

Circle Line

117

May

2015



On the road with B17s

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SPECIAL TRAINS NEAR US: May – August 2015

May 6:	THE GREAT BRITAIN VIII Grange-over-Sands – London Kings Cross THE EASTERN CATHEDRALS EXPRESS Carnforth – Ely – Norwich & return	B1 61306 + 45690 <i>Leander.</i> 47/57 diesels.
May 9:	THE FOUR TRIANGLES Crewe – Ipswich – Bury St. Edmunds – Norwich – Colchester - Crewe.	2x 37 diesels.
May 10:	THE PEAK FORESTER London Kings Cross – Peterborough - Rowsley.	B1 61306 or 70013 <i>Oliver Cromwell.</i>
May 21:	THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS London Kings Cross – Scarborough & return.	60007 <i>Sir Nigel Gresley.</i>
June 2:	THE WHITE ROSE London Kings Cross – York. York – London Kings Cross	Deltic D9009 <i>Alycidon.</i> 60163 <i>Tornado.</i>
June 13:	THE NORTH RIDING KINGS London Kings Cross – Scarborough & return	Diesels to be announced.
June 20:	THE LINDISFARNE London Kings Cross - Berwick & return.	Diesels to be announced.
July 1:	THE PILGRIM FATHERS London Kings Cross – Skegness & return	B1 63106.
July 5:	THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS London Kings Cross – York – Edinburgh	60007 <i>Sir Nigel Gresley.</i>
July 7:	THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS York – Kings Cross THE NORFOLK EXPLORER Bristol – Leicester – Ely – Wymondham & return	Traction to be announced. 2x Class 20.

CAMBRIDGE RAILWAY CIRCLE OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

President: Richard Hardy.
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Deputy Chairman: Don Beard
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Membership Secretary: Peter Heath, 11 Saxon Drive, Burwell, Cambs., CB5 0HR. peter.heath2@ntlworld.com
Circle Line Editor: Mike Page, 84 Blinco Grove, Cambridge, CB1 7TS. mikepage@freeuk.com
Committee Members: Chris Burton, Alan Denney, John Hunting, Graham Mallows.

CLUB MEETINGS

Usually the first Friday of the month, September-May, at Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2LD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIRCLE LINE

Editorial contributions are accepted in hand-written, typed or e-mail form (WORD text files preferred) to Mike Page (details are above). If you e-mail pictures or illustrations, low-res JPEGs should be e-mailed initially (please keep file size below 5MB – don't send images direct from iphones), then high-res may be requested. Colour or black/white photos can be accepted by post. **We welcome news, features and short stories** on the 'modern image' or historical topics as well as stories about members' visits in the UK, Europe and overseas.

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

FRONT COVER

On the road with B17s: Derek Bahram recalls some of his experiences 'on the road' with B17s, a B12 and a 'Britannia'. Here we see one of Cambridge's B17/1s, 61618 *Wynyard Park*, backing out of Cambridge shed in April 1959. *Colour-Rail*



CIRCLE LINE IS THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAMBRIDGE RAILWAY CIRCLE

The contents of Circle Line do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or of the Cambridge Railway Circle

CRC meetings and outings planned for 2015

Meetings

- September 4:** 'Trevithick', *Phil Hosken, Chairman of Trevithick Society.*
October 2: AGM first half; 61673 Spirit of Sandringham update *Brian Hall.*
November 6: Signalling on Network Rail and the North Norfolk Railway *Steven Ashling.*
December 4: To be announced.

Outings

- May 9:** Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway: Steam & Diesel Gala, 6 steam locos & 2 diesels.
July 25: Crossness Pumping Station (Thamesmead) and Epping & Ongar Railway.
October 10: Paddle Steamer *Waverley*, London to Southend.
BOOKING: Tony Dewey, Outings Secretary, 01223 860373.

Other Societies:

- May 19:** RCTS - and every third Tuesday September onwards at the school, Galfrid Road Whitehill Estate.
May 8: Cambridge University Railway Society – weekly on Fridays, term time, Fitzwilliam Coll. except CRC days.
June 19: Hornby Railway Collectors' Association – Fulbourne Village Library, The Swifts, Haggis Gap, alternate months, third Tuesday

From the Editor

Well, what can I say? She looked like a 'fireless' and I must have got it into my mind that she was a 'fireless' – I'm talking about 'Gasbag'. Apparently the men responsible for looking after her and driving her nicknamed her 'Gasbag' and Cambridge gasworks' Sentinel now carries that name in preservation. I suppose if I had seen a picture of the Sentinel with smoke coming out of the chimney I would have known.

I suppose too that most coal-fired 'Sentinels' appeared very 'boxey' in outline, like the ex-LNER/BR 'Y1' and 'Y3'. I did see Y3 68164 at the back of Shrewsbury shed (84G) in 1957 or so – which was quite unexpected to say the least. The loco had been used, I understand, at the Clee Hill quarries not far from Craven Arms. Yes, I know that not all of BR's 'Sentinels' were 'boxey'. The two Sentinels inherited by BR from the former LMS were rather 'curvy' in profile. I did see one of them, 47191, stored with a dozen or more locos at Badnall Wharf sidings a few miles north of Stafford in 1959.

A sad sight I thought was the demolition of the surviving buildings of 31A Cambridge. I see too that the contractors are having to take away by the lorry-loads the 'contaminated' topsoil from the engine yard area. I'm afraid I never saw 31A in its steam heydays. When Elsie and I came to Cambridge in 1971, a couple of the former engine yard roads were still being used to hold 31s and 37s overnight between duties. My own 'homely' shed, the one I visited often, went in December 2013. I'm talking about 3A Bescot a couple of miles from Walsall on the old Grand Junction Railway. The shed building stood for years after closure in 1966. It was used as a vehicle store. No, there was no 'Duck Eight' (ex-LNWR G1/G2/G2a 0-8-0) hiding inside!

Any road up: enjoy the summer and keep an eye out for any interesting movements!

