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SECRETARY - Vacant at the time of typing

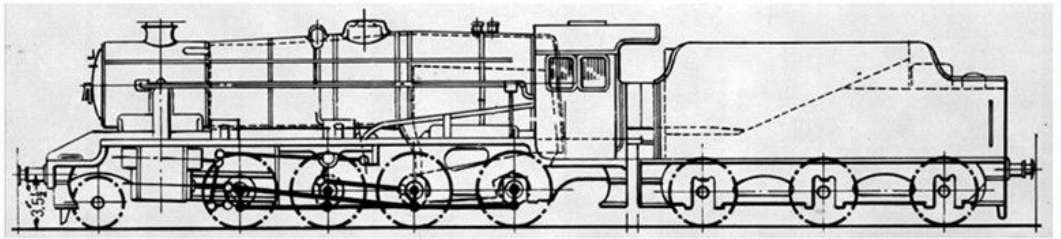
SEE PAGE 17

AERON VALLEY
RAILWAY SOCIETY

THE AERONIAN XP

Endeavouring to enthuse folk with transport in the Aeron Valley. . .and beyond.

JUNE 2021



Hellfire Pass and some Stanier 8Fs - inside!!

A GARRATT GRANGE? ONE OF YOUR JOKES, Ken?
Is this a joke? SEE INSIDE!

A Stanier 8F hauling the ORIENT EXPRESS - another joke, Ken?

Where [*and why*] does the 3rd come *before* the 2nd?

Has this type of piano played its last tune?

NOT popular on a Popular!
WHY??? More Inside!

LONGMOOR - no more!

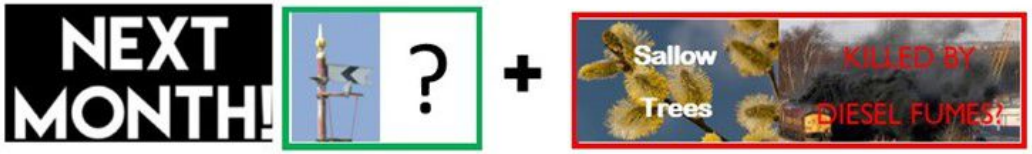
Loco crews needed a bucket + a rope!

2999 + SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY INSIDE

Our Editor has three trays on his desk marked **IN, OUT and LBW.**
"*What does the LBW stand for?*" asked our Chairman.
"***L**et the **Bl**ighters **W**ait!*" replied the Editor.

You are encouraged to read this from your Editor,

FIRST, regarding copyright:- There are some photographs in this issue that are licensed for reuse under the CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION - SharedAlite 2c
I am also grateful to Barbara Brownjohn [on the Editorial Team of THE RAILWAY MAGAZINE] who gave your Editor (several years ago) permission to use material from that periodical PLUS the late Vic Mitchell of MIDDLETON PRESS for permission to use material from their books. Members of THE CORNWALL SOCIETY have been most helpful in allowing me to use their material which has appeared on that Society's website under their webmaster Keith Jenkins. I have been given permission from a gentleman in the Ordnance Survey organisation to use extracts form their maps to illustrate my presentations etc. I have tried to get permission from several other organisations/publishers but did not receive a reply, and rightly (or wrongly[?]) assumed that they didn't mind Thus many have kindly allowed me to reproduce material from their publications often asking that such material is mentioned as being credited to that publisher and/or author. Any who I have overlooked, please accept my sincere apologies.
SECOND, thank you to those who have helped in the production of this issue of THE AERONIAN XP and contributed to it.



Remember what happened at Dawlish?

WEST OF EXETER ROUTE RESILIENCE STUDY or Dawlish Alternative Routes *re January 2014 flooding*	
C1	ALPHINGTON - WARE BARTON Most direct route which is mostly in tunnel
C2	EXMINSTER - WARE BARTON A western alignment of which two-thirds in tunnel
C3	EXMINSTER - WARE BARTON An easterly alignment that reduces the amount of tunnelling
C4	EXMINSTER - BISHOPSTEIGNTON A more easterly alignment which further reduces the length of new construction.
C5	DAWLISH WARREN - BISHOPTEIGNTON The shortest length of new construction
OTHER OPTIONS	
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE A	Modern double track railway would be constructed on the alignment of the former LSWR route from Exeter - Plymouth
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE B	Modern double track railway would follow the alignment of the former GWR Teign Valley route from Exeter to Newton Abbot
More information on the INTERNET	

ALL CHANGE @ SWINDON STATION ALMOST

By the time you read this, hopefully all Hitachi 800 IETs [or *'Flying Cucumbers' with 'Courgettes' that your editor heard for the 5-car units in Mid-May*] should be back on the tracks. During their withdrawal quite a few 'skeleton' services were operated by other types of trains as shown in the following photos taken at the beginning of this unexpected disruption.

EMU guard training between Swindon and Reading

Cross-Country HST shuttling between Swindon and Bristol

Cross-Country HST from Bristol entering Swindon

Voyager dmu about to depart for Bristol

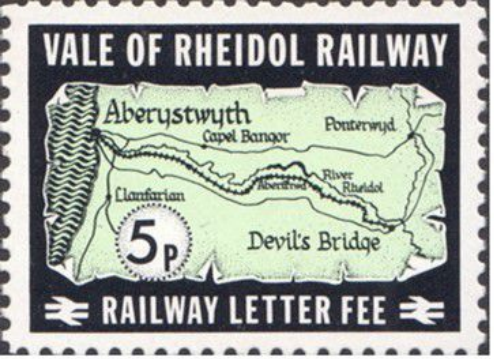
A 5-car IETs *or Courgette - see above* departs for Reading

Photos were take on Monday 10th May; departure board on Saturday 8th May

John back at home[2]

On 1st August 1955, I booked on at 8.55 am at the main line shed and met my driver John Thomas. He was issued with lubricating oil and we were given a ball of cotton waste each. We walked across Park Avenue which, at that time, was a cul-de-sac terminating where the Carmarthen line curved away to the south. In the narrow-gauge loco shed, we met the shedman John Mostyn James, who had made an excellent job of building a substantial body of fire in the firebox of No. 8 "Llywelyn" with best Ogilvie steam coal. It was my job now to build a box full of coal on top of this thick bed of fire all by hand. Driver John Thomas completed the task of oiling round and I checked that the smokebox door was airtight and the ash pan was clean. The bunkers had a substantial amount of coal, although the driver's side one was loaded with small South Wales slack which was soft and always a problem to use. I had previously had six months experience as an engine cleaner on the Vale of Rheidol in 1952, so this was a re-introduction to the narrow gauge shed and depot.

