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01974 241653

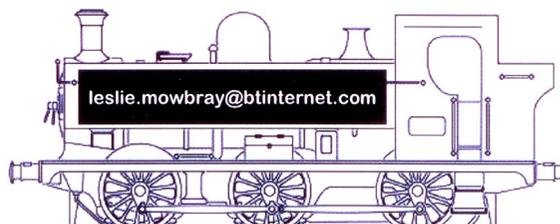


Felin Pontfaen, Llanwryfon, Aberystwyth, SY23 4HA.

Treasurer

Les Mowbray

01239 841346

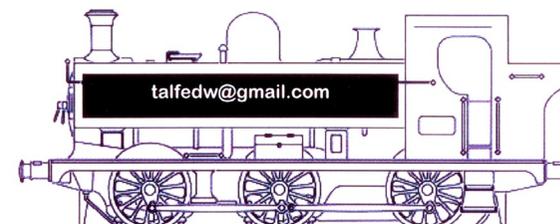


Plas-y-Dderwen, Boncath, Pembrokeshire, SA37 0HS.

Social Secretary

Steve Parr

01974 821444

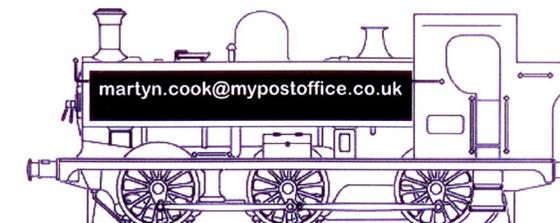


Talfedw, Llwyn y groes, Tregaron, SY25 6QF.

Exhibition Secretary

Martyn Cook

01974 272611



Garn Foel, Pennant, Llanon, SY23 5JG.

Editor - Ken Mumford. "Penylan," 41 Towcester Road, Coleview, Swindon, SN3 4AS.

Tel: ex-directory. E-mail:- ken.mumford@ntlworld.com

Secretary - vacant at time of typing

**AERON VALLEY
RAILWAY SOCIETY**

THE AERONIAN XP

**Endeavouring to enthuse folk in the
Aeron Valley. . .and beyond!**

MARCH 2021



This is class V2
2-6-2 [No.60828]
about to enter
Grantham Station.
[Pinthurst]
Can you find an
article in which
reference is made
this actual loco?



This operator is turning a
wheel that released steam
at high pressure that used
an 'instrument' to call
workers at this 'factory'
to work, and certain other
times during the day, but
especially when the 'factory'
working day was over.

Can you find an article that
is connected with this photo
inside this issue?



Two columns
or
one per page;
that is
the question!

Yes!

Once again I've been experimenting.

Again, with the layout of
THE AERONIAN XP.

Would the subscribers like two
columns per page or one column
per page or a mixture of both?

That is the question that needs
to be asked to make
THE AERONIAN XP
a publication that AVRS subscribers
can be proud of.

So, follow the example of this 'bright' AVRS subscriber
[who wishes to remain ANONYMOUS]..



What is
the link
between
these two
photos?



From the Past



TOP

Fairford Rally
2004

MIDDLE

Lotmead
Farm

Strawberries
& Steam

BOTTOM

RAF Ayro
Lancaster

Two Tunnels Greenway

This is a 'shared use path' for walking and cycling in the Bath [Somerset] area. The route follows the disused trackbed of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway from East Twerton via the Bath suburb of Oldfield Park to the 447 yard Devonshire Tunnel [also it is the longest tunnel in the UK without intermediate ventilation]. It then emerges into Lyncombe Vale before entering Combe Down Tunnel [just over a mile long] following which it crosses and into Midford.



Opened on April 6th 2013, there is much more information on various Internet websites - but two stories from the past.

1. Ex-fireman John Sawyer on his first trip when 17:-
"I wasn't told what to expect. It was a kind of initiation. The regular crew both put soaking rags on their faces as they went into Devonshire Tunnel. I didn't know what they were doing. I was 'blasted with smoke, hot cinders and steam!' It was terrifying. It really frightened me. I've since been through that tunnel hundreds of times and I've never got used to it."
STORY 2 on page 28



Devonshire Tunnel
 [just after S & D closure]