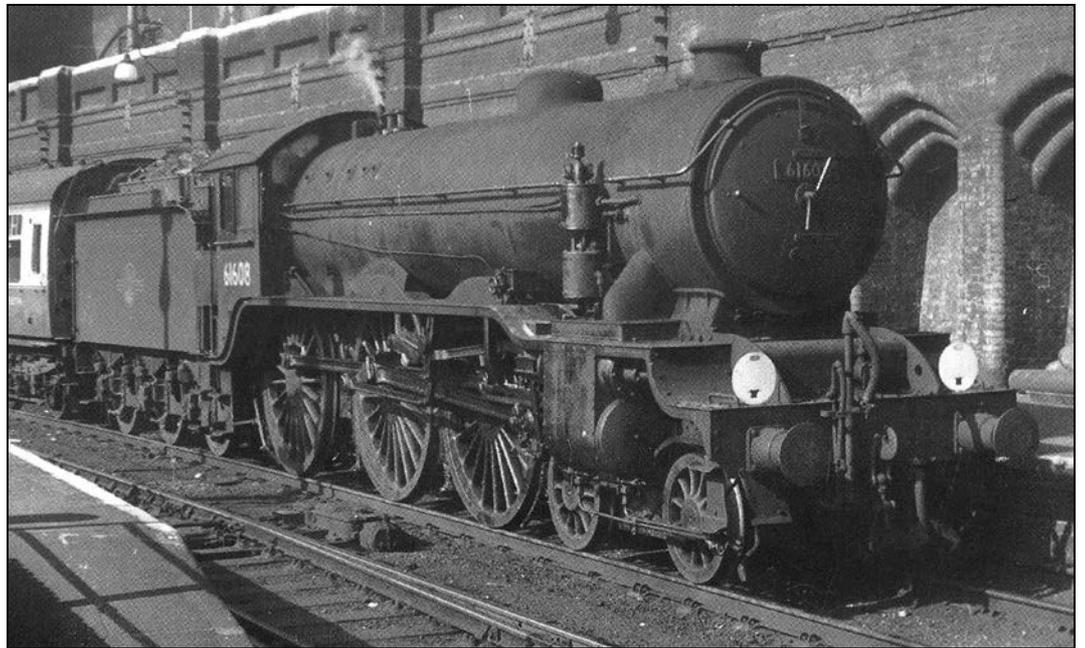
– *Mike Page*

Bescot morning: how the area of 3A Bescot looked on the morning June 6, 1962. An English Electric 'Type 4' (40) is pulling away from the station across the junctions leading on the left to Dudley and Walsall. The '40' is to follow the old Grand Junction Railway route as far as Portobello Junction where it will leave the GJR and climb up to Wolverhampton (High Level) with the 09.10 Euston – Wolverhampton. The shed buildings are on the right and the siding with mineral wagons led into the Edward Elwell factory (garden tools), long since gone. *Mike Page*



'Out on the road' with B17s, a D16, a B2, a B12 and a 'Brit'

At Liverpool Street Station on August 16 1958 Cambridge's B17 61608 *Gunton* waits with a train for Cambridge. *H.C. Casserley*, 'The Cambridge Line' by Michael R. Bonavia, Ian Allan, Shepperton, Surrey, 1995.



Recalling some more of his experiences as a steam locomotive fireman, *Derek Bahram* includes some runs with a B12 and B17 4-6-0s as well as 'Britannia' and a story involving Woodford Halse.

Before recounting some more tales I think it best to explain how a fireman's work allocation at Cambridge Motive Power Depot (31A) operated on a seniority basis. Firemen progressed as follows.

Yard Pilots – Branch Goods.

Main Line Goods.

Branch Passenger.

LMS (London Midland & Scottish Railway) Link (Bletchley and Kettering routes).

GN (Great Northern) Link (to Kings Cross).

Royal Link.

Claud Link (ex Great Eastern 'Claud Hamilton' D16 4-4-0s).

Express Link.

Relief Staff Link.

At that time you had to see the Passing Inspector for driving qualifications and I had studied hard in the classes held locally and had passed first time. Those failing had two other classes to attend and complete failures were found other jobs.

About Woodford Halse

Before I start relating interesting incidents I would like to comment on the article about Woodford Halse in *Circle Line 115*. I started my railway career on August 5, 1947 as an engine cleaner.. After the first week I was asked to assist the List Clerk, a task which lasted into February 1948. During this time in the office I was always in and out of the Running Foreman's Office. Harry Shenton was the Running Foreman and I told him I was going on a day trip to Woodford beginning with the 06.50 to Liverpool Street. I was invited to ride on the engine, a B17/6 61608 *Runton*, with the then ASLEF Branch Secretary Reg Richardson. The trip was not without its moments!

When leaving Elsenham, the Westinghouse air pump (or 'donkey pump' mounted on the right hand side of the smokebox as viewed from the cab) stopped working. Without any fear for his own safety, Reg got the coal hammer and climbed out, holding onto the safety handrails on the cab and boiler to give the 'donkey' a clout! And off she went!

When Reg got back to the cab he said that if anything had happened he would have been in 'dire trouble'. Monty (the fireman – I can't remember his surname) shrugged his shoulders and that was it! We arrived in Liverpool Street and I proceeded to Marylebone to get the train to Woodford. Harry Shenton had told me that the engine (on the Woodford tran) will go to the shed: "You will get a ride, tell them I told you."

As a green novice I thought that I daren't do that, but went to see the engine after we had arrived in Woodford. It was a green B1 and I asked the driver how far the shed was. The driver said: "Two miles." I thought that was a long way and plucked up courage and said to the driver that Harry Shenton had said that if I asked politely I might get a ride.

The B1's driver was said; "Harry Shenton? (Harry was originally a Woodford driver). Tell Harry Shenton he has no right to send young people to cadge rides to the shed. If he wants to know who said that, tell him it was his brother – now get on!" And off to the shed we went as light engine!

After the shed visit I'm afraid the rest of the day is a blank, but what about the luck that it was his brother who had relieved the train's locomen – a coincidence I'm sure!

Bit of a bump with a D16

In the LMS Link, my story about 'Black Friday' has been in *Circle Line* before (102 – Firing on the Cambridge to Kettering Line – *Ed*) when some 5h 20min were lost with J15 0-6-0 65451 and Standard 2 2-6-0 78020. I got to the Branch Passenger Link on a Sunday working on the last trip from Bury St. Edmunds to Cambridge. The driver, Herbert Spicer, asked me to move the engine down for water using just a breath of steam, but found that the 'donkey pump' had stopped so we had no air came to reverse. So we struggled to apply the hand brake as the D16 was an ex-works engine so the brake was stiff. It had just started to apply when we collided with a stationary engine. Now a 'Claud' was not built strongly at the front end and she went down a bit on the right

This 1950s view of part of Holloway Bank has changed significantly since then. The position of the flyover has been changed and the tracks along which 31A's B17/4 61652 *Darlington* is running are no more. 61652 is heading an Up Cambridge Buffet Express (or 'Beer Train'!) on July 11 1953. The engine was withdrawn in September 1959. *Brian Morrison*, 'Steam Days' magazine, June 2011 and a feature: 'Britain's Titled Trains 39: The Cambridge Buffet Car Express'.



hand side. Now Herbert was a crafty old boy and said that when we got to Cambridge shed we should stay well back of the inward road. He went to see Harry Shenton about coaling and disposing her before putting her on the shed's Road No.6.

