

Circle Line

115

October

2014



Firing a J15

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SPECIAL TRAINS NEAR US: October 2014 – January 2015

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|---------------------|---|---|
| October 12: | THE EASTERLING Kings Cross – Cambridge (p/u) – Lowestoft & ret. | 61264 or 70000 <i>Britannia</i> .. |
| October 16: | THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS Newbury – Ely - Willesden | 70000 <i>Britannia</i> .. |
| October 25: | THE JUBILEE REQUIEM Kings Cross – Newcastle. | 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i> (down only). |
| November 9 | THE ROBIN HOOD London St. Pancras - Corby, Newark – Peterborough – Kings Cross. | 46115 <i>Scots Guardsman</i> . |
| November 27: | THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS Kings Cross – York & ret.. | 4464 (60019) <i>Bittern</i> . |
| December 6: | THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS Southend – Cambridge (s/d) – Norwich & ret.. | 44871 + 45407. |
| | THE LINDUM FAYRE Kings Cross – Spalding - Lincoln & return | 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i> .. |
| | CHRISTMAS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY N Walsham – Bury – Cambridge - Newcastle & ret. | 2 x 47. |
| December 9: | Horsham – Willesden – Cambridge (s/d) – Ely - Willesden | 2 x Black Five 4-6-0.. |
| December 11: | THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS Peterborough – Ely – Cambridge – Oxford & ret. | 2 x Black Five 4-6-0. |
| | THE YORK YULETIDE EXPRESS Norwich – Ely - York & ret. | 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i> . |
| December 13: | THE CHRISTMAS WHITE ROSE Kings Cross – York & ret. | 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i> . |
| December 18: | THE CHRISTMAS WHITE ROSE Cambridge – Ely - York & ret. | 60009, 34067 or 35028. |
| December 20: | THE YORK YULETIDE EXPRESS London Victoria – Bedford – York & ret. | 60009 <i>Union of South Africa</i> . |
| December 30: | THE BITTERN FAREWELL TOUR Kings Cross – Lincoln – Kings Cross | 4464 (60019) <i>Bittern</i> (last run). |

CAMBRIDGE RAILWAY CIRCLE OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

President: Richard Hardy.

Chairman: David Pepperell, 15 Vine Close, Cambridge, CB22 5BZ. Dr.Pepperell@btinternet.com

Deputy Chairman: Brent Hudson, Brent House, 20 Boxworth End, Swavesey, CB4 5RA. Brent.hudson1@googlemail.com

Meetings Secretary: Richard Tremaine, 27 Tower Close, Bassingbourn, SG8 5JX. Richard44brice66tremaine@hotmail.co.uk

Administration Secretary: Graham Lear.

Outings Secretary: Tony Dewey. tonydewey@btinternet.com

Treasurer: Mrs. Eileen Smallwood.

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

Firing a J15: Derek Barham recalls his experiences when firing an ex-Great Eastern J15 0-6-0 on the Shelford – Chappell & Wakes Colne – Marks Tey line. J15 65462 arrives at Holt, with the crew giving up a tablet on 5/9/2009 - *Mike Page*



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 planned for 2014/15

- November 7:** 50 years of BR employment memories - *Bill Davis (RCTS Bedford)*.
December 5: Come all ye (faithful) - *Richard Tremaine & Mike Page chairing CRC member's recollections aided by photo/video prompts*.
January 9: Network SouthEast Story - *Chris Green*.
February 6: Barrington Cement Works Railway: History and Revival - *John Drayton MBE*.
March 6: Buntingford Railway History - *Stephen Ruff*.
Other Societies:
September 16: RCTS - every third Tuesday at the school off Galfrid Road in Whitehill Estate.
October 17: Cambridge University Railway Society - weekly on Fridays at Fitzwilliam Coll. except CRC days.

Events during 2014/5

- Sunday, October 5:** Cambridge Museum of Technology Railway Day - Model, including live steam..
Sunday, October 12: Cambridge Model Engineering Club - 'Final Public Open Day' - Fulbrooke Road, access
Saturday November 15: Royston & District Model Railway Club - Bassingbourne Village College.
Saturday November 22: Anniversary of Closure of Buntingford Branch - Benton Hall, Buntingford.

From the Editor

Since the last issue of *Circle Line* sadly we have had to say goodbye to Ken Grange and Harold Jenkins. Ken didn't make any Circle meetings during our last season due to his terminal illness, you may remember him as one of the draw ticket sorters who sat at the back of the hall.

As many of us move into the 'elderly' bracket, it is sad that the membership of the CRC is continuing to decline rather than expand. Our club is not alone in this. I get the impression that today's 'youth' mostly do not attend the traditional railway clubs but do all their communications 'on line'. How we can reverse this trend I don't know - anyone got any ideas?

On a positive note, the 'mix' of visitors' ages seen on the preserved railways continues to be a good one, though perhaps on the steam specials the trend appears to be dads with young children and the more 'mature' of railway enthusiasts.

My own impressions are mixed. When one visits model railway/railway events 'up North', there is a better mix of ages, and certainly in Germany the ages 'mix' is much more balanced. I suppose there is still the influential engineering background north of Peterborough, which affects the youngsters, while around Cambridge, the influences are more from academia, medical, business and retail. So youngsters here are maybe more 'wedded' to their computers, laptops, ipads and what have you?

Anyway, the CRC marches on with a good selection of talks for the 'Winter Season'. It would be nice too to receive more news and articles from members for the 'Circle Line'. So, the summer is over and we get ready for Christmas! - *Mike Page*

In the autumn of 1961, British Railways' London Midland Region was experiencing problems with train heating boilers on its English Electric Type 4s (40s). I often wondered whether the Eastern Region resorted to inserting a steam loco behind a diesel to solve the problem as the WCML lines did? We are at Stafford on a grim November 19, 1961 afternoon as a London - Manchester express departs with D330 and one of Rugby's Stanier Class Fives, 45139, 'doing the honours'. I don't recall ever seeing an ECML Class 40 with, say, a B1 added for train heating - did that ever happen on the Eastern or North Eastern regions? - *Mike Page*



A Connecticut 'Yankee' in King Arthur's Court - Part 5

'Colonel Don' continues his American view of BR in the 1980s, including footplate rides.

Right: Class 55 'Deltic' No. 55.016 *Gordon Highlander* awaits the guard's signal at 2014 on the evening of 11 Nov 1981 at Peterborough. The Vee-shape of its distinctive exhaust plumes can be clearly seen in the still night air.



The Deltics were fading fast toward the end of my second posting in England in 1982. I'd had a day out in the Hull, Leeds, and Sheffield area on 11 Nov 1981 to ride some new trackage and was on my way back to Ely well after dark. On the homeward leg of my trip, I rode some Eastern Region "bug boxes" from Sheffield to Retford, where I was to change to a London up train to take me on to Peterborough and a trusty set of "bug boxes" back to Ely.

I expected my connection would have Class 47 hauled train, so I was more than pleasantly surprised when the main line train I joined at Retford was headed by a Deltic – 55.016 "Gordon Highlander." As I knew the Deltics were an endangered species by then, I elected to ride in the vestibule of the carriage nearest the locomotive (rather than finding myself a seat) in order to enjoy the sound of the locomotive as it progressively accelerated us out of Retford, Newark, and Grantham. As it turned out, I ended up joining an English gricer who had been riding in the vestibule of the lead coach from farther north, enjoying the sound of its twin Napier prime movers.



A three years and ten months old year old Donald A. Woodworth III is at the controls of BR Class 37 No. 37.107 on 12 Sep 1981 at Parkeston Quay. We had a compartment to ourselves in a Mark I carriage, so my son, overcome with the excitement of being an engine driver, slept the majority of the way back to Bury St. Edmunds!

We both debarked at Peterborough and he proceeded to break out a tripod to take a few night shots of our Deltic. When finished, he generously offered me the use of his tripod, the result being the photo of 55.016 shared here. Click, click. We banged off night shots that showed the unusual exhaust pattern of our racehorse locomotive as it panted, waiting to be released to the main line again. We both savored the roar of the locomotive as it accelerated its train into the night for London.

My onward trip to March behind 37.418, and then a set of "bug boxes" onward to Ely, was anticlimactic to say the least. When I later learned of the last official Deltic run on 2 Jan 1982, I was totally pleased that I spent the evening of 11 Nov 1981 standing in a carriage vestibule for the 46 minutes it took Gordon Highlander to eat up the distance between Retford and Peterborough

Donald III and Parkeston Quay.

My son, Donald A. Woodworth III, was named after myself and his paternal grandfather. He was only 6 months old when we returned to the UK in 1978 but, after he'd become old enough to safely take about with me, I would sometimes bring him on short railway expedition. I guess there was a vague hope that he would end up enjoying trains as much as his Dad but, alas, that was never to happen.

