



Hello Everybody

Welcome to Newsletter number 8, which we hope you will find entertaining. What started as a way of keeping a few of us in touch during lockdown has grown and grown and I appreciate the many kind comments received. Also, a big thanks to all those who have contributed photos and articles for our enjoyment; I couldn't have done it without you!



Well the big news this month, apart from the sun actually shining on the Bank holiday and some members being spotted wearing shorts, is the forthcoming government White Paper on the future of our railways. **Great British Railways (GBR)** is a planned state-owned public body that will oversee rail transport in Great Britain from 2023. The organisation will replace Network Rail as the operator of rail infrastructure and will also control the contracting of train operations, the setting of fares and timetables and the collection of fare revenue in most of England. GBR will own all stations and most infrastructure in Great Britain.

The concession contract system will replace the previous system of passenger rail franchising in Great Britain run by the Department for Transport, which collapsed in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic

GBR will be modelled on the operations of Transport for London, which contracts services on systems such as London Overground. Andrew Haines and Sir Peter Hendy, the current CEO and chair of Network Rail



GWR No 813 0-6-0Saddle

Guest Photographer Spot

A youthful Simon Dewey, obviously a dedicated follower of fashion even then, is pictured right with Oxley allocated Black 5 No 44944



Lupins and “Solway Firth”

Each summer saw a wealth of lupins in bloom on the wasteland between the towpath of the 21 locks of the BCN canal down from Broad Street Basin to Aldersley Junction after passing beneath Oxley viaduct and the western side of Oxley engine shed. This was a frequently used route for unauthorized access to the shed with a reduced risk of being caught and summarily ejected by the foreman, with the additional benefit of clumps of bushes behind which one’s bike could be reasonably safely left.

Lupins abound in the foreground as “Britannia” pacific 70049 “Solway Firth” rests in the sun alongside the shed building on the evening of 31st May 1963. Although bearing a 6J (Holyhead) shed plate 70049 was on the point of being transferred to Aston where it would stay for five months before moving to Crewe North, then Willesden and finally, in November 1964, heading to Carlisle from where it would be withdrawn in December 1967.

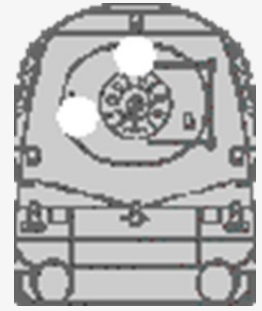
Built at Crewe in 1954 and one of the last six of the class to be constructed, unlike the other five, while being named after a Scottish Firth it was never a Scottish engine. In fact, while the other five, in recognition of their initial allocation to the Scottish Region were so named shortly after being built, 70049 remained unnamed until May 1960. The locomotive was scrapped by J. McWilliams of Shettleston, Glasgow in March 1968, a firm which disposed of no fewer than 21 of the 55-strong class



Thanks for the memories Simon!

Top and 'alf Left

Paul Anderson recalls a winter's night in 1965



It's Thursday, a fortnight before Christmas 1965. I should be Rest Day, but an enquiry to Doug in the List Office regarding available work brings a favorable response: "Yes, Special 6, book on 0120. I think it's an extra parcels train, OK?" "Yeah, thanks, Doug!" Being inherently lazy, I opt to go into work early that night, while public transport is still operating: it's too cold for a nine-mile cycle ride. Alighting from the last 77 from Vauxhall, I cross Wandsworth Road and head down Brooklands Road, its sodium street lights giving the smoke from a "West Country" climbing on to the Nine Elms turntable a weird, orangey greyness. On down the cinder path and into the Stygian gloom that is 70A by night. Noticing a reasonably clean BR Standard Class 4 tank, no 80154 on Number One road, I turn into the Running Foreman's office to announce my arrival: "Evening, Ted!" "Cor, you're early, Andy boy – 80154, just outside on One."



Now, 80154 is a bit special: apart from being the last engine to be built at Brighton Works, it is the Southern's newest loco – if you discount the Bulleid rebuilds – and nearly wasn't built at all, as BR had decreed that the construction of the Riddles Class 4 tanks should cease at 80149 and that the rest of Order BR 7739 should be cancelled. Only when it was discovered that all the parts for 80150-54 were already on hand was building allowed to go ahead. The proposed 80155-69 remained stillborn, with 80154 entering traffic on 26th March 1957 as Brighton's final curtain call. Climbing up into 80154's cab, I can't

believe my luck. Obviously, she hasn't been berthed for long, as she has a full set of tools, lamps, disc boards and oil bottles. I check the controls – all OK – light the gauge lamp and check the boiler water level: good, full. There's a healthy 110 pounds on the clock, enough for me to try the injectors. Water on...and only the merest trickle issues from the overflow pipe. Oh dear! Trying the other injector produces similar results. Strange, as the tank gauge is showing full. Dismounting from the cab with my gauge lamp, I clamber up the front footplating in order to ascertain just how much water is actually in the tanks. Both are only a few inches off being completely full. Back in the cab, I have another go at the two water valves – again, nothing. My previous sense of elation swiftly ebbing away, I head back to the Foreman's office with my tale of woe. Harry Ranger, the amiable Assistant Running Foreman, comes out with me to 80154 but has similar lack of success in divining water from the locomotive's injectors. "Best come and see what else you can take," he ventures as we return to the office to see what else is available. "Gawd, it's all falling apart tonight," sighs Ted as he places a mug of steaming tea in its designated parking space amidst the piles of paperwork on his desk. "I've got the fitters working on the engines for the Mails and the 0245 Portsmouth, both with clacks blowing through..."

"Hang on," says Harry, "82018 on 12 Road was lit up at teatime after wash-out. I wonder if she's on the boil yet..." I amble over to investigate. Climbing into the cab of the Class 3 tank, I clean the gauge protector with a piece of paper and check the water level with my cigarette lighter. It's just starting to move gently up and down in the gauge glass, so with luck should be starting to make steam before long. I try the blower – nothing – then go back to the office, passing, en route, Ginger, the shed's big tomcat, probably off for a serious night's mousing over on 25 Road.

So, we are to have 82018 for our night shift. She is bereft of any tools, apart from a misshapen clinker shovel, and the cab is full of smoke from the recently-lit fire. There's a pricker and dart lying beside a Standard 5 stopped for brake blocks in 11 Road, so I retrieve them and try to liven up the fire by pushing it all over the twenty square feet of grate, then open the ashpan doors to increase the airflow, as the damper control appears to be seized shut. Harry appears again, accompanied by a wheelbarrow full of chopped up sleepers.



