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No 62

COCK O' THE NORTH

NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP



CR 123 With the Scottish Rambler Rail Tour at Auchinleck on 20 April 1962.

Lindsay A C Horne

Membership open to all railway enthusiasts

1977



July 1977, NewsletterTRAINS TO HERE, THERE, ALMOST EVERYWHERE.

Perhaps some of the most interesting and most unusual railway movements are to be found within the secretive pages of Weekly Special Traffic Notices. We have recently had the opportunity of browsing through those for May of this year.

On the very first page of the very first notice which we opened were details of a Charter working from Basingstoke to Oban. This train, of no less than 14 vehicles weighing 515 tonnes departed Carlisle on Saturday May 7 at 01 13 and arrived in Oban at 06 55. The coaches were then worked ECS back as far as Crianlarich and forward to Fort William and Mallaig, the 5 sleeping cars being detached at Mallaig Junction. In the evening, departure from Mallaig was at 17 20 and Fort William at 22 00, Cowlairs box being reached at 01 48.

Monday of the following week saw an Advertised Day Excursion from Inverness to Aberdeen. Passengers on this 350 tonnes, 10 vehicle train were afforded six hours in the Granite City. On Friday the 13th, a far longer journey was undertaken by an 8 vehicle set which ran Eincar from Bellahouston CS to Stranraer Harbour, from whence the BSK, 6SK and BG were worked overnight to Clacton - on - Sea. This circuitous journey, although involving a cross - London path was completed in 11 hours 10 min.

The above mentioned train departed Carlisle an hour after an 11 vehicle (including RB) Advertised Excursion from Euston to Wick and Thurso. Stopping briefly at Mossend to be dieselised, this train continued past Carmuir West box at 03 12 to reach Inverness at 07 30. Had Carmuir West been passed an hour earlier, this northbound train would have met an oncoming northbound train from Southend (Victoria) to Mallaig. The latter train included 8 SLSTP and also an RB among its 13 vehicles and was hauled by a Class 47 via Berwick and Falkirk (Grahamston) to Cowlairs, from where the timing load was for two Class 27s. The sleepers

were detached at Fort William and the 5 returning coaches from Mallaig attached to the ordinary 18 59 Fort William train. The journey south from Cowlairs was by way of Carlisle.

By 12 16, when the Euston - Wick/ Thurso express was being divided at Georgemas Junction, an 07 00 Advertised Excursion ex Coventry, comprising some 13 vehicles was due at Edinburgh Waverley. It was followed in, only 20 minutes later, by a 10 vehicle excursion train from Stafford. The West Coast main line also provided room the same morning for a Charter working from Cardiff, but a 13 vehicle Merrymaker excursion from Nottingham to Glasgow was routed via Kilmarnock, an obvious route for a Blackpool North - Ayr Mystery Excursion which followed later that morning.

In total, these special workings that morning brought north across the Border no fewer than 82 passenger vehicles.

The following week - end was somewhat quieter, although there was a 12 vehicle Merrymaker excursion from Chesterfield to Edinburgh and a Wirral Railway Circle charter from Crewe to Gourock and then Glasgow. The unusual route from Carlisle to Gourock involved two reversals - at Newton Junction (Ayr) and Paisley (Gilmour Street). The Highlands were visited by a week - end excursion from Nelson (Lancs) to Oban , while a 10 vehicle charter from Euston to Glasgow necessitated finding a second additional path on the West Coast main line. Internally, the annual outing of Singer Veterans Association involved two 6 - car d.m.u. sets working from Dumbarton Central and Dalmuir east along the north bank of the Clyde to Glasgow, then via High Street Junction west - ward by the south bank to Paisley and Ayr.

On the morning of Friday, 27th May, a 15 vehicle, 570 tonnes, Chatter arrived at Inverness after an overnight journey from Euston. Its arrival was less than an hour after a special 14 vehicle working from Kings Cross via Aberdeen. Having detrained at Inverness, passengers from both trains - representing the Design Council - departed in an 8 vehicle (BFK 7FO) special for a two hour visit to Kyle. The composition.

of this latter train is perhaps indicative of its passengers importance.