That said, we did have a few good outings when he was about four years old. One was a photographic gricing trip to Santon Downham in the Thetford Warren on 24 Oct 1971 where we spent a pleasant afternoon photographing trains and looking at wildlife between trains. One bit of wildlife that was a bit wilder than we'd like to have seen was an adder sunning itself near a tuft of grass closer to our photo location than I'd have liked. St. Patrick should have made a side trip to East Anglia!

Our best trip, however, was Bury St. Edmunds to Parkeston Quay and return on 12 Sep 1981. The trip out was on some "bug boxes" from BSE to Ipswich, then a short jaunt behind 47.577 to Manningtree, and then another set of trusty "bug boxes" to the Quay. Our return trip was a lot more fun as we had a locomotive-hauled boat train headed to the Midlands behind Class 37.107.

The “37” was waiting at the Quay to take its train back to BSE and points beyond. As we had a bit of time before departure, I posed my son in front of the loco for a photo. The kindly driver noticed what was going on and could tell by our accents that we weren’t exactly native to the area. A pleasant chat ensued during the course of which we were invited onto the footplate.

Never one to say no, I jumped at the opportunity (it was my first opportunity to be aboard a British locomotive) and we climbed aboard. The resultant photo is of my son “driving” the locomotive. Obviously overcome with emotion, he slept all the way back to Bury St. Edmunds while his Dad took notes and enjoyed the ride. Fast forward many years. Despite my best efforts, I turned out to be a failure as a father. My son never developed the interest in railways that I enjoy – though he certainly did inherit my love of travel.

Signal box visit with Cyril Gotobed

One of the unanticipated advantages of being a member of the CRC was becoming friends with a wide variety of BR railway men as well as the “civilian” gricers who regularly attended the meetings. As a result, I was privileged to visit some places that most people didn’t normally get to visit. I never requested any special privileges – but I never said “No” if someone was kind enough to offer.

Thus - I had several pleasant outings to visit the late Cyril Gotobed whilst he was at work at the Chesterton Junction signal box. I marveled at Cyril’s uncanny ability to predict the presence of a train until he smiled knowingly and explained to me about “The Bells.” The signal box was of the “armstrong” variety and I should have known I was being set up when Cyril casually asked if I’d like to pull off one of the levers. Of course I would – right up to the point where my face turned red and I was in dire fear of a terminal hernia – after which Cyril pulled the lever with what I’m sure was casually understated ease. Once again, age and cunning had beaten youth and enthusiasm!

Footplate Ride to London with Bill Last

While signal boxes were stationary and set the path for moving things, things that moved at 70 mph or better were even more fun –to wit, Class 47s on the Kings Lynn-London line. On the magical Saturday morning of 20 Feb 1982, my phone rang and I heard the voice of Bill Last asking if I’d care



to come to Cambridge and have a footplate ride to London and return. Is the Pope Catholic? I was out of the house in minutes and blazing a path across the fens.

The 6p price of a platform ticket soon found me on the south end of Cambridge’s famously long platform and watching Bill’s beatific grin light up the gloomy morning from the footplate of 47.118 as he came booming into the station from Kings Lynn. In a matter of moments, we were away at 10.37 and I was wearing a smile to match Bill’s. I handled the highly technical task of honking the hooter at appropriate locations while Bill drove us on with stops at Audley End and Bishops Stortford. Bill’s second-man, Mr. John Potozzi was a very accommodating host as well and was no doubt secretly amused by the good time that I was having.

London was reached all too soon and, after the requisite photos on the platform and a cup of tea, we were back on the northward journey back to Cambridge at 1305, this time with an additional stop at Harlow Town. The great fun of this trip was that for nearly eight years I’d ridden this line as a passenger and was thus reasonably familiar with it. Hence, it was even greater fun to see it from an engine driver’s perspective. Bill was within just three weeks of his forthcoming retirement on 11 Mar 1982 after a nearly 50 years on the railway, so it was a real treat to ride with him.

The Grice of the Century

In the summer of 1980, my wife developed a major case of homesickness and decided it would be nice to take our children to spend a month in the States with her parents in St. Louis, Missouri. Opportunity knocked! I quickly obtained a British Rail pass and mapped out a mega-grice. I laid out a

Top right: A man’s home may be his castle in the UK but, in the case of BR signalmen, it’s their signal box. Here is where my friend Cyril Gotobed reigned supreme with the drivers of 2,750HP machines doing his bidding. Here is where Cyril kindly invited me on the afternoon of 20 Jun 1982, shortly after my return to the UK for a second tour of duty at RAF Mildenhall.

Right: The levers of progress and other appurtenances of the signalman’s trade, to include a track diagram of Chesterton Junction at the upper right hand corner of the photo. I wish I had had the presence of mind to take a photo of Cyril pulling off a lever when I visited his signal box. Like many railway enthusiasts, I sometimes get too taken up with the equipment of the railways and forget about the people behind them who actually make things work. The new Control Centre that was put into operation in Cambridge some years after I departed the UK for the second time is no doubt a much more efficient and cost effective way to control the intense railway activity around Cambridge. For my money though, and that of most of my gricing friends, I will take a signal box and friendly signalman any day of the week!





An unidentified Class 37 travelling northbound at Broxbourne, Essex, was shot from the cab of Bill Last's 47.118 on 20 Feb 1982 as we were on the final stretch up to London Liverpool Street (the line branching off to the left entered Broxbourne Power Station yard - Ed).

tour of the farthest flung lines from East Anglia that I could find and set out on a mileage quest that took me to the farthest tips of Scotland, Wales, and England - and many other fascinating places.

The objective was to ride as many lines as possible as far away from East Anglia as possible, leaving the closer-in ones to be done later on Saturday jaunts after my family returned from their holiday in the States. Between 2 and 26 June, I wrung maximum use of my pass and along the way met many friendly and interesting people - and just two that weren't very nice at all.

Things went swimmingly, including an overnight stop in Scotland to position myself for a difficult one-way morning working from Markinch, Fife. An 07.24 departure on the morning of 9 June was the only one single train that day in the direction I needed to travel. I stayed at a pub nearby the station and had a very pleasant evening. I managed to find one person to talk with who spoke English in accents I was able to understand. It was fun listening to two older

gentlemen who were having a natter in a corner nearby. Well into Scotland, they were locals whom I hadn't a prayer of comprehending.

The master plan worked and I made my train in the morning, traveling ever father north into Scotland - all the way to Wick where I over-nighted in order to catch the first train south in the morning. It left so early that there was no possibility of breakfast or anything like that - I just had to make it to the station for this particular train of the next several days of planned riding would disappear into a black hole. The hotel I stayed at was a charming oldy-worldly place with corridors running every which way and in no predictable order. Nice if one is not in a hurry, but disastrous if one over slept and needed to get out in a very big hurry for an 05.30 departure - which I did. This became reason No. 1 why I have ever since checked the egress route from any hotel or motel in which I have subsequently stayed. If there had been a fire, I'd have likely fried. As it was, I made the train with about 30 seconds to spare. Sadly, I had no time to photograph my train headed by BR 26.040, even though this would have been possible at



Mr. William E. J. Last, aka "Bill," stands in the gangway of BR Class 47 No. 47.118 at the south end of the long Cambridge platform (Platform One) having arrived at 10.15 with an up express train from Kings Lynn on 20 February 1982.



Bill at the controls of 47.118 on 10.37 ex Cambridge up train to London. Bill has an annotated employees timetable just to the left of the controller handle, highlighting any special restrictions that might be encountered on that particular day.



Bethnal Green as seen from the footplate of 37.115 on 15 February 1982, just minutes from reaching Liverpool Street Station. I knew the trackage in this area was complex but never realized how much so until I was able to see it from the footplate of a locomotive instead of out the window of a carriage. On this particular morning, I was headed to Kings Cross Station en route to my Great Railway Journey on the 'Flying Scotsman' to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. On this occasion, BR had generously provided me with authorization to ride the footplate of the locomotive so I got a sneak preview of what I'd later see again on my trip with Bill. I made a mental note to return to Bethnal Green on a sunny day for additional photography.

such an early hour when so far north in the UK.

As I traveled south again, the cluster of lines around Middlesbrough was one of my next targets. I spent the better part of my wife's 30 th. birthday working my way from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Middlesbrough. I rode bug boxes E50181+ E50256, departing Middlesbrough at 16.50 and arriving Whitby at 18.14 over the Esk Valley line. With only twenty minutes to spend on the platform before retracing my route aboard the same units, there was no time to explore Whitby. I departed again at 18.34 and again reached Middlesbrough at 19.57 – just in time to find digs for the night and some dinner.