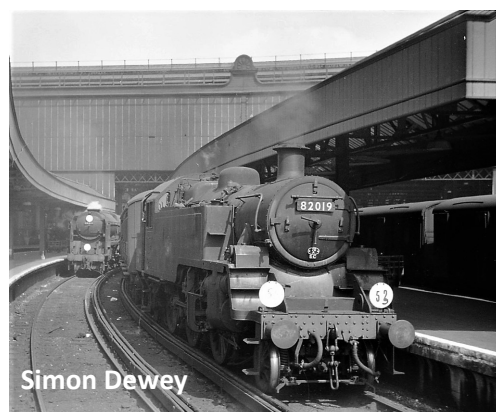
"These'll help bring her round," he shouts to me as he chucks the contents of the barrow up on to the footplate. It's time to visit the stores with the oil bottles previously retrieved from 80154, filling the paraffin bottle and collecting a nice clean disc board upon which I paste "SPL6" from the rack of paper numbers just inside the door. I head back to 82018 and begin throwing the bits of oil-soaked sleepers on to the fire, along with half the contents of the paraffin bottle. Slamming the firehole doors shut, I hear a muffled whumph as combustion ensues. Simultaneously, a faint sigh from the chimney announces that steam production has commenced. The overwhelming benefit of this is that smoke is no longer billowing into the cab, as the blower is just cracked open enough to lift the smoke, but not enough to use all the steam being produced. The pressure gauge is now showing about 20 lbs per sq. in..

Checking in the roster lobby, I see that Special 6 is 0200 off shed, 0215 Waterloo, vans to Woking via the Hounslow loop, Staines and Virginia Water, re-gaining the main line west of Weybridge, arriving Woking at 0330. Waterloo to Woking is a distance of 24 and bit miles by the main line, considerably more by the convoluted route we are to take. Being ignorant of the correct head code, I poke my head round the mess-room door and casually ask "Anyone know the code for Waterloo-Woking via the Hounslow loop?" The answers range from stony silence to "Please go away, you are disrupting our card school" (or words to that effect). Wiser counsel comes from the Foreman's office: "You want **Top and 'alf Left**, Andy boy, that'll get you there!" That august body, The Railway Clearing House, had more or less standardized loco head codes in the years 1917-1923, but the Southern alone, because of multiple routing options, continued to use "route" rather than "train description" – along with six, rather than four, lamp irons as a means of informing signalmen what was in their sections. The R.C.H also standardized such things as four-wheel goods wagons and inter-carriage electrical jump connections. Anyway, back on 82018, things are looking a bit healthier. A drop of bearing oil and the coal pick soon has the damper control working again, so I shut the ashpan hopper doors. Meanwhile, the boiler is thumping and groaning as steam is being raised rather quicker than it would like. A few shovelfuls of coal around the box and under the doors quickly have the pressure up past the 100 psi mark. Dare I try the injectors? Clunk, gurgle – and again – clunk, gurgle. Oh, the sweet sound of success! Both A1. Wiping over the controls, driver's brake pedestal and firebox back-head makes things a bit more shipshape: even if we haven't got much steam, we have a clean footplate! It's about half-past one: good job I did come in early. I haven't seen my driver yet, but never mind: I'll fill the boiler up and move the engine forward a bit, then I can fill the tanks so that we leave with the full 1500 gallons plus a full boiler. I apply the steam brake and, as I wind the handbrake to "off", I am greeted with "ullo mate!" – it's my regular driver Len Roycroft. I haven't seen him for ages, as he has been at local Departments Committee (L.D.C.) meetings, which seem to take up more and more of his time now that the Bournemouth electrification scheme is under way.

"I'll just nip underneath and check the pony axle boxes," he says. "OK, I've filled the feeder for you – here you are." These Standard 3's really are a doddle to prepare! I reapply the handbrake and release the steam brake. While Len is busy below, I hang a tail lamp on the front buffer beam and a white light on the bottom right bunker lamp iron – the code for light engine to Waterloo. As I chuck the last of Harry's chopped-up sleepers into the firebox, Len regains the footplate, applies the steam brake, gestures to me to unwind the handbrake, and we move forward to No 12 Road water column with plenty of wet whooshing from the cylinder drain cocks. "Righto mate!" I shout as the water comes within half an inch of the tank tops. Pausing only to check that the smokebox door is tightly closed, we move on to the turntable. Opening the ejector – the turntable is vacuum operated – we turn 82018 then head down the pit road so that the bunker can be topped up under the coal hopper. "You can take coal, Pete." (he always thinks my name is Peter, but I don't really mind as he is such an amiable bloke).

"I'll go and make a brew – give us your can." While Len is brewing up, I wash down the footplate and, with a wet brush, climb the bunker footsteps and sweep off any excess coal and dust from the cab roof. Len comes back with a full can of Typhoo's finest, just as the dummy comes off to allow us up the steeply curved headshunt that is "Loco Junction" from the signal box of the same name. Mr G.J. Churchward once said that the secret of running trains was to see how little steam one could use. That wouldn't be a problem tonight! Winding 82018 into back gear, we hear the exit dummy clunk to green and head up to Waterloo under a clear, starry sky. Normally, the fire wouldn't be touched for the two-and-a-half mile run up to the terminus, but in view of its fairly thin nature after my rapid last-minute preparation, I decide to run the bar through it. The resultant trail of sparks from the chimney - the result of burning so much wood – is worthy of Halley's Comet!

We are signaled into Platform 15 at Waterloo, and I'm horrified by the length of the train we back on to: there must be about 16 or 17 vans – big 'uns – between us and the buffer stop. Sensing my panic, the guard reassures me that we are only taking the first seven vehicles. "Phew, that's more like it," is my relieved reply. "Do you want me to hook up the steam heat?" "No point," he says, "the lazy so-and-sos haven't put the pipes together down the train!" I take the white lamp off the bunker, put the vacuum bags together, swing up 82018's



draw hook on to the leading (and freshly-painted) BG, and glance back down the train: a BG, a Western Fruit D, a SR PMV, and then four more BG's. Placing the head lamps in top and half left position, I then put the disc board with SPL6 on the bottom middle lamp iron. Meanwhile back in the cab, the guard is enjoying some warmth and tea. "Seven for 217 tons, stopping Hounslow, Staines and Woking, OK?" I check the water as the guard is giving the driver the load: just below the top nut. While the guard goes off to do the brake test and Len waits for the vacuum gauge needle to drop to zero, I start to put some body into the fire: ten shovelfuls in each back corner and a dozen under the door. Five minutes to departure time, 200 lbs on the clock, I throw on a few more shovelfuls to get a decent depth of fire. We appear to have a reasonable bunker full of soft coal, most of it in decent-sized lumps. 0218 and the safety valves start to lift, so I slam open the fire-hole doors and reach for the injector controls just as Len yells across the cab "We got the road!" Knocking off the injector, I look back for the guard's green light. "Yup, right away, Len!" Fire doors slammed shut, pop on the whistle, green aspect with "WL" (for Windsor Local) in front of us, and we're off... 82018 positively stamps out of the great terminus, its 5'3" drivers accelerating rapidly as we negotiate the sinuous curves towards Vauxhall, fire-hole doors rattling in time to the stentorian exhaust beat. 82018 doesn't have a speedometer – unlike later members of the class – but it does have AWS, and a strident drrring announces the fact that we are approaching a colour light signal at green.