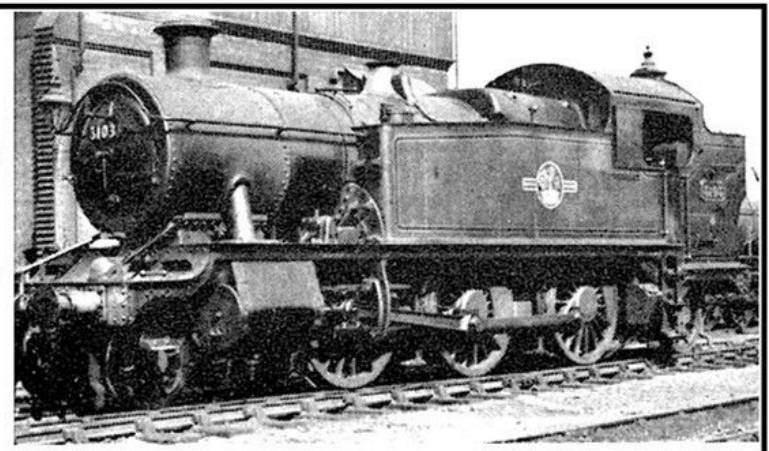
No. 8 was ready to depart for the station [*recent photo right*], so we topped up the water tanks and crossed Park Avenue under the control of the signalman Joe Rowe, who halted any traffic using a red flag. At that time there was very little, being mainly Crosville buses in and out of their large depot and some industrial vehicles. Unbeknown to us "Llywelyn" had recently been to Swindon works for maintenance, but more later.



Departing from the station and re-crossing Park Avenue, the route of the railway at that time went past the football ground on a 1 in 80 gradient. The line is then level until just after it crossed the A4120 road at Llanbadarn Fawr when it climbs until it reaches the "Black Bridge" after which the line drops to Glanyrafon Halt. From here on the line climbs gently towards Capel Bangor but the loco seemed to need no effort in keeping time. After Capel Bangor the fire is burning well with the firedoors kept tight shut to ensure that none of the steam coal falls out onto the footplate. The boiler was steaming well and the water level was being maintained as we reached Aberffrwd. Water is taken here and by now the fire is burning through well. The water level in the gauge glass is where it should be; not too high otherwise the nonsuperheated boiler would prime!

Leaving Aberffrwd with pressure right up to the mark, we crossed the minor road and began to tackle the 1 in 50 gradient with the reverser and regulator set at 25%, enough to maintain our pace. However as we climbed further, the water level in the boiler began to drop alarmingly and it was clear that we had a problem. We made it round the Horseshoe curve and onto the straight, but we were forced to stop at the 8¼ mile post to allow us to recover the water level. We were within a mile of journey's end and even though the hardest part of the climb on a severe curvature was ahead of us, there was sufficient water in the boiler to get us there. On very rare occasions with a heavy train full of passengers, it would have been necessary to use full second

3103 was mentioned last month hauling a Rhymey Valley Sunday School excursion. Now your Editor found this photograph.



Where AND When?

A Carmarthen AVRS member [Mr. Victor Walters] sent this information about this photo for which your editor is grateful.
It is a G.W.R. six-wheeler [No. 1115] Morris Commercial 14 seater Charabanc with half-tracks on the rear wheels - Reg. No. YX3055.

[D5312] hauls the *Queen of Scots* Pullman at Bishopbriggs in 1961 heading south for London.

Did such locos run on the N & B?

This picture was found on one of the NEATH & BRECON websites with the title - '*THE BRECON TRAIN*'.
I came across this snippet in the APRIL 2009 issue of '*THE COAL TANK*' which I edited for some 10 years
Can anyone throw any light regarding whether such locos ran on the Neath & Brecon?

Modified or un-modified smoke deflectors! That is the question! 70026 '*Polar Star*' and 70020 '*Mercury*' smokebox to smokebox at Cardiff (Canton) motive power depot in 12th May 1957.
[*J. D. Edwards*]

regulator (flat out) to reach Devil's Bridge, but fortunately that was not necessary here. Indeed I can only recall one occasion when I was firing to Les Morgan on a NALGO trade union special in 1956, that we had to go "flat out" on full second regulator.

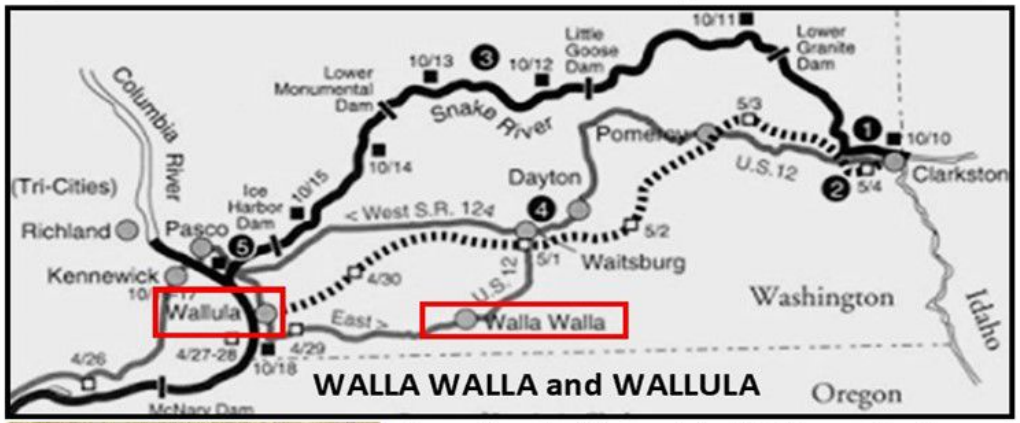
The return trip to Aberystwyth was mostly downhill, so no difficulty was encountered, but during this particular week in August 1955, the same problem occurred every day from Monday to Friday. I was on the afternoon turn, the 1-45 pm departure and on each occasion that week, even though the smokebox, ashpan and fire were checked, we could not get past the 8¼ mile post without stopping to recover. . .