On the line from Middlesbrough to Whitby on 12 Jun 1980, I met a small group of school girls that were en-route to Whitby. They must have sensed that I was friendly (and also starving) as they began a conversation that ended up with their sharing some baked potatoes they had with me. Delicious! I returned to Middlesbrough and I stayed overnight so I could get an early morning start on the 07.16 departure for Darlington on 13 June. Here, I re-learned the fact that many people are creatures of habit. Everyone knows that "bug boxes" are a wonderful way to cover new territory, so I of

boxes" are a wonderful way to cover new territory, so I of course found a seat at the very front of the train where I could enjoy the driver's view of the line. I soon sensed that I had unwittingly taken the seat of a "regular" who must have regularly commuted on this line. No chance for conversation here as the atmosphere was notably chilly until Mr. Grumpy debarked from the train.

Below left: While electrification now extends all the way from Liverpool Street Station to Kings Lynn, such was not the case during my time in the UK. The wires ended at Bishops Stortford and the character of the railway north of that point was very different from that to the south. On 1 March 1980, I set out to explore some of the electrified commuter lines that radiated out of Liverpool Street Station. I rode from Enfield Town to Hackney Downs and had 16 minutes on the platform there before boarding another set of electric 'bug boxes' to ride to Chingford. Whilst waiting on the platform, I had opportunity to photograph northbound BR 31.204 at 15.42, most likely headed for Kings Lynn. While not directly in the sequence of my ride with Bill, the photo is included here to give a flavour of this section of line.

Below: Electric railroading has always fascinated me. The more wire in the sky the better – and it seemed like Britain's copper supply for the past 20 years was suspended in the sky at Bethnal Green. Here, BR EMU Set No. 317.796 is seen northbound at 09.38 on a fast stopping train for Witham on the Norwich Line – 27 Feb 1982.





BR Set No.126, outbound for Southend at 09.31 on the 27 Feb 1982, probably sets the standard for homely 'Plain Jane' emus.

Rocket 150 at Rainhill

I made it a point to visit the Rainhill sesquicentenary Rocket 150 celebrations as part of my Great Grice of 1980. Rainhill lived up to its name – it was dismal the entire time I was there – but the trip was worth it. I got to see *Rocket* in steam and also one of my favorite locomotives – *Evening Star*. I cannot possibly think of a better name for a locomotive ending the long tradition of steam in Britain.

I'd tried on many subsequent occasions to witness *Evening Star* at speed on an excursion but sadly, apart for the one time I saw her plodding along at a sedate pace at Rainhill, I was only able to see her stuffed and mounted at the wonderful York Railway Museum. Likewise for *Mallard*. When I look at photos of locomotives in the run-down condition in which many of them finished up on British Rail (sadly three years before the US Air Force [finally!] assigned me to the land of the World's Greatest Model Railway Layout, I can only dream about the time when the mainline railways kept their front line power in the wonderful condition in which they continue to exist at York and in the other fine railway museums around Britain.

The Drunken Scotsman.

On one of the mid-point legs of my June 1980 tour of Britain by rail extravaganza, I had what was the single unpleasant encounter during all of the trips that I'd made on BR - and



The stars of the show: Mr. Bill Last and No.47.118 at Liverpool Street Station immediately after an 11.34 arrival on 20 Feb 1982.



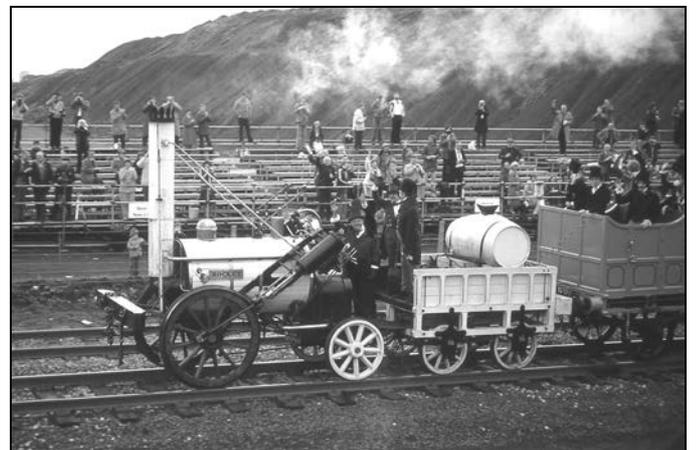
Here is one of the few shots I have of Bill and me together. It would be a chore to figure out which of the cats had eaten the canary here!

also learned a bit about international diplomacy. I am a non-smoker and always ride in non-smoking carriages for that reason. I don't dislike smokers; only their smoke.

At any rate, as we traveled down the Settle & Carlisle toward Leeds on 13 Jun 1980 behind BR 45.106, not far from where I was sitting was an obviously tipsy Scotsman who, listening to his conversation was just returning to civilization from spending some time offshore on one of the North Sea oil rigs. During the course of the journey, he repeatedly smoked cigarettes, considerably fouling the air of our non-smoking carriage and making the people around him uncomfortable.

No one seemed to be doing anything about it, so I approached the man and asked that he please move to a smoking carriage if he wished to smoke. Bad idea! I forgot the old adage about "When in Rome ..." and that sometimes one's accent could get one into as much trouble as it could make something nice happen. In this case, we were dealing with potential trouble!

As he stood up, I immediately discerned that he made about two of me and that I would find it a dreadfully uncomfortable squeeze passing through the small sliding ventilator window at the top of the main window in our Mark I carriage. Wishing that I'd had the common sense to find the guard and



Replica *Rocket* wowing the crowds at the rainy Rainhill, Lancs. At the 'Rocket 150' celebration on 26 May 1980. Technology is a funny thing. *Rocket* looks so quaint and antique in this photo that we sometimes forget that the principles successfully demonstrated on this now-famous locomotive continued in their basic form right to the end of steam.



BR Class 40 No. 40.092 lumbers through Cambridge northbound at 10.50 on the dreary morning of 30 Sep 1979 with an ECML re-routed northbound express

smoking, I quickly decided that an international incident involving ‘moi’ was probably not a good thing so I wished the “gentleman” a pleasant journey and returned to my seat. The remaining trip into Leeds was not pleasant to say the least but I think everyone in the carriage (particularly me!) was delighted to disembark and be rid of smoked Scotsman.

The Dreaded “E” Word – Engineering Works – Excursions – Electro-Diesels

Earlier in this article, I had made reference to the dreaded “E” word regarding engineering work on the railway lines, usually occurring on Sunday. I soon learned to check carefully in advance if I had any railway travel planned for a Sunday, or, better, to simply avoid travel on a Sunday.

On the plus side, engineering work had a decided plus if one weren’t traveling – and that was the ability to see unusual



What a treat to see a ‘Deltic’ in Cambridge on a diverted regular working. Here, Class 55 No. 55.017 “The Durham Light Infantry” moves a train northbound through Cambridge at 10.18 on the morning of 30 Sep 1979.