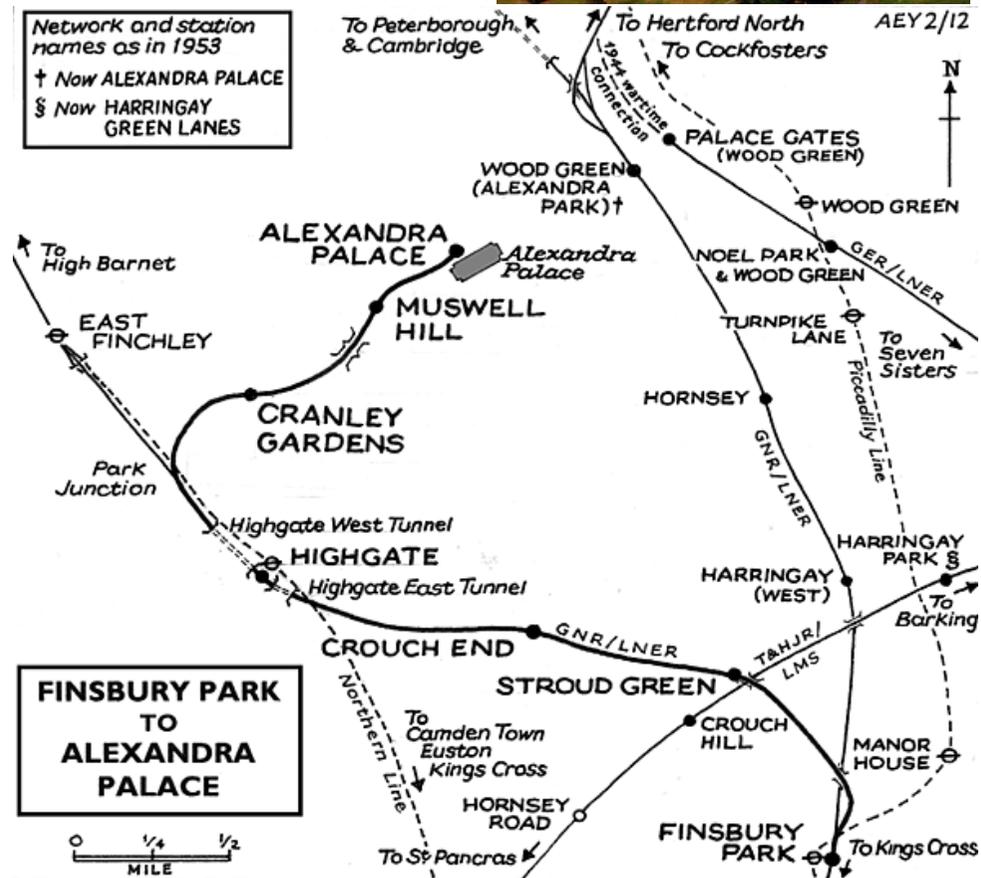
Have you read about what Aberayron received a second time in 1958?



ALEXANDRA PALACE BRANCH



Alexandra Palace



DID YOU KNOW that in the grounds of ALEXANDRA PALACE was a railway station - one of a number of stations to have held that name at various times BUT SHOULD NOT *be confused* with the current ALEXANDRA PALACE which is on

the East Coast Main Line to the east of the closed station that WAS in the grounds of Alexandra Palace [*where, in 1936, the first BBC TV pictures were broadcast*] - see right-hand photo at the article's beginning.

The former station was the terminus of a short branch line from Highgate - the preceding station on this branch was Muswell Hill. The terminus was located immediately adjacent to the north side of the Palace buildings. Nothing remains of the tracks or island platform today, which have been removed and covered by a car park, but the small station building remains and is in use as a community centre - see top left photo.

Among the schemes for improving London's transport [interrupted by WW2] were the electrification of the former LNER line from Finsbury Park to the Alexandra Palace, and the provision of a connection at Finsbury Park with the underground to Moorgate. The extension of the tube from Archway (Highgate) to East Finchley was completed in July



1939, and the Northern Line trains now run to High Barnet and Mill Hill East, but for several years the Alexandra Palace line has had no more than a shuttle service of steam trains to and

from Finsbury Park during the hours of business Travel - above. Even these reduced facilities have now been withdrawn, as the service was among those temporarily suspended on October 29th 1951 as an economy measure. Alternative transport facilities are available, and it remain to be seen whether it is decided to close the line permanently. With dwindling passenger numbers, passenger services to

Chimney to roof is about 1 ½ inches!

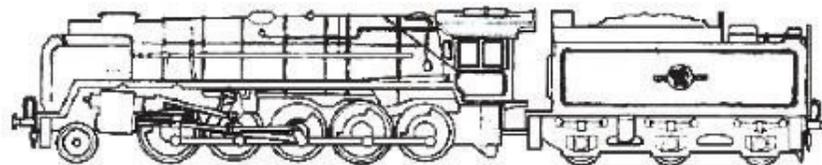
The original Penar Tunnel was built by Benjamin Hall for the passage of horses and trams from the local collieries to the Crumlin Canal. When the GWR took over the line in 1877, the tunnel was found to be too low and narrow for the passage of steam engines and so would require rebuilding.

When this was finally undertaken at the start of the new century in preparation for the movement of coal from the new Markham and Oakdale pits, it was found that the tunnel could be shortened by about half to 239 yards in length but required a complete rebuild to accommodate steam engines.

This was not fully completed until September 1912, before which the line south from Penar Junction [on the Pontypool Road to Neath line] to Hall's Road was unusable.

During the period from the opening of Markham and Oakdale, traffic from these collieries, and also others open north of Penar Junction (for example. Llanover), passed via the Taff Vale Extension Line from Penar Junction, but after September 1912 was able to run south from Penar Junction to Hall's Road Junction where it joined Western Valley line on to Rogerstone Yard and Newport.

When Standard class 9F 2-10-0s worked services to Markham and Oakdale in the early 1960s, their clearance through Penar Tunnel was extremely restricted with only about 1 ½ inches between the engine chimney/cab and the tunnel roof, so that the driver and fireman had to lie face down on the cab floor for ventilation through the tunnel in the up direction when running chimney-first. It was more normal when working back down the Valley tender-first.



other equipment, and an extensive track network. Much of this is displayed in the Railway Exhibition Hall but **BEWARE** when this museum is allowed to open - you really need a **WHOLE DAY** to thoroughly enjoy and explore this fascinating museum.



TWO TUNNELS GREENWAY - Story 2: In the unventilated 447 yard Devonshire Tunnel where clearances were tight - both of these factors led to a November 1929 tragedy.

The crew of their slow-moving, heavily-laden goods train were overcome by the loco's exhaust fumes. **THE RESULT** was that having breasted the climb out of Bath, the now out-of-control train gathered speed down the 1 in 50 gradient towards Bath killing the driver + two goods yard workers.

