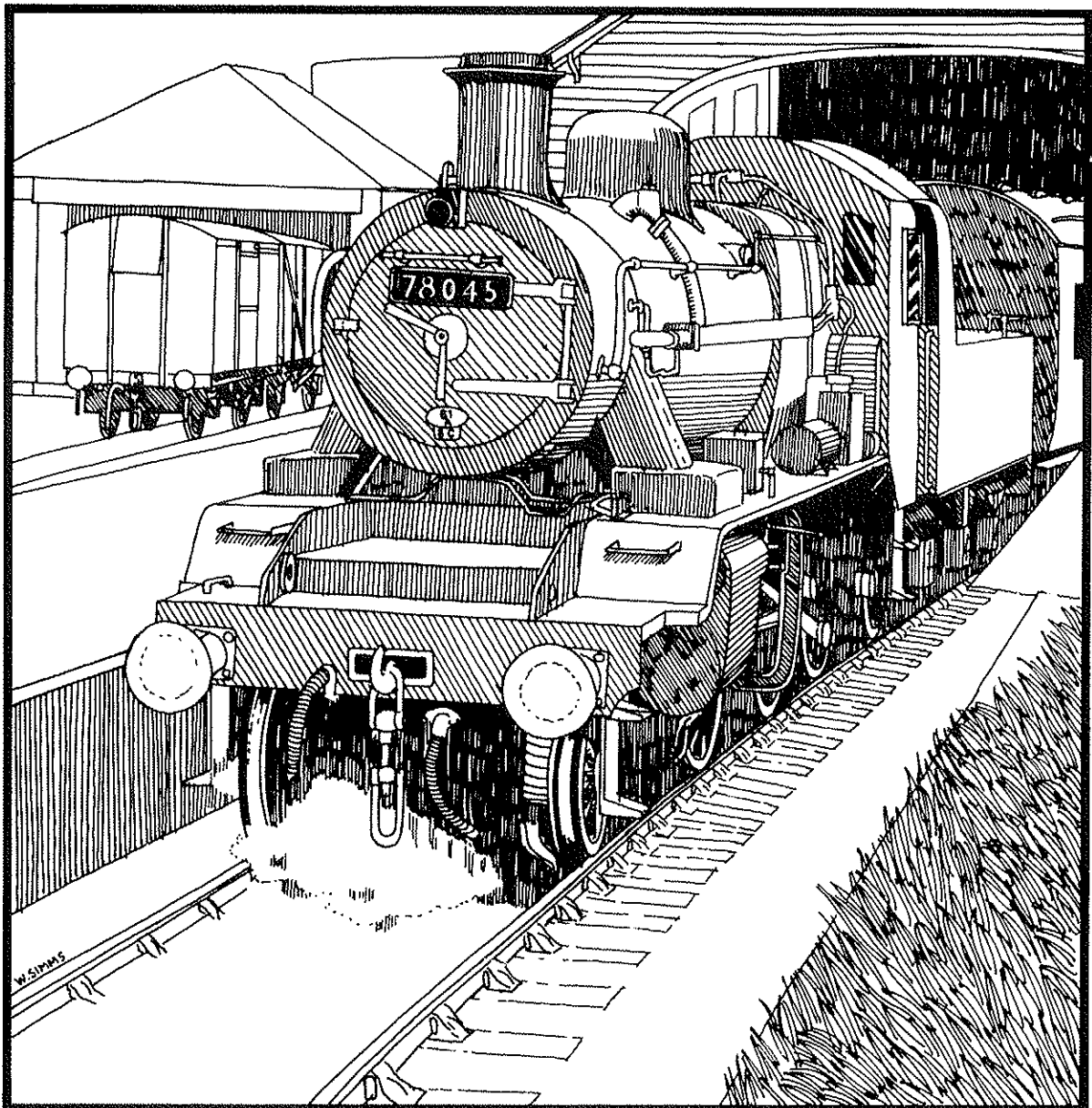


COCK O' THE NORTH

1978

NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP



BR 2MT 2-6-0 78045 on the 3.23 Banff to Tillynaught train at Banff on 6th August, 1962. From a photograph by Lindsay AC Horne.

ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP
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Newsletter No. 75Railtour Reminiscences - Part 1.

The four day rail tour entitled " The Scottish Rambler " held during Easter 1962 afforded me the opportunity of travelling over the majority of the Angus branch lines.

This rail tour, covering 735 miles by special buffet car train, was jointly organised by the Scottish Area of The Stephenson Locomotive Society and the Branch Line Society. The Angus lines were traversed on the third and fourth days, that is to say Sunday 22nd and Monday, 23rd. April.

On Sunday, the tour commenced from Aberdeen Joint Station and I was neither impressed with the motive power - a snowplough - fitted English Electric Typel diesel No. D 8028, nor the weather, which was cold and wet. Thankfully the train had been well steam - heated.

Once inland, the weather improved and D 8028 knocked 10 minutes off the timings to Bridge of Dun, where we remained until the signalman came on duty at Brechin. The four mile Brechin branch was to be the first branch to be covered, and apart from a short level section, the line climbed all the way. At Brechin quite a few of the locals were at the spacious station to witness our arrival.

D 8028 ran round her train and we now set off to travel over the Brechin and Edzell Branch. This branch, just over six miles long, had only one intermediate station, namely Strathcathro, formerly Inchbare, after which we crossed the West Water Viaduct, before reaching Edzell. Passenger services ceased from 27th April, 1931, but were revived experimentally with the 1938 summer timetable.

D 8028 retraced her journey to Brechin and Bridge of Dun had, heading north, passed Pudgeston Siding to Dubton, then down the three mile branch through Broomfield Junction to Montrose Caledonian Station or East. This terminus was closed by the L.M.S. on 29th April, 1934 and the Dubton trains diverted into the main line (L.N.E.R.) station until their withdrawal on 4th August, 1952.

Once more D 8028 ran round before returning to Broomfield Junction, where we crossed on to the Montrose and Bervie railway opened on 1st November, 1865. Bervie was renamed Inverbervie in 1926 and passenger services were withdrawn on 1st October, 1951. 64790 hauled the last train.

The upper part of Broomfield Junction signal box was demolished when it was struck by an aeroplane, early in the last war, and was rebuilt in timber. The line crossed the River North Esk on an impressive masonry viaduct of twelve arches. Between Lauriston and Jphnshaven the line crossed the precipitous gorge of Den Fenella on another high masonry viaduct, this time of four arches.

Returning from the neat terminus at Inverbervie, five minute stops were scheduled at Gourdon, Johnshaven, Lauriston and St. Cyrus. At Broomfield Junction we traversed the line to the present Montrose station, arriving on time. I was delighted to find the Type 1 replaced here by Tay Bridge's two Ivatt 2.6.0's - 46463 and 46464. They made short work of the run to Elliot Junction taking twenty six minutes.

Here the 2.6.0's left the main line and several motorists were amazed to be held up at the level crossing on the main road to allow the passage of a double headed five coach train, complete with buffet car, on the Carmyllie Light Railway - bearing in mind that passenger services had been withdrawn since 2nd December, 1929! The Ivatts stormed their way up the branch with its ruling gradient of 1 in 37, not to mention ungated road crossings passing the scarcely noticeable stations. The scheduled ten minute stay at Carmyllie allowed the Moguls to run round and they returned much more sedately to Elliot Junction.

However back on the main line, they made a spirited run to Tay Bridge station, where their brief moment of glory over, they were replaced by a Gresley J 39 - number 64786 - running tender first.