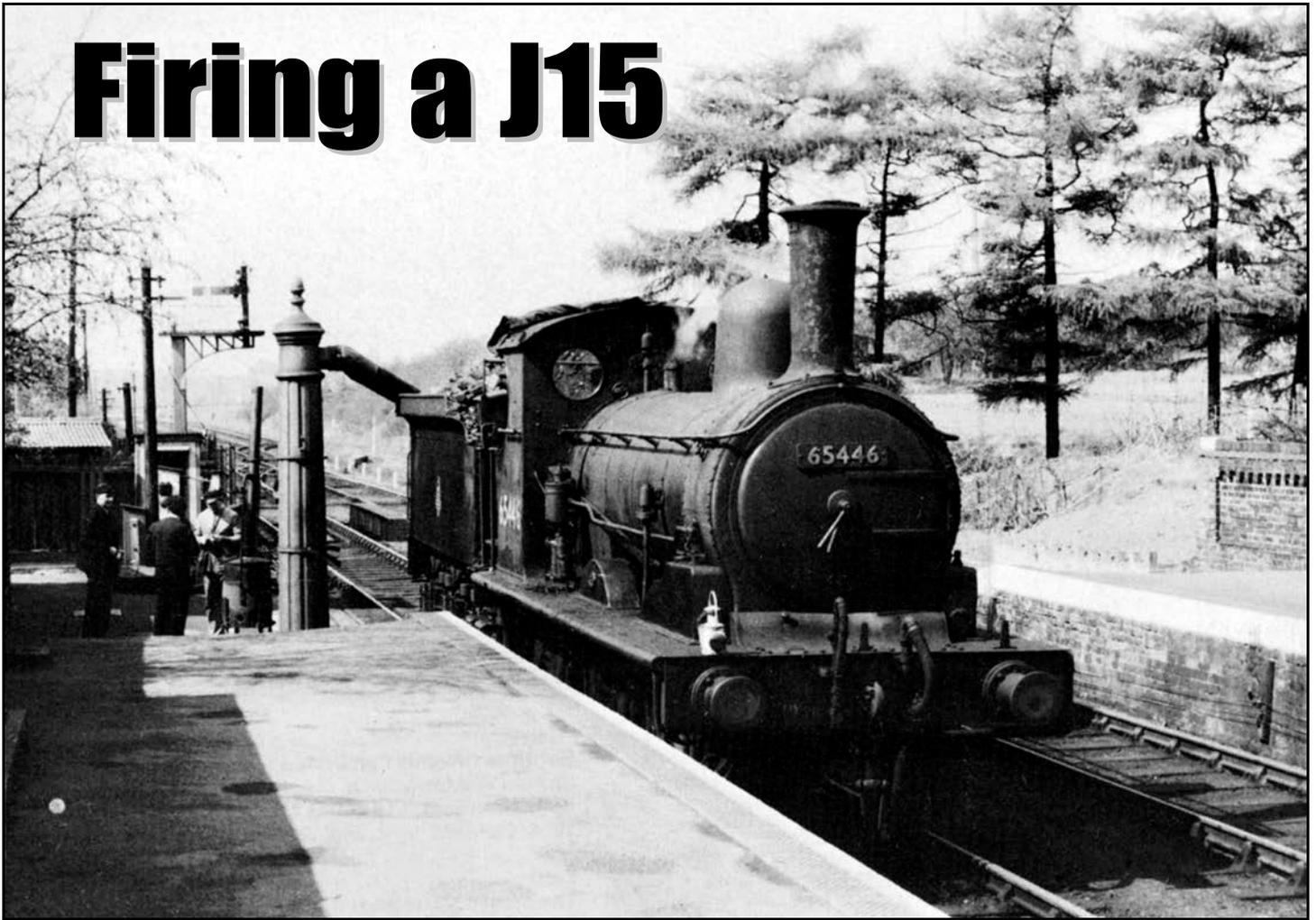


Ely, before the wire went up and colour light signalling came in, was a sea of semaphore masts – the perfect foil for a modern HST. Here, HST set E43096-43123 is seen northbound, passing Ely South Box at 12.25 on the early afternoon of 6 Sep 1981. A close look at the signal box will reveal the signalman dropping the semaphore to danger following the passage of the HST.

workings. As I became more familiar with my surroundings in the Cambridge area, I began to learn what was normal and could thus also begin to appreciate the abnormal – such as Deltic and HST workings through Cambridge and Ely, etc. Having friends in the CRC to give me a “heads up” when such events were occurring didn’t hurt anything either! The other, and much more fun, component of the letter “E” was “excursions” – which also produced unusual workings – such as Class 33s at Ely. Again, having friends in high places (aka the CRC) did not hurt anything!

‘Colonel Don’ concludes his review of travels on British Rail during the 1970s/80s and meetings with CRC members in the next issue.

Firing a J15



Colchester's J15 65446 takes a break amid shunting sessions for a drink at the water column at Haverhill Station on April 14, 1959. *J. Brodribb collection*, ('*Steam in the Eastern Counties*' by John Brodribb, published by Ian Allan, 1985) – thanks to Peter Heath.

The Great Eastern Railway's 4ft 11in (1500mm) 0-6-0 goods engine (the LNER/BR J15) was a powerful engine for its size, but she had a small boiler. So you had to know what you were doing when you were firing one, relates *Derek Barham*, particularly on the Cambridge – Marks Tey line!

My first experience with a J15 was on the Littleport to Downham Market pick-up goods and shunt job. After shunting at Littleport and with yard work completed we then proceeded with a loaded train to Downham Market. In those days (1950s) Downham Market was an interchange point for sorting out wagon destinations.

When we were ready to leave with our made up train for Cambridge I wasn't prepared for what was to come, as I had had no experience of firing a J15 working a train. The J15s were powerful engines but had a small boiler and I was soon in trouble! It was only with the help of my driver that we reached the up arrival road in Cambridge! It was a relief to get the J15 to the shed and head for home!

After a spell in the Branch Goods Link, I was put with my regular mate, Cecil Blay. We were attached to a train to Colchester (via Bartlow, Haverhill and Marks Tey) as far as Haverhill where we went on as engine and brake van to Yeldham (on the Haverhill - Halstead – Chapel & Wakes Colne line). At Yeldham we had to collect a trainload of bombs for disposal. The road from Yeldham back towards Haverhill as far as Birdbrook was all up hill with a short level section half way. Well, we were struggling well before Birdbrook and then with down grade and then up grade to

reach Haverhill South Junction. The downhill section into Haverhill really gave us no respite before having to tackle the 1 in 88 of Bartlow Bank. Although we managed to get a little boiler pressure back but struggled to keep running down to Bartlow and Linton. At least the stretch from Shelford to Cambridge was easy going but on the whole, the run was not very satisfactory, as I had lacked experience in this regard.

The next day I was booked on the same working, but this time I had a very old and experienced driver Sid Thurlow. He asked me. "Were you on this job yesterday?" and I said: "Yes." He asked me how I had got one and I replied "Disastrous!" On asking why, I told him what had happened with Cecil Blay.

Sid told me that the J15 had been the mainstay of the locos that worked the Great Eastern main line goods workings, but you had to be ready and prepared for the work involved and told me how it should be done: "Fill the firebox at the back up to the firehole door. Leave the front of the grate shallow and bright. When the fire gets a bit burnt through at the back fill the firehole door completely."

There was more: "Next, get the next fire-up ready for use on the tender's shovel plate." So off we set with the same loco as



One of Cambridge's J15s, 65438, arriving at Chappell Wakes Colne with a train for Cambridge on May 21 1956. The engine crew is handing over a single line token. *P. Hay (Aspects of East Anglian Steam Volume 2 compiled by J.D. Mann and published by South Anglia Productions in 1991). Thanks to Peter Heath.*



Another Cambridge J15, 65457, waits in the Cambridge line branch platform at Marks Tey on May 28 1958. The main London-Norwich line is beyond the station building. *J.A.C. Kirke (Aspects of East Anglian Steam Volume 2 compiled by J.D. Mann and published by South Anglia Productions in 1991). Thanks to Peter Heath.*

yesterday. He told me to put the injector on and not to shut it off while running. For the next fire-up I was told to scatter the burnt coal at the firehole door around the front of the firebox grate and then fill the firehole door up from the tender shovel plate "And be quick so you can close the firehole door." Sid told me to prepare the next fire-up on the tender's shovel plate.

The trip was a good one compared with the previous day's run. Thanks to Sid Thurlow I was never again short of steam on a J15! There was the exception such as on the 'Black Friday' on the Cambridge-Kettering road with 65457 when we lost 5h 25min of time in one day! (Circle Line 102 – Ed). The cause of the delays involving three trains over the 47-mile run was a faulty smokebox joint, which was upsetting the smokebox vacuum and, consequently, the firing. The regular loco, J15 65390, used to respond well to the road beyond Huntingdon, which was mostly upgrade.

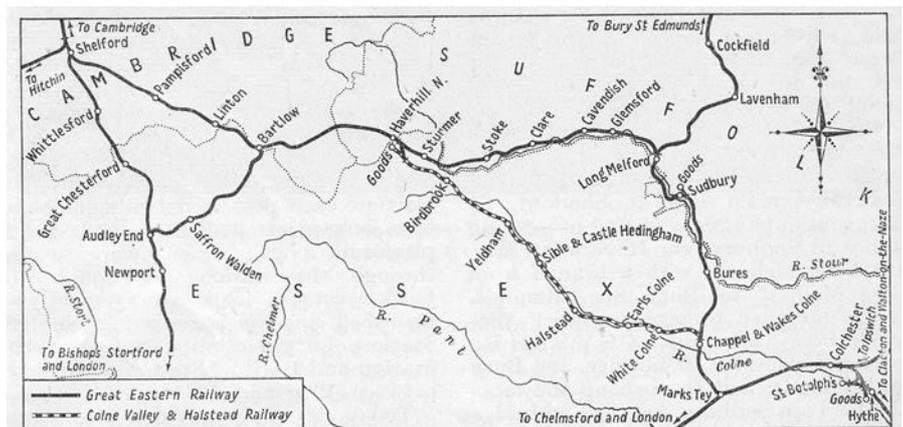
Whilst with Herbert Spicer in the Branch Passenger link it was during the summer season when workings comprised eight coaches over the Colne Valley Line going via Marks Tey and Colchester for Clacton. One Saturday while waiting on the down main and branch platform at Marks Tey for our train to take over for the Colne Valley and Cambridge line we could see our train coming up the bank at Stanway and making black smoke. Black smoke was an indication that all was not well. We walked to the end of the branch platform to take over from the Colchester men and we could hear the engine groaning through lack of lubrication. Once on the footplate, 'Hubby' shut the steam off for the lubricator and cooled it

down with cold water and then refilled the lubricator with oil. While he did that I was getting as much coal as possible into the firebox up to the firehole door. Already the 'Right Away!' was being given the guard waving his flag and blowing his whistle. But, Herby said: "take no notice, we will go when we are ready!" He opened the steam valve to the lubricator to warm it up.