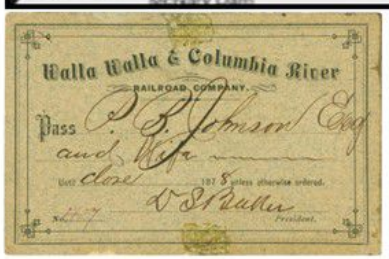
I was called into the locomotive inspector's office and asked my opinion as to what the problem was. I said that I thought there was a valve problem and the loco should go back to Swindon. This was declined, and the local fitters dismantled the valves to discover that there was a hole in the slide valves. New valves without holes in them were obtained and the problem was solved. It seems that the original Davies & Metcalfe drawings had been used by Swindon and for reasons that are not understood these drawings included a hole. The 1923 locomotives had holed valves as built but these had been replaced early on and the problem had not recurred until the 1955 incident.

[*Davies and Metcalfe was a railway equipment and locomotive manufacturer which was founded in Aberystwyth in 1878. More on the Internet*]

D&M

SLOWER BY TRAIN by David Heath



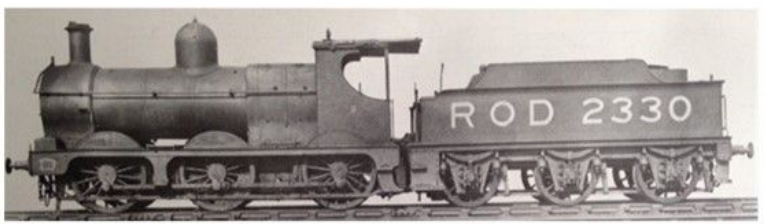


One day in the mid-1870s, a train on the 3ft gauge *WALLA WALLA & COLUMBIA RIVER RAILROAD* in Washington Territory, USA, jumped the tracks several miles outside its terminus. A passer-by helped the crew to re-rail the offending box cars. The line's owner - Doctor Dorsey S. Baker - was on board the train and offered the man a free ride into Walla Walla for his trouble. *"No, thank you, Doctor,"* replied the passer-by, *"I'm in a hurry!"* Like many Walla Walla & Columbia River Railroad (WW&CR) stories, if it isn't true, it ought to be.

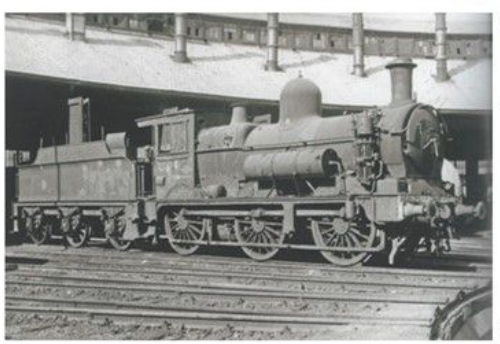
Completed in 1875, the WW&CR ran 32 miles [see above] from the farming community of Walla Walla to the steam boat docks at Wallula on the Columbia River. To save money, the line was built using strap iron mounted on wooden rails. Construction crews rove spikes through the iron to secure it to the wooden stringers. Then the ends of the iron were bent over the ends of each rail to stop it from curling up - this wasn't entirely successful. According to authors Botkin & Harlow, *"The strap iron had a nasty habit of working loose under the train and rising up until it poked its way through the floor of the car, forming the familiar snakehead."* Claims that rawhide was used to patch

Here, there & everywhere?

During WW2 there was much demand for loco power to convey fighting forces personnel, munitions and many other 'things' associated with fighting a war. Although a good number of the '2301' class (*known to many as 'DEAN GOODS' and built from 1883 onwards at Swindon*] had already been withdrawn, and 9 recently taken out of service, these were hurriedly reinstated.



Thus the GWR handed over to the Government 108 goods locos [*actually on 5th October 1939 the Chief Mechanical Engineer reported to the GWR Locomotive Committee that the reconditioning of 100 such locos was to take place for the War Department for service overseas but to ease the pressure on Swindon Works, he further reported that 20 were to be dealt with by the Southern Region though only 15 were prepared at Eastleigh – and a further 8 in December 1940*] of the '2302' class, and at the time of the German invasion of France 79 of them went for duty there.

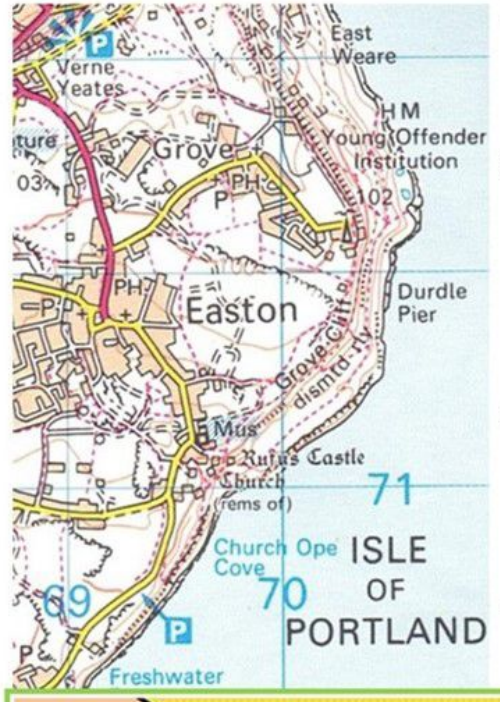


Some of these 79 locos [+ *39 containers and 2 containers*] were destroyed in the retreat of Dunkirk while the remainder were used on French Railways by the German occupation forces - *is that one in the lower left photo?*]. The GWR had to hurriedly reinstate some recently withdrawn locos to compensate whilst the Government paid compensation for any losses to the GWR.

mountainside alongside the railway. In the event of one or more wires being broken, signals in each direction would be automatically triggered to *'DANGER'.*

Thus this system was known as *'ANDERSON'S PIANO'* after is inventor and the noise that the tensioned screen wire were said to make in the wind.

Stone signals were also elsewhere on the Callander & Oban Railway at Craig-na-Cailleach on the west side of Loch Lubnaig , about 6 miles from Callander.



BUT DID YOU KNOW that the GWR had STONE SIGNALS? These were at Grove Point between Portland and Easton on the Isle of Portland - *part of the dismantled line can be seen west of DURDLE PIER.* The 211 yard long boulder screen was erected in 1928 with signals each end; the mechanical arrangement of the screen was relatively simple comprising one continuous wire that ran back and forth from end to end.
To learn more - search STONE SIGNALS. Happy Hunting!!