Next morning Inverness again saw the arrival of a charter train - 13 vehicles from Euston via Carstairs, Edinburgh (RR) and Aberdeen. On that same day, three other charters totalling 32 vehicles, from Stoke - on - Trent, Liverpool and Birmingham were worked between Carstairs and Edinburgh. The train from Liverpool ran forward to Dundee. Edinburgh also received, via Berwick, a charter from Beverley and three Advertised Day Excursions from Stevenage, Manchester Piccadilly and Wellingborough. None of these trains comprised less than 10 vehicles . The West Highland Line was traversed by a Merrymaker excursion from Euston to Mallaig and there were advertised excursions from Llandudno to Wemyss Bay and Blackpool North to Balloch Pier. The train to Balloch Pier was hauled by two engines, one of which worked the ECS to and from Cowlairs whilst the other remained at Balloch Pier. Meanwhile, further north some members of the A.R.G. were marvelling at yet another visit to Perth by the " Union of South Africa " in connection with an excursion from Kirkcaldy to Aviemore.

Really, it is amazing just how busy our railways appear to be trying to make a loss! And we can't even get a train from Perth to Forfar (tears).

SCOTT BRUCE.

GOLLANFIELD: 9 JUNE 1953

I submit the following without comment, other than the hope that it might stimulate some comment in subsequent issues of our Newsletter.

1) The summer timetable for Coronation Year came into force on 8 June, and in it a new evening train from Inverness to Keith was put on, leaving the former place at 8.17 p.m. As is often the case with a new service its existence was at first little known, and it was poorly patronised. In the circumstances it was very fortunate that this was so. In fact there were only three passengers in the four coaches forming this train. The engine was a Pickersgill 4 - 4 - 0 No 54881. Double line then existed from Inverness to Dalcross, but from the latter point eastwards the line was single, equipped with electric tablet instruments, with apparatus for mechanical token exchange. At that time, the former LMSR regulations for single line working were in force.

Travelling westwards was the 5.45 p.m. unfitted freight train from Keith to Inverness. This train had a very ample time schedule, presumably to provide margin for shunting at many intermediate points. It was not booked to leave Forres until 9.10 p.m. - a time of 3 hrs 25 mins for a distance of only $30\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Keith; but evidently no more traffic was awaiting it, or expected, and the actual departure from Forres was at 7.55 p.m. Although the train was thus running so much ahead of time the driver seemed to be in a hurry, and with a Stanier Class '5' 4 - 6 - 0 and only nineteen wagons and a 20 - ton brake van he ran fast to Nairn. There a further twenty wagons were attached, and despite the marshalling involved the train was ready to leave only twenty - five minutes after leaving Forres, $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles away. The signalman at Nairn was a little hesitant to allow the train to leave, as there seemed a possibility of delaying the 8.17 p.m. eastbound stopping train from Inverness, which would have to be crossed at Gollanfield Junction, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles away. But the driver of the goods assured the signalman at Nairn that he would get to Gollanfield in ten minutes, and so, after advising the latter signalman, the goods was

allowed to leave Nairn at 8.22 p.m.

At that time of year it was of course broad daylight in those latitudes, and although cloudy the visibility was good. Hauling now a load of forty vehicles the Stanier 4 - 6 - 0 continued to be driven exceptionally fast for an unfitted goods train, especially considering that the train was already so far ahead of time. The regulations stated that: ' when trains which have to cross each other are approaching a token station in opposite directions, the signals in both directions must be kept at danger and when the train which has first to be allowed to draw forward has been brought to a stand, the home signal applicable to such train may be taken off to allow it to draw forward to the station or to the starting signal and after it has again come to a stand and the signalman has ascertained that the line on which the other train will arrive is clear, the necessary signals for that train may be taken off'. On the other hand, the LNER regulations which had operated on the GNSR line until nationalisation permitted the home signal to be lowered when the signalman judged the train first to arrive in a crossing loop had come nearly to a stand. When looking down a line towards an oncoming train it is sometimes difficult to judge the speed. But the signalman at Gollanfield made a serious misjudgement when the goods was approaching, and he lowered his home signal prematurely. It may have misled the driver, although from the conversation with the signalman at Nairn he must have known he had to cross the 8.17 p.m. passenger train at Gollanfield. Whether he was misled or not, Colonel McMullen, who conducted the subsequent enquiry, considered that the driver had set up the conditions for an accident by approaching the distant signal at a speed that could not have been less than 55 m.p.h., requiring a stopping distance of 2,300 yards even with full brake power. This would have caused the train to overshoot the facing points at the west end of the loop by some 500 yards.