When all was arranged Shenton waved a white cloth from the Foreman's Lobby door and we moved the damaged 'Claud' under the coaling tower. Once coaled, she did not need turning so we moved her onto the straight pit road so that the damaged front end would not be seen. She got watered following disposal. Herbert went to see where the engine should be placed. A white cloth was again waved from the lobby. So we moved her onto the shed road, changed the points, left the 'Claud' at the end of the road and made our exit.

The next day we were to walk to the station via No.7 shed road to the shed gate where we heard banging and saw a man with an oxy-acetylene torch and jacks trying to get the Claud's running plate level again. We walked on with out comment!

Regular engines

Next came working on the GN Link with volunteer drivers progressing from firemen after six turns with regular engines. I fell with Wally Alasby and a B17/4 4-6-0 61652 *Darlington*. She was a good engine but the 'Group Standard' LNER tender' shovel plate was lower than the GE type, which was level with the firehole door. It meant that each time you fired you had to raise the loaded shovel by 6-10in (say 15-25cm) to it get level with the firehole door. It was a back-breaking job! Wally was a man who would do 'half-and-half', so I drove Cambridge-Hitchin and Kings Cross-Hitchin. He would never let the fireman drive into buffer stops (at Kings Cross and Cambridge bays): a very wise precaution!

During the 'turn-around' at Kings Cross Loco (the loco yard lay on the west side of the entrance to the Gasworks Tunnel – *Ed*) the coal was pulled forward in the tender, the fire cleaned and then we had to make ready the fire for getting up Holloway Bank and the longer pull up to Potters bar. To do this, you had to avoid making smoke, as London Council would photograph any offenders and prosecute! We knew how to avoid making any smoke, but as soon as you got the 'Right Away!' from the guard the fireman would finish

coaling the fire all over the firebox so the engine made smoke inside Gas Works Tunnel!

Our return trip was the 12.05 'Buffet Express' and providing we got away from the 'Cross' without slipping we could pass Wood Green ('Ali Pally' – Alexandra Palace) in about eight minutes with the boiler pressure at 225lb/in2 and the injector having stayed on.

On any Up journey, when entering Kings Cross Wally would deliberately open the regulator to make a noisy entrance. It was Wally's way of drawing attention! Normally, you could freewheel into the station.

In the event of two trains leaving for Gasworks Tunnel at the same time it was a race to get in to the tunnel first to avoid the other loco's exhaust, but that was not always possible.

Regarding the Royal Link, four selected drivers took firemen on four turns: Liverpool Street; Kings Cross; St. Ives and March and Wisbech via Ely and Peterborough with all the 'odds and sods' attached on the road. All the stations were still open at the time and the regular 'Royal' engines were B2 4-6-0 61671 *Royal Sovereign* and D16/3 4-4-0 62530. 61671 was often used on the 'Buffet' – 15.15 to Kings Cross and 17.56 return. But for some reason on a Monday we found we had B17/6 61646 *Gilwell Park*. She was a good one and we left the 'Cross' at 17.56 with 12 coaches. Our first stop was Welwyn North before which the boiler pressure gauge had shown a red mark (225lb/in2 maximum working pressure) all the way!

On the Tuesday we had another B17 as 'they' had pinched 61646 for the Liverpool Street and Bury St. Edmunds turn – only a B17 with a small tender could be turned at Bury. We got 61646 back on the Wednesday but she wasn't the same engine as on Monday! On Thursday she was worse! When we came on shed that evening, my driver said he would book 61646 to be examined .

When I dropped her fire I noticed that the front tube plate was completely covered – not a hole to be seen! Now I should have realised what the trouble was, but it was now after the



At Wisbech Station some time in the 1950s, Cambridge's B12 61516 waits with a local train. *R.K. Blencowe collection, 'The Last Days of Steam in Cambridgeshire' by Eric Sawford Allan Sutton Publishing, Stroud, Glos., 1991.*

event. I told the driver not to book the work. Often when on 61652, Wally Alasby would get two packets of sand pebbles from the sand furnace and on leaving would scatter the pebbles over the brick arch so they would clean the tube plate, which is what we should have done with 61646.

B12s replaced the D16 'Clauds'

Derek eventually moved into the Claud Link, but as he says: by the time I got into the Link all the Clauds had been withdrawn (1959). Instead we had the Class B12/3 4-6-0s following the Shenfield-Southend electrification in ? It was really a waste of power having a B12 pulling just three coaches. Our regular engine was 61516: she was a good loco and had been involved in many tests fitted with poppet valves (such as the Lentz system).

My driver was 'GM' who wasn't that well liked. He wasn't a technical man as far as locomotive management was concerned and this period of my firing career was not a happy one. When I first went out with him he would tell me how to do my job.

One day on the 13.55 to Peterborough via St. Ives he left it too late to stop and overran Histon station by one-and-a-half coaches finishing up with the engine's cab next to the signal box. We were given the 'Right Away!', but he couldn't get the engine to move. After several swearings he said that the brakes were 'hanging on'. I released the tender air release valve. It wasn't 'hanging on' as there was a massive gush of air. He should have realised it was fully 'on', but it had never dawned on him.

The signalman came to his window and said we had been given the 'right away', so I said the driver was having difficulty with the engine. 'GM' then said to me with tears in his eyes: "You know what's wrong don't you!" So having stood there for several moments I said "Well, I will have to break my vow not to tell you your job!" But instead, I asked him what was the last thing he did when he realised that he wasn't going to stop correctly.

He answered: "I put the brake full on. That's exactly where it is now. With the 'Dreadnaught' vacuum ejector the handle has three positions: Quick Release; Running Position and Full

On. Up went the large valve and off we went. He never put the handle into Running Position, except once, all the way to Peterborough.

There was a turn to Wisbech and it involved shunting in the goods yard with 61516 where we got derailed with the bogie off the road. Permanent Way (PW) staff got the rerailing gadgets for wagons placed them in position on the rail and luckily we got back on the road. I insisted that the driver had the loco examined at March shed as we were to work the Birmingham express but they found no trouble. 61516 had then run 18,156 miles since she was last at Stratford Works but that derailment had caused a crack in her main air reservoir. So 61516 was withdrawn from service (July, 1958 – *Ed*) and scrapped – a sad end for a lovely machine.