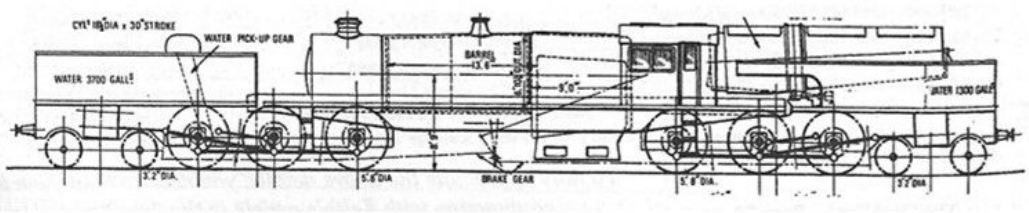
up the rails were, in fact, pure myth. Even so, they didn't prevent the WW&CR from earning the moniker - the RAWHIDE RAILROAD.

The first two locos [No. 1 - *Walla Walla* and No. 2 - *Wallula*] were little 0-4-0Ts built by Porter, Bell & Co. of Pittburgh, Pennsylvania - they endured a lengthy sea voyage via Cape Horn to reach America's Pacific Northwest. Once in service, they boasted a top speed of 10 m-p-h but were usually limited to 4 or 5 m-p-h due to the dire state of the track.

A train could take up to 7 hours to complete the 32 mile journey - no wonder the passer-by mentioned earlier thought that it was quicker to walk! And he wasn't the only one. Botkin & Harlow tell the tale of a traveller [*an innocent stranger in those parts*] who rode the train from Wallula - "*Eventually the Conductor came by and told the Engineer to go ahead, that the Conductor had some business at hand but would catch up with them before too long. The little engine gasped, clattered and shuddered; the whistle bleated in pain, and the trip started. Within a short time the whole shebang was rocketing along at a steady 2 m-p-h, swaying and jolting on the uncertain track . Within an hour the Conductor came sauntering up the track, and nodded to the Engineer. But did he get aboard? Certainly not - it was easier to walk.*"

Doctor Baker, who'd effectively self-financed the entire venture after the townspeople refused to contribute, was forced to adopt extreme economies. We've already noted how the use of wooden rails slashed construction costs. BUT the 'good' Doctor also skimped on water towers - not one was provided along the whole of the 32 mile line! Footplate crews were supplied with. . .

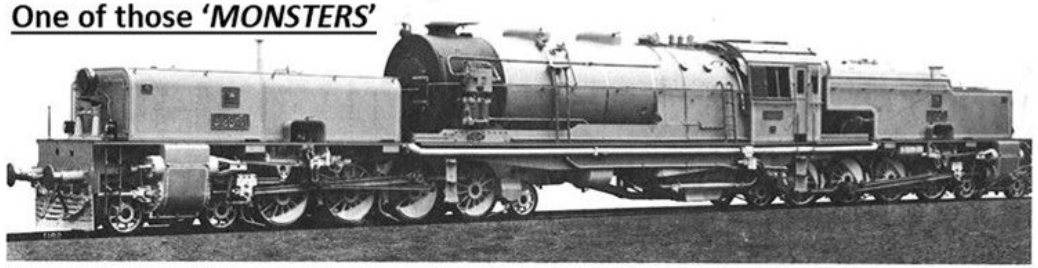
Find out in the next issue



A GARRATT GRANGE?

It was the early 1930s and private locomotive builders were all going through a sticky patch - none more so that Beyer-Peacock who were never slow to publicise the advantage of the Beyer-Garratt articulated type. This company tried to interest the GWR with diagrams of two types of heavy freight 2-8-0 + 0-8-2T and a mixed-traffic 4-6-0 + 0-6-4T with 5ft 8in driving wheels [see above]. This 'double Grange' [as some called it] was given short shift by the GWR, BUT it is interesting to note that when the Iranian Government required some large standard gauge Garratts in 1936 for handling 400 ton trains up 40 miles of 1 in 36[!!] they came to Britain for advice - was it the LMS or LNER who were both Garratt users? NO! To the Southern who were interested in Garratts? NO! They actually went to the GWR and Collett's chief running man [F.C. Hall] who took charge of the project. Full specifications were drawn up for a massive 4-8-2 + 2-8-4T at Swindon. Four of these 'monsters' and last known as being part of Iran's strategic in Tehran.

One of those '*MONSTERS*'



I see that the Rugby League National Cup was once sponsored by Arriva Trains. Were the kick-offs late?

FROM p.27 –To cover for the loss of these '2301' locos, the GWR borrowed various 0-6-0 tender locomotives as follows:-

BORROWED LOCOMOTIVES		
DATE	**FROM**	**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
1939	LMS	26 ex-Midland 2F 0-6-0s
1940	LMS	17 more ex-Midland 2F 0-6-0s
1939	LNER	24 J25 0-6-0s
1940	LNER	16 more J25 0-6-0s
1940	LNER	30 O4 2-8-0s
Further Collett designed 0-6-0s [2251 class - *Baby Castles*] built at Swindon also helped the '2301' loco class losses.		

OOPS

Was this postman delivering the mail first or second class?

OR

Should have gone to

Specsavers

WHAT MIGHT BE SPECIAL ABOUT the 3rd Wednesday of every month?

Not the *lost* chord but the *last* one?

Do these semaphore signals remain despite the entire area now being controlled by Radio Electronic Token signalling?
These are stone signals - a sequence of two-way signals NOT controlled by a signalbox!

Originally these unique 17 signals were controlled by a set of 10 lightweight wires along the length of this railway which would break with the weight of a boulder. These were linked to a wooden post [also on the right - with the weight bars on it] which connects across the line above train level to the signal. The two semaphore signals on each post do not work together; instead a breakage of the wire at any point will replace the signal to danger at either end of a half-mile stretch.

No distant signals are provided; being able to stop short of a pile of rocks is dependent on a good approaching view of the signals and the relatively low permitted line speed. In addition, these signals are regarded as 'cautionary' and may be passed by drivers [*with care*] when at danger.

BUT WHERE WERE THESE SIGNALS?