Now some ten minutes late, we set off from Marks Tey to climb the bank to Chappell and Wakes Colne. Hubby said: "I'll give her 'the gun',," which meant applying a hand to the top and a foot on the bottom of the regulator. We were struggling to the top of the bank with the injectors on and smoke in abundance! We stopped at Chappell then we were away on the Colne Valley Line. We used full regulator up the grade towards White Colne station and then shut off the injectors. Onwards to Earls Colne where we had the benefit of the lubricator and the fire burnt through so it was easy on to Halstead and Haverhill. We arrived at Cambridge having picked up eight of the 10 minutes lost at Marks Tey. Note that this job was normally an Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 for the summer workings but Colchester had put on a J15 to keep our 2MT!

I had 18 months with 'Hubby' Spicer and I enjoyed working with him. He was not tall but weighed about 19 stone (say 120kg – Ed). He used to fire on 50% of the branch workings, but never with a B1 or a B17 as he said he could not manage to get coal into the front of the firebox on those engines! Link progression parted us as I went into the 'Royal Link' and following that, the Claude Link and Express Link.

On the right is a map showing the branch lines that once lay between Cambridge and Marks Tey. The map was taken from the *Railway Magazine* (published today by the Mortons Media Group) September 1951 issue, *The Sudbury and Haverhill Line, Eastern Region* by B.D.J. Walsh. One feels that some of those lines would have been useful to have had today, when one views the intensity of rush-hour traffic on the roads into Cambridge! Mr. Walsh in his article noted that there was an excursion on Summer Sundays from Cambridge to Clacton and back. It ran non-stop between Haverhill and Marks Tey. I wonder if any of our retired railwaymen members worked with those excursion trains?



Cambridge Railway Circle Outings report during 2014

CRC Outings Secretary *Tony Dewey* reports on two of the Circle's outings: visiting the Midland Railway – Butterley and the Crich Tramway Village and the Bluebelle Railway as well as a visit by some members to the Beeches Light Railway. CRC Meetings Secretary *Richard Tremaine* recalls the CRC visit to the K&ESR.

CRC's first outing of this summer season was to the Kent & East Sussex Railway (K&ESR) on May 24 2014. A full coach load made a comfortable journey to enjoy the preservation line's 40th Anniversary Gala. Featured were a strong steam line-up of seven locomotives. The weather was promising and turned out to be a mix of bright sun interspersed with several heavy but short bursts of rain; a nice photographic opportunity.

Some members of our party joined the first train; I took time myself to enjoy the 'ambience' of the station; a tour of the museum workshop, and a good cooked lunch in their excellent restaurant. My train was taken in charge by one of two Swindon products at work on this day: No. 6619, an 0-6-2T, which I recall was designed for south Wales coal traffic. The other GWR loco was light pannier 0-6-0T1638, a British Railways built stalwart of GWR branch lines; a loco that was originally in preservation on the Dart Valley line I believe.

A delight of the K & ESR is its collection of period carriages though the lack of 'suspension' of the four-wheelers certainly reverberates through one's body. A nice 'USA tank', a look-alike product of Yugoslavia, was good to see. Another foreigner in the shape of Norwegian No. 376 2-6-0 in black livery and K&ESR marking was coupled to a most strange steamer: a former 'Bagnall' (*Gervase*) coupled 0-4-0 with 'Sentinel' vertical boilered chain-drive hybrid conversion!

'Terrier' A1X 0-6-0T 32678 was the epitome of Southern branch lines; originally a Stroudley 1872 London, Brighton & South Coast Railway (LBSCR) product, with a later 'Marsh' boiler of 1911, (thanks, Ian Allan info.) one of the most preserved types, though not so often seen in steam. What a lovely vision she made heading four-wheeled stock, and indeed a real 'local' scene maker with a view across a small hop-plantation at Bodiam station.

A 'Shepherd-Neame' beer poster stated that hops have been grown in the Rother Valley for over 400 years and Guinness beers had acquired several hop farms around Bodiam station in the early 20th century. Memories of London hop-pickers September days were recalled. Guinness paid for a siding to be constructed at Bodiam in 1910, which is now the run-round loop. A notice was displayed regarding the absence of famous 'Edith Cavell' coach (under restoration), which may



The ex-LBS&CR 'Class A1X 'Terrier' 32678 at Bodiam. The engine was based at 71A Eastleigh in 1962 - *Richard Tremaine*

sometimes be seen here. The 7th loco in steam was an Austerity 0-6-0T, in green livery.

The ambitions of the preservationists are to rebuild the line through to Robertsbridge and establish a 'Network' interchange station. Another GWR loco, 2-8-0T No. 4253 is a major restoration project here, for the longer run that this line will require. From my press readings this is work-in-progress and perhaps we may look forward to another visit sometime.

This 'Colonel Stephens' line certainly lives up to the reputation of its originator in following the land contours. So the run back to Tenterden town station is particularly onerous for the footplate crew, being on a steep gradient with a curve resulting in a good thrash at the regulator. Atmosphere in abundance hereabouts!
– *Richard Tremaine*

On Saturday July 12th. the destination was Derbyshire when we headed for Midland Railway Butterley for the '1960s Weekend'. On a fine morning the journey was made non-stop from Shepreth in about 2h, in time for the 10:30 departure hauled by Class 25 D7671 to Riddings via Swanwick Junction. A two-train timetable was operating, one steam and one diesel with plans to run freight on the former colliery branch at Swanwick Junction.



Here is the 'Bagnall-Sentinel' conversion *Gervase* coupled with the Norwegian 2-6-0 at Bodiam, K&ESR. – *Richard Tremaine*



Ex-Great Western 56XX 0-6-2T 6619 (shedded at 88C Barry in 1962 and finished up in Dai Woodham's Barry scrap yard) stands alongside a USA-designed 0-6-0T (like the Southern Railway-owned 'USA' tanks in Southampton Docks) is a Yugoslavian-built 'look-alike' at Tenterden Town.
 – Richard Tremaine

The steam power was provided by 3F tank engine No.23 on passenger and Peckett No.1163 was rostered for the freight but was unfortunately confined to static display in the bay at Swanwick minded by its driver, as no fireman was available. Many operating volunteers also look after 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland* based at nearby West Shed and as this loco was on main line duty this weekend they were out on support crew duty. In the event, the freight was hauled on the 'main line' by the Class 25, which was replaced on passenger by Class 47 No. 47401.

The site at Swanwick Junction is massive and presents the Midland Railway Museum, demonstration signal box, narrow gauge railway, diesel shed, railway church and cafe. A short walk enables a visit to the Princess Royal Locomotive Trust West Shed where 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland* usually resides alongside non-operational 'Princess Royal' 46201 *Princess Margaret Rose* and restored carriages. The shed was open to visitors even though 46233 was away.

The majority of our party had elected to move on to Crich Tramway Village for the afternoon with just nine staying at Butterley to be picked up on the way home. Unfortunately, an incident with the freight train on its way from Swanwick Junction to Butterley and Hammersmith brought the whole railway to a halt with a long delay. We were stranded at Swanwick with our coach at Butterley, only a few minutes ride by train but arrangements were made to bring it to Swanwick with a MR 'pilot' to negotiate the narrow roads into the site. As the route to Crich involved retracing steps to Ripley, we lost about an hour in all.

The '1960s Gala' was rather disappointing for its lack of major attractions and the lost time added to our frustration. It does appear that the following weekend with the 'Duchess' in steam and other steam power on display at West Shed would have provided more interest.

Crich's 'Edwardian Weekend' was much more of an attraction and value for money, the only disappointment perhaps being the non-running of its horse-drawn tram, which would only be operating on Sunday. There were huge crowds when we arrived at Crich an hour behind time and many trams running with Edwardian re-enactors adding to the atmosphere. The



Ex-LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47357 is seen arriving at the 'Whistwick' Station on the 'Butterley Railway' on June 9 2001. 'Midland Railway – Butterley' was then known as the 'Midland Railway Centre'. 47357 was shedded at Edge Hill (8A) in Liverpool in the 1960s and was the LMS' 'Standard' shunting tank engine developed from a former Midland Railway type of which one survives at the Barrow Hill roundhouse museum.
 – Mike Page

tram shed was open for viewing as was the museum with some stalls and talks. The standard of restoration of the trams never ceases to amaze and the most recent London tram running is immaculate. Mind you, at a price tag of £400,000 they need to raise vast amounts of funds.