It was at this point that we lost the passenger work and had to set back into the Main Line Goods link then go through the links again. I got into the Express Link but it was no longer all steam. But I had several turns with 'Britannias'. When working Liverpool Street – Norwich both ways about 80% of our work went into these workings (Many London-Norwich workings still went via Cambridge – *Ed*).

My regular mate HC was an ill man and I covered for him a long time before he had to come off the footplate. I was passed for driving at the time. A most memorable occasion was when 'Cockney Bill' wanted fitters to attend to 70007 *Coeur-de-Lion* and so he took our scheduled Brush (Type 31) diesel. The fitters' work was completed in time for us to take 70007 on the 08.00 all stations to Bishops Stortford then on to Liverpool Street.

After we had left Cambridge, 'HC' never notched up. So I asked: "Are you alright, Henry?". He said "No, I'm not feeling well." I emptied a bucket and found a short plank of wood in the fire irons trough in the tender. Putting the plank on the upturned bucket, I sat him on it with his back to the boiler. I took over to Shelford. If I had asked for another driver the whole service would have stopped so I carried on working both sides. If anything had gone wrong I would have been in trouble.

Doing the driver's job as well as the fireman's

How I did both jobs was to put a bit around the fire and shut off the injector. I got the 'Right Away!' opened the regulator, notched up and put the injector on again. Then I shut off with a good roll into Whittlesford. I carried out the same procedure to Bishops Stortford: the only place to get another driver.

I thought we were doing OK, I carried on to Liverpool Street, uncoupled from the train and then onto another platform to pick up empty coaching stock to take to the sidings. But crafty 'Cockney' had to wait to keep the loco diagram intact, so they never gained that much. We returned with the parcels from Stratford Old Yard with the Brush diesel. It was an experience that I recall with some satisfaction and was relieved all went well.

Eventually, work went to the Coldhams Lane Diesel Depot and the practice of crews getting regular engines ceased, The stationary boiler at the steam shed was condemned and cold water boiler wash-outs became the norm for steam engines and so boilers furred up and everything went down hill fast. It was all a sad end to the Cambridge steam depot.

Downham Market Station – A Railway Venture of Discovery

Downham Market Station on a bright winter's morning sees a four-coach Class 365 unit departing for King's Lynn.
Chris Burton



CRC Members Graham Lear and Geoffrey Smallwood ventured out to Downham Market Station on February 27 2015, and met up with Chris Burton to sample its delights as reported here by *Graham Lear*

A bright but fresh morning around 10.15 found your intrepid voyagers Messrs. Lear and Smallwood fuming on a City 8 bus from Histon running late (again), for who knows what reason? Needless to say, we finally arrived at Cambridge station just in time to miss the 10.35 Downham Market train finally departing on the 11.35 (the 10.44 ex Kings Cross, which divides at Cambridge) and with the added disappointment of no sign of our technical advisor, Mr (Chris) Burton. Yes, I do appreciate that Chris has been readily 'accessible' on our TV screens of late, but we were on our way to The Railway Arms on Downham Market Station, (to say nothing of the delights of Downham Market town) – it's just not the same without him!

A comforting cappuccino later and Geoffrey and I were on the next train at 11.35. Somewhere en route, just north of Ely at the Potter's sidings, I gather, we passed a stationary aggregate train with a Class 66 attached, due to head south to the cement works at Harlow Mill station. I can also reveal that there was not a single yellow coloured 0-6-0 diesel shunter to be observed when we passed Potter's.

We arrived at Downham Market some 32 minutes later at 12.07 – and guess who was hailing us from the opposite platform? Well, it WAS a Friday and they WERE open! Whilst CB was on his train earlier, he had noted just south of Littleport at 10.55 or thereabouts (running an hour late), the passing 6E87 freight heading to Monk Bretton from the Middleton Towers sand works. These are at the end of the remaining stub of the former Great Eastern line, which ran from King's Lynn to Swaffham, opened in 1848.

First things first!

CB commented that it is a fine, well-cleaned and painted station, even if some brickwork is in dire need of repointing. I would agree that, externally, the station at Downham Market gave an initial distinct impression of being well run, cared for, and where some trouble had been to sympathetically preserve remaining original buildings. This even included tall panels of reproduction old maps either side of the entrance to the Gents!

Sooner rather than later was the consensus after these thirst-making observations and this was confirmed prudent when we

entered The Railway Arms - the small but atmospheric café/bar and adjoining reading/waiting room on Platform One.



Entrance to the Gents on Platform One with reproduction old map.



The Up platform buildings at Downham Market Station, which incorporate a very comfortable place of respite: the 'Railway Arms'. *Geoffrey Smallwood*

These both also echo a bygone age, usually, in my experience, to be encountered only on heritage (preserved) steam railways. By definition, the range of food and drink was limited, a single draught ale and more than one cider plus bottled Guinness and a very satisfying 6.5% West Indian Porter.

The hot bacon/sausage sandwiches were really fresh – the bacon had been delivered by the landlord's wife 5 minutes after we arrived and we were satisfactorily catered for by the friendly staff.

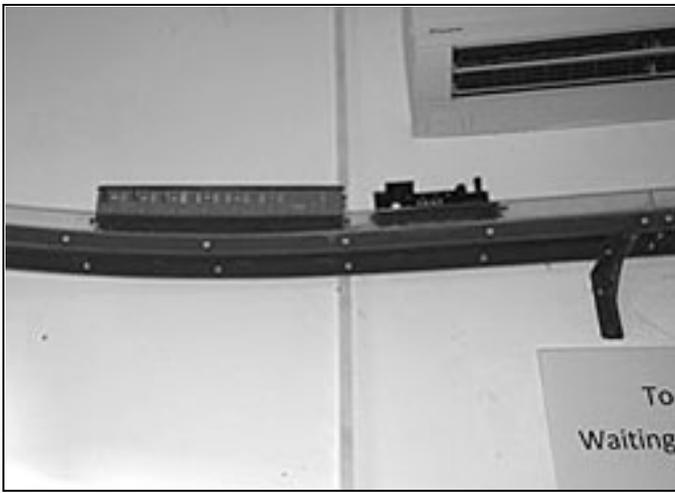
At around 13.45 we all missed, through these other cultural activities, 6E88 Middleton Towers to Goole Glassworks. Well, we did see it pass the window but no more than that. Our advice is to get there early and check out the 'Library' (yes, you can buy the books) and the elevated electric model train. The landlord kindly arranged for this to run for us.

