

❖ A.R.G. JOURNAL ❖

No 133. SPRING 1994.

CONTINENTAL BARRIERS TO REPLACE BROUGHTY GATES.

The old style level crossing gates at Broughty Ferry Station (or, what's left of them) are to be removed and replaced with lifting barriers at a cost of around half a million pounds. A Parliamentary Commission, hearing evidence during the week ending 12th February came to the conclusion that the private order promoted by British Rail could not be accepted. During a week where some utter nonsense was heard from both sides, the case against closure always appeared to be the stronger.

Now that the gates issue has been resolved, after much time and expense, perhaps we can expect the same effort from Tayside Region and Scot Rail in re-establishing a much needed local rail service. *(Full story inside)*

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An interesting footnote to the crossing saga, is the situation concerning the underpass. Apparently, whilst the lighting and drainage is the responsibility of Tayside Region, cleaning of the subway walls is ScotRails' responsibility. However, it is Dundee District Cleansing Department who are responsible for cleaning the walkway. I wonder if this explains why the underpass is always to be seen in such pristine condition?

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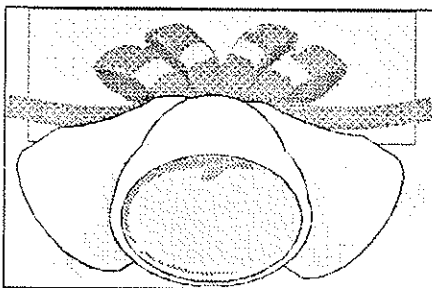
Can anybody help Bob Sinclair out with a copy of the original S/Album Vol 1? Only the first prints carried the photograph of the viaduct over the Kingsway. Or, does anyone know who has the negative that this print was taken from?

SPECIAL OFFER RAILWAYS OF FIFE VIDEO

For a limited period only, I, (that's your sales officer) can offer the brand new 'Railways of Scotland' video, Volume one (Fife) at a special introductory price of £15. A great deal of work has gone into the production of this video and our own Mike Smith has handled the narration. The running time is 57 minutes and anyone interested in a copy is urged to order as soon as possible.

(Please add sufficient to cover P&P should you wish your copy posted)

EX CHAIRMAN TO TIE THE KNOT!



We are delighted to learn of the forthcoming marriage of ARG and Errol stalwart, John Beech to Sue Stewart. The big day is set for Saturday, 26th March at Shefford near Bedford. All our best wishes go out to John and Sue for the best possible future.

NEW SEATING AT MEETINGS.

By the time this edition of your *Journal* is in your hands, a new set of chairs should be in use at Broughty. They have been purchased at great expense and the colour blue has been chosen in a effort to please old bluenose fae Perth!

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COMMITTEE ...

SECRETARY;
Scott Cunningham,
3 Whithorn Place,
Monifieth,
Dundee. DD5 4TX.

SALES OFFICER and
LIBRARIAN;
Jim Page,
'Oakbank'
27, Rankine Street,
Dundee. DD3 6DY.

TREASURER;
David Tough,
48, Moyness Park Drive,
Blairgowrie. PH10 6LX.

MINUTE SECRETARY;
Gary Straiton,
36 Friar Street,
Perth. PH2 0ED

CHAIRMAN and
NEWSLETTER
positions are still vacant.

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The Potted history of
ANGUS RAILWAY GROUP *Part one*

Jim Page.

This is the first part of an ongoing series that will outline the Groups past, as described in the old minute books and newsletters/journals. It is hoped that members may find the earlier period interesting and that the older brigade will find it little nostalgic.

The origins of the Group can be traced back to the final weeks of 1971, but it was in January of 1972, that the inaugural meeting took place. Of the nine initial members present two, Dave Tough and Lindsay Horne are still with us. A three weekly cycle of meetings was favoured from the outset and this of course is still the pattern today. What was less easily decided, was the most suitable evening of the week to meet. The first meetings were held on Saturdays followed by a switch to Wednesday, quickly followed by a spate of Fridays.

The early meetings were held in members homes and although couthie, this arrangement was not without its problems. Reasonably small numbers could be coped with adequately, but difficulties with seating and space would eventually prove problematical as numbers increased. For the time being however, numbers were fairly modest and there was the advantage of the respective wives, mothers etc, supplying a slap up feed to end the evening!