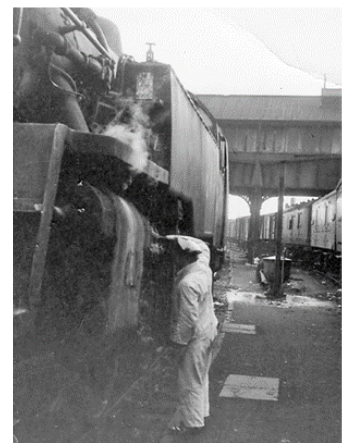
As the lights of Woking come into sight, steam is shut off and we drift gently to a halt alongside its Southern Railway Art Deco-style signal box. I climb down to unhook the train whilst a signalman is shouting something to my driver. It transpires that our return working is from the engineer's sidings on the up side of the station. Len directs me to the mess room to get a brew ready whilst he will take the engine over to the sidings. Wash hands, brew a can of coffee, have a sandwich, read the paper. All too soon, the break is over and it's back out into the dark and cold to find 82018 hooked up to six 40-ton capacity Walrus bogie ballast hoppers, destination Wimbledon West Yard. "Seven for 370 tons," announces the guard. This is a very heavy load for an 82 tank. The fire has gone a bit dead, so I give the bars a rock, and start placing coal in the box with the blower fairly hard on. After what seems like an eternity, we've got a box full of very hot fire with a good depth to it. The guard signals to make vacuum. Brake test OK, I look out for the tip from the man in the van: we've got the road. "Right away, driver!" I call out as a green light is directed at me from the rear of the train.

Opening the regulator produces a loud woof from the front end, then.....silence. I light a Player's Gold Leaf, and have half smoked it before the second woof from the chimney, then I feel very gentle movement as 82018 strains every muscle to get this load on the move. There is a brief slip, then eventually we get our train under way and trundle through Woking's up platform at about eight or nine mph. The gradient is basically favorable to us all the way to Wimbledon, so we should be OK even if we don't break any speed records. Each wagon sounds all of its 59 tons gross weight as it bangs over every rail joint. I've got too much fire in the middle of the box – nearly up to the brick arch – and the pressure is dropping back to the 160 mark. Swift work with the pricker to even it out and the needle gradually comes back to 180. Keeping the injector on for short bursts and firing just to the back half of the box means that we are progressing at about 35 mph with about 190 lbs of steam and three-quarters of a glass of water. By the time we are through Weybridge – on the London side – with about 12 miles to go, the train starts to run more easily, probably owing to those plain bearing axle boxes reaching their working temperature. Wimbledon West Yard hoves into view, and we are quickly shunt-released by a Q1; then it's hey-ho, light engine back to Nine Elms, take coal and water, clean the fire (a particularly easy job on the Class 3 tanks), take maybe two or three shovels of ash from the smokebox, sweep the front footplating, and away home. But not before I find out what was wrong with 80154. You've guessed it – yes, the filter box by the fireman's side cab footstep was choked solid with bits of rust and scale. London water has a lot to answer for! 82018, despite being four years past its last Heavy General overhaul, comfortably did all that was asked of it that night in 1965. I loved these neat, snappy little engines, many of which ended their lives at Nine Elms, and all of which were prematurely broken up. No wonder that, much later, the phrase would be coined "The best engine the preservation scene never had"!

Now, many years later and working as Assistant Publicity Officer, helping Chris Proudfoot on the SVR-based 82045 project, I'm absolutely thrilled to think that an 82XXX will be taking to the rails again before too long. Chris has promised to hand me the firing shovel – I can't wait! Sadly, Paul passed away in 2017.

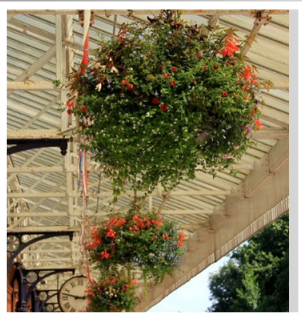
The late Paul Anderson (1945-2017), seen right 'oiling up' at Clapham Junction, was a BR fireman at Nine Elms from 1963 to the end of 1966. He had many turns on 82xxx tanks and loved them, so was an enthusiastic supporter of the 82045 project. He was a great mate of Chris Proudfoot, the project's fund-raiser, and is very much missed.

Story kindly shared by The 82045 Steam Locomotive Trust.



Stafford Virgins Part-6

Tuesday May 27th turned out to be just a little different to normal. The police had to be called on three occasions while I was on duty. The railway has its own police force known as the British Transport Police but unfortunately there is no one based at Stafford the nearest being Wolverhampton or Crewe. The first incident involved a gentleman who wished to leave this world but paramedics were on the scene in minutes and the sad fellow was taken away in an ambulance. Shortly after a phone message from a London bound train from Liverpool informs the team leader that the train would be making an unscheduled stop at Stafford to take off two drunk passengers who were being violent on the train. On this occasion BT Police were in attendance and escorted the two men back to Crewe. Shortly after this, a message came into the team leader's office that a freight train was to be held in Stafford while police searched some containers on the train. It later became evident that three illegal immigrants were inside one of the containers. A passenger on a platform further down the line had heard pleas for help as the train passed and he alerted the authorities.



One of the more enjoyable tasks at the station was watering the flower baskets which was a big job in time spent. While performing this duty I was called away to comfort a man who was going to Inverness from Nuneaton who had become unwell. He refused the attention of a doctor as well as going to the hospital. We contacted his son who made his way to Stafford to accompany his father home. My notes remind me that the late Spring and Summer were very warm and this caused many problems with the ageing trains that were still operating as well as the infrastructure. Air conditioning was an

ongoing problem and on train staff would give out bottled water to keep passengers cool! Stocks of water were on hand at Stafford for trains who were out of stock.