There are lots of railway memorabilia on display, including a reproduction Flying Scotsman nameplate. Geoffrey was particularly pleased to see this, as it is his favourite locomotive.



Here is the interior of the café/bar with lots of memorabilia, including a *Flying Scotsman* nameplate and a LNER model train near the ceiling.

G.S.



An LNER train running at ceiling level (J69 0-6-0T perhaps – Ed)



The waiting room and library at Downham Market.

G.S.

We then embarked on an exploratory tour of the town about half a mile away, which in view of its geographical location is considered to lie on the northern edge of the Fens. To describe its feel as 'quirky' would not, I consider, be either totally impolite or inaccurate as I lost count of the number of different sizes and architectural styles of the buildings (some more attractive than others, it must be admitted). In short, the

type of town where one continually seems to find oneself surprised by what lies around the next corner, but seldom disappointed as the result of having been so.

Inevitably, we found ourselves obliged (in a professional capacity, you understand) to evaluate the choice and quality of the draught ales on offer in the Crown Hotel and then the Castle Hotel – sadly, not our finest hour on both counts.

A pleasant stroll back to the station afforded us the opportunity of observing our return train having arrived at the down platform at 16.50. It then went forward and reversed to the up platform via the crossover at the north end of the station.

Chris explained that formerly this was a special schools working from Cambridge to Downham Market, which would have returned as Empty Coaching Stock, but had now become a regular service train.

Having left on time at 17.10, we arrived back in Cambridge at 17.41, after passing a sunlit Ely Cathedral on the way. It had been a most pleasant day on a local railway route; we are now planning other railway research, alias quality assurance, expeditions, so watch this space for our reports.....

A bone-chilling wait at Ely North Avoiding Line.....

Chris Burton writes: I was fascinated by Don's 'farewell' article (*Circle Line 116*) and his pictures of 19 December 1981 when all of us present at Ely North Avoiding Line had been waiting a bone-chilling minimum one and three quarter hours for Deltic 55009 *Alycidon* (not '15 *Tulyar*) on the Kings Cross to Spalding, March, Norwich, Ipswich, Cambridge and KX Charter. Because of the snow and ice, there had been lengthy delay at Sleaford and again at Spalding, where a guard was awaited. We hardy souls at Ely caught it around 90 minutes late at 12.45. For the full gory report check out Six Bells Junction website where John Vaughn lambasts BR 'organisation.

I enclose the pic with the Cl.31 31112, heading from Birmingham to Norwich because two other people feature, not because the loco falls foul of that damn bush which also mucked up Don's retreating Middleton Towers-Doncaster sand train behind 31271. I presume it is a lady and not Don to the right of me. Sadly I did not note the number of 31271 and it was only through a Wisbech friend of mine's deep archive, that we worked out which one it was. A mere three months before you published the information anyway!



From the Rhein to the Elbe in 1962

The north end of Hamburg Hbf as it looked on August 20, 1962. I was walking away from the station when an 01 Pacific with large smoke deflectors and odd coaches approached. The engine was from the DDR (East Germany) and the train had probably come from Berlin as only East German 01s retained the large smoke deflectors.



It seemed like a good idea: to spend a weekend in Hamburg visiting a pen pal and see more of West German steam at the same time. The fates were against me, recalls *Mike Page*, as the 1960s steam locomotive scene on the DB was changing quite quickly.

Back in the early 1960s, there were a number of ‘pen pal’ clubs, which claimed to find for you the ‘right’ kind of pen pal, you know: similar interests, that kind of thing. Well, I wrote off to one advertised in the *Railway Magazine* requesting someone of similar age interested in railways. I got Karin in Hamburg, who was interested in sport, dancing, pop music – but not railways! Well, we corresponded quite interestingly (particularly when she sent me her picture!).

We eventually met up in Hamburg during a weekend in August 1962 halfway through a two-week trip to Unkel am Rhein organised by Wolverhampton Technical College (today it is a university). Unkel lies about 20 miles or so south of Bonn on the east bank of the River Rhein.

She agreed to find me a ‘Pension’ (bed & Breakfast) and so I was to set out from Unkel on Friday August 17. Now there was very little information about German railways in UK railway magazines at the time. Except that P. Ransome-Wallis had had published a three-part article on the Deutsche Bundesbahn (DB – German Federal Railways) in the September, October and November 1960 issues of the *Trains Illustrated*. From these reports I understood that I was likely



Passengers on Unkel-am-Rhein station wait for the Koblenz local on August 15, 1962 as DB E40 15kVA a.c. B-B E40.352 hums through with a lengthy freight on this busy route on the Rhein’s east bank.

to get diesel hydraulic haulage (V200 B-Bs, later Class 220 and 221) on the most direct route from Cologne via Bremen to Hamburg. On the other hand, Ransome-Wallis waxed lyrical about his experiences with the heavy, three-cylinder oil-fired Pacifics (01.10 built 1939/40 as coal burners and rebuilt in the late 1950s, later redesignated 012) and the two Class 10 oil-fired Pacifics (two only, built by Krupp, Essen in 1955). These Pacifics were working the main line between Würzburg, Fulda, Bebra, Hannover and Hamburg. I decided to reach that line travelling via Frankfurt am Main, Fulda and Bebra.

Unkel lay on the then only recently electrified Cologne – Frankfurt east bank route alongside the Rhein. This route was primarily for freight and during a visit to Königswinter in 1961, I saw a constant procession of Class 50 2-10-0s on freight (one every five to ten minutes!) while elderly Prussian P8 (DB Class 38) 4-6-0s handled locals and semi-fasts and the 1920s/30s built heavy two-cylinder Pacifics (Class 01) managed the few expresses.

August 1962 in Unkel was very different with green DB Class E40 and E41 15kVA electric B-Bs handling locals and



This ex-Prussian, three-cylinder 2-8-2, now DB Type 39, had only a few years left. 39.048 has arrived at Frankfurt Hbf with a local from an unelectrified secondary route on August 17, 1962.



These hefty ex-Prussian 4-6-4Ts, now DB Type 78, were still around in some quantity. 78.353 was shunting an engineers' train in Offenbach's yards seen from the train on the way to Bebra, 17/8/1962.

freights and the blue E10 B-Bs the few expresses. However, steam did linger on as a couple of 50s were seen as well as a Prussian T16 (DB Class 94) 0-10-0T on a pick-up freight.

So, on Friday August 17 I caught the 06.00h local from Unkel to Koblenz where Class 50s, 44s (heavy three-cylinder 2-10-0), 01s and 38s were operating some branches and the main line along the River Mosel to Trier. Koblenz lies on the west bank of the Rhein where most of the expresses between Cologne and Frankfurt (via Mainz) ran. The route had been electrified since 1958.