Alexandra Palace operated on 3rd July 1954 along with the rest of the line from Finsbury Park.

The line as far as Muswell Hill continued to be used for goods traffic until 18th May 1957 when the section between Muswell Hill and Highgate was closed altogether. The tracks between Muswell Hill and Highgate were retained until the 1970s to enable Northern City Line's tube stock to be transferred to and from Highgate depot, and as the tracks are not electrified, the trains had to be hauled by battery locomotives.

Today the track has been removed and many of the platforms and station buildings have been demolished.

At Stroud Green the former Station Master's house still stands and sees residential use, but the platforms and buildings have been removed. The opposite is true at Crouch End [right], where the platforms survive almost intact but



only fragments of the station building survive. The track bed between Muswell Hill and Finsbury Park is now largely part of the Parkland Walk which officially opened in 1984.



Your Editor once left a railway society because its Chairman moaned about members [who like your Editor] that were unable to attend meetings - he referred to them as 'ARMCHAIR' members! **THE AVRS encourages such members** - reading THE AERONIAN XP and/or contributing an article makes **YOU** a valued member of the AVRS!

THE END?

When the Swindon Work hooter blew for the last time at 4-30 pm on March 26th 1986 [right], it was greeted in the town as a fittingly mournful symbol of the bitter closure of 'the factory'.

For many Swindonians the fact that this hooter would not be heard again suddenly brought home the realisation that the historic works were dead.

For over a century the hooter had been part of everyday life and it would be sadly missed - even though, for many, it symbolised the oppressive control that 'the factory' had over people's lives.

There were claims that the hooter could be heard up to 25 miles away, but this has to be taken with a pinch of salt - though it could be heard loud and clear at Lydiard House, three miles away. There the 5th Viscount Bolingbroke set up a grievance of his own against those who worked at 'the factory' when he objected of the 'steam whistle' calling workers to their labours saying that its noise could frighten and disturb some of his pheasants sitting on their eggs a few miles away.

Quite a large petition signed by those at 'the factory' [and others who did not] was sent objecting to his 'Lordship's action' - it had the desired effect.

BUT DID YOU KNOW that this hooter was NOT the first means



AMBERLEY MUSEUM

The site [now occupied by this museum] was formerly the *AMBERLEY CHALK PITS*. From the 1840s to the 1960s, chalk was quarried and burnt in kilns to make lime for mortar, for decorating and for agricultural use.

Initially there were several producers at Amberley making lime or cement.

By the time of the last century John Pepper and his son [Thomas Cunningham] were the sole producers on this site until the business closed in the 1960s.

Peppers' limeworks was served by standard gauge tracks connecting with the main line from London to Brighton line at nearby Amberley Station. The path leading to the museum's ticket office lies on the route of that connecting line, which [from 1870] provided direct access for railway



wagons to the works, where sidings led to the kilns. At first, wagons were drawn in by means of a stationary steam winding engine, but by 1877 they were being hauled by the works' first locomotive.

Four railway locomotives [3 steam, 1 diesel] were employed during the working life of the quarry. One of the steam engines [an Aveling & Porter built in 1899] was equipped with an external flywheel which enabled it to drive the grinding wheel below the kilns by means of a belt. The locomotive shed in which it stood [next to the museum's smithy] has an unusual chimney, supported on old bullhead rail, to take the smoke from the working engine.

This museum has a collection of narrow gauge railway locomotives, rolling stock and



Quenington is the next village - a pretty Cotswold setting - with a large village green. Kearsley/ Marchant routes meet here, going to Cirencester and Cheltenham. After Quenington the road drops

through a lofty glade to the River Coln to another pretty Cotswold village - Coln St. Aldwyn. By now, there were usually no passengers left on the bus, so we parked outside the pub for refreshments (!) before completing the run to Hatherop, two miles away, through private estates.

The return journey started from Hatherop at 1403, and took the same route back, picking up a full load en route. By 'FULL LOAD' one means three children to a seat, standing on the lower deck amongst other places. It has been known for NINETY-ONE [91!!] passengers to be aboard a creaking RTL which shows how well these London buses were built.

When this was written [i.e. 1974] the route remained the same, but the vehicles are not in the best of conditions even the London Transport red paint is showing through the grey of Marchant's. The writer thought that if the vehicles were kept in good condition, and routes

tree-lopped once in a while, the Marchant and Kearsley routes could be more than a lifeline for the remote villages.

These could easily be used for pleasure rides through the scenic Cotswold countryside.



91 on a 56 seater!

What would Blakey think of our bus services in 2021?

of summoning workers to 'the factory?'

- [1] First was a large bell [fixed to the roof of 'C' shed] PROBLEM - By 1867 Swindon had grown and so many of 'the factory's' workers lived in outlying villages - too far to hear the bell.

SOLUTION:-

- [2] Secondly a deafening hooter that could be heard several miles away which would blow for ten minutes at 5-20 *in the morning*.

PROBLEM - Unpopular with many people. Local Government Board ordered that it must not blow again.

GWR's ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM

A new **LOUDER** hooter!