The first meeting took place in Dundee at Seymour Avenue and the second at the quaintly addressed, River Cottage, Cortachy, then the home of Dave Tough. A short entry in the minute book for the latter meeting is worth quoting. *"The evening was in no way marred by the lack of electricity due to the miners dispute and David is to be congratulated on supplying adequate heating and lighting."* Aye, times were hard even then!

Attendances were generally in the high single figures but for the sixth meeting, only six turned up. The much lamented Dundee & Newtyle Rly., was the subject of the first ever outdoor meeting (held in early June) and five members plus two guests showed up for it. Such an outing would be repeated many times in future years. The first Sunday meeting would have taken place in mid August but had to be cancelled at the last minute through lack of support.

The first newsletter had appeared in early May and consisted of four sides, two of which were lists of books. The editor suggested that the name 'Angus Railway Group' sounded too parochial!

A feature of the early years was the ability to charter a train from British Rail at reasonable rates and the first such charter (between Perth and Forfar) went ahead in late September. Given the low numbers attending meetings, this was a fair undertaking and the Treasurer was pleased to report that all had gone well and that a small profit had been made.

Only seven were present at the meeting following the railtour, when a committee of six, voted themselves into office. It was an isolated existence for non committee members in those days!

The publicity surrounding the railtour resulted in a much needed boost to the membership and with the onset of Winter, numbers quickly increased. It was eventually decided that a limit of 20 would be put on the membership list. Subscription fees were set at £1.50. per annum, payable in two instalments if required.

The first AGM went ahead at the Cambustay Hotel at Barnhill in mid January followed by the first ever meeting at Scone and a 'record attendance' of 16. Strangely, Scone was to become something of a happy hunting ground for ARG recruitment with at one time, more from here than from Dundee.

The once a month newsletter was proving to be a shade ambitious, with the result that content was usually light; not that this was the only problem to beset the editor; part of one editorial reads, *What with the material from the last newsletter getting lost somewhere and with people sending their contributions to the Treasurer, I've a vague suspicion that everyone else in the group has already read newsletter articles that I've never even seen!*

By the Spring of '73 the Group had its first lady member when a Mrs McMillan of Ballinluig joined the ranks. There was also now on offer, the option of group membership of the Strathspey Railway Association and the somewhat unusual investment in a compartment in a LNER sleeping carriage at Aviemore. After a promising start the venture failed with only a handful taking up the option in a share purchase scheme, or in making use of the accommodation. It did however, confirm the progressive attitude that was inherent within the membership at that time.

Regular meetings continued with a varied programme and generally healthy turnouts, but all was not entirely well behind the scenes. Three months into the second year saw two committee men tender their resignations, followed a few months later by another. In contrast, a further railtour was undertaken, this time taking in the round trip Dundee, Ladybank, Perth, Dundee. There had been rumours around this time that the Perth-Ladybank route might close.

Some additions to the membership list since the Groups inception had included Jim McDonell and Lawrence Burness who of course, are still within our numbers. Ed Nicoll, who recently gave a talk to the Group and Ian Johnstone, forever known as *The Colonel* were others. Dave Tough resigned during May and I joined about a month later. It should be noted that the last two instances had no connection!

1974 began with 25 members, five more than the agreed limit and the highest total so far. Average attendances at meetings were around a dozen. Early spring saw the running of the most adventurous railtour yet, the aptly named *'Five Counties'*. A great deal of work went into this particular tour and the result was one of the Group's most memorable days. A further railtour *'The Buchan Belle'* went ahead later that same year but proved to be a modest financial failure with a working loss of £76.

Once again, the railtours had attracted new members and a meeting at Rosemount Road, Dundee, during November attracted a turnout of 19. At the same venue three weeks later, the attendance was 23 plus two guests. The atmosphere was less that pleasant; stuffy and with space at a premium, it was time to limit numbers. In the event such a move proved unnecessary, as the early weeks of 1975 were less than agreeable with a spate of resignations, including my own. One notable newcomer however was Scott Bruce who then lived in Scone.

