

COCK O' THE NORTH

Newsletter of the Angus Railway Group



Ex. C.R. 0-4-4 at Killin (C.R. Line)

AUG 1976

ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP
COCK O' THE NORTH

CHAIRMAN	MR. R.W. BEATT, "GLENLEA", 6 STANLEY ROAD, BROUGHTY FERRY, DUNDEE, DD5 3AR.	0382 - 79897
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	MR. W.S. BRUCE, 12 OAKDENE CRESCENT, SCONE, PERTH, PH2 6PG.	0738 - 51476
SECRETARY	MR. L.A.C. HORNE, BREADALBANE, 10 SEYMOOR AVENUE, DUNDEE, DD2 1HG.	
TREASURER	MR. J. CUMMING, 20 PERTH ROAD, SCONE, PERTH, PH2 6JJ.	
SALES OFFICER	MR. J.F. SIMPSON, 8 ROWANBANK GARDENS, BROUGHTY FERRY, DUNDEE, DD5 2JW.	0382 - 79006
MINUTE SECRETARY	MR. I.S. RATTRAY, 12B PRESTWICK COURT, ARDLER, DUNDEE, DD2 3SG.	0382 - 89266

BACK NUMBERS 10p EACH FROM THE SECRETARY

E D I T O R I A L

A TRIBUTE

From current national newspaper reports we are hearing with increasing frequency of strong hints that somewhere in a faceless London office tower regular meetings occur, attended by a small group of sinister but very influential men. This league, possibly now in constant session and even predominated by women, have only one task set before them. Their task - How can the present cumbersome railway timetable be reduced to more compact dimensions, so as to be easily slipped into a pocket or handbag whilst enabling its bearer still to stand erect? This problem, which clearly requires the trained (no pun intended) minds of economists to solve is not as simple as it may at first appear. Only by the most careful cost manipulations will it be possible to effect a reduced expenditure on printing, without further increasing the price beyond the present £ 1.50.

Time to these people is also of the essence. Can, for example, the Tay and Forth Bridges be demolished before an independant Scotland determines its own network and runs trains of tartan livery over a 5 ft 6 inch gauge? If passenger trains are to cease running north of Edinburgh and Glasgow, why is a considerable stretch of the Perth - Inverness Line being redoubled to cope with increased traffic!

In the event of such an eventuality, the demand by many railway enthusiasts to buy a vast assortment of relics will be enormous. Yet, there will remain one indisposible asset no matter what network remains. From conversations with station staff, talks with engine crew and an association with administrative officers, it is increasingly obvious to the writer that, with definite isolated exceptions, all these men have been apprenticed in one job - to be gentlemen. Those of the Group who recently visited Haymarket Depot will bear this out. Whether they are made redundant or transfer to other regions, their honour will bear with them.

We have learnt by special telephonic message that a copy of this Edition will be despatched to a correspondent in the U.S.A. He is most warmly invited to send any contributions for inclusion and we wish him well.

" BY THE EARN AND THE ALLAN AND THE OCHILS WE SHALL GO "

In our youthful days, a wise Scottish minister, having accepted the reason for our noticeable absence from choir one day, put his shepherdly hand on our shoulder and with fatherly advise remarked in firm voice " Young man, never travel to Church by train on a Sunday. " His advise about Sabbath travel, we knew to be a repetition of that given by many clergymen following the collapse of the first Tay Bridge, amidst fire and tempest on the last Sunday of 1879. It was also to be a warning for the years to come.

One fine Sunday, only two or three weeks ago, our very own Treasurer took his family to an S.R.P.S. Open Day at Falkirk. Departing from Perth by the noon train, a triple d.m.u., Forteviot level crossing was just reached when the scenery around became still. For a few delicate moments, there could be heard only the sound of chirping birds. Little flowers that open added colour to the grassy embankments. Here, indeed, was a wonderful setting, such as must have inspired Cecil Frances Alexander to write that famous childrens' hymn " All things bright and beautiful. "

Fervent attempts by the driver to restart his failed engine failed and, after some delay, pulling away on one engine the long uphill grade to Gleneagles was made at no more than 30 m.p.h. The hardest task was yet ahead. From a standing start at Gleneagles up to the summit, the speedometer needle never managed to rise above 15 m.p.h. Once running downhill towards Dunblane, however, there was no difficulty in reaching a replacement set at Stirling. Passengers arrived at Falkirk Grahamston some forty minutes late.

