and suddenly, the former 'Communist Bloc' or Soviet 'Satellite' countries in Eastern Europe were much easier to access. Unfortunately the steam locomotive age had almost finished. When steam was in business, it was not so easy to get there, relates Mike Page.

While the armed border guard was scrutinising my passport, two soldiers were unscrewing panels in the railway carriage corridor ceiling. Alsatian dogs were running underneath the train. More armed soldiers watched from overhead catwalks that ran around the walls of the railway station. Armed guards held back waiting passengers.

A massive platform-to-ceiling steel barrier cut the railway station lengthways into two. Behind that barrier, local West Berlin 'Stadtbahn' (City Railway) trains arrived and returned. The station is Friedrichstrasse, Berlin - a remarkable 19th Century, iron-and-glass, double arched-roof survivor of World War II. The time was June 1977. I travelling to the Poznan Fair in Poland and it was cheaper to go by train then.

Before the advent of Ryanair and other 'cheapo' airlines, one could make use of the *Ost-West Express*, which stood waiting for you - almost at the side of the ship - at Hoek van Holland. Either the British Rail steamer *St. Edmund* or the Dutch Railways' *Konigin Beatrix* had treated you to a sometimes-exciting roller coaster North Sea night-time voyage from Harwich. For a reasonable extra £10, you could take advantage of first-class comforts and a very relaxing bar and waiter service restaurant. Have dinner, a nightcap, and wake up next morning to a discreet tap on the door and: "Morning coffee, sir?" No, it was 1977, not 1937!



Netherlands Railways (NS) 1505 waits at Hook of Halland with the *Rhein Express* to Frankfurt. September 3, 1971. 1505 was BR 27001 and now resides in the Manchester Museum of Science and Technology - Mike Page

The Dutch officials were aggressive with all would-be incomers in those days. Once past the border police and probing customs, the train awaited you. Breakfast - including

'hem undt ekks' (ham and eggs) - was being prepared in the red Deutsches Reichsbahn (DR - German State Railways, GDR) Mitropa restaurant car, which stayed open all day. You had walked past furtive, fur coat bedecked individuals conversing anxiously with the liveried, military-looking stewards of two immaculate green Russian couchette/sleeping cars bound for Minsk and Moscow (these cars were built to the 'normal' European UIC loading gauge). I had found a clean compartment in a sooty brownish green 'UIC' Polish coach heading for Warsaw. There were also green German Deutsche Bundesbahn (DB - German Federal Railways) UIC coaches for Berlin (West) and a couple of blue Dutch railways coaches for Hengelo.



DB 'V200' diesel-hydraulics (later 220) were the usual power for between Bentheim and Osnabrueck in the 1970s, like 220.080 heading the *Holland-Skandinavian Express* into Rheine, September 4, 1971 - Mike Page.

In addition to the *Ost-West Express* waiting at the Hook of Holland in 1977 there also waited the *Holland-Skandinavian Express* on the next platform for all major halts to Copenhagen and Stockholm (via two train ferries) or the well-appointed, wine-red and cream *Rheingold* Trans-European Express to whisk you down the Rhine to Basel. There was also a slower 'D-Zug' (Durchfahrenden Zug or through train) for Frankfurt-am-Main (the *Rhein Express*). Oddly enough, a British-built electric locomotive pulled each train, an ex-British Rail EM2 Co-Co in the 27000 series. The 1500V DC EM2 passenger electrics had earlier been sold to the Dutch, who painted them in grey and yellow 'Dutch' livery and numbered them in the 1500 series. There would also be a local train to Amsterdam.

Breakfast takes you across The Netherlands, chatting to a pretty curly blonde ballet dancer who lives and works in Bielefeld. A German oil engineer, who joined the train at Hengelo, only wants to talk about beer and football. If you are a nutter like me, you will be hoping that the DB will have had

a rare diesel failure, and a surviving express passenger, oil-burning 01.10 (later 012) Pacific will be waiting to replace our Anglo-Dutch electric loco at Hengelo. Nope! It's a V200 diesel hydraulic! As we halt at Rheine, a class 44 2-10-0 (later 044 and 043) heads north to Emden docks with iron ore empties. An oil-burning 41 2-8-2 (later 041) sits in a passing loop with mixed freight waiting to follow the '44'. But Rheine shed doesn't want to give us a pacific here either. The V200 restarts and we pass another 44 as we head for Osnabrueck. There, we lose our V200 for a blue E10 15kVA B-B.