It was on an evening when the skies opened with torrential rain, thunder and lightning a Euston to Liverpool train entered platform 6. A full time member of staff was instructed to take a wheelchair and occupant off the train which was not under the platform canopies. He radioed for assistance and I went to help. The parents were to say the least were irate that the train could not be moved under cover but this would not be possible, but had they travelled in Standard class as per their ticket they would not have had the problem. A kindly train manager put them in 1st class with all the trimmings but they were going to have to get wet when leaving the train. Needless to say, my colleague and I were drenched to the skin by the time this was sorted out and although I found another shirt and trousers, the collar size was too small and I was unable to wear a tie which I referred to before as a criminal offence and so I was not able to continue my shift. Into August and the 'Silly Season' starts; more next time...

Look forward to that - thanks Derek!

LMS Coronation class 'semi' 4-6-2 No 46240 "City of



Platform End

Peter Hand's casual mention of the original railway arch in Three Tuns Lane last month stirred a few memories.

Brian Shaw kindly contacted me to ask "did you know that the original underbridge in Three Tuns Lane featured in the 1957 film 'The Man in the Sky', the majority of which was filmed at Pendeford Airport? I think the new bridge was built around the mid-late 1960's - a relative of mine from Barnsley was QS on the job! Well, no I didn't Brian but I found a still from the film to illustrate your comments. (Below)



Legendary filmmakers Ealing Studios will forever be associated with London's big screen boom, but on one occasion they shot on location in the Black County – and brought the day's biggest stars to the fringes of Wolverhampton. Ealing Studios are today remembered for their gentle, black and white comedies – such classics as *The Ladykillers*, *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *Whisky Galore!* In *The Man in the Sky*, released in January 1957, was quite different. It was an action thriller in which



top box office draw Jack Hawkins played the pilot of a damaged aircraft desperately trying to land. The film was set in Wolverhampton and Pendeford airfield and some of the neighboring streets were used for the location filming. Alongside Jack Hawkins, the film featured Elizabeth Sellars, Donald Pleasance, Lionel Jeffries, Megs Jenkins, Victor Maddern and John Stratton, stars of countless classic British movies and TV series from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Pendeford Airfield was developed by Wolverhampton Corporation in the 1930s. Under the government's Aircraft Expansion Scheme, the council was able to entice aircraft maker Boulton Paul to leave their Norfolk base and set up a new factory at Pendeford. The first Wolverhampton-built aircraft, a sub-contracted Hawker Demon, flew from Pendeford in August, 1936. The first Boulton Paul Defiant fighter flew in August, 1937, but the airfield was not officially opened until June 27, 1938. In the Second World War the airfield was used as a training school for pilots. In September 1940, the Luftwaffe attacked, a Junkers Ju88 dropping a cache of bombs that missed the airfield and exploded at the nearby Barnhurst sewage beds. After the war the airfield was used for commercial flights, with Don Everall Ltd operating from there. The close proximity of houses led to increasing complaints about noise and the council announced the airfield would close down on December 31, 1970. Sadly, a few months before that, on April 9, 1970, a de Havilland Dove crashed onto a house in Redhurst Drive. One occupant of the house and two people aboard the aircraft died in the fire that followed.



Your chance to comment on previous items, add a photo or story, correct our mistakes and generally add to our knowledge....

We would love to hear from you!

Ivan Whitehouse remembers the arch from his long lost youth as having no pavement for pedestrians; “You just took your life in your hands then ran for it”! Brian’s date for the new bridge was spot on because Ivan also sent a picture of the bridge being reconstructed in February 1964 as part of the Wolverhampton electrification works. (right)

Ivan also sent this photo taken not far away just north of Bee Lane in 1947. The Crewe driver of ‘Patriot’ class 4-6-0 No **45519 Lady Godiva** mistook a cleared main line signal for him to leave Bushbury sidings and derailed on the catch points.



Perhaps with a touch of truth Ivan reports that the engine fell on its side at the back of some houses and it only took the local residents 20 mins to empty the 9 ton of coal from the tender! PS It’s not often you see Lady Godiva covered up!

THE LADYKILLERS

This classic black comedy from Ealing Studios ranks alongside *The Titfield Thunderbolt* as its most famous

railway film even if it isn’t really a railway film at all. Whereas ‘*Titfield*’ epitomizes the rural branch line and the *Man in the Sky* the fringes of a provincial town, ‘*Ladykillers*’ is soaked in a big City atmosphere of smoky tunnels, goods yards and built-up approaches to main line termini. The railway forms a very atmospheric backdrop that dominates the proceedings, particularly in the last half-hour or so. Mrs. Wilberforce’s house that the gang use was specially created for the film over the southern portal of Copenhagen Tunnel (594 yards), but the siding running past her backyard is of interest, more on which later.



The freight trains which the bodies of the gang fall into are on the lines that run into and out of King’s Cross Goods Yard. The signal that hits Alec Guinness on the head during the film’s climax was, like the house, specially set up for the film at the mouth of the tunnel.

Much rolling stock, both passenger and freight, is seen throughout the movie, and provides a tantalizing glimpse of the railway scene at the time. Like ‘*Titfield*’ it is all in colour too.

In this classic scene from the movie Alec Guinness and Danny Green wheel the body of Cecil Parker away to be disposed of. The track in the foreground really was an actual siding that connected with the North London at Caledonian Road whilst the approaching loco is an N2 Class 0-6-2T on a suburban working.



Ivan Whitehouse kindly sent these pictures of Stafford Street, Willenhall mentioned by Mike Shaw in his article last month.

Top:

Super 'D' 0-8-0
(a Bescot 'duchess' !)
shunting in the station



Middle:

The exterior of Willenhall Stafford Street signal box, one of the few Midland Railway boxes to be seen in Wolverhampton.

Bottom

Phyllis Rudd answered the war-time call for workers and became a cart-driver at Stafford Street. Pictured there with her horse 'Jack'. As a young child she was said to be terrified of horses!

NONE BUT
COMPANY'S HORSES
ALLOWED TO DRINK
AT THIS TROUGH



Simon Dewey kindly sent this photo after reading Keith's liking of the big 9F engines in last months Newsletter. A 9F on the Stour Valley line; 2-10-0 **92047** of Birkenhead shed running light engine towards Wolverhampton High Level on the embankment just south of the end of the Stour Valley viaduct at Fox's Lane on 11th April 1964, presumably from Bushbury shed. The high pitch of the boiler above the frames with the distinctive clear gap beneath is clearly visible, from which some trainspotters of the day nicknamed the class "Spaceships".