Crossing the Tay Bridge, our 0.6.0. took the North of Fife line at St. Fort to Lindores, calling at Kilmany and Luthrie. Due to the removal of Glenburnie Junction 64786 ran round at Lindores returning to the main line at St. Fort. The train now travelled south to Ladybank where another run round prepared it for the last branch of the day. The J 39 barked its way through Collessie, ran along the side of Lindores Loch, passed the site of Glenburnie Junction, then through Newburgh,

Abernethy and Bridge of Earn to Perth - arriving only a couple of minutes late.

The journey from Aberdeen to Perth had taken just over twelve hours - by a somewhat devious route!

(To be continued)

LINDSAY A. C. HORNE

Fort Augustus Branch - L.N.E.R.

Passenger and parcels traffic on the Fort Augustus Branch was suspended in November, 1933, and there is now only one weekly coal and petrol train, leaving Spean Bridge at 10.30 a.m. on Saturdays, all other traffic being dealt with by L.N.E.R. motor lorries and David McBrayne's buses and steamers, the latter in summer only. The locomotive working the branch is an ex - North British 0 - 6 - 0 goods, No. 9663, which runs out and home light from Fort William, and makes up its train at Spean Bridge; the latter usually consists of twelve to sixteen wagons and a brake.

By courtesy of the L.N.E.R., I was able to make a journey over the branch in June last, and travelled in this train. The branch presents a rather neglected appearance, for several sidings, passing loops, footbridges, signal boxes, and all signalling except for a fixed distant just outside Spean Bridge, have been removed. Leaving Spean Bridge I travelled in the brake, having, in addition to the guard, a bicycle, two passengers, some newspapers, three or four bags of coal and a large consignment of cakes, as companions. We stopped at Gairloch, the first station out, where the guard's wife is station - mistress, and I was very interested to see the way in which part of the station buildings have been converted into a camping hostel, similar to the camping coaches, but with fireplaces, telephone, water laid on, and " Mrs. Guard " to minister to one's wants. Similar arrangements have been made at Invergarry and Fort Augustus, the charge averaging £2 to £3 per person per week. Leaving Gairloch we passed Invergloy platform, also two sidings put in for timber traffic during the 1914 - 1918 war, and pulled up at Invergarry. A station - master/clerk is in charge here and a similar arrangement obtains at Fort Augustus. After some shunting, and it appears to be the rule that this is done on the outward trip, I changed to the engine.

A short distance ahead a tunnel is passed, and speed rose to 35 or 40 m.p.h. I was particularly struck with the comfort of 9663's double cab (we were travelling tender first) and her easy riding over the rather poor track. Passing Aberchalder, the station buildings of which are now let to a fruit merchant, about 20 min. journey brought us to Fort Augustus. Here all the passenger tracks have been removed, except a through line which ran down to the pier station (closed 1907), $\frac{3}{4}$ mile further on; a swing bridge over the Caledonian Canal and a viaduct still remain, together with a few hundred yards of track. When the Glasgow - Inverness road was reconstructed in 1934 - 35 part of an embankment of the pier extension was removed completely and the rails are thus severed. The two - road engine shed is derelict, but the turntable is still in use by the Engineer's Department Ro-Railer, which comes up from Fort William occasionally. Chickens, sheep, goats, and a number of domestic animals roam over the tracks and station premises, and they seem not a bit disturbed by our arrival.

About 12.15 p.m. the train commences its return journey, which has no stops, save one, at Gairloch, to pick up the guard's dinner, and Spean Bridge is reached about 1.30 p.m. Gairloch, Invergarry, and Fort Augustus stations have recently been repainted and numbers of men were at work renovating several bridges; a sleeping van was stationed at Aberchalder for them. The present war may cause the branch to be fully employed again, but apart from that, local opinion had it that the British Aluminium Company was going to put up another works on the branch, and this, coupled with the repairs in hand, may indicate a possible greater use of the line.