As lunchtime approaches, we are nearing Hannover. Our quiet E10 B-B electric loco is handing the job over to a throbbing V160 diesel-hydraulic red box (now 218). On the way to Helmstedt, tension is rising among transit passengers as we near the *Iron Curtain*. Stress relief for an English 'train-spotter' is that the DB has seen fit to concentrate some of its remaining steam power - Class 50 2-10-0s (later 050/051/052 and 053) - to shuttle freight trains to and fro between the yards at Hannover and the GDR border exchange sidings.



Freight through Rheine was intensive in the 1970s. The route from Emden docks in the north brought imported iron ore to the Ruhr. We see rebuilt DB class 44 2-10-0 as oil-burner 043.131 heading a northbound trainload of coke through the station on September 3, 1971 – *Mike Page*.

The train stops at Helmstedt, and a few passengers detrain. A very pleasant lady doctor - a native of West Berlin – is amazed to hear how quickly British people could get GDR visas. For a West German, it could take 10 weeks, she tells me, as a pair of West German border police, followed by two customs officers, breeze uncaringly past our compartment.

Our V160 loco has been uncoupled and we now have a bright red and cream DR V180 (later 118) diesel hydraulic B-B. We depart gently through empty fields towards a wall of steel. A cleared zone - about 100 yards wide - with a patrol road can be seen in front of three parallel rows of electrified wire fence. A US Army jeep stands nearby, its occupants lounging and bored, watching our train.

We halt in a corridor of high, electrified wire fence with watchtowers for five minutes, before moving gently forward into Marienborn, GDR. Flags and 'Welcome to the GDR – Workers' Paradise' banners and GDR flags form a backdrop to the stern border guards. Some are armed with machine guns and are accompanied by Alsations. They wait for us on the station platform. The station area is very aggressively fenced.

We are told to stay on the train, while the guards toothcomb our coaches and open the inspection panels in the locomotive. I had learned much later that as many people had tried to get into the GDR as had tried to get out - even hiding under the coal in locomotive tenders - not so easy now with diesel

engines. Which was why two soldiers are shovelling around the coal in a DB 50 freight locomotive's tender, while dogs sniffed under the engine's motion and wheels, before it departs for freedom with 30 bogie wagons of brown coal. The border police come aboard, selling us transit visas - each a 'snip' at DM5 (about £1.50 then). '*No, your letter does not cover transit, you have to pay!*' Disappointingly there is no 'James Bond' being marched off the train that day, but the customs officers want to search all suitcases. So we stand there for an hour! Suddenly the station announcer broadcasts that if anyone wants to leave the train, *to do so immediately!* One man in a dark overcoat gets off, watched curiously by us and glared sternly at by the guards. Is he a homebound communist spy? Who else would want to get off at this God-forsaken place?

We amble away from Marienborn back into sanity - the countryside looks no different to the plains around Hannover. We avoid Magdeburg, passing a marshalling yard where a racy-looking Giesl-fitted 50 2-10-0 and a rebuilt '52' 2-10-0 rub shoulders with big Russian V300 (later 232) diesel electric C-Cs. On and on at about 50mph we run until suddenly the fences, concrete walls and watchtowers loom again, and we roll into Berlin-Wannsee (Lake Wann) station.

The train is searched again - armed guards and dogs - while border guards remove the transit visas from us and stamp the passports again. So we cross into West Berlin and you get the impression that you are back in West Germany once more. Most people get out at Berlin- Zoologischer Garten (Zoological Garden). Our train has, somewhere along the line, maybe at Hannover, picked up an ancient-looking Belgian coach from Brussels, two more Russian UIC sleeping cars (Paris-Moscow) and a couple of French coaches from Paris on the way, which too, are going to Warsaw.



Berlin Friedrichstrasse showing rebuilt, oil-burning 01 Pacific, 01.0513 on a Hapag Lloyd tourist special, September 30, 1980 – *Mike Page*.

So the train rumbles on through West Berlin in the gathering dusk, across the River Spree and a wasteland of weedy, neglected, crumbling factories and warehouses, and a complete weed and bush covered layout of railway lines, signals, signal boxes, etc., to meet 'The Wall' and its guards again at Friederichstrasse. There, the whole 'guards and dogs' pantomime begins again.

Eventually I am allowed to leave the train and proceed to the customs hall for a relatively quick check and I have to purchase a second visa! I then walk out, under the railway bridge and along a drab street towards the Hotel Metropole. Though a surprisingly stylish, Swedish-built four-star edifice

with a very pleasant staff, bed and breakfast works out at about £15/night, a bit cheaper than spending £20 or more in a two-star job in West Berlin. Expecting problems as I only had a transit visa: no, they would be very pleased to put me up for two nights, no problem - they will sort out a new visa with the police and I will get the passport back in the morning. To carry on to Poland, the Metropole's receptionist said it would be easier to take the 'S-Bahn' (City Railway) to the Ostbahnhof (East Station) rather than try and board the train at Friedrichstrasse.