The 9Fs were regarded by many as the most successful of the BR Standard locomotives and while intended as heavy freight engines they were not unknown on passenger workings, perhaps most famously on the hilly Somerset & Dorset line (RIGHT) but also pressed into service by the Western, Midland and Eastern Regions often on summer weekend extras. I have a memory of seeing two such trains in quick succession working round the Oxley triangle to head south along the Kingswinford Branch with the empty stock of trains they had brought into the Low Level station from the South Coast in 1959. Published records recently seen show that these were 92240 with the 08.48 train from Hastings and 92244 with the 09.00 from Margate, on the 8th of August that year.



While frequently seen at Oxley shed (including when brand new and on delivery from Crewe Works to the Western Region: the 92221 to 92250 batch, during 1958) none were ever shedded there. A few examples of the class also visited Stafford Road Works for variously Unclassified and Light/Casual repair but 92079, the Lickey banking engine, was there for Heavy/Intermediate repair between August and November 1961.

Tales from the footplate

Keith Morgan continues his tales with a crash-course on empty stock working!!

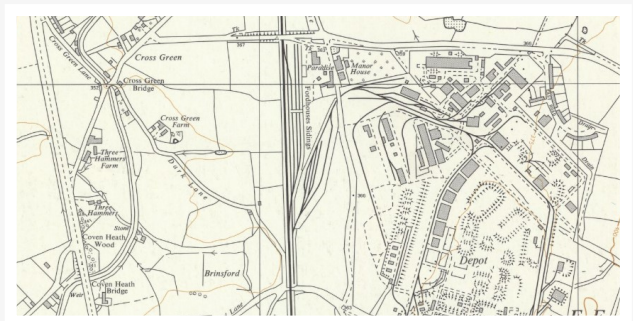


My next move was the control link, in which there were no set jobs, the work being generated with instructions either from the control centre or the shed foreman.

I was a little disappointed that I was booked with a driver who had a reputation as a hard hitting drinker amongst others at the shed. My mates told me to keep an eye on him, especially on nights when he had been to the social club. My fears were however unfounded; he was a very intelligent man who could hold a discussion on any subject but you did have to watch him on occasions. I was impressed with the fact that he had been a top-link fireman at Saltley and fired on the Water Orton-Carlisle's, apparently the longest mileage goods train in the UK.

This was a mammoth 225 mile, Seven hour-Forty minutes trip described as non stop although it did in fact stop twice for ten minutes at Rotherham and Skipton. There the Tender was replenished with water and the wagon inspectors (Wheel tappers) would check the train. This was the longest non stop freight job worked by one set of men, —Leon

One night as we booked on for the at 10pm shift, the foreman greeted us with a job card in his hand, "I've got a nice job for you two, empty stock from Fordhouses to Willesden". Exciting as that sounded, my hopes weren't that high, because just a couple of weeks before, we had the same job, which was "Caped", railway code for cancelled. The Black 5 engine that was allocated to us had been prepared and whilst the driver checked round the engine I built the fire up and checked both injectors. On his return to the cab my driver said that he had checked the smokebox door and the sanders, all ok. We moved the engine to the water column and filled the tank and then sat there waiting for the guard. He duly appeared, so we set off tender first to Fordhouses, our guard informing us that the train consist was 20 coaches, not unusual at the time. Fordhouses was the ex-MOD factory station/yard situated about 5 miles north of Bushbury which was used mainly for storing ECS, all long gone now. The site at Featherstone was known as filling factory No. 17. Covering more than 158 acres, the factory specialised in filling weapons such as bombs, shells, smoke and cartridges. I believe some of the land was used to build Featherstone Prison.



On reaching the yard the Bobby crossed us over to the up line, then we backed on to the first 10 coaches, hooked on, and drew the rake onto the main line, now we backed very slowly until the guards red lamp told us that we had touched the other ten. After about ten minutes delay, the driver instructed me to go and check on the guard, but then he appeared, "I've had to chuck a couple of dossers out of the train telling them they could either get off, or have a trip to London" - - - they left.

After receiving the tip from the guard, we were away, the Black 5's punchy exhaust telling me that she could handle this mammoth train on our journey south. Approaching Bushbury Junction we took the left hand line towards Bescot, our engine going well, with the steam pressure gauge just below the red mark, a satisfying situation for a fireman meaning I could now relax. (a little).

With clear signals our speed increased and Bescot and Perry Barr were soon reached. As Aston Junction was now approaching, the driver shut the regulator, and slowed to take the left hand line towards Stetchford, where we would join the New St. to Coventry main line. With clear signals, my driver opened the engine up, the Black 5 responded and began to accelerate at quite a rate, she was steaming like a kettle as they used to say. After another firing, my driver called me over and said, "they will probably relieve us at Rugby, but if we get clear signals, do you want to carry on to Willesden"? I of course said yes!!

The night air felt good as I stood looking out my window towards the front of the engine, then I couldn't believe my eyes, but a second look confirmed that a vehicle was stationary on Marston Green level crossing. A collision was inevitable! I shouted to my driver, **obstruction!!** but he was already taking action, closing the regulator and making a full brake application. Our engine, unable to stop, hit the vehicle, a van, on our left hand side, sending it about 3 feet in the air and landing in a siding. The train came to a shuddering stop. After a couple of minutes to get our breath back, we inspected the front of the engine, which surprisingly perhaps was untouched. The signalman came to us and explained what had happened. Apparently the van driver finding the crossing gates closed, drove into the goods yard and attempted to cross the main line by driving over the rails only to come to rest blocking the up main before he abandoned the vehicle and ran away. After conversations with Control, it was decided to carry on to Rugby at a reduced speed, where they also explained that the engine would be replaced and taken on the shed for further inspection. Sadly we had no chance of going to Willesden now and spent the rest of the night at Rugby, catching the earliest train back to Wolverhampton. A few days later the Birmingham police came to Bushbury to interview us with regard to any evidence that we might have, but it was futile, we couldn't add anything. They then explained that the van was used in a cigarette robbery, i don't know what the outcome was. NB. I believe Marston Green crossing has been replaced with a bridge?



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Thanks Keith. As he told me, a very anxious moment speeding along in the dark particularly as he couldn't see how large the vehicle was, just a pair of headlights.

Did you know?