(From an article in the February, 1940 'Railway Magazine'.) SUN CHARIOT 62B

The Coming of the L.S.W.R. to Devon

The first attempt at the formation of a line into Devon by a route that was to become part of the LSWR system was made in 1845, only seven years after the first LSWR constituent service, the London and Southampton, commenced operations. The promoters of 1845 set about the formation of a railway known as the Exeter, Yeovil & Dorchester line. At Yeovil the promoters envisaged a connection with the then talked of London, Salisbury & Yeovil Railway Company, whose promoters first met only 26 days after those of the former line gathered for their first discussion, on the 29th March, 1845.

The LSW's first plans for Devon were only formulated in October, 1845 when, on the announcement of the G.R.'s plans for a route from London to Exeter via Hungerford, Westbury, Yeovil and Honiton (utilising a previously projected privately owned line between Westbury and Yeovil), the LSW sought the Board of Trade's reaction to their building a line through Salisbury, Yeovil, and Exeter to Cornwall. The projection of such a line was seen by the LSWR as a violation of a mutual LSW/GW acceptance of a Board of Trade report known as the Dalhousie Report, but however, under an agreement in connection with this report, no Board of Trade intervention could be made unless both LSW and GW companies requested such intervention. The LSW then decided to try a different approach, and proposed that it should take a 25% shareholding in the LS & Y, the EY & D and the Cornwall and Devon Central. In the event of each Company being successful they planned that the LSW, LS & Y and C & DC should merge, and jointly lease the EY & D.

The 1846 session of Parliament sorted out the favoured from the disfavoured schemes. Only the Basingstoke to Salisbury Bill succeeded and Devon was not blessed with the prospect of new railway developments. However, better luck ensued before the 1847 session of Parliament. A revised EY & D scheme was passed therein, though a branch to Sidmouth was not successful in obtaining approval. The LSW was to rent this line and subscribe a quarter of the capital; £ 500,000 being sufficient to cover the additional costs of financing the project. However, it did not work out quite like that as the response of EY & D shareholders, hesitating to increase their holdings necessitated the LSW agreeing to provide the outstanding capital. The Salisbury to Yeovil line of the LSW was also passed by this session of Parliament so through running to London was ensured.

Progress on construction into Devon was slow, nothing having commenced by 1851, as the LSW directors had decided on 27th November, 1847 that it would be appropriate for no further work to be undertaken excepting in areas where operations were contested, on account of a severely depressed economy. In view of this lack of construction the people of Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset and Devon proposed a mainly single line (only 10 miles double but with earthworks for doubling throughout) from Salisbury to Exeter at a projected cost of £ 1,100,000. They intended negotiating with ' other parties ' if the LSW didn't go along with the idea, but on the 16th December, 1851 the LSW Board recommended acceptance to their shareholders, for whom they foresaw no danger; for the line was to be run by an independent ' Salisbury Yeovil & Exeter ' body to whom they would provide rolling stock and whose line they would operate for 25 years for half the receipts, less half the profits of additional traffic brought to the LSW at Salisbury.

This plan was quashed with great rapidity. Some promoters were more interested in extending the ' Corkscrew ' to Exeter by way of a new ' Dorchester & Exeter Coast Extension Railway'. The alternative put to the shareholders was that a committee should be set up to decide between the D & ECE and the SY & E, rather than settling on committing £1,000,000 for use on the Basingstoke to Salisbury extension and the SY & E. This committee was approved, and a week later it recommended that the self-financing D & ECE should be approved, which on the 31st December, 1851 it was, despite an offer from the SY & E to make themselves semi - self - financing.

However when it came to Parliament in 1852, the D & ECE Bill failed on Standing Orders. But a subsequent poll of LSWR shareholders in October, 1852 again rejected an alternative plan utilising the SY & E. In the 1853 session the LSWR opposed a GW Devon & Exeter scheme, on the grounds that it planned a double track Dorchester - Exeter extension. Much internal trouble followed on the Board of the LSWR,

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN HERE. COULD IT ?