The S-Bahn trains in 1977 were mostly the older, riveted 'cast iron' looking, red and cream pre-war stock, with manually-opening/automatically slamming-to double doors. It all works and the train moves quickly over the long cross-city viaduct.

My train is the morning 08.41 departure, the night time 'Ost-West Express' from Hoek van Holland. The East Station, another iron and glass roofed World War II survivor, is impressive, but there is no steam about. Would I perhaps get an 03 or an 01 Pacific to the Polish border - er, no. A V180 pulls in with a similar mixture of stock to my train of two days ago. One of the DR's yellow, eight coupled jack-drive, centre-cab diesel hydraulic shunters draws out a six-coach rake of wide-bodied Russian green coaches and proceeds to attach them on the rear of 'my' train. So there are now some 14 coaches in the train's make-up. Somewhere along the line, the red 'Mitropa' dining car has been replaced by a dingy-looking 'WARS' Polish equivalent. My excitement is now increasing, as there is a 50-50 chance of Polish steam taking over at Frankfurt-am-Oder.

We draw slowly out of the East Station past massive freight and passenger rolling stock yards, with no steam in sight. I glimpse a '52' 2-10-0 on the high level orbital line as we clatter through the Ost Tor (East Gate)'s part clover leaf junctions and station. We head out into much the same scenery as seen on the western side of Berlin except that silver birch trees are becoming more common. The V180 has got us moving at about 55-60mph and we pass an 03 Pacific heading west! Then a Russian V300 on freight goes by chased by a rebuilt DR 52 with a block train of logs. It is only about an hour or so until we approach Frankfurt am Oder's marshalling yards, occupied by two waiting 52s on westbound freights. I manage to grab a shot of a sparkling, retreating 03 pacific leaving the Frankfurt station.



Rebuilt 03 Pacific, 03.2118, backs out of the western side of Frankfurt an der Oder station, March 7, 1977 - Mike Page.

The GDR border police are surprisingly quick, asking me if I have a Polish visa, while depriving me of my GDR visa paper and stamping my passport yet again. I hear a steam loco working very hard. An unrebuilt '52' appears to be on the brink of stalling as it lifts a heavy mixed freight up the bank from the Oder bridge. I jump off the train and risk a shot, and jump back on again and remain unmolested. I think the staff were too busy with the uncoupling of the 118. There was no Polish Pt47 2-8-2 waiting for us, but two PKP (Polish State Railways), Ciegieski-built SP45 diesel electric C-Cs idled nearby. One was for our train, but more was happening.



The Polish State Railways (PKP) class SP45 1750HP diesel electric C-Cs were built by the Henry Ciegieski plant in Poznan and were introduced in the early 70s. The Ciegieski plant was one of two major locomotive plants in Poland having built numerous steam locomotives. SP45.077 heads a Berlin-bound train of Russian wide bodied stock on March 3, 1979 - Mike Page.

A yellow shunter has removed our six wide-bodied and the four smaller, UIC bodied Russian sleeping cars, while another V180 arrives with a mixture of DR and more wide-bodied Russian coaches. The shunting results in all the Russian coaches making up one train for the second SP45. We have our SP45 now, have gained some of the DR coaches, and we slowly depart towards the wide River Oder, which lies about 100ft below the station level. We descend slowly around a wide curve towards a long girder bridge, on which sits a massive PKP Ty51 2-10-0. After World War II, the PKP had acquired 100 heavy, mechanical stoker-fired, 2-cylinder 2-10-0s (Ty246) from the USA. The PKP railwaymen nicknamed the Ty246s 'Trumans'. The Poles liked them so much, that they modified the design in 1951 with a larger firebox, added smoke deflectors, called them Ty51, and built 250 or so more!

We stop on the bridge, but there are too many soldiers about to risk taking a picture of the panting Ty51. After about ten minutes, the SP45 lifts us slowly off the bridge and out of the Oder valley to arrive, a few miles later at the Polish border station of Kunowice. The Polish border police are business-like but not unfriendly. As the border policeman - speaking good English - scrutinises the Polish visa stamped in my passport, a wholly American five-note chime whistle wail precedes the passing of a Ty51 on a long mixed freight heading for the bridge. No one wants to look at my luggage, but the customs folk decide that the German in my compartment is a suspicious character and all his bags are opened. They confiscate about eight polystyrene vacuum packs of what looks like fresh beef hearts. Now I wonder who will eat those? Meat was in very short supply in Poland.