As the line passed close to the old Elmdon aerodrome a short distance to the east of the station, emergency colour light signals were installed. These were normally out, but in the event of the down line becoming obstructed or damaged by aircraft, the emergency colour light signals could be illuminated by the signalman to stop any Down train. These signals, when lit, gave yellow and red aspects, and should a train be stopped at the emergency stop signal, the driver was not to proceed until the light had been extinguished and permission had been received by telephone from the signalman.

Marston Green, 5MT No 45344 is seen at the head of an engineering department's loading gauge clearance test train on 24th April 1954.



Pictures from Warwickshire Railways website.

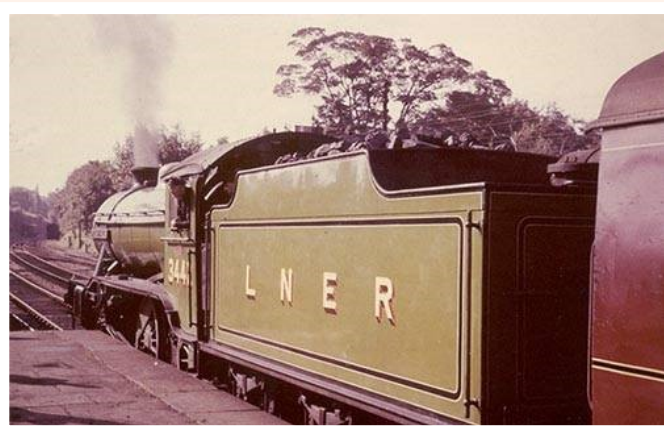
First trip on the Severn Valley Line: The 'Restored Engines

Phil Jones looks back 56 years for us

With the closure of so many Midlands Railways, I was keen to travel on as many lines before closure and demolition. 1965 was a pivotal year, with lines under threat. I had managed to do Cannock to Rugeley, and Stafford to Shrewsbury, before services were finished but I had been too late for the Severn Valley Line from Bewdley to Shrewsbury. This finished in 1962, and the track north of Bridgnorth was already being lifted. The best I could manage was a ticket on the Special train being organised by the Stephenson Locomotive Society. The motive power was to be three locos recently passing into private ownership, and beautifully restored to their original liveries. The itinerary was to include the last chance to travel up the Severn Valley as far as the Alveley Colliery, and also the run up from Stourbridge to Wolverhampton Low Level. Sunday, September 19th was a perfect day for



'gricing' (i.e., travelling on 'rare' lines) The first leg was a fast non-stop run from Snow Hill to Worcester, with the 8 coach train hauled by LNER 2-6-0 No 3442. 'The Great Marquess' was sporting its USA Bell as it passed through the Black Country. The Organiser, the legendary West Midlands



enthusiast Mr 'Cam' Camwell (**Left**) had provided a detailed itinerary for passengers, which marked each signal box, junction, and factory sidings. A complete Rail Journey, with a History Lesson included. At Worcester, the 'Marquess' was taken off for servicing, and replaced the other end with two GWR locos, Nos 1420 and 4555 which had been acquired by Mr Whitehouse, and based at Tyseley. The previous year on June 13th, No 4555 had been the last loco to pause at Womborne station on one of the SLS 'specials' which also included a stop at Dudley on the last day of Services. The double-headed train travelled back as far as Hartlebury, before taking a left turn for Bewdley, via Stourport. At Bewdley, there was a pause for photos. The station was still busy, with a local DMU service from Kidderminster, and also the occasional coal train from the Colliery up to Stourport Power Station. The train was joined by a group handing out leaflets which was promoting the recently formed Preservation project, which was hoping to suspend the lifting of track at Bridgnorth Station. Their ambition was to follow the example of the Bluebell line, and recreate a complete 'steam railway'. I was a bit sceptical, as the Chasewater Group had been finding it difficult in generating interest in their plans for a lakeside railway.

After the passing of a coal train, the special proceeded to the Alveley Colliery sidings, where passengers could alight. Here the two locos were separated and serviced. The train reversed and made its way back to Bewdley before turning left for Kidderminster. Passing the huge Sugar works, the train proceeded through Kidderminster and on to Stourbridge Junction. Here, another left turn took the train onto the previously



The final call was at Wolverhampton Low Level, where the two tank locos ran round the train. The station was still as I had remembered it from 'spotting' days in the late 1950's. A fast run back to Worcester, avoiding Bewdley, meant the third side of the Hartlebury triangle was negotiated. This was always a feature of the SLS specials. At Worcester, the Marquess was replaced for another fast run back to Birmingham Snow Hill.

My first visit to Bridgnorth had been in May 1965, when I found the Station abandoned. However, the Station Bar was still open (I think!) and the track was still intact, albeit very overgrown. This is Bridgnorth station looking south on 24 April 1966, 2½ years after closure. By this time demolition contractors were working southwards, and had reached the station area, as can be seen by the missing track, the missing water columns and the partially demolished signal box. Fortunately, once the Severn Valley Railway Society had agreed terms with British Railways for the purchase of the line, demolition was halted. British Railways wanted £40,000 for purchase of the



land and buildings but, with the savings they would make by removal of their maintenance liabilities, they finally agreed on a purchase price of £25,000. One of the first targets for the newly formed society was to raise the deposit so, in addition to encouraging more members and asking for donations, they also organised stalls and fair-ground rides in Bridgnorth yard to generate further income. In view of objections by Shropshire County Council and Chelmarsh Parish Council to the Light Railway Order application, a public enquiry was necessary and was held on 1 and 2 October 1968.



On 6 April 1969, whilst awaiting the result of the enquiry, this impressive line-up of Severn Valley locomotives (**ABOVE**) showed the world that the SVR was “ready and waiting for the green light”, although it would be a further 13 months of negotiations before they were able to open on 23 May 1970.

This year, the 56th Anniversary of my Special, the season began after lockdown with the SVR “Spring Steam Up” Gala Weekend. I could not have foreseen what would have happened in the following half-Century on the railway let alone Covid! The SVR now has the reputation of being **the ‘Premier Line’ of Steam Railways in the UK.**

Thanks Phil but don't let the Bluebell Railway hear you say that!

Coastway Crusader



This tour takes me back to my early days of serious rail touring thirty five years ago. It ran on Sunday 27th July 1986 and was organised by F&W Railtours, forerunners of Pathfinder Tours. Although I joined the train at Bromsgrove, it had set out from Wolverhampton at 0612 so I imagine several members of the Railway Circle may have been participants. **50050** had led as far as New Street where it was replaced by **45128** for the leg to Bristol Temple Meads, running around the stock during the pick up at Gloucester.