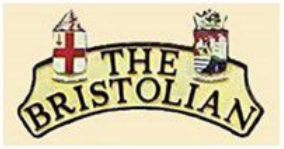
They were on the line that goes through the ***PASS OF BRANDER***

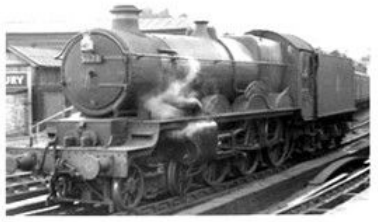
BUT WHERE IS THE PASS OF BRANDER?

Between Dalmally and Taynuilt lies the Pass of Brander on the Oban branch of the West Highland Railway - originally part of the Callander & Oban Railway opened on July 1st 1880. It follows the norther shore of Loch Awe for some 7 miles. Since the railway's opening, rocks falling the steep slopes of Ben Cruachan [which rises over 1000 metres above the track] onto the track had threatened to cause a derailment.

John Anderson, secretary of the above railway, devised a system that would detect falling rocks and provide a warning to drivers. A tensioned wire screen, linked to semaphore signals, would be erected on the

TWO FABULOUS HALLS [1]





It was September 15th 1954 when "*THE BRISTOLIAN*" left Bristol (Temple Meads) hauled by a "Castle" 4-6-0; the rostered "King" 4-6-0 having had a minor failure. 5073'*Blenheim*' [photo by Bob Greening] duly set out from Bristol with Driver Fowler and Fireman R. E. Ball of 82A [Bristol Bath Road] - the normal seven-coach load of 230 tons tare and 245 tons gross.

Brief details from Bristol until 5073 came to a halt.

THE BRISTOLIAN **' 15th September 1954**		
DISTANCE (miles)	**SPEED** (m-p-h)	**DETAILS OF LOCATION**
	39 (min)	2 miles of 1 in 75 of Ashley Hill bank
4.8		Filton Junctionn passed in 7 min 58 secs
	64	Up the long 1 in 300 to Badminton
16.6		Badminton passed in 20 min 40 sec. nearly I minute inside the 21½ min schedule
	80	Speed attained on the 1 in 300 descent from Badmninton
. . .then the brakes began to leak on and eventually the train came to a stand on the fast road at Little Somerford alongside a Severn Tunnel Junction to Didcot freight which had been looped to the platform road '*THE BRISTOLIAN*' to pass at speed.		

5073 was examined and it was found that it couldn't be cured on the spot. Thus it was decided to swap over the two locomotives at Little Somerford standing within that station. Isn't it interesting that the motive power of 'THE BRISTOLIAN' was a "King", then it came down to a "Castle" and now it was coming down to a "Modified Hall" for the haulage of this WR crack express.

LITTLE SOMERFORD looking east.

It was evident from 7904's performance that it was in a fit condition. Who could have foreseen what this 4-6-0 (allocated to 81A - Old Oak Common) with driving wheels of 6ft [compared with 6ft 6in of a 'King' and 6ft 8½in driving wheels of a 'Castle.'] would have achieved - certainly since it was unprepared for this assignment which was the fastest train on the Western Region. Also, how fortunate it was that Mr. W. F. C. Phillips was on this train [his first trip] to make a detailed record of the running - see next page.

LITTLE SOMERFORD - PADDINGTON [Some details]
Time spent at Little Somerford = 13 min 54 sec.
Energetic start - 6.8 miles to Wootton Bassett in 7 min 39 sec.
THE BRISTOLIAN' was 20 min. late passing Wootton Bassett
A perfectly clear road was maintained for this crack express.
7904's capable crew made use of such an opportunity.
7904 and its crew made up 6½ min of lost time.
Paddington reached 13½ min. late.
Crew were within 1½ min of keeping net running times
less two 4 min. recovery margins.
For just over 47 miles (From Wantage Road to West Drayton)
speed was between 80 and 84 m-p-h.
Over the 71.6 miles (from Swindon to Ealing)
average speed was exactly 80 m-p-h.
Passing Swindon to dead stop at Paddington was 59 min. 37 sec.
WELL DONE to 7904's crew [Driver Fowler with Fireman Ball]
[plus the signalmen who kept the line clear when
'THE BRISTOLIAN' running out of its proper path].

line was closed to passenger traffic in 1957 and the rail link ceased altogether in 1966b when goods traffic was withdrawn. The section of the L.M.R. between Bordon and Martinique Yard was lifted shortly after.

The Hollywater Loop, a lightly-laid 4 mile line, was first used for construction training purposes; it was surveyed and laid in 1932 and then dismantled. It was re-laid in 1942 and has been used for training purposes only, unlike the rest of the line which fulfils this function and that of connecting Liss with the Longmoor railway system for passenger and freight movement. During the war this reached impressive figures; on some days over 800 wagons were inter-changed and more than 7,000 passengers used the line. The turnover of trainees during this period was high also, some 27,000 passing through Longmoor in a year.

Over 15 years ago when military operation and construction was the responsibility of the Transportation Branch of the Royal Engineers, but with the formation of the Royal Corps of Transport in July 1965, the operational function was taken over by the new Corps. Some two years later, the railway operating function has been considerably run down and now only one squadron [8 Squadron R.C.T. (embracing both rail and road transport)] is stationed at Longmoor. The School of Transport is also at Longmoor which, under its Commandant - Brigadier P.F. Claxton, is responsible for all forms of military transport and movement training.

More in the next issue.

LONGMOOR MILITARY RAILWAY: Leading Particulars

Gauge	4 ft. 8½ in.
Route length	11 miles
Track length (including sidings)	26 miles
Locomotives: Steam, 2-10-0	1
0-6-0T	1
Diesel, Sentinel 650-h.p.	1
shunters	3
Diesel railcars	2
Rolling stock: Passenger coaches	6
Freight wagons	56
Maximum speed	30 m.p.h.
Passengers carried annually	52,000
Rail (flat-bottom)	75 lb./yd.
Axleload	16.4 tons

Military railway operation will be a centre of interest because it embraces all the functional aspects of this form of transport. It provides many opportunities to improvise and overcame difficulties, and tests the ingenuity of the operator, but the basis of success is to be found in a good knowledge of the rule book and the ability to interpret and use it.

The railway training centre for the British Army has been at Longmoor, in Hampshire, for more then 60 years - the first Railway Engineers unit [badge left] moving there in 1903. This 53 Company R.E., formed in1899 for serving in the South African War; it was joined by B Company R.E. in 1905. Jointly these two units constructed the first section of the L.M.R. [LONGMOOR MILITARY RAILWAY] the 5 mile section from Bordon to Longmoor.