This NEW hooter sounded to a careful planned timetable:-

SWINDON WORKS HOOTER				
MONDAY to THURSDAY			FRIDAY	
	TIME	DURATION	TIME	DURATION
M O R N I N G	6:45	17 SECS	6:45	17 SECS
	7:20	12 SECS	7:20	12 SECS
	7:25	7 SECS	7:25	7 SECS
	7:30	12 SECS	7:30	12 SECS
	12:30	12 SECS	1:30	12 SECS
A F T E R N O O N	1:05	12 SECS		
	1:10	7 SECS		
	1:15	12 SECS		
	4:30	12 SECS		

Three decade after Swindon Works closed, local steam engineer [Colin Hatch of Wanborough, near Swindon] built and installed a replica of that famous hooter on the roof of

the STEAM MUSEUM of part of the SWINDON 175 celebrations. Today, Colin Hatch operates these replica hooters on special days.

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

In the past Railway Police were still endeavouring to locate workmen whom they wish to question in connection with the collapse of the hooter, which fell down during 'TRIP' week. Meanwhile, everyone else is searching for Ted Bunce and his D Shop scaffolding gang - they put it back up.



The AVRS Editor found this snippet in the October 1960 issue of SWINDON RAILWAY NEWS given to me by a friend who once worked in 'THE FACTORY.'



28th March 1998 saw 6024 'King Edward 1' hauling Pathfinder Tours [The Cumbrian Mountain Express] over the Settle & Carlisle line - the photo from 6024 website gallery. The loco did well from Crewe to Hellifield; after that the performance was far from 'Express' - the reason given was poor coal from Columbia. An interesting banner was laid

out on the bank at Blea Moor which said:-

The Rivals ? "Bury the King, Bring back the Duchess!" by **Richard Brinsley Sheridan ?**

Then there were some tiny lanes and farmyard to negotiate before reaching Marston Meysey - where RTL 138 had to reverse into a gateway and go back through the village to the road to Kempford after some 2½ miles of straight, fast [40 m-p-h] road. For the second time the RTL had to reverse at St. Mary's Church, Kempford and return through that village to turn right onto the Whelford road - a stretch of road that passes the end of the main runway of Fairford RAF Station. On an unknown date ex-Ribble Leyland CCK was on this stretch it stopped so that its passengers could see Concorde 002 taking off - see right! A few years later your Editor took a group of pupils group of



Concorde 002 at Fairford



Space Shuttle - May 1983



pupils to see the Jumbo Jet modified to carry the Space Shuttle land at Fairford having come from the Paris Air Show in May 1983 - see above.

The route now turns left in Whelford to reach Fairford after two or so miles. The bus stops in the quaint market place before leaving past the church and over the bridge beside a mill [see next page] whereafter it turns right and leaves Fairford.

This seemed a good idea considering we were going to transfer 8335 to their yard in the near future. Would Dave Nicol be willing to come and help? With a little bit of persuasion he did and after a quick cuppa at Ken's - by order of Ken's wife, Ken and Dave were soon on their way to the British Road Services depot - the time was now 10-40 pm. Enquiries were made at the gate - "It'll cost you," the gate-keeper said and then told us where to go.

Dave did the talking while Ken parked his car.

Within a few minutes a young lad was on his way with us to the 'WRECKER' - some sort of slang for a breakdown truck. Soon the E.R.F. engine was roaring into life and we were on our way into town. It



was very noisy in the cab and Dave nor Ken fancied the job of driving such a beast! One interesting thing about the instrument panel was the provision of a rev-counter. Our driver certainly used almost peak revs going through the gears to get us rolling along towards town at 40 m-p-h.

Soon the 'WRECKER' was reversing up to 8335, the mechanic inspected our KSW6G to see where best to put a chain and tackle. Eventually two were put around the front axle though one proved to be enough. Ken got behind the wheel of our bus for the tow whilst Dave got in besides him to keep Ken company!

Off we set, complete with 'ON TOW' notice portrayed at the rear of our bus and about six feet of chain between the two vehicles. With very little vacuum left, the job of

The next vehicles to work the route on Saturdays were equally interesting, but more standard than the Crossleys.

They were the double deckers of A. W. Kearsley's Cheltenham based fleet which had (by now) come under the ownership of Roy Marchant. The 'usual' was Kearsley's 63A [formerly London Transport's RTL 138 with registration KGK 802] but after a while anything that was available turned up.

There was 62A and 64A - another two RTLs plus 69A - an RTW that even had a destination blind [the others didn't] plus a Leyland Titan PD2/3 with Brush L27/26R bodywork of Ribble's CCK batch plus Kearsley's own MDF 612 - a Leyland

PD2/12 with Leyland L27/26RD which was bought [in 1953] new!

The newest double decker in the fleet - a 1957 AEC Regent V with Park Royal L31/28RD numbered 79 in the fleet

[registration TDF 657] - also bought new. It seems as though this



bus was not often seen in Swindon though a photo of TDF 657 [see above] graced the front cover of the S.V.O.S. magazine/newsletter for March 1974 - the first for its new editor [now the AVRS Editor].

Single deckers used on the route have also been varied. One thing the writer never knew or understood was how they knew when a single deck bus would suffice! On one occasion in 1967, JDG 714 [fleet number 58], a 1950 AEC Regent III with Burlingham Sun saloon FC33F bodywork was used. It carried a standing load as can be imagined. Usually there is a 52-seater Ford if a coach is operated, but other oddities have been used - such as the Owen B42F

bodied Bedford SB1, or ODG 983 which is the Burlingham Turning to the route itself, the writer of this article used to travel almost every Saturday on the 1145 from Swindon for nearly two years. The driver, Mike Walker, worked only on Saturdays for Marchants. For the rest of the week he was spare parts manager at Douglas Commercials in Cheltenham. The writer travelled as an assistant rather than a passenger, so therefore was well rewarded!