The trams retired to the sheds by 5.30pm and we departed at 6pm to pick-up the others at Butterley and heading home, arriving at Shepreth by 8.30pm. We had enjoyed a glorious sunny day at two Derbyshire sites and Crich scored very highly for its attractions but the event at MR never made its 'Gala' status and was disappointing for that reason.

The season was rounded off on Saturday 9th. August with a visit to Bluebell Railway for its 'Vintage Transport Extravaganza'. We had planned a visit to Bluebell in 2013 for its 'Summer Gala' and to experience the East Grinstead extension for the first time. Unfortunately, the railway had



Sheffield Park Station on the Bluebell Railway as seen during July, 2007. Ex Southern Railway 'U' 2-6-0 (3)1638 has arrived with a train from Horsted Keynes while behind the 'U' A1X 0-6-0T *Stepney* is engaged in driver training.
 Mike Page

Right: During the CRC visit to Adrian Shooter's 'Beeches Light Railway' on May 11 2014 CRC Members Geoffrey Smallwood and Richard Tremaine help diagnose a locomotive problem.

Below right: Adrian Shooter is seen in the Refreshment Room during the CRC visit.

- Photos are by Eileen Milner



experienced severe steam locomotive boiler problems resulting in cancellation of the gala. We changed our day out to visit the Mid Hants Railway's 'Autumn Gala' instead but promised a re-arranged visit to 'Bluebell' in 2014. The 'Transport Extravaganza' seemed the ideal opportunity for this. made good time of 2h to East Grinstead.

Once again we were blessed with a lovely, pleasantly warm, sunny day. We were to join the first train of the day, but we dropped six of our members off outside the 'Southern' main line station, leaving them to walk to the 'Bluebell's' new station at the south end just beyond the main line connection. The coach then made off to Sheffield Park station, which was to be our base for the day.

The standard peak two train service was operating today with the 'S15' 4-6-0 No. 847 hauling a set of Mark 1 coaches and The 'U' 2-6-0 31638 the second set of mostly 'Maunsell' vehicles, but also three vintage Southern Railway ones too. Although there didn't appear to be a large number of visitors, the trains were well filled throughout the day. The vintage vehicle gathering in the field at Horsted Keynes was attracting much interest, which probably accounted for the apparent smaller crowds generally. The stations were busy when trains were arriving and departing, especially Horsted Keynes.

There were half a dozen traction engines in steam confined to a corner of the field with no space to 'stretch their legs' although I did spot one, which escaped to the permanent way yard at the south end of the Horsted Keynes complex. Otherwise, there was a vast collection of vintage cars in the field, including a large display of MGs. Quite a large group from Belgium had driven their cars over for the event.

The railway timetable ran like clockwork all day with no hitches. The Sussex countryside appeared delightful in the sunshine and with some steep banks for the locos to climb, especially up to and through the excavated Imberhorne cutting from both directions, there were exciting noises from the front end. Imberhorne viaduct, which takes the railway into its new station at East Grinstead, is a very impressive structure.

Facilities there are basic, comprising only a run-round loop but it would provide a good viewing point for main line charters running onto the heritage railway. 'A1' 60151 *Tornado* had been a temporary visitor running scheduled trains but had departed on the Tuesday prior to our visit.

After a most enjoyable visit, we departed Sheffield Park at 6pm and called in at East Grinstead to pick up two who had travelled on the last departure from Sheffield Park. We experienced some congestion approaching the Dartford Tunnel but still made it back to Shepreth by about 8.30pm.

Adrian Shooter had again invited CRC members to his 'Beeches Light Railway' steaming in Oxfordshire. A dozen members and accomplices travelled by cars on Sunday 11th. May and two more on Saturday 9th. August. By all accounts two enjoyable days out were experienced.



Visiting Woodford Halse engine shed in the 1960s



Woodford Halse engine shed as seen on May 13 1966 nearly one year after its closure in June 1965

- Mike Page

Woodford Halse engine shed of the former Great Central Railway in Northamptonshire underwent a 'Midland Regionalisation' of its motive power following the Nottingham (Victoria) – Marylebone main line route's transfer from the Eastern Region to the London Midland Region in 1958 wrote *Allan Baker*. *Richard Tremaine* presents *Allan's* memories from 1960/1962/1964.

My teenage spotting days were mainly from my residency in Cambridge; the GC lines formed notable gaps in my underlinings in my Ian Allan spotter's books; L1s being particularly prominent as many were seen around my usual G.E. haunts. On my 16th birthday (born 14/4/44), whilst staying with Colin, a Cambridge spotting friend who had moved from Cambridge to Hemel, we had the opportunity to take an early morning journey to Banbury with an HGV driving neighbour of his.

At Banbury we spent a short while spotting G.W. stuff (beautiful, but they all look the same from a few paces!) before taking the local shuttle from Banbury's bay platform behind one of those elusive L1s: 67771, taking us to Woodford from Banbury. This was my only visit to this wonderful depot in operating days. Probably the most notable loco on Woodford shed was the recently withdrawn J10, 65158, the only one of that class I ever saw. Due to it's withdrawal, and I think the occasion of my 16th. birthday, we were surprised to be given the steam whistle off the J10. It resided at Colin's home for many years but sadly he eventually sold it! Locomotives logged on shed that day were:

90638 / D3066 / 92090 / 90516 / 45450 / 43330 / 61368 / 90080 / 61910 / 65158 / 61186 / 92010 / 92216 / 90672 / 90474 / 90065 / 90403 / 90697 / 90095 / 61882 / 61832 / 90066 / 61809 / 61913 / 92087.

The depot closed in June 1965.

During my university days (1964-68), I was sent, in April 1967, for a 6-month work based project in Northamptonshire. I had to return to see the dying vestiges of the recently closed G.C.depot.

Four signal boxes once controlled the line and depot, I accessed the remains of the former Number 2 signal box. Of many finds, I salvaged two of many scattered signalman's logs; the 1962 one still showing many ex.LNER loco movements, and the 1964 one contrasting with LMS locos. Somewhat unusually, I have been informed, the duty signalmen had logged not only the train movements, but also the locomotive numbers involved.

I have since learned that No.2 box controlled loco movements on and off the depot and therefore was particularly of interest. The logs cover operations over a period of 2 months and, long overdue, since I have had them in my possession for over 45 years, I recently monitored the logged movements of an operating week commencing:

Tues: 31/7/62:

92250/ 45223/ 92074/ 42253/ 42251/ 90504/ 90365/ 92031/ 92090/ 90638/ 92073/ 92089/ 92032/ 6929/ 92095/ 92013/ D3069/ 42568/ 61187/ 42251/ 64727/ 42250/ 92033/ 45262/ 4917/ 42178/ 92088/ 61084/ 92011/ 73045/ 61867/ 92090/ 90040/ 42252/ 92030/ 90365/ 92092/ 90065/ 92096/ 61889/ 92073/ 73156/ 92093/ 92089/ 92010/ 45722/ 42250/ 61106.

48 locos

Wed, 1/8/62: 45262/ 42568/ 92095/ 42178/ 42253/ 92088/ 92071/ 42291/ 90697/ 90346/ 90149/ 92074/ 92038/ 45722/ 45223/ 92092/ 6929/ 92011/ 92076/ 92093/ 42568/ 92069/ 70014/ 92073/ 90474/ 3849/ 61192/ 44819/ 42250/ 4917/ 73045/ 60963/ 92088/ 42291/ 61435/ 92249/ 92013/ 61269/ 90697/ 42178/ 90365/ 92074/ 44690/ 61889/ 92072/ 92075/ 92012.

47 locos.

Thurs 2/8/62: 73069/ 61897/ 92076/ 92093/ 90504/ 42250/ 92099/ 44847/ 92088/ 61192/ 42568/ 92073/ 42281/ 61897/ 92011/ 42253/ 90638/ 61229/ 92069/ 90474/ 92092/ 42251/ 92033/ 92030/ 6929/ 92010/ 92096/ 92072/ 42568/ 76042/ 61106/ 42291/ 92095/ 5964/ 92088/ 42178/ 61434/ 92013/ 92093/ 42251/ 61068/ 73045/ 92069/ 90520/ 61109/ 42250/ 92031/ 90095/ 92011/ 61315.

50 locos.

Fri 3/8/62: 61884/ 60963/ 73156/ 92076/ 61192/ 61867/ 44847/ 42281/ 42178/ 92088/ 90065/ 42291/ 61192/ 92013/ 42253/ 92010/ 44659/ 92033/ 90095/ 92092/ 92074/ 92043/ 92093/ 6929/ 92095/ 92011/ 92069/ 42281/ 45666/ 61028/ 42251/ 73156/ 92076/ 42252/ 61857/ 61455/ 92012/ 42291/ 61071/ 61187/ 92031/ 73045/ 61847/ 92010/ 90095/ 44848/ 90474/ 4925/ 92092/ 61889/ 61192/ 92011/ 61867/ 92076/ 90040/ 92095/ 61269/ 92088.