An E10 hauled my express to Frankfurt Hbf (Hbf is Hauptbahnhof or main station) where some steam could still be seen. A Class 50 was acting as station pilot while a P8 and a Prussian P10 three-cylinder 2-8-2 (DB Class 39) arrived on local trains. The 39s take the middle cylinder valve gear drive from a third externally mounted eccentric crank on the third axle while the cylinders drive on the second axle.

Not knowing anything about 'Inter-Zonal' trains I was surprised to find my train to Bebra consisting of DR



I don't think there were many ex-Prussian G8.1 2-8-0s around in 1962! 56.482 creeps into Bebra with an engineers' train, 17/8/1962.



Unrebuilt DB Type 41 2-8-2 41.204 has a rest by a rather empty roundhouse opposite Bebra station on August 17, 1962. The engine had pulled my train from Fulda and later took over an express freight.

(Deutsches Reichsbahn or German State Railways of East Germany) coaches. Now while all the red restaurant cars I had seen on the DB were run by 'DSG' (Deutsche Schlafwagen Gesellschaft or German Sleeping car Company) the red one on my train had 'Mitropa' on it (the pre-war operator of German restaurant and sleeping cars). A pre-war Class E44 B-B coupled on to this train, the D199 to Leipzig.

We passed through Hanau where I saw an old Prussian T11 (DB Class 74) in steam on shed as well as a Prussian T18 4-6-4T (DB Class 78) and a Class 86 2-8-2T on engineers' trains. Eventually we joined the main Würzburg-Hamburg route and I was a bit dismayed to see a V200 pass us on a southbound express. Well maybe they have one or two on this route, I thought.

In Fulda, the E44 came off to be replaced by an unrebuilt Class 41 2-8-2, the 41.204. So off we set towards Bebra passing a number of oil-fired 44s (later 043) roaring along with long heavy freights. We approached Bebra where two half roundhouses stood mostly empty near the station. What I failed to realise until too late was that a DR Pacific had coupled on the back and the whole train was to reverse, with the 41 acting as banker to start the train off towards Leipzig!

Then came the announcement that my train, the D483 to Hamburg, was running 40 minutes late! After a quick snack in the 'Bahn-Restaurant' I went across to the other platform to look at the roundhouses, which revealed only one 41 - 41.204 - moving around. She eventually replaced 41.044, which had arrived with a northbound 'fast freight'.

After watching 41.204's departure I sensed something creeping towards the other platform. It turned out to be one of the then fast disappearing Prussian G8.1 2-8-0s (DB Class 56.2, a 1930s rebuild from the G8.1 (DB Class 55 0-8-0), the 56.482 was towing a breakdown train complete with steam crane. Now that was a nice surprise!

The nasty surprise was the arrival of a V200 with my train to Hamburg. So where are all the 01.10s and 10s I wondered? I joined the train and as we roared uphill out of Bebra I looked back and saw we had a 44 2-10-0 as banker. The line ran quite close to the East German border with its watchtowers and fences. Electrification works were in full swing on this stretch towards Hannover. I eventually saw one 01.10 near Hannover and a rebuilt 01 and 'normal' 01, as well as more P8s, in



DB Type 01 Pacific 01.161 sits with a chartered holiday express at Hannover Hbf on August 17 watched by an ex-Prussian P8 4-6-0, now DB Type 38.10, 38.1981. The station was rebuilt after electrification.

Hanover Hbf. Another V200 arrived on a train for Würzburg and points south.

I think our driver was overstressing the V200 with its thirteen mostly UIC style 85ft long coaches to hold 75mph or so on the flat route across the North German Plain to Hamburg, where we arrived 50 minutes late. Hamburg Hbf was populated with Class 78 4-6-4Ts and P8 4-6-0s on locals and semi-fasts, but Karin stood waiting patiently there too. So, I had to leave off trains for a while!

I did not get any chance to 'chase steam' over that weekend, but I decided to arrive at the Hbf an hour early on Monday morning before catching the 09.00h to Hannover where I intended to spend an hour or so there before carrying on south. Before leaving Hamburg I managed to photo some 03s (light two-cylinder Pacific), a rebuilt 01 and a 1950s-built DB Class 82 0-10-0T. Before that, while walking towards the Hbf I saw a large smoke-deflectored 01 arriving with DR stock – presumably from Berlin.

My train was again a V200! Well, we passed some Prussian 0-10-0Ts shunting in the yards serving the docklands and an incoming P8 with a semi-fast. Our V200 did not have to work so hard with only eight UIC coaches to pull. I detrained in Hannover Hbf to see more P8s and an oil-fired 01.10 with an express to Kassel. While photographing the 01.10 I missed a



This 0-10-0T is considerably newer than the first wagon in her transfer freight passing through Hamburg Hbf. on August 20. The DB built over 30 of these heavy shunting engines during the early 1950s.



During the 1950s, the DB rebuilt a number of pre-war coal-burning 01 Pacifics with roller bearings on all axles, pin bearings in connecting rod Journals and all-welded boilers like 01.124 at Hamburg Hbf.

Prussian T14 2-8-2T (DB Class 93) passing by and was not quick enough to photograph it. Then Kassel's 10.001 passed through light engine. My last shot was of a post-war DB Class 23 2-6-2 arriving with a string of 'Reko' (rebuilt) six-wheeler coaches. And, yes of course, my train to Bebra arrived with a V200!

The V200 had 12-on and proceeded to loose 45min on the way to Bebra. It was at Bebra I made a very big mistake – through timetable ignorance I might add! I knew I could have changed trains into a Leipzig-Frankfurt, which could have been steam to Fulda. But I was worried about my planned connection at Fulda on to Frankfurt with connections to Koblenz to get the last train to Unkel, so I stayed with the V200.

Before we departed, the 'inter-zone' arrived with an East German, large smoke-deflectored 01, 01.123. We pulled out and to my chagrin, what was coupling onto the back of the 'inter-zone' train was 10.002! Yes, a four lettered, old Anglo-Saxon swearword was voiced!

I detrained at Fulda to discover, that after all, my connection could still be made. Only again, damn it, the connection was the 'inter-zone' train! By the time 10.002 rolled in, it was getting too dark to take a picture on Ilford FP4. The Pacific uncoupled to be replaced by an E44. I made all the



On the outskirts of Hamburg near the docks on the River Elbe, 38.2216 climbs up an incline which takes the line over the throat of large marshalling yards serving the docks on August 20, 1962.