RTL 138 [KGK 802] left Swindon via Cricklade Road, Beechcroft Road and Kingsdown. The it picked up the road to Highworth passing the Vickers Works. Soon turning left just beyond these Works one came to Stanton Fitzwarren which was the RTL's first passenger dropping point.

After leaving this village the route turns right at the T-junction



onto the Blunsdon to Highworth road which was traversed in the direction of Highworth as far as the Freke Arms [left] where a sharp left is made onto the road which leads to the village of Hannington.

On this road there was for some time a large heavy branch which highbridge buses [like RTL 138]couldn't avoid, so we would drive under it at two or three miles per hour with the branch thumping along the roof.

After Hannington, the route drops down into the Thames Valley and after 3 miles reaches Castle Eaton where the route crosses the River Thames [see photo of road bridge in the background on the next page] - and the river, very young at this stage.

More of - FERNDALE PUPILS - OFF!



One of the first things that was decided was that the police had to be informed that our vehicle [8335] had broken down and that it would be moved as soon as possible. Then there was the question of - who would move the bus? John Tincknell offered several suggestions and it was left to Ken [your AVRS Editor] to follow one of these suggestions up. Frank Glead and Dave Nicol made off in one direction whilst

John T. sped off in another direction and Ken made his way to his car parked near the bus garage as it was then.

En route to his car Ken wondered whether Dave Austin would be on a bus in the bus station so as to break the news to him. Alas, only one bus was in the bus station - but who should be driving it - Dave Austin. His face dropped a mile [or should I say a kilometre?] when Ken told him of 8335's breakdown. I gave him a quick rundown about the evening's events; we were joined by an inspector who sympathised with us. Then it was time for Dave's bus to leave the bus station en route for Park North. We agreed that Dave would give Ken a ring when he came off duty to see what had been fixed up regarding moving 8335 from Davis Place near Boots the Chemist.

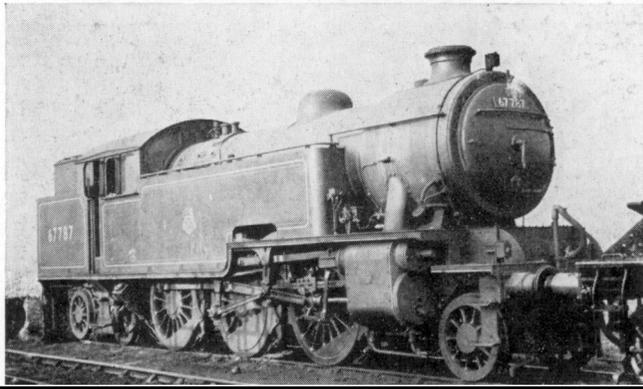
On the way back to his car, Ken's single-cell brain snapped into action and realised that there were still a few things he wanted to discuss with Dave Nicol, the SVOS secretary. So off to Park North sped one red Renault 16TL. More discussion took place and it was decided that we try the 24-hour British Road Services breakdown service.

John A and the Neasden L1 2-6-4Ts

I was promoted to fireman and moved to Neasden on June 15th 1953.

Although this had originally been a Great Central [later LNER] depot, at that time it came under the Western Region of British Railways.

Initially I got to know Anthony Mathews who had move there from Landore depot at Swansea. We shared a bedroom in the same 'digs' and this arrangement worked well even though our shifts were different. He had been a regular fireman to a driver called Bill Stevens, and when in due course, Anthony left for another job, I was promoted to take his place. We worked in the 'Met passenger link' between High Wycombe and Marylebone. One of the regular locos on



"L-1" CLASS

Origin: L.N.E.R.

Introduced: May, 1945.

Driving Wheel: 5 ft. 2 in.

Pony Wheel: 3 ft. 2 in.

Trailing Wheel: 3 ft. 2 in.

Length: 43 ft. 4 in.

Weight: 89 tons 9 cwt.

Water Capacity: 2,630 gals.

Designer: Edward Thompson.

Purpose: Mixed Traffic.

**Cylinders (2):* 20 in. x 26 in.

†*Boiler Pressure:* 225 lb. sq. in.

Tractive Effort: 32,080 lb.

Coal Capacity: 4 tons 10 cwt.

Power Classification: 4-MT.

Route Availability: 7.

Additional Identification Features: Footplate raised from front buffer-beam over outside cylinders, then dropped again to buffer-beam level over middle pair of driving-wheels. Outside valve-gear. Large bunker. Normal chimney and dome.

Number Series: 67701 to 67800 (TOTAL: 100. Ten on N.E. Region, remainder on E. Region).

Historical Notes: An entirely new design, the first originally being numbered 9000, built at Doncaster, and painted in L.N.E.R. green: the next 29 built at Darlington in 1948 and the remainder by contractors 1948-50. Designed for London suburban services and to be seen nowadays in the South, East and Yorkshire areas of the Region.

* Nos. 67770, 67771, 67772, 67776, and 67779 have 18½-in. diameter cylinders (E. Region engines).

† Nos. 67747, 67753, 67761, 67795, and 67798 pressure reduced to 200 lb. (E. Region engines).

these turns was ex-LNER L1 2-6-4T numbered No. 67767, shedded at Neasden.

On one week's turn I was working with a local man born and bred in Denzil Road, Willesden. He knew the Neasden depot foreman

ONCE A DAY, TWICE A WEEK,

and THREE TIMES ON SATURDAY

PLEASE NOTE - this article was first written in March 1974 by SVOS member, Nigel Kane.