58 locos

Sat. 4/8/62: 44847/ 42568/ D3066/ 6969/ 42568/ 42178/ 42291/ 63758/ 92012/ 92071/ 90672/ 64875/ 92073/ 60810/ 92092/ 73045/ 61187/ 92074/ 44932/ 61228/ 61420/ 92095/ 42252/ D3067/ 92072/ 61276.

26 locos

Sun.5/8/62: 92071/ D3067/ 92074.

3 locos

Mon.6/8/62: 42178/ 42281/ 42568/ 73156/ 61167/ 42281/ 42176/ 61028/ 42253/ 73045/ 61192/ 44848. (A bank holiday)

12 locos

Tues 7/8/62: 61846/ 92074/ 44984/ 42291/ D3068/ D3066/ 42257/ D3069/ 42252/ 92071/ 45277/ 42253/ 92122/ 64875/ 92072/ 42568/ 92089/ 61192/ 92030/ 92096/ 92092/ 90672/ 90346/ 90080/ 42252/ 92011/ 92073/ 92090/ 92010/ 44821/ 42252/ 92033/ 42281/ 42291/ 61028/ 92074/ 42568/ 92088/ 61315/ 61039/ 92092/ 73045/ 90672/ 42250/ 61187/ 90365/ 73156/ 90218/ 91485 (as recorded; fatigue ending 10pm-6am shift? Should be 90485?)

49 locos.

The log continued, concluding during 6am. shift, 2/9/1962. It should be recorded that the signalmen A.L.Jordan, G.Hemmings, R.Cannon were the signalmen who had the interest to add the loco numbers to this log of their work. I am grateful.

Mr. Wallace Hill reported of Woodford Halse Engine Shed, in February's issue 2012 'British Railways Illustrated' magazine. He commented that: "by New Year's Eve, 1962, it was very much a London Midland shed". I have seen other such suggestions but my log rather negates this. The following three weeks note that V2, B1 (incl.61008/28 namers), B16, K3, and RODs and three J39s continue to appear regularly alongside the many 9Fs, WDs and other 'Standards' as well as Stanier and Fairburn tanks, Black 5s and occasional Jubilees and GWR visitors. Only four 8F appearances:

48142,48306/67/78 and Brits. 70014,70025,70037, 70041 and 70048 were recorded.

The 1964 logbook, however, is strongly LMS; to be studied later, if interest arises from members. I have, on occasions, tried to find assistance from anyone with signalbox knowledge, and especially Woodford, to be able to decipher the bell codes and other movement notes. Sample page photocopies available to anyone with relevant knowledge. Another 'BRILL' 20-page article on Woodford appeared in their Summer Special 10; probably the best concise one I have read. It includes a very useful diagram of all lines/sidings/s_boxes, etc. of Woodford Halse. For an excellent social commentary, I also recommend 'Woodford Halse, a Railway Community' by Ruth Irons and Stanley Jenkins (Oakwood Press (0-85361-529-2).

As life moves, in often unexpected ways, I was to become resident in Greens Norton, near Towcester from 1968-1977 (when I first started to visit Quanton Road). I also became familiar with walking the former trackbed of the old S.M.J. which, of course, had a Woodford connection. Indeed, again by life's peculiarities, I had ridden on what was probably the last passenger train along the SMJ behind 61572, the famous 'Wandering 1500' tour organised by the founding group which became the North Norfolk Railway, and had even earlier, in the 1950s, been taken to an early 'Silverstone' Grand Prix meeting by my father, from our Cambridge base; detraining at Towcester for a shuttle bus to the circuit.

Work took me back to Cambridgeshire, and a new world, of LED research & development, and regular contract employment overseas, mainly in Japan; a country with which I have since had regular contact for over 35 years (becoming Chairman of the Japanese Railway Society, since its formation in 1991. In this role I was privileged to meet, twice, Eric Lomax, who, surprisingly maybe following his Japanese experience, was for three years a member of our JR Society. The movie film: 'The Railwayman', highly recommended, and more in truth than 'Bridge on the River Kwai'). During however, my years back in Cambridgeshire I was, as work availed me, one of Trevor Paice's team on restoration of the wonderful G.N.R. coach at Quanton, and now retired (from paid employment) I have also been on member's support to Quanton open days, most recently enjoying Thomas and Friends sessions, which will hopefully see me again this year.



Woodford Halse Station sees 'Black Five' 44920 departing with the 16.30 Nottingham – Marylebone train on May 13, 1966. The station was now almost a 'Halt' with signals removed. *Mike Page*

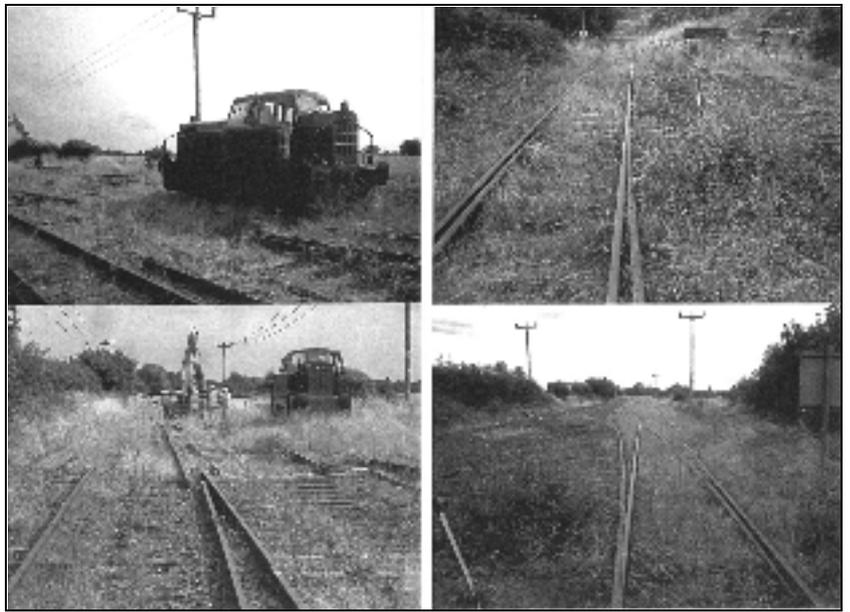
Barrington Railway Report: Welcome to the 'Guided Binway'!

Top left: The two-axle Sentinel loco arrives in Week 2 from the Weardale Railway.

Top right: The 'main line' is left in-situ.

Bottom left: Contractors began to remove the old Barrington railway track beginning July 21 2014.

Bottom right: By Week 3, the sidings had been removed leaving the 'main line' in-situ pending the delivery of replacement track. – *Richard Tremaine*



Former quarry manager John Drayton, MBE, has kept me sort of updated, often rather more promise than activity! Finally in the week commencing Monday July 21 he was able to report people on site; *Richard Tremaine* went down to look towards the end of that week and found a gang of four men, lead by site foreman, Brian Mills. They were loosening up bolts ready for lifting of track. The team are also preservationists having worked at both Dartmoor and Weardale railways. I was able to have a few minutes chat but Brian said that although he was aware of my interest, via John, he couldn't welcome me on site, even with high-vis vest, due to health & safety, etc.

The following week found a Sentinel two-axle loco, said to have come from the Weardale railway operation (Devon & Cornwall Railways), on site, working with a lifting machine, taking rail from the two siding loops which run to the Foxton Road crossing, and loading a long wheelbase carrying truck, the detail of which I couldn't ascertain due to it being camouflaged by long grass growth! It was reported to be something of a 'Heath-Robinson' product and perhaps that was why, a week later, the local Royston Crow newspaper reported a derailment on the residential Glebe Road crossing in the village of Barrington! Traffic was held up for 30 minutes whilst it was re-railed. The end of the third week found all sidings removed but the main through run from Foxton junction to the works remains intact.

There will be a lull of three weeks before the crew expect to return, to begin work on laying new (presumably cascaded) rail. Some of the lifted rail has supposedly been given to a preservation site but no information of where. It is planned to relay the sidings, though with less crossover pointwork, as well as the main link to the works. The original plan, of two to three years ago, was to upgrade to 22.5 ton axle load for MGR type waste trains, up to four a day (main line pathways were agreed with Network Rail, including a reversal through the down road junction). The concrete bridge over the Rhee (Cam tributary) is presently only passed for 16 ton axle load and it was also to have been uprated with strengthening work planned. Crossrail clay excavation was to have been the main infill product; this was, however, re-routed to lay a new Thames estuary wildlife island; Cemex were left to find a new customer for their hole-in-the-ground. A contract has seemingly now been agreed. There is some, as yet unspecified, waste infill, which has to be acceptable to local

and environmental specifications.