By this time, mini raffles were becoming regular features at meetings. Not everyone liked them, but they did raise some money. It was also during this season that first talk was heard of what was to become the initial issue in the *'Steam Album'* series although this was still some way off. Never the less, 1975 was a disappointing year and the Chairman said as much in his annual report. He also showed concern at the sharp drop in membership.

(to be continued)

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Editorial;

With the Group's 1994 AGM, now only a week or two away, it is perhaps time to take a look at ourselves and the way we operate. The atmosphere at meetings in recent times has been very good with numbers in attendance holding up well. We have also been fortunate in attracting some fine new members over the past year or two. Why then is it, that we seem to be struggling for people who are willing to become slightly more involved with our basic activities? There's no doubt that a few more helping hands would not go amiss. Someone to take the Hoover over the floor at Broughty for instance or to lend a hand with the tea and coffee. Even just washing out the cups now and then. We've also been working away with a slide projector with a minor but irritating fault that everyone seems prepared to accept rather than fix! Then, there's the committee; still two short after nearly a year. The syllabus has also been a bit frayed at the edges this season, which is a shame as some

of the programmes have been first class. We could also do with some contributions to our Journal. I do seem to recollect about seven or eight hands raised at the AGM two years ago from those willing to make a contribution or two. Seems a few forgot! So how about it. No need to be shy, *thir's nae cliques in the ARG!*

Jim.

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Here's the programme for the rest of the season.

13th March Alan Simpson (East Fife Central Rly.) and George Gall (Recent railways in Devon)
3rd April To be arranged.
24th April AGM.
15th May Mike Smith (Railways in Scotland)

Broughty firms win battle to open BR gates

THE PEOPLE of Broughty Ferry were celebrating yesterday after parliamentary commissioners decided unanimously that British Rail must keep open the level crossing at Gray Street.

After the announcement, on the fifth day of the parliamentary inquiry, a ScotRail spokesman confirmed they would abide by the decision and reopen the level crossing.

"We have said all along we would accept the decision of the commissioners and we will," the spokesman said.

During the hearing in the Queen's Hotel, Dundee, British Rail sought to secure a private parliamentary order to have the crossing permanently closed.

After 25 years of wrangling with local authorities over the issue British Rail now accepts it will have to instal automatic lifting barriers at the level crossing at a cost in excess of £600,000.

BR admits there are now "no insuperable technical or legal problems" to installing lifting barriers.

In his summing up to the parliamentary commissioners yesterday, Mr Christopher Haddow, QC, for British Rail said there was a statutory obligation on British Rail to operate railways "with due regard to safety, efficiency and economy."

Much of the evidence concerned the escalating costs of providing the barriers, particularly with reference to more stringent safety guidelines brought in following the Clapham rail disaster.

The inquiry also heard, however, that the cost of properly closing Gray Street could be £300,000.

There is no right of appeal against the decision of the Parliamentary Commission and it is understood that BR will also not be pursuing an appeal against a Court of Session ruling last year to reopen the crossing.

The latter action was taken against the railway by Tayside Regional Council.

But the decision will not mean an immediate reopening of Gray Street.

After the announcement Tayside's roads and transport convener James Glover said meetings would have to be arranged with ScotRail to "talk about a timescale."

"I think we are realistic in the sense we know the barriers are not going to be in place within the next two or three weeks," said Mr Glover.

"WE LOOK forward, I hope during the next week, to council and ScotRail officials getting around the table for constructive talks."

Broughty Ferry regional councillor Calman Cathro, a long time supporter of the campaign to keep the level crossing open, was jubilant.

"I am absolutely delighted on behalf of the Broughty Ferry people that ScotRail are obviously going to have to honour their obligations," she said.

Mr Sandro Paladini, president of the Broughty Ferry Traders' Association, described the news as "fantastic."

He said, "The shopkeepers and inhabitants of Broughty Ferry will rejoice at this decision."

"Now that this protracted campaign has been successfully resolved we can concentrate on positive new projects to further improve the amenities of the area."

City of Wells axleboxes stolen by scrap raiders

SCRAP METAL thieves have stolen the six main driving axleboxes from Bulleid 'Pacific' No.34092 City of Wells, in an audacious raid on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's Haworth locomotive depot.