A few days later, the writer had occasion to make Weekday journeys from Perth to both Edinburgh and Glasgow. The following logs, as far as Larbert Junction, where the respective lines diverge, show how the journey can be made by two very different types of train. The first train was the 8.04 am from Perth to Edinburgh and comprised a three car d.m.u. The second train, for Glasgow, had originated from Aberdeen and comprised eight coaches hauled by engine No. 40. 099. It was scheduled to depart Perth at 1.13 p.m.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Edinburgh Train</u>		<u>Glasgow Train</u>	
	<u>Time</u>	<u>Speed</u> <u>m.p.h.</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Speed</u> <u>m.p.h.</u>
PERTH (Platform 1) Dep.	8.10 am.	-	1.16 pm.	-
Hilton Junction S.B. Pass	8.13	58	1.20	50
Forteviot S.B. "	8.17	69	1.23½	75
Dunning S.B. "	8.20	63	1.25½	74
Auchterarder S.B. "	8.24	53	1.29	60
GLENEAGLES	Arr.	8.27	1.31½	-
	Dep.	8.28	1.33	-
Blackford Level Crossing	8.31	65	1.37	56
Greenloaning S.B. Pass	8.35	67	1.40	73
Kinbuck Station site "	8.37	68	1.42½	66½
DUNBLANE	Arr.	8.41	1.45	-
	Dep.	8.42	1.47	-
Dunblane Tunnel exit Pass	8.43	52	1.48	52
Bridge of Allan "	8.44	62	1.49	62
Cornton S.B. "	8.45	62	1.50	62
STIRLING	Arr.	8.48	1.53	-
	Dep.	8.50	1.56½	-
Polmaise S.B. Pass	8.53	52	1.59	56
Plean Junction S.B. "	8.56	60	2.01	65
Alloa Junction S.B. "	8.58	20	2.03	20
LARBERT	Arr.	9.01	2.07½	-
	Dep.	9.02	2.08	-
Larbert Junction S.B. Pass	9.04	40	2.09½	43

There is a Temporary speed restriction of 20 m.p.h. for approximately 200 yards at Alloa Junction, while work on removing the junction is in progress. The equal timing between Dunblane and Stirling is of interest.

SCOTT BRUCE.

SPECIALISTIC GRICERY

The word gricery, a derivative of the verb "to grice", is defined in "The Crewe Shorter Dictionary of Railway Terminology" as "the art of enumerating locomotives and carriages according to their numbers and class or type."

In the halcyon days of steam traction, with whistles and crows and smoke black and white, happy hours could slip by as from some vantage point one kept alert like a sentinel. Progress, an opinionative word in railway nomenclature, has, alas, brought with it standardisation. Enthusiasts now know with a far greater certainty which engines to expect and how they will perform. So it is, that only when a particular locomotive class, after months of under-valued service, is being rapidly withdrawn that notebooks are kept at the ready.

Current railway periodicals are emphasising the rarity of active Class 24s in Scotland. In May, Nos. 24.119/147 went without resistance into store at Haymarket, so allowing Nos. 24.103/4 to return to service after a year behind scenes. The latter engine was observed later that month on a Polmadie ballast working, whilst Nos. 24.094 and 151 were both noted on Grangemouth cement trains.

Class 24 fans will be delighted to know that several more recent sightings have been made - a number of them locally. On July 30th, No. 24.116 could be seen basking in morning sunshine outside Dundee Motive Power Depot (M.P.D.). Only hours later, there was rejoicing as No. 24.069 emerged from Dock Street tunnel at Dundee easily coping with the Aberdeen to Perth Postal (17.15 ex Dundee). Monday, August 9th, saw No. 24.065 up early and on the line from Fife, hauling only a guard's van past Saughton Junction towards Edinburgh. Moments after, No. 24.119 could still be glimpsed at Haymarket, in front of, or behind No. 24.124.