Eventually the Polish officials are all satisfied and our SP45 is allowed to proceed. The next stop is a much larger junction station at Rzepin, which is alive with steam. Another five-note wail on an American chime whistle tells us that more Ty51s

have this wonderful sound. A PKP S160 American 2-8-0 (Tr203), now with a tall chimney, is busy in a nearby yard. That loco could have been hauling freight around the UK in 1944. A tall, Polish-built Ol.49 2-6-2 rolls by, but station is crawling with soldiers and police, so photography looks unwise. The temptation to risk a quick 'shot' with the camera is burning, as a Prussian P8 4-6-0 (Ok1), with the larger smoke deflectors, arrives on a two-coach local train. We pass Rzepin's roundhouse populated by Ty51s, Ty2s (DR 52 2-10-0s) and another Prussian P8 4-6-0 (Ok1). There are also bright green Romanian-built ST.43 diesel electric C-Cs (with Sulzer engines under licence), which, as we proceed to Poznan, seem to be in charge of all the freight heading to Rzepin. Yet the PKP uses the more powerful Ty51s between there and the bridge – maybe the reason is the steep climb out of the Oder river valley.



Maybe the elder retired enginemen at Cambridge may remember these beasts? It is a UNRAA type S160 2-8-0 from a number of USA locomotive companies who built over 500 of these, many of which worked in Britain during 1943-44. Three of them survive in preservation in England. Poland had one of the largest allocations: at least over 200. This one, Tr203.302 is shunting the large yard by the main station in Poznan on March 10, 1979. The PKP has added a taller chimney – *Mike Page*.

We emerge from the silver birch forests to open fields, and see in the distance, a pall of smoke. We approach extensive marshalling yards at Zbasnyek. There is also a large traverser type locomotive depot with Ty2s and a few Ty51 on view in the loco yard. I get a view of another high boilered Ol.49 2-6-2; these were originally designed in 1949 to replace the many ageing Prussian P8 4-6-0s (Ok1) inherited from when today's western Poland was formerly part of Prussia until after World War 1. There is also what looks like a Prussian G8 0-8-0 (DR 55 or PKP Tr2) 'dead' in the shed yard.

Our SP.45 gets under way again, and we pass a Polish-built Tkt.48 2-8-2T waiting with a four-coach set of double deck stock. These engines are a bit larger than West Germany's class 86 2-8-2Ts. Very quickly we are in open country again, until factories and chimneys are seen on the horizon and we are joined by an electrified line coming in from the south (from Wroclaw) and another line from the north (Gdansk). We enter an extensive freight yard, with an obviously busy roundhouse behind the wagons. A Tr203 approaches tender first shunting a string of covered wagons. A Ty43 (Polish build of the DR 42 2-10-0) waits with a short freight, while Poznan Glowny (main station) appears to have only electric DMUs on view. Our train switches left, to reveal a bay platform with an Ok1 waiting on a train to Zbasnyek.

A quick dash up the platform secures a departing shot of Ok1.130 with its set of double deckers. I leave the station hastily as I don't want to get stopped now!

So that was a trip to Poland at a time of transition from steam to diesel and electric. Steam died slowly over the next ten years, leaving a few pockets lingering on in the GDR and Poland. Today, the Wolsztyn museum depot soldiers on, still having two steam jobs to Poznan, while very active enthusiast groups keep steam operating in today's 'Plandampfs' (Timetable Planned Steam) in Germany.

Not many travellers use the train and ship these days to travel to Germany or Poland. The would-be train user wishing to get to Poland will find only two local trains waiting for him at the Hook of Holland when disembarking from today's daytime high speed ferry. One train will get you to Rotterdam where there might be a connection through to Berlin – or at least – Hannover.



After the First World War, Poznan – or Posen – remained in Germany along with many ex-Prussian, and later, DR locomotives. After World War II, Poland's boundaries shifted some 60 miles to the west, so Posen became Poznan once more. Many of the German locomotives remained in Poland with the PKP as reparations. This ex-Prussian P8 4-6-0 (DB and DR class 38) was one of those to stay in Poland as the Ok1 class. They quickly faded from the scene during the late 1970s. At least two are preserved in Poland, including one at Wolsztyn. Ok1.130 leaves Poznan with the 16.05 local train to Zbasnyek, March 7, 1977 – *Mike Page*.