The railway is offering 'a substantial reward' for the recovery of the axleboxes which have a replacement value of between £24,000 and £30,000 - but fears they may have already found their way into the melting pot, probably for less than £500.

The theft, a devastating blow to the restoration of the air-smoothed 'West Country' took place around tea-time on Friday December 3 after a road vehicle had been used to force open the heavy wooden doors of the former Haworth goods shed, where the axleboxes of the dismantled 'Pacific' were stored.

Made of gunmetal with heavy brass bearings, each axlebox weighs 2½cwt, and would have been a struggle for two men to lift. The number '34092' is stamped on each box.

The presence of a suspicious character in Haworth yard some days earlier caused a member of the shed staff to note down a car number - but the vehicle turned out to have been stolen. West Yorkshire Police are pursuing a number of leads.

The return-to-steam of City of Wells, previously

projected for 'late 1995' has now been significantly set back by the theft. Says locomotive co-owner and KVVVR company chairman Richard Greenwood: "We didn't need this. Fortunately, we do have a pattern though, which was made when one of the boxes was replaced while the engine was at York in 1986. With the pattern we could probably have new boxes made for around £4,000 each.

"Where the money will come from though I can't say. Right now we're desperately trying to establish if the boxes are covered by our insurance."

Commented KVVVR Society chairman Graham Mitchell: "This is a very considerable loss to the railway, not just financially, but in terms of morale, time and effort. Our volunteers deserve better - that's why we have agreed to put up a substantial reward to any person providing information leading to the recovery of our property, and the successful prosecution of those responsible. We are determined not to be beaten by metal thieves."

● In May 1992, raiders stripped the brass axlebox bearings from the Worth Valley Railway's entire fleet of Mk 1 coaches, as they stood overnight in Oxenhope carriage sidings. On that occasion, 81 bearings were stolen as the thieves systematically jacked up each coach in an operation believed to have taken five hours.

Replica Highland Railway Station for Strathspey.

The Strathspey Railway is to build a replica of the former Highland Station at Broomhill, four miles from Boat of Garten on the railway's proposed Grantown-on-Spey extension.

The station which served the nearby village of Nethy Bridge was demolished following closure of the Aviemore Forres line in October '65, but measurements from the surviving foundations and photographs taken of the station in working days, has resulted in the railway drawing up plans for submission to Highland Region.

GREAT NORTH OF SCOTLAND RAILWAY.

GENERAL OFFICES.
80, GUILD STREET, ABERDEEN.

DIRECTORS.

SIR DAVID STEWART, LL.D. (Chairman), of Banchory-Devenick, Aberdeen.
ANDREW BAIN, (Deputy-Chairman), Glasgow.
THOMAS ADAM, Shipowner, Aberdeen.
W. ROSE BLACK, Elgin.
THEODORE CROMBIE, Grandholm, Aberdeen.
GORDEN A. DUFF, Hatton Castle.
DR. FARQUHARSON, of Finzean, Aboyne.
GEORGE SMITH GRANT, Minmore, Glenlivet.
JAMES GRANT, Glengrant, Rothes.
COLONEL THOMAS INNES, C.V.O., Aberdeen.
DAVID G. IRVINE, Liverpool.
THE EARL OF SOUTHESK, Kinnaird Castle.
O. H. WILLIAMS, Fulwood Park, Liverpool.

CHIEF OFFICERS.

(Unless otherwise stated, the addresses of the Officers are at the Chief Offices, as above.)