The final stretch - the 3½ miles from Longmoor to Liss - was started in 1924 and was the work of R.E. Supplementary Reserves units. The task spanned 9 years, but did not include a connection with the Southern Railway main line which was not put in until 1942.

The Liss connection and the construction of the exchange sidings considerably facilitated the handling of through traffic and the need to interchange at Bordon dwindled as a result. The Southern Region Bentley - Bordon

W.R. LITTLE SOMERFORD - PADDINGTON

Engine: 4-6-0 No.7904 '*Fountains Hall*'

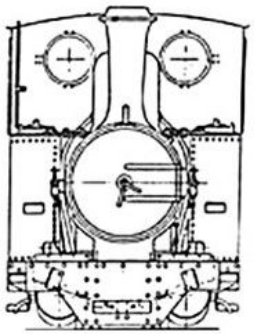
Load: 7 coaches, 230 tons tare, 245 tons gross

DISTANCE (Miles)		SCHEDULE (min. sec.)	ACTUAL (min. sec.)	SPEED (m-p-h)
0.0	LITTLE SOMERFORD	0 00	0 00	0
2.7	Brinkworth		3 45	65
6.8	Wootton Bassett	8	7 39	66
12.4	SWINDON	13	12 33	79
18.1	Shrivenham		17 05	76
23.2	Uffington	*	20 56	77
25.8	Challow		23 02	78
29.3	Wantage Road		25 45	80
33.2	Steventon	31½	28 43	80
36.6	DIDCOT	33½	31 14	82
41.2	Cholsey		34 37	82
45.0	Goring		37 19	80
48.2	Pangbourne		39 41	82/84
53.7	READING	45½	43 41	83
58.7	Twyford	49	47 18	80/83
65.5	Maidenhead	54	52 10	83
71.2	SLOUGH	58½	56 25	82
76.5	West Drayton		60 22	80
80.6	SOUTHALL	65	63 35	75
84.0	Ealing Broadway	*	66 15	73
88.4	Westbourne Park	75	70 01	
89.7	PADDINGTON	79	72 10	0

* includes 4 min. recovery margin

Can you find [in this issue] a candidate that the AVRS could enter this contest?

ON THE BUSES



W.D. Light Railways by Gareth D. Jones.

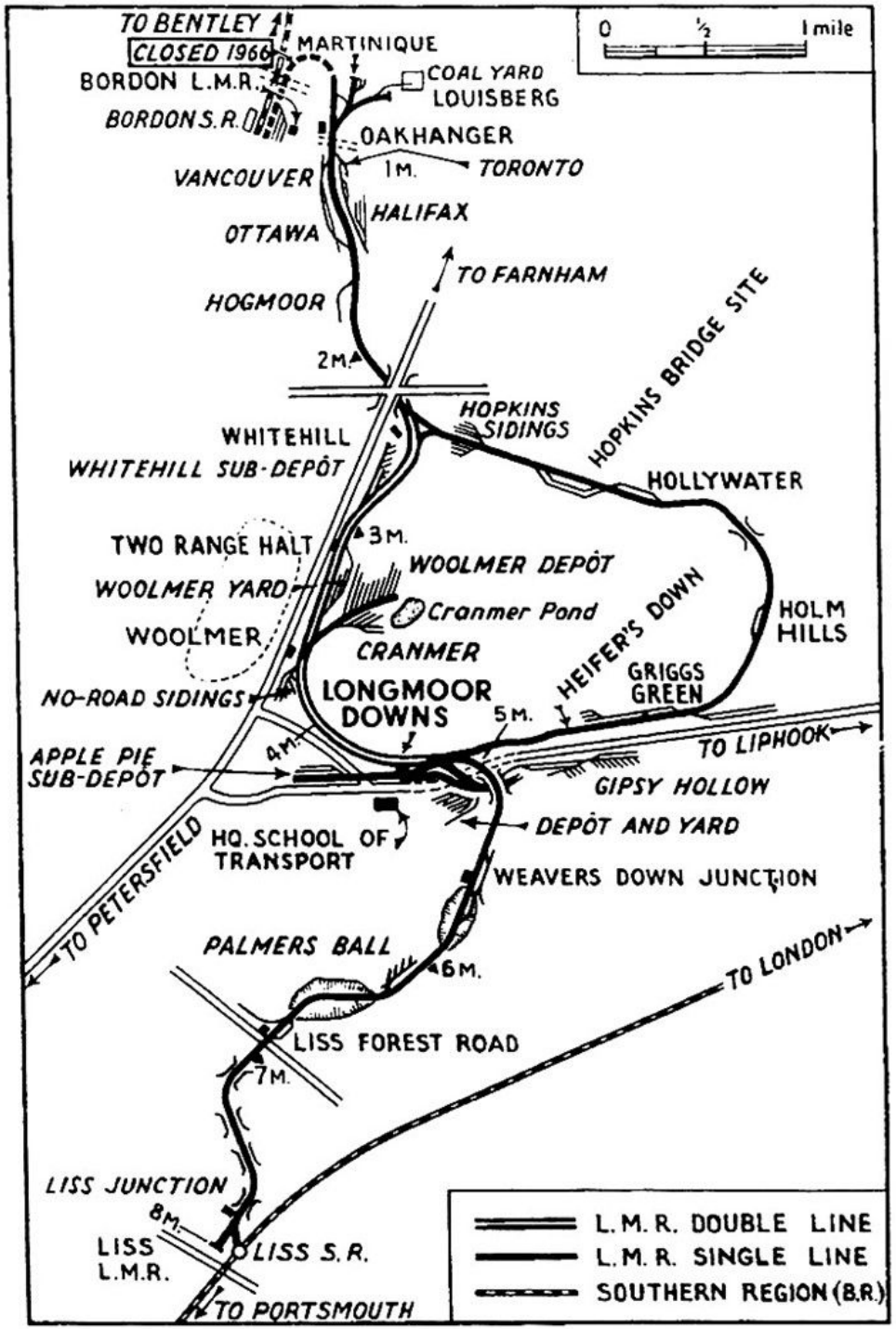
The AVRS Editor has been given permission to use it from the Vale of Rheidol Railway Newsletter

The WDLR system supported the allied forces in a multitude of ways, one of the primary uses was to keep the troops on the front line supplied with rations, munitions and other essentials. The railway also provided a transport network for troops moving to and from the front lines and provided an improved method for extracting wounded for more prompt treatment saving lives in the process.