In view of frequent Press reports concerning a growing discontent amongst London commuters, one might speculate as to whether the events described in the 'Daily Telegraph' of 15th November could, one day, have a parallel on this side of the Channel. The relevant article read:-

" Commuters yesterday again blocked the 8.15 suburban train from Argentan to Paris because it arrived 16 minutes late at Dreux and Montfort L'Amaury stations. They prevented it from leaving for another quarter of an hour as a sign of their displeasure at its constant unpunctuality."

" After several weeks of delays, travellers' anger exploded on November 9. They lay down on the line at Montfort L'Amaury to hold up their train."

" The management of the S.N.C.F., the State railways, said yesterday that the train was late due to technical trouble between Argentan and Laigle. Dead ----- on the lines had caused the driving wheels to purr round uselessly in a spin, unable to get a grip on the metals. "

The British commuter, who is not noted for his Latin passions, would surely never stoop so low. Rather, British Rail, as suggested by a Mr. R. Perrin of London, would rewrite the timetable so that trains which were regularly 11 minutes late arrived 11 minutes later. In this way they would arrive on time and everyone would be very happy, unless dead leaves on the line caused the driving wheels to purr round uselessly.

QUIZ

See if you can guess how much of the commodities below British Rail required in the Year ending 31st May 1977. The answers will appear in the next issue of 'Cock O' the North':-

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Space for Answers</u>
1 Diesel Oil	Litres	
2 Concrete Sleepers	Number	
3 Track Ballast	Tonnes	
4 Steel Plates	Tonnes	
5 Uniforms	Number	
6 Nuts and Bolts	"	
7 Toilet Rolls	"	
8 Soap Tablets	"	
9 Envelopes	"	
10 National Payslip Paper	Miles	
11 Pins	Weight	
12 Paper Clips	Number	
13 Batteries	"	
14 Biro's	"	

(Questions devised and set by Jeremy Farquharson)

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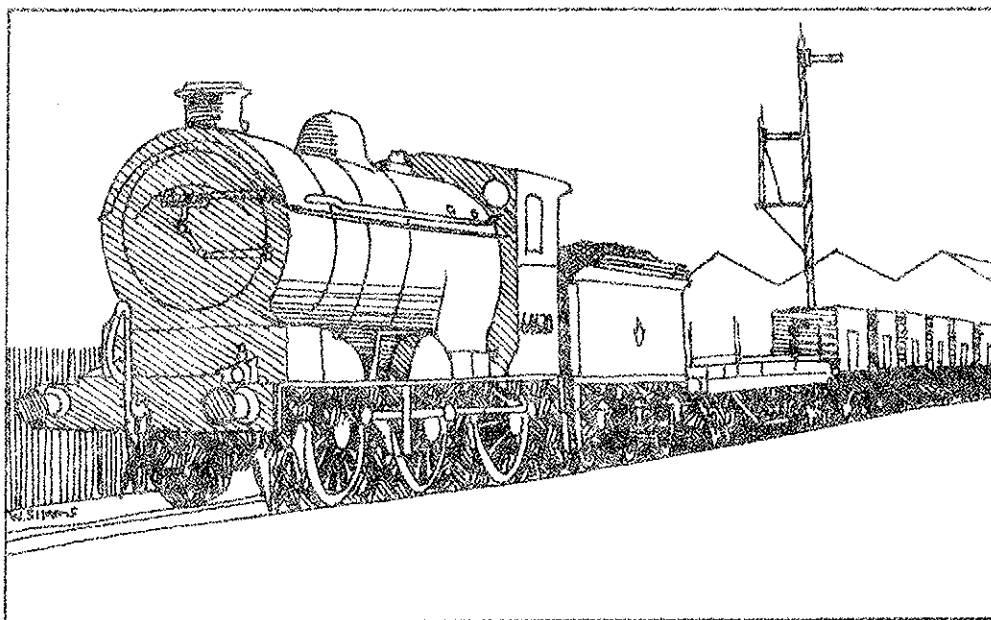
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Angus Railway Group

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