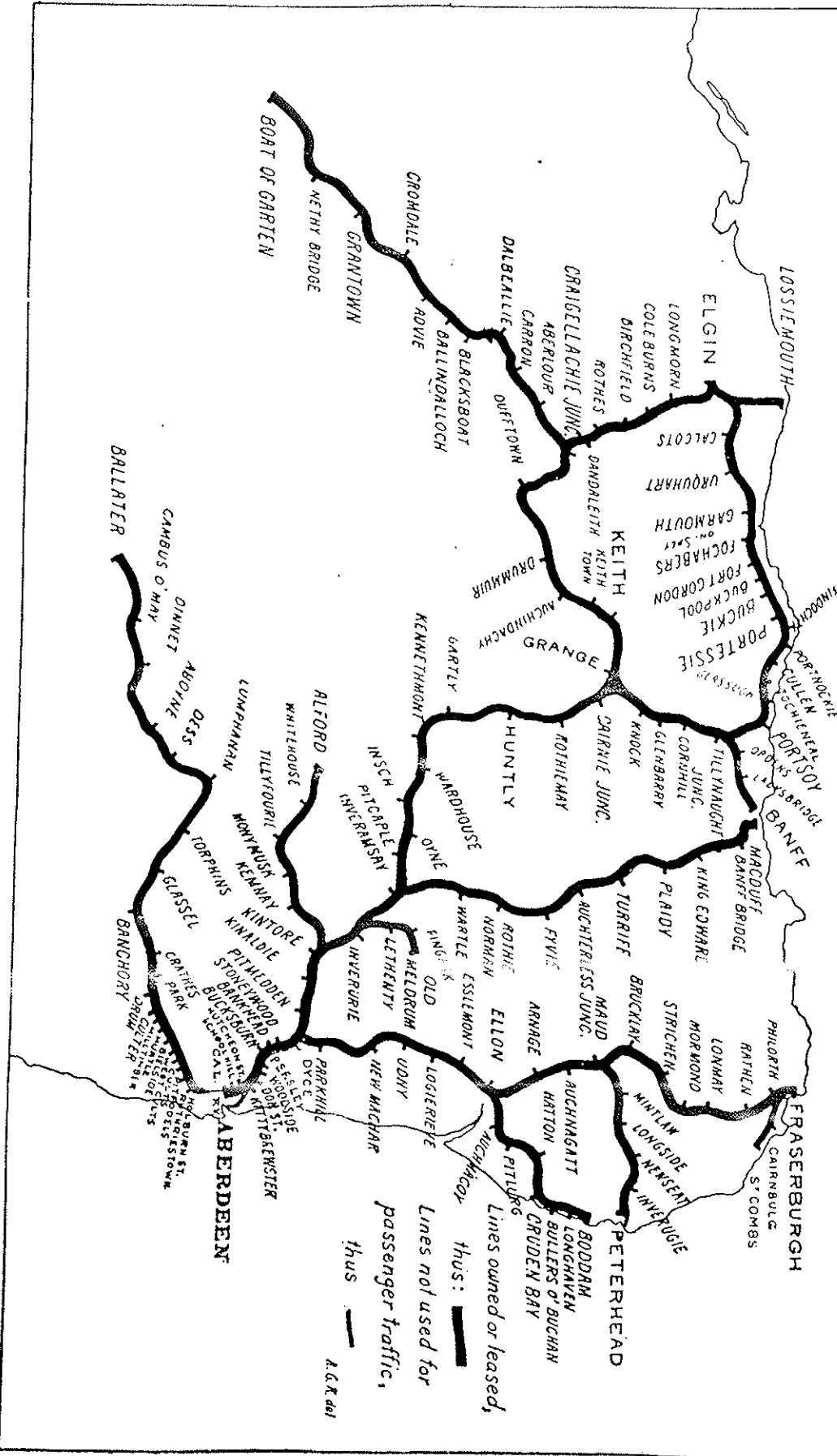
General Manager—GEORGE DAVIDSON.
Chief Clerk—GEO. P. BENZIE.
Secretary—T. S. MACKINTOSH.
Passenger Superintendent—W. DEUCHAR.
Goods Manager—A. M. ROSS.
Accountant and Treasurer—JAMES MORTIMER.
Audit Accountant—JOHN McEDWARD.
Locomotive Engineer—WM. PICKERSGILL, Inverurie.
Chief Clerk—A. COOPER.
Chief Draughtsman—J. F. DRAKE, Inverurie.
Engineer—JAS. A. PARKER.
Stores Superintendent—CHAS. A. THOMSON.
Storekeeper—JOHN RAE, Inverurie.
Hotel Managers—Palace Hotel, Aberdeen: J. E. RYAN.
Cruden Bay Hotel, Port Erroll: MISS WILLIAMS.
Auditors—J. A. ROBERTSON DURHAM, C.A.
GEORGE McBAIN, C.A.
Parliamentary Agents—DYSON and CO., Westminster.
Bankers—NORTH OF SCOTLAND BANK, LTD.