On the left at Hannover Hbf on August 20, 1962 is one of the two DB Type 10 three-cylinder 4-6-2s, 10.001, built in the 1950s by Fried. Krupp of Essen. This engine survives today though not operational. **On the right** is a heavy three-cylinder Pacific Type 01.10 rebuilt in the late 1950s with roller bearings, pin bearings on connecting rod journals and a new all-welded, oil-fired boiler. The 01.1071 was renumbered 012.071 and was operational into the early 1970s.

connections to arrive back in Unkel at about 01.00h.

Why all the V200s? Well, the DB had decided to transfer the V200s away, wait for it, from the Cologne-Hamburg workings to the Würzburg-Hamburg route and the 01.10s, yes you guess right, to the Cologne-Hamburg route! The two Class 10s were kept at Kassel, along with a few oil-burning 01.10s, to work cyclic diagrams out of Kassel (including, damn it again, Hannover-Kassel-Frankfurt, a route I could have also used!).

The DB's idea was that during the electrification of the Würzburg-Hannover route the V200s ought to be able to accelerate the trains away from engineering slacks faster than the Pacifics and so keep time. Well, in light of my own experience, the V200s were not achieving what was wanted!

Well, with the lack of European information in the UK monthlies of the 1960s one had to learn the hard way! I did eventually experience some cracking runs with the oil-burning

01.10s between Osnabrück and Bremen in the late 1960s and on the Rheine-Emden-Norddeich line in the early 1970s. At the very least, I did get to see a Prussian 2-8-0!

Our coach from Wolverhampton allowed little time for photography at Calais, though I did manage to photograph the 050TE 0-10-0T's shunting at the Maritime station as well as a 231C Pacific and 141R 2-8-2s. Near Dunkirk we were stopped while an 050TD 0-10-0T crossed with a local freight. A quick stop near Brussels Midi saw an SNCB electric dragging an SNCF 231E Pacific and train through to the Nord station.

And finally, no, I did not have a 'romance' with Karin. She worked for a year as an au pair in Brent, so I went down to London Euston from Wolverhampton High Level on two occasions in 1963 with 70016 *Ariel* and then 70029 *Shooting Star* to visit her. But no, she was not for me!
(All photographs by Mike Page)

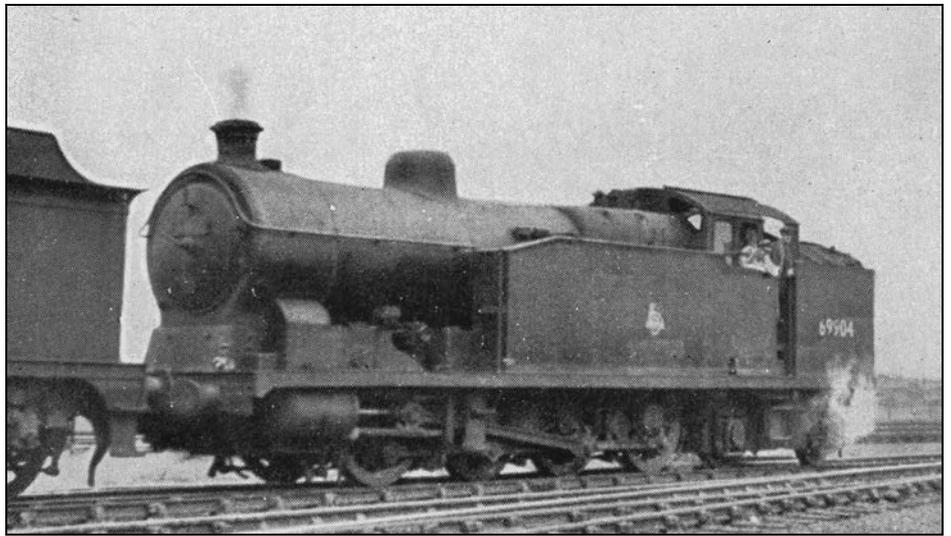
Chasing up the D49 on the Nene Valley Railway

Richard Tremaine was able to capture the ex-LNER D49/1 *Morayshire* in action on the Nene Valley Railway on February 21, 2015, before she moved on to the North Norfolk Railway for the recent Gala there. These locomotives spent most of their time on secondary passenger trains in Northeast England and Scotland – Ed.



About 9Fs, an S1, A Stanier 0-4-4T and others...

Did this Robinson ex-Great Central S1 0-8-4T pass through Cambridge? It arrived in Stratford for scrapping. 69904 spent many years based in Mexborough (36B) before moving on to Immingham (40B) sometime after 1952. Did anyone see it around Cambridge? *Locomotives of British Railways, H.C. Casserley and L.L. Ashe, Spring Books, London, 1961.*



In a letter to the editor, Jeff Edwards said that he had stumbled on the *Circle Line* writings from 2011 in the Cambridge Railway Circle magazine and really enjoyed them and what memories they stirred.

When I was a child my Grandmother had a lodger, Reg Walker, who was a mechanical engineer of some sort at Stratford Works. Several times when I was a child in the 1950's he smuggled me in for unauthorised visits at quiet times. My Dad was not a railwayman but he was a keen angler so we often spent afternoons and summer evenings by the River Lea and the Stort along the GE line to Cambridge at places like Roydon, Broxbourne and Ponders End. He fished, while I watched the trains!

You mention 92014 arriving at March in 1954 or '55 (*Circle Line 104*) and the first time it was on shed at Stratford. There was (still is) a great train viewing spot by the Lea at Broxbourne and I can remember seeing this engine heading towards London in mid June (start of the coarse fishing season, June 16) on a Saturday afternoon freight. I was only six or seven, so initially unable to take on the significance of this, except I recall my friend Robert, who was a couple of years older and subscriber to *Trains Illustrated*, becoming ecstatic at the appearance of this brand shiny new 9F, the first he'd ever copped. The fact it was '92014' has stayed with me ever since. Amazing what you remember.

Likewise, interesting about the L3 going down to Stratford to be a steam heating boiler. Didn't see that, but how about this sighting, which I never saw in the *TI*'s 'Motive Power Miscellany'?

We lived in South Woodford so about this time Robert and I started going spotting to Stratford, a few stops down the Central Line. One Saturday afternoon, I think it would have been summer 1957; we ducked downstairs to Stratford Low Level, which had a busy flow of freight traffic to the Royal Docks then. At the north end of the platforms was a short tunnel, which carried the double track underneath the main Liverpool Street- East Anglia lines and several carriage sidings etc.