To the north of the French town and important railway junction at Arras is found the Canadian National Vimy Memorial [*left*] which honours the Canadian soldiers who gave their lives fighting in the First World War. It is on Vimy Ridge where the lookout point was of great strategic importance as it overlooked the roadways and terrain eastwards towards the German forces. Allied artillery was directed from there to disrupt German lines of supply and communication. The WDLR network that supported the troops on the ridge was of huge importance to ensure the artillery had enough ammunition to maintain its role. The site is a very moving place to visit with the very striking memorial towering above the ridge-line, standing guard. It is highly recommended to visit if you have an interest in such things, especially the preserved trenches system a short distance from the memorial.

Another area the railways came into their own was within the battlefield area that straddled the river Somme, the scene of one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War.

LONGMOOR No More!



THE HEJAZ RAILWAY was a narrow-gauge railway [3ft 6in] that ran from *DAMASCUS* to *MEDINA* [810 miles] through the *HEJAZ* region of modern day Saudi Arabia with a branch line to *HAIFA* on the Mediterranean Sea [see accompanying map]. It was a part of the *OTTOMAN RAILWAY* - its original aim was to extend the line from the *HAYDARPAS TERMINAL* in *KADIKOV* beyond *DAMASCUS* to the city of MECCA. BUT construction was interrupted due to the outbreak of WW1 and the line stopped 250 miles short of Mecca.

An important reason for this railway was to improve the economic and political integration of the Arabian provinces into the Ottoman state, and to facilitate the transportation of military forces.

The Hejaz line was repeatedly attacked and damaged, particularly during the Arab Revolt, when Ottoman trains were ambushed by the guerrilla force led by T. E. Lawrence - better known as *LAWRENCE OF ARABIA.* Information and pictures of the many attacks on this railway can be seen on the Internet.

19th May 2021
London - Bristol & return
via Didcot and Swindon.
Passing Uffington [*TOP*]
Marston Footbridge [*BOTTOM*]

From this area the railway system transported many injured troops away from the front lines to relative safety of the field hospitals set up away from the front lines.

After the First World War many of the locomotives used on the system were repatriated and sold on to other industrial users. Sadly only a handful of these engines survive today and fewer still are in operational condition. I consider myself fortunate to have seen an example of the Baldwin and Hunslet 4-6-0 locomotives during a visit to the Statfold Barn Railway [*right*] which was a great day out with good company.

One of the inspirations behind writing this article is that a Baldwin 4-6-0 locomotive is under restoration within our workshop at Aberystwyth - *right.* The engine, works No.44699, is owned by the Imperial War Museum who repatriated the engine from India in 1985 and has been placed in the custodianship of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway (WHHR). The engine will be restored as, 590, a Baldwin which operated on the Welsh Highland Railway (WHR) from 1923 until it was cut up by the contractor that was hired to scrap the original WHR permanent way in 1942. I for one am rather looking forward to the day this engine once again takes to the rails under its own power, upon completion it will be the third of its type to steam in the UK, remarkable survivors when considered that they were only thought to last six to eight months.

Remember?

This Ford Popular model which had a very unusual windscreen wiper system. When driving in the rain the wipers virtually stopped; even turning them on to full setting. On going downhill they went like the clappers! Climbing a steep hill when it's raining can be an 'adventure' in one of these cars. As the 1172 cc engine labours its way up a hill steeper than 1 in 7, the wipers crawl across the windscreen, it begins to get hot inside with steam soon issuing from the front end - overheated engine. In days past there was, sometimes someone [who was used to seeing overheated cars climbing some steep hills] ready with supplies of water (sometimes making a charge!) to help cool those 'hot' engines down. Such hills were often to be avoided!

RAILTALK is the internet magazine FOR the ENTHUSIAST

Two photos of 2999 '*Lady of Legend*' - from Didcot Locomotive Centre

Grateful thanks to Peter Hudson

THE HEJAZ RAILWAY

NOT your usual Stanier 8F 2-8-0's

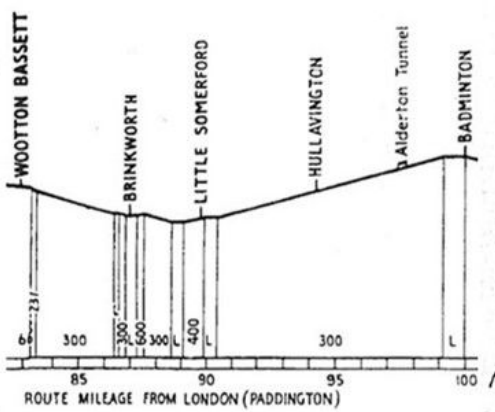
Serious damage [by cannon fire] was caused to many Stanier 8Fs that served the War Department abroad. This is loco WD 432 standing at Halfaya ('*Hell Fire Pass*'- see below) with armour plating protection. Later, protection was increased to include the tender front as well as the boiler and cab. On June 15th 1941 German armour was said to be deployed to draw the British tanks of the 11th Hussars onto concealed 88mm guns - 11 out of 12 British tanks were destroyed in this *OPERATION BATTLEAXE* earning that Pass the nickname '*HELLFIRE PASS.'*

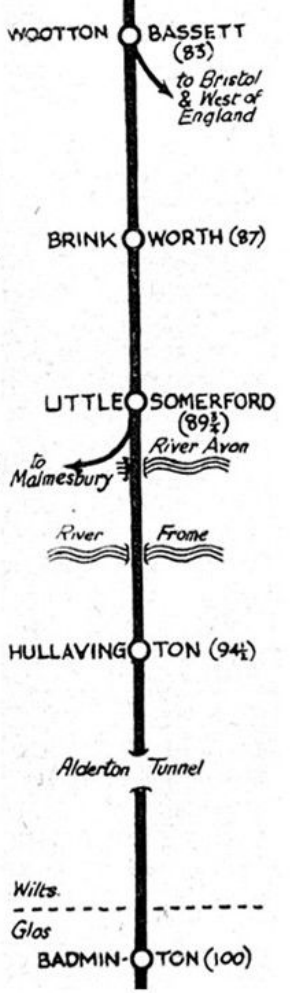
There are other places in the world nicknamed HELLFIRE PASS including a mountain pass reaching 1,788ft above sea level in Gwynedd - BWLCH Y GROES - Pass of the Cross. It is located within the Aran Mountains on the edge of Snowdonia - see left.