Changes in Directorate and Official Staff during 1907.—Mr. Jones, Director, deceased; Mr. David Smith, Director, resigned; Gordon A. Duff, David G. Irvine, and The Earl of Southesk, appointed Directors; Mr. Morrison, retired, and Mr. Mortimer appointed Accountant and Cashier; Miss McKilliam resigned, and Mr. Ryan appointed Palace Hotel Manager.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE Company was incorporated in 1846, for a railway from Aberdeen to Inverness, with various branches. The G. N. of S. Company's northern terminus is at Elgin, where traffic for places beyond is handed over to the Highland Ry. At Cairnie Junction, 48½ miles from Aberdeen, the main line forks: one line goes through Portsoy and follows the coast to Elgin, the other route is via Keith and Craigellachie and over the Morayshire Extension Railway to Elgin.

GREAT NORTH OF SCOTLAND RAILWAY, GENERAL MAP.



Lines owned or leased,
thus: ————
Lines not used for
passenger traffic,
thus: ————

A.G.R. del

STATISTICS of Capital, Receipts, Expenditure, Dividends, Rolling Stock, Mileage, and Train Mileage.

Capital.—The Paid-up Capital at 31st July, 1907, stood as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| Loans and Debenture Stock | ... | ... | ... | ... | £1,539,275 |
| Preference Stock | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3,240,407 |
| Ordinary Stock | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,563,871 |
| | | | | | £6,343,553 |

Expenditure on Capital Account—

| | | | | Year ending 31st July, 1907. | | Total Capital Expenditure to 31st July, 1907. |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------------------------------------|---------|---|
| Lines open for traffic | ... | ... | ... | £4,899 | ... | £5,141,422 |
| Working Stock | ... | ... | ... | 13,081 | ... | 916,951 |
| | | | | | £17,980 | £6,058,373 |

Receipts.—The Receipts for the year ending 31st July, 1907, were made up as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| Passengers, Parcels and Mails | ... | ... | ... | ... | £255,090 |
| Goods, Minerals and Live Stock | ... | ... | ... | ... | 218,840 |
| Other Receipts | ... | ... | ... | ... | 28,710 |
| | | | | | £502,640 |

Expenditure.—The Expenditure for the year ending 31st July, 1907, was divided as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| Maintenance of Way and Works | ... | ... | ... | ... | £37,729 |
| Locomotive Power | ... | ... | ... | ... | 85,207 |
| Carriage and Wagon Repairs | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17,688 |
| Traffic Expenses | ... | ... | ... | ... | 77,043 |
| General Charges | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12,711 |
| Rates and Taxes | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14,620 |
| Other Charges | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7,141 |
| | | | | | £252,139 |

Dividend.—The Dividends paid on the Preferred Ordinary Stock for the year ending 31st July, 1907, 3 per cent. per annum, and 1 per cent. per annum. on the Deferred Converted Ordinary Stock.

Rolling Stock.—The Rolling Stock at 31st July, 1907, comprised 115 locomotives, 95 tenders, 72 first-class carriages, 287 third-class carriages, 68 composites and saloons, 336 other coaching vehicles, and 3,592 goods vehicles of various kinds.

Mileage.—The Mileage at 31st July, 1907, stood as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|------|--------------------|------|
| Miles owned | ... | ... | 336½ | Miles maintained:— | |
| | | | | Two lines | ... |
| | | | | One line | ... |
| | | | | | 63 |
| | | | | | 273½ |
| | | | | | 336½ |

Total length, including sidings, in equivalent of single track, 524 miles.