This was an ambitious itinerary featuring a pair of Class 25's undertaking an approximately 230 miles journey around central southern England, including a freight only branch plus brief visits to two seaside resorts. To quote F&W's tour folder, "it is most probable that this will be the last visit of the class to the South Coast in charge of a passenger train." By now the vast majority of the class had been withdrawn but Crewe Diesel depot had put their faith in **25181/191 (LEFT)** and they were waiting at Temple Meads ready to take over for the main event.

We had a pleasant but uneventful journey via Bath, Westbury and Salisbury to Andover where the 25's

ran round and set off along the rump of the MSWJR towards Lurgershall. This line owes its survival to various MoD establishments in the surrounding area and still remains in regular use. Eighteen minutes were allocated for the locos to run round the stock again at Lurgershall but from my position near the front it soon became apparent all was not well with **25181**. Much scratching of heads and animated conversation was going on with fingers being pointed in the general direction of one of the bogies. On the other side of the railway boundary fence and paying little attention to proceedings was a chap with his head under the bonnet of, if I remember correctly, a Ford Capri. After a while a member of train crew went over for a chat with said man and returned with a tool of some description. Whether the tool was of any use I don't know but shortly afterwards the train was able to resume its journey back towards Andover just under an hour late. On arrival at Andover 25181 was declared unfit to go any further, indeed this was its final working. Apparently the loco had problems with its brakes, one report stating the handbrake had not been fully released resulting in severe wheel flats. It was subsequently withdrawn and moved to Eastleigh on 19th August where it was scrapped by Vic Berry two years later. In the meantime **33011** had been summoned to go forward with 25191 but there was further delay while the 33 was marshalled inside the 25, presumably not to disappoint photographers. It was also decreed the ploughs should be removed from 25191 because later the tour was booked over tracks shared with District Line trains between Wimbledon and East Putney before dropping down to Point Pleasant Junction. The ploughs were duly stashed in the rear cab.



The tour finally left Andover 2hr 7min late and headed directly up the South Western main line to Wimbledon and the above mentioned route to Point Pleasant Junction. From there we progressed via Clapham Junction and the metropolitan dubious delights of Brixton, Herne Hill and Tulse Hill before briefly rejoining the main line at Wimbledon as far as Raynes Park. Next came Epsom, Dorking and Horsham where we joined the Mid-Sussex line, passing along the lovely Arun Valley to Ford and our next destination, Bognor Regis.

The tour was only booked a twenty minute break here, long enough for a quick photo and 73114 to be attached to the rear for the short run to Littlehampton. Three years ago I revisited Bognor on a railtour but this time had the opportunity for a quick look around the place. At the risk of offending anybody associated with the town, I must admit being at a loss as to why King George V and Albert Steptoe were so besotted with it. Bognor's best days appear to be long vanished unless of course, you know better!



You may well be right Tony as the King, on being told he could recuperate from his chronic lung issue in 1936 in the town, is alleged to have said BUGGER BOGNOR!



The 8¼ miles to Littlehampton were soon traversed by the ED hauling this substantial train. Our leg stretch there was halved in an attempt to make up some lost time but setting out from Littlehampton at 1818 on a Sunday evening, home does seem a very long way away. With 25191 and 33011 leading once again our homeward route was via the Coastway Line to Havant and Cosham, then through Eastleigh and Romsey to Salisbury by which time

the deficit had been reduced to an hour late, or "Railtour Standard Time" as it is often called. Here 33011 had to relinquish its impromptu role. However by good fortune **37046/117** were on hand and duly backed down on to **25191** to take the train forward to Bristol, quite an exotic and noisy trio.



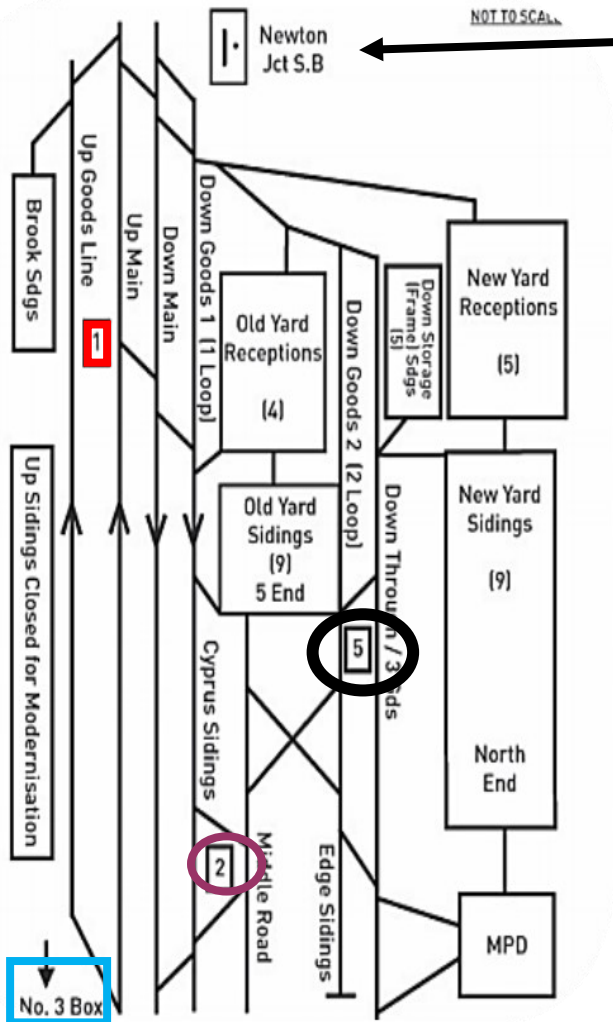
Due to the enforced change of traction, departure from Salisbury had increased to 1½hr late but 15min was regained by the time we reached Temple Meads where 45128 was lurking in the shadows to return the tour through to Wolverhampton.

It's worth noting that of the seven locos used that day, two are currently mainline registered, 50050 and 37117 which was subsequently renumbered to 37521. Following withdrawal in March 1987, 25191 was acquired for preservation on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and regained its original number, D7541. In 2011 it was bought by the South Devon Railway.

Thanks for the tale and the photos Tony!

A Bobby's Tale-Part 2

Mike Shaw explains the complexity of Bescot's layout and continues his tale of time spent as a signaller at Bescot No. 5 signal box



Newton Jct. SB, a class 2 signal box controlled the Up Main and Down Main lines; the exit from the Up Goods and Up South End Sidings; the entrance to the Down Goods and, by arrangement with the Down Receptions Points man, entrance to the Down Old and New Yard Receptions and 2 & 3 Down goods.

No. 1 SB, also class 2, controlled the Up Main and Down Main lines, through movements along the Up and Down Goods and connections to and from the Old Yard Hump.