Beyond this tunnel was a 'Y' junction, the left fork heading to the North London Line, Palace Gates and so on and the right fork went through the centre of the whole Stratford Works complex and then on to Temple Mills and the Lea Valley route. A light loco appeared in the tunnel from the right hand arm and pulled half way into the Low Level Woolwich bound platform before reversing and crossing over to the Temple Mills bound track whereupon it disappeared back round the curve.

Astonishingly this was one of the S1 0-6-4 tanks engines that had spent their whole lives at Wath and later Doncaster I believe. Again it was my friend Robert, who pointed out what an extraordinary event this was. Unfortunately I can't be sure which one it was, but 69904 is in my mind, though I could be wrong.

Reg Walker later told me this engine had come down for scrapping,

and indeed, the scrap road at Stratford then was adjacent to the direction the engine took and some of it was visible from the main platforms at Stratford High Level. Did this engine come down the Cambridge Line? Certainly other interesting engines did come down to be broken up from the Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire zones, including a D11, which was reported in the *TI*.

The piece on Cambridge in the fifties resonated so well and underscored why 'loco spotting' then was so compelling. There were certain locations where strange and 'foreign' locos turned up, and not everything reached the 'Motive Power Miscellany' pages. For example: circa 1958 seeing LMS 0-4-4t 41901 stationary at the rear of Ilford carriage sidings. It was actually on a turn out that lead to a little used and now completely vanished connection through to the Central Line at Newbury Park. What was it doing there? Some Midland Johnson 0-4-4s were used on the Romford- Upminster shuttle I know, but by the time I saw 41901 the service, I am sure, was operated by diesel railcars.

My other favourite 'foreign' cops at Stratford were seeing Bullied light pacific 34077 603 *Squadron* on a Harwich bound troop train (again on a Saturday).

Also, around this time, the *TI* reported the unusual appearance of a Lancaster based 'Crab' at Willesden. I can exclusively reveal its travels got more exotic than that. Before the *TI* reported this incident I had 'copped' this loco passing through Stratford Low Level on its way to the Royal Docks with a freight.

One last recollection for you (there are many more). About 1957, again in mid late June, my Dad taking me fishing after he'd finished work to Ponders End. I vividly remember wandering off to the 'down' side of the level crossing that existed there then, where I stood at close rail level to see a Doncaster based 'O4' storming towards March on a train of coal empties.

Two things stick in my mind clearly even nearly sixty years later; the '36A' shed plate and the seemingly huge elliptical front buffers. I did cop the number and if I ferret in the loft for my treasured 'Combined Volume' I would be able to identify this exact loco as it was only 'O4' I ever saw.

Was this an unusual sighting? 'WD's were a penny a dozen and 'O1's from March shed quite common on this route, but a Doncaster engine working south of March to Temple Mills I don't think happened a lot.

Kind Regards,

Jeff Edwards

No, Mr. Editor! I, 'Gasbag', am certainly *not* 'fireless'!

The Cambridge Gas Works' Sentinel' steam loco, affectionately known by its drivers, as 'Gasbag' was certainly not fireless. The vertical boiler was in the cab and coal was carried by means of buckets (and from whom I got the idea that 'Gasbag' was 'fireless' has faded into the 'mists of time', and that's my excuse! – Ed)



No, the Cambridge gasworks locomotive was not a 'fireless' but a coal fired 'Sentinel' and known as the 'Gasbag' she worked until 1969 as Alan Denney explains below.

The photograph and article about the sentinel locomotive at Cambridge Gas Works has prompted me to write. The Sentinel Works Number 8024 was supplied new to the former Cambridge University and Town Gas Light Company in 1929.

She is not a fireless loco as stated in the report. She has a vertical boiler in the cab, the chimney exits through the cab roof. What could be taken for a boiler is in fact the water supply tank, what appears to be a smokebox is the casing over the vertical two cylinder double acting engine producing 80HP. Power is transferred to the driving wheels by chains. The boiler pressure is 275lb/in² fitted with a superheater. The makers claimed its capability was pulling a load of 120 tons on the level from a standing start. Two of her drivers were A. J. Day and J. E. Farrington and she was affectionally referred to as 'Gasbag'.

'Gasbag' was supplied new by Sentinels in 1929, at the same time as an extension to the coal siding at Coldhams Lane was built. Also a coal tippler plant was added and the building had a date stone bearing the mark 1929. The coal waggons were inverted by the tippler (right) the coal falling into a bunker, a conveyor then lifted it up into an overhead hopper for

discharge into lorries for transfer across Newmarket road to the Gas Works site. The Gas Works owned three Sentinel Steam Waggons, two of them have survived into preservation, DG4 Reg No. VE181 built in 1928 (since re registered BS9215) and Super Sentinel S6 Reg No. BRF200 built 1932. The Super Sentinel (below left) was fitted with high-sided boards for carrying coke; as the lorries were also used for bulk coke deliveries. It now carries the livery of the Tarmac company, I had the pleasure of travelling in this waggon about 10 years ago while in the Isle of Man when it was visiting a steam rally; it is easily capable of 40MPH (64km/h).



The first production of coal gas in Cambridge is attributed to John Grafton who set up a small plant in Gas Lane in the early 1820's. Demand soon outstripped capacity and a new site between Newmarket Road and the River Cam was established in 1828. This was to become the Cambridge University and Town Gas Light Company. Originally the coal was brought up to Cambridge by river barge, but with the coming of the railway to Cambridge in 1845 it was found to be cheaper and more convenient to transport it by rail. It took until 1866 before a coal siding at Coldhams Lane was established. The Gas Company was never allowed to build a railway line across Newmarket Road into the Gas Works site. This necessitated the coal being transferred by horse and cart and then by lorry. This setup remained the case until the closure of the Gas Works in 1969.



Top: The 17.10 to Cambridge negotiating the trailing crossover at the King's Lynn end of Downham Market. *Geoffrey Smallwood.*

Above left: at Holt the D49/1 62712 *Morayshire* has backed up with freight onto a headshunt to let B12/3 LNER No. 8572 come in to the station with a passenger train from Sherringham during the North Norfolk Railway's recent Gala. *Richard Tremaine.*

Above right: ex-Great Western Railway 'Manor' (though built in BR days) 7828 *Odney Manor* departs from Arley with a train for Bridgenorth on the Severn Valley Railway last year. *John Hunting.*

Right: industrial 0-6-0T *Wissington* arrives with vintage stock at the busy Weybourne Station when running a shuttle service between it and Holt during the North Norfolk's recent Gala on March 7, 2015. *Richard Tremaine.*