Train Mileage.—The Train Mileage worked during the year ending 31st July, 1907, was as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| By Passenger Trains... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,522,861½ |
| By Goods and Mineral Trains | ... | ... | ... | ... | 671,311 |
| | | | | | 2,194,172½ |

Originally it was intended to amalgamate the G. N. of S. and the Aberdeen Rys., but in 1850 the Amalgamation Act was repealed and in 1866 the Aberdeen was absorbed by the Caledonian. The construction of the line was commenced in 1852. Between Inverurie and Aberdeen part of the railway is laid along the course of the Aberdeenshire Canal, which had been in use from about the commencement of the century, and the waterway was used to convey materials for the construction of the railway as well as for the general trade of the district. The engineering works were of an ordinary character, as at a meeting about this time the chairman said, "While the works are unusually light, our traffic prospects are particularly good." There was a timber viaduct across the Don, whilst some of the cuttings were at that time considered extensive. The completion of the first portion of the line was much delayed by the severe weather of 1853-54, and it was not until September 12th, 1854, that the first forty miles—a single line from Kittybrewster to Huntly—were opened for traffic. From the first the electric telegraph formed part and parcel of the undertaking, the Great North being far in advance of other Scottish railways in this respect. The G. N. of S. Ry. has never had any second-class carriages.

The system was consolidated as from August, 1866, by the absorption of the Alford Valley, Fortmartine and Buchan, Inverurie and Old Meldrum, Aberdeen and Turriff, the Banff, Macduff and Turriff Extension, the Keith and Dufftown, and the Strathspey Rys., and from 1st August, 1875, the Deeside Ry., the line to Ballater (for Balmoral), was amalgamated with the G. N. of S. Ry. A line from Ellon to Boddam was opened in 1897, and a light railway from Fraserburgh to St. Combs in 1903.

Road Motor omnibuses for passengers and parcels traffic (the property of the G. N. of S. Ry.) ply between Ballater and Braemar, Aberdeen and Cluny, Aberdeen and Echt, Aberdeen and Newburgh, Alford and Strathdon, Huntly and Aberchirder, and a steam and petrol motor lorry service for goods traffic is worked between Aberdeen, Skene, Watertou, Echt and Midmar, etc.

Important Bridges, Viaducts, etc.—The bridge over the River Spey, on the Moray Firth Coast Railway, is the longest, 7 spans (950 ft. in length). The main span is 350 ft., and the other 6 spans are each about 100 ft. long.

Principal Towns Served and Quickest Trains.—Aberdeen, Inverurie, Huntly, Keith, Banff, Buckie and Elgin, whence the railway affords access to Inverness and all places in the north of Scotland, also Macduff, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Boddam, Alford, Old Meldrum, Banchory, Aboyne, and Ballater. The fastest trains run are between Aberdeen and Elgin, thence by the Highland Ry. to Inverness, but there are also quick and convenient trains on other parts of the system.

Longest Run without a stop.—Between Aberdeen and Huntly, 40½ miles.

Running Powers.—The G. N. of S. Ry. exercises the following running powers:—Over the Caledonian line between Aberdeen and Ferryhill Junction, about three-quarters of a mile; and over the Highland Ry. at Boat of Garten for a distance of 3 miles. Description of traffic worked: Passenger, goods and live stock.

Steepest Gradient.—The steepest gradient on the railway over which passenger trains work is near Rothes, being 1 in 50 for a distance of 1½ miles.

Permanent Way.—Main Line: Rails 90 lbs. per yard; chairs 46 lbs. each; sleepers Scotch fir, creosoted, 9 ft. by 10 in. by 5 in.

Tunnels.—The longest tunnel is Hutcheon Street, which is 269 yards long.

Dimensions of Vehicles.—Longest passenger coaches are 48 ft. in length of body.

Rates and Taxes, 1907.—£14,620, equal to about £43 per mile of railway.

Season Tickets, 1907.—2,945, each available for twelve months.

Colours of Engines and Rolling Stock.—The locomotives are painted green, picked out with red, and the colour of the passenger rolling stock is white from top to waist and crimson lake from waist to sole.

The Locomotive Works are now at Inverurie, having been removed from Kittybrewster.

The largest signal-box is Inverurie; it contains 69 levers.

Through Services.—The Great North of Scotland Ry. runs through carriages from Aberdeen to the following on a foreign line:—Inverness, Highland Ry.

Summit Level.—The summit level is situated between Nethybridge and Boat of Garten, and is 702 feet above sea level.

No Parliamentary Bill has been deposited for the 1908 Session.

Driver's position on the footplate.—Left.

Hotels owned by the Company.—Palace Hotel, Aberdeen, and Cruden Bay Hotel Cruden Bay, Fort Erroll.