NO! This isn't directions for taking medicine, nor the number of times the Chairman asked his wife for a higher pocket money allowance [that was more frequent!], but it is the frequency of a certain rural bus service some 45 years ago! The service in question is that run by Marchant Coaches of Cheltenham between Hatherop and Swindon.

On *TUESDAY* and *FRIDAY*, a morning service *into* Swindon and a mid-day service *out of* Swindon is operated, nearly always with one of Marchant's large fleet of Ford 41 or 52 coaches.

On *SATURDAYS*, these journeys are supplemented by another *into* Swindon from Hatherop at 1303 which reaches Swindon at 1415, then a short working at 1600 to Kempford then back *into* Swindon in time for a 1730 journey *out of* Swindon back to Hatherop. Absolutely anything works this Saturday service!

This service first caught the writer's eye in 1965 when it was operated by a dark blue double decker with a Beverley Bar roof, ex-Yorkshire. When the Swindon Bus Station was opened in 1967, the service was being operated on Saturdays by one or t'other of a pair of ex-Eastbourne Corporation Crossley DD42/7s with East Lancs bodies - registrations JK 9991/2. Unfortunately, I never rode on either of these, but I frequently look them over whilst they stood in our bus station. JK 9992 had a broken window on the nearside upper deck for some time before its withdrawal; it never got repaired!

[According to the CLASSIS BUSES WEBSITE history of the Crossley DD42/7s mentioned above are actually DD42/5 and more than TWO were bought by Marchants - see table below.]

Eastbourne Buses on withdrawal sold to Marchants of Cheltenham				
FLEET no.	Reg. No.	Delivered	W/D	Sold to
32	JK 9989	Jun '49	Sept '63	Marchants who W/D in July '67
33	JK 9990	Jun '49	Sept '63	Marchants where it overturned in April '64 Sold for scrap May '64
34	JK 9991	May '49	Sept '63	Marchants who W/D in January '68 Used as H26/25R with platform doors
35	JK 9992	May '49	Sept '63	Marchants who W/D in Oct '68
36	JK 9993	May '49	Oct '62	Marchants used it as H26/26R W/D Feb '67
37	JK 9994	May '49	Sept '63	Marchants who W/D in Sept '68
38	JK 9995	May '49	Sept '62	Marchants who W/D in Sept '68
39	JK 9996	May '49	Sept '62	Marchants who W/D in July '64



All the above buses were Crossley DD42/5 buses with East Lancs H28/22R which was altered more than once whilst with Eastbourne Corporation.

ABOVE is no. 38 [JK9995] on route 2 in Eastbourne taken by D. Gilbert.

See Classic Buses Website for lots more information and photos on Eastbourne Corporation buses.

In the 1947 snowdrifts, the Settle & Carlisle Railway was impassable for EIGHT WEEKS around Dent. At Kirkby Stephen, snow cutters hung their coats on the tops of telegraph poles. Stone built snow cabins were provided at Dent for gangs of men engaged on the above snow clearing work.

keeping that chain tight relied on using the handbrake for braking purposes - not a job Ken didn't fancy having to do on a long tow!

Up Commercial Road we silently rolled - no throb of a six-cylinder Gardner diesel beside one for company even if it was noisy - just Dave Nicol! Down Princes Street, along Fleming Way, through the Magic Roundabout [quietly so as not to disturb Dougal], then up Shrivensham Road with speed around the 15 m-p-h mark.

Soon we were entering the B.R.S. yard [now the Greenbridge Retail Park] and 8335 was finally parked by during it into a space on the batteries. Time was now 11-20 pm and so ended a rather eventful evening.

Just after 11-30 pm Dave Austin phoned up and was relieved to find out that 8335 was in a more suitable place than at the back of Boots the Chemist. "Yes," Dave Austin said, "I saw the breakdown lorry going along Fleming Way when I was in the bus station, and so-and-so saw 8335 being towed."

Dave Austin has got his spies everywhere - hasn't he?

The following day when sir went to school several comments were made about the previous evening - the Headmaster even announced in assembly much to the amusement of the whole school! One pupil said that he wasn't going to speak to sir - yet he answered his name when I called the register!

He has also spoken to sir since! Someone else said, "Will you want a push tonight, sir?" thinking that 8335 was where we left it earlier the previous evening.



POSTSCRIPT [1] 8335 was fixed the following Sunday by Dave Austin and a Mr. F. Culley who used to work at the Bristol Omnibus Company depot in Old Town, Swindon. Very grateful thanks are expressed to both these gentlemen who worked in very cold conditions so as to fix what was then the S.V.O.S. bus.



8335 after many years neglect 8335 in August 2012

POSTSCRIPT [2] March 1972 - 8335 was bought by the S.V.O.S.

October 1980 [approx.] sold to Graham Ledger, Northampton

January 1989 sold to Roy Hawkes, Pode Hole

December 1992 sold to

Currie of Sittingbourne, Kent

December 2007 sold to

Mike Nash of Weybridge, Surrey

February 2008 sold to

Mike Ellis, Saul.

No details after February 2008



Harold Floyd, who sister Cicely was married to a Neasden driver Charlie Dains, later a driver at Kings Cross.