For the above information, the Editor and we hope the entire Group will very kindly wish to thank the "Scone Class 24 Club"

THE CALEDONIAN RAILWAY - GLASGOW TO ABERDEEN cont.

There was a certain amount of rivalry between the stations of Buchanan Street and Queen Street. In the earliest days, while the Scottish Central Rlwy. and the lines leading northward to Aberdeen were close associates, the Caledonian trains from the north used the Edinburgh and Glasgow Rlwy. line from Greenhill, rather than take the Caledonian's own line southward to Garnqueen and then reverse at Gartsherrie. As yet, however, the associates of the Caledonian provided the only route to Aberdeen and the rivalry between the two stations was potential rather than actual.

Both Buchanan Street and Queen Street stations were awkward to operate. The land rises steadily from the north bank of the Clyde, so that any railway coming into the heart of Glasgow must inevitably face a steep descending gradient. The Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway maintained their level grading until the last minute, as it were, and then came down very steeply on a cable - operated incline. The Caledonian sited their new passenger terminus, Buchanan Street, further up the hill from the river, but had nevertheless an incline nearly three times the length of that from Queen Street, extending nearly to Robroyston 2.4 miles out. Against the Queen Street gradient of 1 in 47, however, those out of Buchanan Street were 1 in 79 for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, 1 in 98 for the next mile, and 1 in 125 past Milton Junction, where the new line into Buchanan Street diverged from the original route of the Glasgow, Garrkirk and Coatbridge Railway. As from Queen Street, the first part of the incline out of Buchanan Street was in tunnels, and the majority of passenger trains were assisted at the rear. Unlike the practice at Queen Street, when steam had entirely superseded cable - haulage, Caledonian trains drew out of Buchanan Street, stopped, and then the banking engine would run out from a siding and buffer up in rear for the ascent to Robroyston.

The Caledonian Railway had not been in operation for very long before there were many signs that the Board and Management were running into serious trouble financially. Glasgow and its immediate environs represented by far the greatest potential source of traffic, but in that city opposition remained strong and access was obtained only over the metals of a chain of small local railways. No permission could be obtained for a system of their own.

THE CALEDONIAN RAILWAY - GLASGOW TO ABERDEEN cont.

The use of existing lines may have been a means of avoiding expense in construction in the first place, but the tolls payable in respect of running powers were to prove a steady drain upon Caledonian resources. It may have been intended as tact in the first instance, but it was soon taken as a confession of weakness that the headquarter offices of the Caledonian were established, not in Glasgow, but in Edinburgh.

The broad outlook of the Caledonian Directors in interesting themselves in the extension of the lines northward to Stirling, Perth and Aberdeen was unfortunately backed by no appreciable business experience or ability, and through their clumsy, though well - meant operations, the Caledonian gradually became enmeshed in a frightful tangle of financial commitments. They were obviously worried and perplexed by the situation that was rapidly developing in Central Scotland. There, one beheld the ludicrous spectacle of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway waging a ruinous competition for inter - city passenger traffic with two canals. Instead of developing their one great potential asset, speed, they waged the competition by reducing fares until one could travel third class from Edinburgh to Glasgow for 6d (2½p) by either means of conveyance.

By the beginning of the 1850's, a good deal of tidying up of the British railway network was in evidence. Business interests realised the disadvantage of having a large number of independant companies that had originated from enterprises which, in the majority of cases, were quite local in character.