I've had major problems with my printer,
So please understand if there are any printing problems in this issue - Ken

The 3rd will be 2nd

Because the third attempt at the TON by steam on 9th May 1964 took place on the Badminton to Swindon section of the Western Region main line in the vicinity of Little Somerford, it seemed right to include this attempt in an issue with what happened at Little Somerford station several years earlier.





100 m-p-h ATTEMPT No. 3 by 5054				
DISTANCE (miles)	LOCATION	SCHEDULE (minutes)	ACTUAL m. s.	SPEEDS m-p-h
17.65	BADMINTON	22½	21 12	66
23.40	Hullavington		25 54	89
27.90	Little Somerford		28 30	96
30.65	Brinkworth		30 17	88
34.75	Wotton Bassett	35	33 28	65*

The full performance log of single chimney 5054 [together what that of double chimney 7018 [hauling THE BRISTOLIAN] is shown on the next page. The Editor is hoping [commitments permitting] to produce a booklet about May 9th 1964 sometime in the future. On 8th May 1964 5054 on 82B (Bristol, St. Philip's Marsh) awaits a day of glory on the following day.

WESTERN REGION - Bristol - Paddington

LOCOMOTIVES		5054 'Earl of Ducie'			7018 'Drysllwyn Castle'		
CREW		Driver F. Higby Firemen: R.Gitshan/C. Richards			Driver: R. J. Jones Fireman G. J. Williams		
COACHING STOCK		7 coaches 243 tons tare, 265 tons gross			8 coaches 280 tons tare, 305 tons gross		
DISTANCE		SCHED.	ACTUAL	SPEED	SCHED.	ACTUAL	SPEED
0.00	BRISTOL (Temple Meads)	0	0.00		0	0.00	
0.60	*Dr. Days Bridge Junction*		2.38	15*			
1.65	Stapleton Road	5	4.24	45	5	3.49	44
2.50	Ashley Hill		5.39	42			
3.90	Horfield		7.25	37		6.54	37½
4.80	FILTON JUNCTION	9½	8.56	48	8½	8.29	42
6.20	*Stoke Gifford East*	11½	10.30	50		10.09	49
9.20	*Coalpit Heath*		13.39	63		13.24	62½
13.10	*Chipping Sodbury*		17.12	69/70		17.00	66/69
17.65	BADMINTON	22½	21.12	66	21½	21.02	68
23.40	*Hullavington*		25.54	89		25.28	90
27.90	*Little Somerford*		28.30	96		28.20	96
30.65	*Brinkworth*		30.17	88		30.07	87
34.75	*Wootton Bassett*	35	33.28	65*	34	33.24	60*
40.35	SWINDON	39½	37.57	80	39	38.27	74
46.15	Shrivenham		42.04	86		42.59	82
51.15	Uffington	47½	45.31	90		46.28	85
53.85	Challow		47.18	88		48.30	85
57.25	Wantage Road		49.39	88		50.56	86½
61.15	Steventon	54½	52.17	87	55½	53.34	86½
64.55	DIDCOT	57	54.36	87	58	56.00	81
69.20	Cholsey		57.55	84		59.37	75
72.90	Goring		60.37	80		62.37	77½
76.10	Pangbourne		63.00	79*		65.15	72
						p.w.s.	25*
79.00	Tilehurst		65.08	82/84		69.35	
81.65	READING	69	67.05	79*/81	71½	72.06	69
86.65	Twyford	73	70.49	75*	75	76.20	69
93.40	Maidenhead	78	75.48	86/83	80	81.12	85
99.20	SLOUGH	82½	79.58	85	84½	85.22	79
104.40	West Drayton		83.38	84		89.32	79
						sigs	20*
108.55	Southall	89½	86.36	85	93	94.25	64
111.95	Ealing Broadway		88.55	87		97.26	74
114.90	Old Oak Common		90.59	82		99.22	75
						sigs	30*
116.40	Westbourne Park	95½	92.31	40*	101	102.08	
						sig.stop	*
117.65	PADDINGTON	100	95.33		105	107.54	

* Speed restriction

Unusual ORIENT EXPRESS haulage!

Egyptian State Railways

ORIENT EXPRESS - 18.00 Cairo - Tel El Kebir

Locomotive: Stanier '8F' 2-8-0 ESR No. 850

Load: 15 coaches - 685 tons

DISTANCE [miles]	LOCATION	SHEDULE [minutes]	ACTUAL [min. sec.]	SPEED [Av] [m-p-h.]
0.0	CAIRO	0	0.0	0
0.8	Cabin 4	4	3 40	
3.0	Tawdeeb Cabin	7	8 15	33
4.1	Shubra	9	10 15	33
6.2	Mitnama BP	12	13 50	35
8.8	Qalyub Junction	16	17 45	39
12.4	Sudiyum BP	21	23 10	40
15.9	Qaha	26	28 20	41
20.6	Tukh	33	35 00	41
24.9	Sandanhur	39	41 20	42
27.9	BENHA [arrive]	45	46 50	41
0.0	BENHA [depart]	0	0.00	6 mins EARLY
2.8	Mimyet el Sia	7	7 30	35
7.3	El Azizya H.	13	15 55	38
18.2	El Zambalum	29	33 25	37
22.0	ZAGAZIG [arrive]	36	40 30	3 mins LATE
0.0	ZAGZIG [depart]	0	0.00	on time
1.0	Cabin 5	4	4 00	
8.7	El Siva	15	17 55	39
14.8	El Mahgas BP	24	27 55	35
18.4	TEL EL KEBIR	30	34 20	

The ORIENT EXPRESS BUT NOT by a loco that you would expect to haul it!

BRYNGOLD BOOKS

BACK PAGE PHOTO Western Welsh provided an important link for many rural communities as this busy 1950 scene at Aberaryon, with all-Leyland TS7 163 (KG 7011) waiting it next turn of duty, shows. Photo by A. B. Cross and reproduced with the grateful permission of *BRYNGOLD BOOKS* from their book - *'RED, CREAM AND A TOUCH OF GRAY' by Colin Scott*