On one occasion, I was on duty at 4-40 am for two trips from High Wycombe to Marylebone. I booked on at High Wycombe with Driver Charles Simpson and he said, "I don't have my regular fireman this week, so I'll ask you to do the same as him and I'll show you what to do." He outlined his preferred procedure for cleaning the loco, Oil was warming in the oil-can on the firebox and was then sprayed all over the boiler cladding. Water from the boiler [at near boiling point] was then sprayed over it from the slacking pipe (or *pet pipe* or *hose pipe* as it's sometimes known) and allowed to run down on to the track bed. After that an oily

rag was used to wipe away the residue of oil followed by a rub down with a clean rag to shine up the paintwork and brasswork. After cleaning duties, it was time for breakfast. While I was eating breakfast at High Wycombe, Charlie asked me where I lived. I replied, "*Old Oak Common Hostel.*" He replied, "*None of the lads I know there eat as well as you.*" I said that they all eat at the canteen, whereas I do most of my own food. Then he asked me if I would like to lodge with a family instead of a hostel. "*Their present lodger is a fireman who is going into the Army this week. If you like, you can come with me and go down to 14 Monks Park, where Cicely Dains lives and tell her Charlie Simpson sent you.*"

At the end of our shift I went with Driver Simpson and gave the message to Mrs Dains. It was a Monday and I was dressed in fresh clean overalls; she looked me up and down and said, "*You are a nice looking clean young man, so if*

Charlie sent you, you can most certainly stay here with me." I duly caught the bus back to the hostel and told the manager, Mr. Lewis, that I would be leaving next week. I looked forward to lodging with a family with a Great Central Railway background.

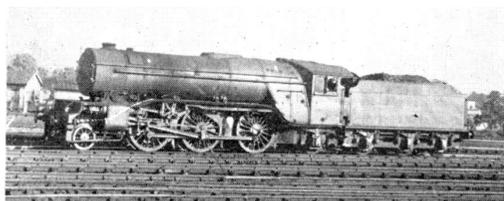
Charlie Simpson's regular engine and his regular fireman kept the cab spick and span like jeweller's shop. A bonus was that the loco had a turbo-generator at the side of the smokebox and this meant there was electric lighting in the cab. Occasionally the generator would develop a fault, but Charlie's mate was good with electrics and became an unofficial electrician.

Although the cab was spotless, there was a shortage of cleaners at Neasden so the exterior of the loco was not so good.

The main line locos that came in from the north - usually A3s, V2s and B1s were generally in cleaner condition.

I have never forgotten Charlie Simpson, because

there was an accident at Barby [south of Rugby] in which he was involved on August Bank Holiday 1955. Prior to each turn of duty the driver is required to read regulation Notices warning of any track maintenance work taking place and any route changes this might entail. It appears this was not done and the



loco [V2 60828 - similar loco shown above] was derailed as it failed to negotiate a crossover at 55 m-p-h instead of the required 20 m-p-h.

Driver Simpson suffocated under the coal from the tender and Fireman Nethercott was severely scalded from broken steam pipes. It is not known whether he ever returned to footplate duties.

From 2nd May to 8th May 1954

I was on the local passenger turn, booking on at 4-40 am, but booking off each day at different times between 12-30 and 2-00pm. This was the only full week of early turns in the 8 month period I was in

Malmesbury land reclamation scheme in Wiltshire and the construction of the emergency port at Cairnryan Harbour [a roll-on ferry terminal on Loch Ryan in south west Scotland north of Stranraer].

After the railways were nationalised a second generation of camping coaches were introduced from 1952 by British Railways, these vehicles were generally more up-to-date, spacious and better equipped. In the early 1960s the stock was enhanced by the conversion of some redundant Pullman coaches, the service peaked at 223 vehicles in 1962. The Beeching cuts brought the end to the service with a lot of smaller lines, where the coaches were often located, closing and coaches being scrapped. The last coaches available for public use were withdrawn at the end of the 1971 season.

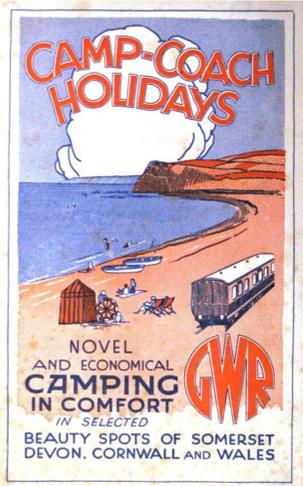
In view of the passenger closure it came as a surprise when [in 1952] a camping coach re-appeared at Aberayron - the official means of access was by taxi from the nearest railway station from Lampeter or Aberystwyth *but unofficially those hiring the camping coach might be able to get a ride in the brake coach or parcels van which ran to Aberayron in connection with the evening milk train.* Aberayron was not unique in having a camping coach but no passenger service [see the Alnwick - Coldstream line] - but this Welsh seaside resort must have been considered a successful site because by 1958 a second camping coach arrived. The end of the

1962 season was the end of Aberayron's camping coaches.



LEFT W9920W converted from 2458.

*Thank you,
Martin Connop Price.*



VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF CAMPING COACHES		
[Tremendous detail on Wikipedia]		
YEAR	REGION	EXTRA INFORMATION
1933	LNER	10 in picturesque places
1934	LMSR	called <i>CARAVANS</i>
	GWR	called <i>CAMP COACHES</i>
1935		215 coaches at 162 sites
1939		439 coaches
1940		Not for public use
1952		Coaches re-introduced
1962		223 coaches [some Pullman]
1971		Last public use of coaches

Camping coaches were holiday accommodation offered by many railway companies in the United Kingdom from the 1930s. The coaches were old passenger vehicles no longer suitable for use in trains, which were converted to provide sleeping and living space at static locations. The charges for the use of these coaches were designed to encourage groups of people to travel by train to the stations where they were situated; they were also encouraged to make use of the railway to travel around the area during their holiday.