Once at Hannover a train will get you to Berlin where you will most certainly find a train through to Poznan and Warsaw, I doubt very much whether you would see a steam locomotive along the way. You may get a glimpse of a 'stuffed and mounted' DB class 012 three-cylinder Pacific as you whiz through (or stop) at Braunschweig.

Where the 1970s train once crept across a wide, bare, mined 'no-man's land' between West and East Berlin, there now stands the glistening glass and steel, double-level main station (Berlin Hauptbahnhof). This station has realised the pre-war DR 'dream' of a north-south 'cross-rail' across Berlin.

Obituary: Joan Last



July 31, 1917 – May 10, 2009

If memory serves me correctly, I first met Joan in 1970 when I attended my first meeting of the Cambridge Railway Circle. The meeting was held in the long gone British Rail Social Club, which was located in the proximity of Cambridge Railway Station.

What immediately struck me on that occasion was the hand of friendship extended to each newcomer by all the Committee members and their respective ladies. In particular, I well remember Joan's beaming smile and the welcome she gave me in those early days.

The very fact that the Circle is now celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year is a testament to the unstinting encouragement given by Joan and other ladies in supporting their husbands who were creating the foundation for such a successful and fraternal organisation.

Joan was always there to offer help to her husband, Bill, in his role as Chairman for many years and to personally organise the 'tea and biscuits' refreshments during an interval. So successful had the Circle become, it was not

unusual for Joan and her helpers to have to cater for up to 130 members' needs each evening.

The Last family's home, from the outset, became the regular meeting place for holding our Committee meetings. The Last's compact lounge at No. 39, Fallowfield, was to become a shrine of friendship over the years. When the business of the day had been concluded we always looked forward eagerly to Joan's cups of tea, homemade fruitcakes and sandwiches. The lounge was adorned with many railway relics, which Bill had acquired during his 50-year career and I have to presume that it was Joan who regularly had the job of polishing the brass items! They were always kept in immaculate condition whenever we visited.

I soon became aware that Joan was also a most accomplished and respected local history speaker. Hardly a week would pass by when her name did not appear in the Cambridge Evening News, responding to Mike Petty's competitions involving the identification of local photographic landmarks from past years. She was always right!

Over the years, the Cambridge Railway Circle has run many railway and coach outings; and Joan and Bill, with very few exceptions, would be the first to support such ventures with their presence. They led by example.

A couple of years ago I had the pleasure of being invited to Joan and Bill's 90th Birthday celebrations held at Girton College. Yet again, one was made to feel part of the family at this superb occasion.

Joan had much personal delight in offering teatime hospitality to many of our speakers before the commencement of meetings. This kind of friendship was instrumental in the Cambridge Railway Circle as being seen as something special by our guest presenters.

Dorrie Ewles, the widow of Ken Ewles, our late President, has asked me to pass on her sincere appreciation for Joan and Bill's unstinting friendship over the years. The long car journey from the Norwich area to Cambridge, undertaken to attend the monthly meetings, would be inevitably broken with afternoon tea at the Last's. Joan would serve up Dorrie's favourite: celery wrapped in ham and accompanied by an appropriate sauce, which to this day Dorrie has never been able to match!

Joan, to many, will be remembered as a 'pure English gentlewoman' – always a person bearing that unforgettable smile, someone with immaculate personal presentation and having a kind word for everyone. Our thoughts and condolences are very much with Bill and his close extended families.

Joan, may you rest in peace.

Joan's funeral was held at St. Andrew's Church, Chesterton on Thursday May 21, 2009. The funeral service was conducted by the Reverend Lorna Dazeley. David Pepperell, Chairman of the Cambridge Railway Circle, read out the above Family Tribute during the service. Donations in memory of Joan were made to the Macular Disease Society.

Cambridge Railway Circle Committee Members

President: Bill Last

Chairman: David Pepperell
15 Vine Close, Cambridge, CB2 5BZ.
Email: Dr.Pepperell@btinternet.com

Secretary: Christopher Burton
2 Stone Terrace, Cambridge, CB1 2PN
Email: cfb79ten@googlemail.com

Outings Secretary: Anthony Dewey
Email: Tony.Dewey@btinternet.com

Treasurer: Michael Cosgrove

Circle Line Editor: Mike Page
84 Blinco Grove, Cambridge, CB1 7TS
Email: mikepage@freeuk.com

Contributions to Circle Line

Editorial contributions are accepted in hand-written or typed form or by e-mail to Mike Page (contact details are above).

If you e-mail pictures or illustrations, JPEGs are preferred. Please keep file size to 1.5MB maximum.

Thanks again, to this month's contributors without whom our journal would not have appeared.

Circle Line is the newsletter of The Cambridge Railway Circle

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