All the evidence went to show that the driver made no more than a slight

application of the brakes, and witnesses on the station could not recollect that there was any clanging of buffers among the loose - coupled wagons. In the meantime, the 8.17 p.m. from Inverness, hauled by the Pickersgill 4 - 4 - 0 was running slowly up to the home signal, preparing to stop, and doing not more than 20 m.p.h. Then its enginemmen were doubtless horrified to see the freight come careering through the station at fully 45 m.p.h. They remained at their posts and must have been killed instantly in the frightful collision that followed. As the official report stated, the engine became a tangled mass of metal, and the Stanier engine was also wrecked beyond repair. The combined speed of the two trains can have been little less than 70 m.p.h., and so far as damage to engines was concerned Quintinshill was no more than a ' bump - up ' compared to this apocalyptic smash on the heathlands beside the Moray Firth. So ended the Pickersgill 4 - 4 - 0 No. 54481.

From ' The Caledonian Dunalastairs ' by O.S. Nock. Published by David and Charles.

2) Sir -

I have recently enjoyed Mr O.S. Nock's book ' Highland Railway. He refers to a book , kept by David Jones, mentioning small fines over a number of years for minor misdemeanours and states that there was no mention of ' drunk - in - charge '.

As an authority on the Highland I can assure your readers that the HR was probably the most imbibing company in the British Isles.

Until the end of steam, the older generation of drivers were often under the influence (especially the bachelors - more to spend!) at the week - ends, and dismissals were not infrequent. I have personally driven a Black Five (quite unofficially) with the driver 'out for the count' from Nairn to Aviemore (passenger).

I am by no means a teetotaller but ' let the truth be out '. The Gollanfield collision in 1953 causing the death of four railwaymen was the result of a passed cleaner taking over from a driver ' fast asleep. David

Jones had another book for that.

J. S. Aikman.

Forres.

Letter to the Editor, Railway World: December 1965.

RON BEATT.

Members Timetable

September 1977 to May 1978

The following programme, which commences on Sunday September 25th, 1977 covers the period until February, 1978. Full information about the remainder of the season will be published at a later date.

September 25th, 1977. Film Evening starting at 7.00 p.m. prompt in the Queen's Hotel, Nethergate, Dundee. A Supplementary Charge of 40p will be levied for both members and any one guest whom they may care to invite.

October 16th, 1977 The Meeting will have as a special guest Mr. J. M. Summers, Area Manager, Dundee, who will speak on a topic of his own choosing.

November 6th, 1977 A programme to be presented by John Anderson.

November 27th, 1977 It is hoped to arrange for Keith Jones to present another of his fascinating slide shows. If Keith is unable to be present, then Jack Herd will be invited to come along and Keith's visit deferred until December 18th, 1977

January 14th, 1978 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

January 21st, 1978 Train Brain 1978 to be held at Scone.

IN ADDITION there will be a Supper - Dance at the Wheel Inn, Scone, on December 10th, 1977.

The Committee regret that they cannot undertake the reservation of First, or Second Class seats or any other accommodation at the Meetings. Except with the hosts consent, dogs and other pets will not be allowed in what may, but hopefully will not, become sleeping accommodation. Luggage limit 110 lbs.

SENSATIONAL PRIZE MUST BE WON.

Why not try right now and beat the man who thought he was Scotland's leading authority on railways? Below are listed thirty clues each of which should bring to mind the name of a Scottish railway station. Send in your answers no later than a fortnight after receipt of this Newsletter and a HALF YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION will be awarded to the member whose envelope with the correct answers is first to be opened. Your solutions should be sent to Lindsay Horne, who suggested and devised the competition. Here now are the clues:-

- 1) Musical Instrument
 - 2) A Monarch
 - 3) Preserved locomotive AD 600
 - 4) NBR 256
 - 5) To Regret?
 - 6) To Put Away in a Suitable Place
 - 7) The dwelling of a yeoman or gentleman farmer
 - 8) E C TRAIN (Anagram)
 - 9) Systems of religious beliefs and worship
 - 10) Terrifies suddenly?
 - 11) Young unmarried women
 - 12) 28 lb.
 - 13) NBR 673 ?
 - 14) Larger?
 - 15) Dishonest gent from the south of England?
 - 16) Ideal location for railway photographer?
 - 17) Not metric?
 - 18) Sounds French here?
 - 19) A kind of sauce much used in India
 - 20) Paces?
 - 21) Closely connected with the film industry
 - 22) Used for gaming?
 - 23) Solves a farmers fodder problems
 - 24) Tyre manufacturer
 - 25) MOST ROUEN (Anag)
 - 26) Unwilling
 - 27) A rap
 - 28) Teddy's residence
 - 29) Cash in Clacks.
 - 30) BLANK DAY (Anag)
- NB Some of the stations may have been closed. GOOD I. CK.

ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP

STEAM ALBUM

VOL TWO

WANTED!
PHOTOGRAPHS

SEND YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR SELECTION TO IAN
RATTRAY, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