The REC [Railway Executive Committee] controlled the use of camping coaches throughout the war initially determining that they should be available for when circumstances required the provision of emergency quarters. In 1940, the first summer season after the war's start about half of the camping coaches were still available to the general public, around 200 vehicles were pressed into war service.

By the end of 1940 most of the coaches needed refurbishment before they could be put back into public use, and the REC determined that camping coaches would be retained for housing railway staff made homeless by enemy action or as lodgings for those transferred away from home. Despite this decision there were numerous demands for use of the coaches some of which were fulfilled, such as at

the Relief No.6 at Neasden depot. The links I worked in there were - the Pilot Link, the Relief Link, the Met Goods Link and the Met Passenger Link. The most passenger work I did was in the Relief Link and the Met Passenger Links. The latter was a full 18 week rota, but I did not complete it because I was transferred away in March 1955.

I lodged with the Daines family at 14 Monks Park for about a year and enjoyed the family atmosphere there. It was sad occasion for me

when I booked on one day to be told by the booking clerk that I was to be transferred to Wales within a week. Railway duties often required moves of this sort, but it was with a heavy heart that I had to tell Mrs Daines that I was leaving.

Taking my bicycle I transferred back to Aberystwyth and resumed lodging at 6 Trinity Place where I had lodged previously. There I lodged until I got married over two years later in September 1957.



The shelter at Wildmill station [on the Maesteg to Bridgend branch] had to be rebuilt because it was discovered that *IT WAS ONE INCH TOO CLOSE* to the edge of the platform.

Thus:-

1. Station's opening was delayed several weeks.

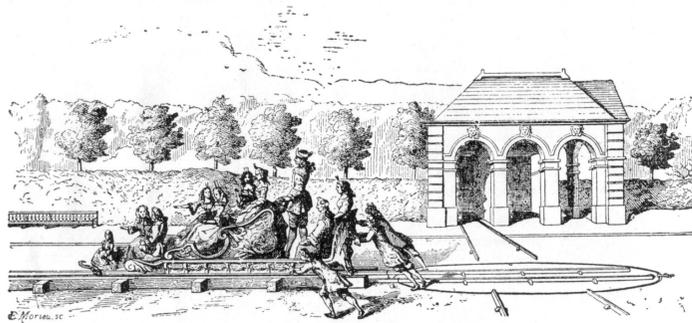
2. Shelter had to be dismantled.
3. Shelter had to be rebuilt.
4. Platform surface repaired.
5. Possible passengers lost to road transport



If
YOU
read
ANY of this
publication

then
you're

**R
F
A**



Print described as "Louis XIV's Railway"

This
Monarch
WAS
AMUSED

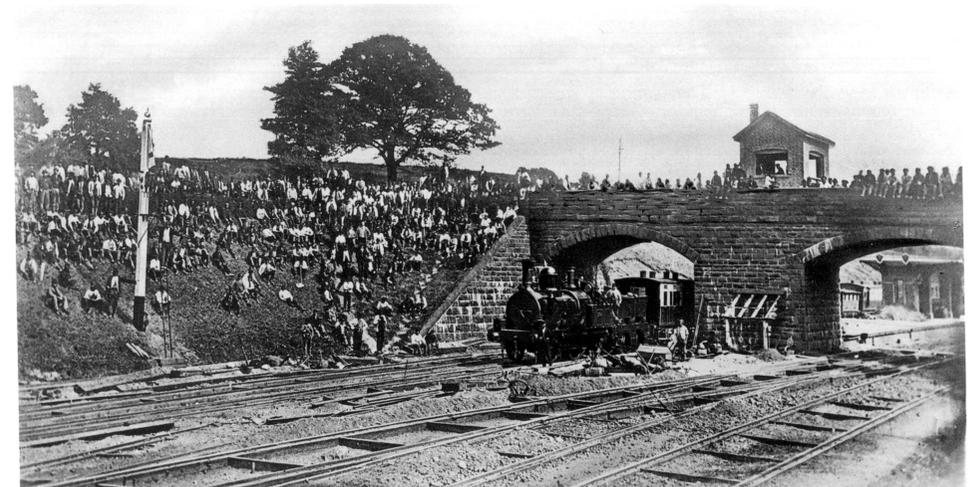
In the June 1939 issue of 'The Railway Magazine' [which is not in my possession] included a reproduction of the drawing of the drawing showing Smeaton's 1756 turntable. As a result an RM reader send a cutting from 'The Picture Magazine' of 1894 of an illustration purporting to show a turntable of 1714.

The text accompanying the picture said, "Louis XIV's Railway." The accompanying print represents the view of a miniature railway constructed by order of Louis XIV in his magnificent park at Marly-le-Roi. The remarkable peculiarity of this railway is that the construction of the rails was very similar to those of the 1940s, and also that turntables existed as far back as 1714. A carriage was run on these rails for the amusement of the Royal Family. The motive power was provided by servants pushing at the rear and sides. Unfortunately it seems that no information about the date of the original.

Louis XIV [1638 - 1715] reigned over France from 1643 to his passing away. He was a luxury-loving king and encouraged arts and literature.

Could the date of 1714 be authenticated?
If so it would show not only the earliest-known turntable but also the first recorded pleasure railway.

1869 at Grange Court Junction



Recording the conversion of the *HEREFORD, ROSS and GLOUCESTER* branch lines.



- [1] Men who worked on this conversion came from as far afield as Milford Haven.
- [2] A special train of 40 vans was used as sleeping quarters during this operation.
- [3] In true Victorian fashion, a first class carriage was provided for the supervisory staff.

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