Relaying is scheduled to be complete in December and the first infill trains expected around March 2015. John, though having some involvement, is presently playing a minor role but assures me that the line will be reopened in grand style with another steam charity weekend event.

John recently produced, with a grant from the former Rugby Cement owners charity fund, a DVD on his life and work and Barrington (2008-1900 in retrospect) and the works and railway operation (including eight minutes of open weekend return-to-steam specials by CRC member, Colin Bass). On May 14, I attended the 'world premiere', in Barrington village hall, filled mainly by local residents. £10 for almost 80 minutes; was good value; selling well, following a recent favourable Heritage Railway review. Profits go to Multiple Sclerosis research. John is scheduled to present this to Cambridge Railway Circle on Friday Feb 6. 2015, by which time all should be clear as to how operations are to proceed.

Not the best outcome for the cement plant; the rotary kiln has already been taken out (thus reducing its manufacturing rateable value) and redevelopment of the whole site will slowly proceed over the five or so years (my estimate) that it will take to complete the quarry infill to return to farmland. Significant remaining minerals are still potentially available, should the market take a major upturn, though they would have to be transported elsewhere for processing. 'Clunchstone' reserves are still being slowly sold for restoration work (often ecclesiastical), mainly locally, and the site is listed as an SSSI of wildlife and geology (fossils) for the future.

The Sentinel locomotive is very similar to that which I purchased from Cemex on their Barrington site some years ago. Mine was a 'Thomas Hill of Rotherham' variation of the same basic model. They later bought it back from me to display on a short length of specially laid track near the site entrance. On complete closure of the site it was given to 'Rocks-by-Rail' which I visited in June 2013, and a subsequent visit I made on May 1st 2014. On my second visit I was able to ride in the sister loco (named Mr.D, after John Drayton), which Cemex (I think actually still Rugby Cement at that time) had previously donated to what was then Rutland Railway Centre.

'Flying Scotsman' at Rugby Central in 1963



Watched by Woodford Halse WD 90237, the then Alan Pegler-owned *Flying Scotsman* departs Rugby Central with the 'Great Central Special' — Mike Page

Having read about the overhaul and return to service of *Flying Scotsman* in its original LNER condition, one had to see it. Rugby Central was the nearest location to me in 1963 where 4472 would be calling, recalls Mike Page.

Until 1956, Rugby was unknown to me as a 'train spotting' venue. Two of us went there for a Saturday's 'spotting' on April 11 (Circle Line No. 88) and were impressed with the number of freights on the Great Central main line: nearly all were in the hands of Annesley's 01 2-8-0s.

We were tempted to return to the same allotment location by the Great Central 'Birdcage' Bridge on Saturday May 12, 1956. The big attraction was to see A4 60014 *Silver Link* on Ian Allan Company's 'Pennine Limited' Pullman car train. We weren't the only ones: I think most of the West Midland's spotters had the same idea, such that the police turned out to disperse hundreds of us from the allotments by the GCR 'Birdcage Bridge'. Henry and I headed for a field located between the Euston and Northampton lines. The police were approaching to kick us off again just as 60014 tore across the bridge with her all-Pullman train.

Most of the spotters dispersed quickly, but we returned later to net seven A3s (60059/63 (twice), 92, 106 and 111 (twice). Heaton's 60092 *Fairway* was in sparkling condition on a southbound express and was as surprising to see, as 60014 was pleasing. Also across the GCR bridge ran: four V2s including York's 60977; eight B1s; one L1; one J11 on a pick-up freight (Woodford Halse's 64327, which was withdrawn by 1957) and 28 01s.

On the West Coast Main Line below ran the usual Stanier and Fowler classes including four 'Compound' 4-4-0s (these were disappearing quickly) and, very surprisingly, one of Wolverton Carriage Works' ex-LNWR 'Special Tanks' C.D.3! I guess C.D.3 had been to the Rugby shed's repair shop for attention.

Well, it wasn't until 1963 that I paid a return visit to the GCR at Rugby to photograph 4472 on the southbound Great Central Railway Preservation Society's special. I don't know whether it was 4472's first major outing after her rebuild, under Alan Pegler's directive, back to original, LNER single chimney condition.

During the journey from Wolverhampton (Low Level) via Birmingham Snow Hill I only wrote down one 'Hall': Reading (81D)'s 5977 *Beckford Hall*. Then between Birmingham (New Street) and Rugby Midland, most passenger trains on the WCML by then were in the hands of English Electric 'Type 4s' (40s) and BR/Sulzer 'Type 2s' (24s and 25s) while a variety of diesel multiple units (DMUs) handled most of the local services. Goods trains were handled by Stanier 'Black Fives', 8Fs and the occasional Hughes/Fowler 'Crab' and Stanier 'Crab' 2-6-0s. I noted down nine 8Fs, one Standard Four 4-6-0 (75030 from 2B Nuneaton) and one Fairburn 2-6-4T (42114 from 26E Lees, Oldham!).

London Midland Region take-over

A number of us waited on the south embankment opposite the goods yard on the south side of Rugby Central. The surroundings were almost rural. Most LNER types had left the scene, the London Midland Region having taken over the route south of Leicester in 1958. It was then that Neasden's (34E) and Leicester G.C.'s (38C) A3s and V2s had migrated to the East Coast Main Line sheds. So what could one expect?

In the half-hour or so waiting for 4472 to arrive, York B1 61069 made good speed with a southbound fitted freight to be closely followed by Annesley (16D)'s 9F 92073, which was also very much in a hurry with a southbound freight. Another



With a clear chimney, 4472 *Flying Scotsman* accelerates away from Rugby Central with a complete train of Gresley stock, on 15/6/1963.

16D 9F, 92090, was in hot pursuit. Then Woodford Halse (now 2F) 'WD' 2-8-0 90237 clanked and banged into view with a southbound pick-up goods and proceeded to shunt the yard.

Another 16D 9F 92072 slammed by southwards with a fitted freight, and then there was a pause. "Here she is!" 4472 was in sparkling condition with burnished buffers and connecting rods. She drew to a halt by the water tower for five minutes or so with a whole train of Gresley stock. 'Right Away!' She marched out from Rugby Central accelerating quite briskly and with a clear chimney. In my 'going away' shot; I think I achieved a virtually timeless view of an LNER train. So, that was my first view of the reconditioned *Flying Scotsman*.

I retraced my steps to Rugby Midland, where while waiting for a train back to Birmingham the only loco of interest to appear was 'Jubilee' 45567 *South Australia* (Crewe North) on a down train of empty stock. Another 9F roared northwards over the GCR 'Birdcage Bridge' as a '40' pulled in with a Euston-Birmingham train.

We all mostly know of the gradual decline of the GCR route, which finally closed between Leicester and Aylesbury in late 1967. It seemed a complete waste of a well-built railway – constructed to European loading gauge structure (apart from platform clearances) – that surely would have been a valuable freight route today.



York's B1 61069 came through Rugby Central at a smart pace with a feather of steam towing a fully-fitted southbound freight on 15/6/1963.



Almost a 'going away' shot of a late LNER express with a GCR lines 'A3' and Gresley bogie stock as 4472 leaves Rugby Central behind.

It is a pity that the UK did not follow French line closure practice in that after closure, tracks could not then be lifted for 15 years and thereafter the track bed would be protected for 50 more years. It would have then meant that the former GCR route would have been available right up to 2017.



While much emphasis is made today on the 'windcutter' trains of mineral wagons on the GCR, the variety of freight was extensive. Indeed I did not see one train of mineral wagons on that day. Annesley's 92073 has a block load of loaded bogie bolsters.



Darkening the sky! Smokey Annesley 9F 92072 is in full flight with a fully fitted freight heading south to Woodford Halse on 15/6/1963.



Above: 'Triple headers' were a relatively rare sight in 'steam days', unless you were in Exeter in the 1950s, where there was a regular triple-header turn to Barnstaple Junction. Today, a diesel/electric 'triple header' is more common, while a steam one remains rare. Here we see a Stanier 'triple' with 8F 48151 leading 'Jubilee' 45699 *Galatea* and rebuilt 'Royal Scot' 46115 *Scots Guardsman* returning to Carnforth with an empty coaching stock working across Suffolk from Dereham to Carnforth on June 2 2014 after the Mid-Norfolk Railway Gala.
 – Peter Heath

Right: Ex GWR 14XX 0-4-2T No. 1450 was working a push-pull service from Highley into Bewdley on the Severn Valley Railway – John Hunting



Below: A shot of 70806 hauling 70807 (not under power) on 6L37 from Hoo Junction to Whitemoor in atrocious conditions through Coldham's Lane Junction at 14.13 hrs on 27th May 2014. Although a Conditional(Q) service, never the less it runs most weekdays, plus a return service which drifts into Cambridge Station goods loop at around 20.40 hrs where it remains until around 21.05 hrs.
 – Chris Burton