The northern network of lines that eventually became part of the Caledonian Railway was part of a single master plan for which the Grand Junction Railway was largely responsible. The Caledonian Railway was foiled in its attempt to amalgamate with the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway, then on the brink of financial disaster. This amalgamation was proposed in November 1849, but it is difficult to imagine exactly what advantages were foreseen in linking the tottering fortunes of the Caledonian with a railway, the traffic policy of which seemed to be going berserk. The usual arguments were advanced that amalgamation would be to the advantage of both companies, but negotiations had not proceeded far before it was evident that whatever the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway might lack in traffic operating technique

THE CALEDONIAN RAILWAY - GLASGOW TO ABERDEEN cont.

and tactics, its management lacked nothing in financial astuteness. Had the amalgamation taken place, it would have presented the Caledonian with a virtually impregnable monopoly over a belt of country more than forty miles wide stretching across the very heart of industrial Scotland.

At the time the amalgamation proposals were allowed to lapse, the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway did not constitute a very serious threat to Caledonian supremacy. It was an isolated enterprise and against the growing network of railways associated with the Caledonian had the appearance on the map of an intrusion. It is true that it was an older concern, and that it was associated with the East Coast "Alliance" at the Edinburgh end. The latter grouping at that time in railway history was a very uneasy association, far different from the strong friendship and understanding that already existed between the West Coast allies. The North British on many occasions adopted a policy of independence in railway politics that was a source of embarrassment and annoyance to the North Eastern, while the Great Northern was only just emerging from its position as the "Ishmael of Railways" and had scarcely yet been accepted at York as a full and equal partner in the East Coast traffic.

Aware of all this, and faced with the urgent task of getting their own house in order, one can well appreciate that the Caledonian management could regard the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway as no more than a local competitor. The advantages of eliminating that competitor did not appear sufficient to warrant all the time and expense that would undoubtedly be involved, quite apart from the risk of an abortive Parliamentary campaign. Nevertheless, there was now a serious point of contention between the two Companies, quite apart from the Edinburgh and Glasgow traffic. As early as 1844, the Edinburgh and Glasgow shareholders had authorised their directors to promote a line to Stirling and negotiations had been opened with the Scottish Central, then no more than a proposal. These were broken off and the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway put forward a line of their own. Parliament, however, favoured the Scottish Central, and after the latter line was built there were several skirmishes between the Edinburgh and Glasgow and the Caledonian to secure

THE CALEDONIAN RAILWAY - GLASGOW TO ABERDEEN cont.

ownership. Although the Scottish Central was part of the great London to Aberdeen project fostered by the Grand Junction, the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway people did their level best to block all attempts at amalgamation with the Caledonian.

Competition for the Edinburgh and Glasgow traffic was resumed for a time, at a more intense level than ever. Then, in 1853, came another attempt at reconciliation, but again Parliament refused to sanction the arrangement and the Caledonian and Edinburgh and Glasgow Managing Committee was not only stillborn, but its demise led to an even more bitter competition for traffic. Once again the fare between Edinburgh and Glasgow was reduced to 6d, third class, and while the Scottish public enjoyed the benefits and the shareholders looked on helpless, the English shareholders of both Companies took things into their own hands.

After several abortive attempts, a meeting in London in February 1856 approved an arrangement whereby the two Companies were pledged to enter an agreement to work for a common purse for a period of ten years. It was agreed that the net proceeds should be divided between the two Companies in proportion to their probable earnings. This was fixed at 30.64% of the total to the Edinburgh and Glasgow and 69.36% to the Caledonian. Later, the Scottish Central was brought into the common purse arrangement, receiving 14.98% of the joint net revenues. The remaining 85.02% was divided between the Edinburgh and Glasgow and the Caledonian in the same proportion as previously.

Heartened by this measure of agreement, the three Companies brought forward a Bill in 1860 for their complete amalgamation. This was strongly opposed by the North British and it was generally unpopular in Scotland, where it was feared that the result would be a complacent monopoly. The Bill was rejected by Parliament and a revised Bill suffered the same fate in the following year. The three Companies made one last try in 1864 and again failed. By this time the Caledonian, realising the strength of North British opposition, concentrated its attention away from the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway and turned to its more natural allies further north.

(To be continued)

LESLIE MORRISON.