No. 2 SB, again class 2, controlled the Up Main and Down Main lines, entrance to the Up Goods; exit from the Down Goods via Cyprus siding and movements from 5 end via various routes.

No. 3 SB, class 'special B', controlled the main junction with routes to and from the North, (Grand Jct. Line, known as the 'Old Road'); Dudley Line, Walsall line and all movements concerning the MPD and the Down Sidings 5 end; New Yard and North End. In 1960 just before I moved to Bescot the up sidings, except for some minor shunting in the South End, was taken out of commission for remodeling and No.4 box demolished. This then left the Down Old Yard receptions; Down Old Yard 5 End; Down New Yard receptions and marshalling sidings and North End sidings

to handle all the incoming and outgoing traffic, controlled by **No 5 SB**. There was also a couple of private sidings, Avery's, the weighing machines manufacturers, controlled by Newton Jct. SB and Elwells the manufacturers of garden tools (Later Spear & Jackson), controlled by No. 3 SB which also had responsible for the considerable movements Of Bescot Motive Power depot, then designated 3A.

1961 view (Right) of the inside of Bescot No. 5. Note the position of the block instruments and on the left and the 'prized' luxury of the guard's seat obtained from a GW brake van mentioned on the net page.



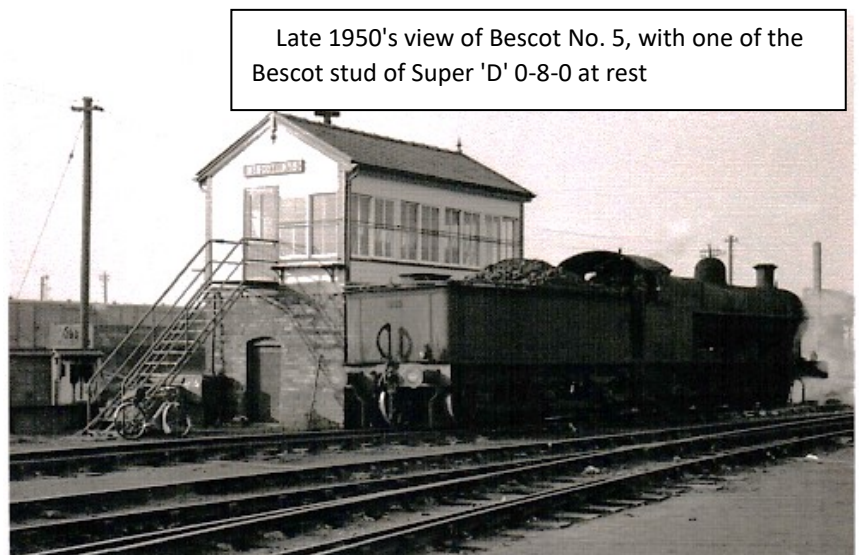
Bescot No.5 signal box was not a very desirable residence, no burnished lever handles or polished floor here and without such luxuries as running water. This was obtained from the guards messroom opposite and stored in a white enamel water can which would hold enough for a shift including, tea making and hand washing in the white enamel bowl provided. Cooking etc. was done on the coal fired stove but there was gas lighting. Not even a 'PRIVATE' sign on the door; it was in fact a glorified shunter's cabin with the surrounding area inhabited by many large rats (no Health and Safety considerations in those days). May I also mention in passing that there was just one toilet, which was adjacent to the guards booking-on point, opposite the signal box so you shared this with dozens of others. The one prized form of luxury in the box was the semi upholstered seat purloined from an ex Great Western brake van but even this had to be discarded and burned, to be renewed as the opportunity arose, when it started to 'walk towards the door' with infestation.

The signal box itself contained 35 levers, 12 of which were red shunting signals and the rest black point levers (no facing point locks) and was somewhat unusual in the fact that the block shelf was not situated above the lever frame but on a small shelf at the end of the signal box. The reason for this was that the signaller needed uninterrupted vision from the lever frame to the outside shunting activities. This block shelf contained single stroke bell from No. 1 box for Down Goods 1 & 2; to No. 2 box for middle road and Cyprus Siding (see later) and sending instruments from No. 3 box. One route was known as 'round the corner' and the other 'back of the box', more formally 3 loop; these routes

were for arrivals/departures via the north end and to and from the MPD. From No.3 box you only received 'wrong direction' bell signals and movements, hence the need for sending instruments only. There was no electric and very little mechanical interlocking and no track circuit indications but there was one signal repeater for the small elevated signals that led along the shunt neck and to the north end via 3 goods. The hours of duty covered the period from 03.15 Monday to 05.50 Sunday through

three turns of duty, I must say, though, that the idea of working 8-hour shifts was virtually non-existent and during my time at this post I could probably count on one hand the times I was not doing twelve hours shifts. This of course involved a 03.15 – 14.00 the double back for 22.00 – 0600 on the Monday then 18.00-0600 the rest of the week and alternately a 14.00-22.00 and double back for a 06.00 – 18-00 Mon/Tues and rest of week. The same situation existed for the shunting staff except that they didn't have to start until 06.00 on Mondays, so no doubling back on Mondays for them.

The staff at 5 end in addition to the Signaller was a Head Shunter, Under Shunter and on the night turn of duty and a 'shackler' to deal with the amount of fitted trains that departed during these hours. Additionally, there were Carriage and Wagon staff, (wagon tappers) who thankfully had their own accommodation in close proximity meaning on top of everything else we didn't have to suffer the smell of the spent carbide from their inspection lamps. Overseeing the management of staff was a Yardmaster, at this time an ex-army major Mr. Clarke who was on duty from 09.00- 17.00; three shift Assistant Yard Masters (AYMs) 07.00-15.00, 15.00- 23.00 and 23.00 -07.00 Monday to Saturday, who covered all the yards. There were also five shift Yard Inspectors covering all the yards around the clock from Monday to Saturday one of these starting at midnight Sunday. You saw a lot of these because their offices were just opposite No. 5 signal box which also provided a good vantage point for them to 'keep an eye on things', much to the chagrin of the shunting staff at times, especially when they thought they were unofficially leaving their duties early when the 'job was squared up'.



Late 1950's view of Bescot No. 5, with one of the Bescot stud of Super 'D' 0-8-0 at rest

My regular AYM was the formidable Ernie Blackham, in my eyes a giant of a man metaphorically speaking and I had great respect for him, a respect not shared by many of the shunting staff for obvious reasons and even though he was a great disciplinarian he also had a softer side. Ron and myself, who was then on the same turns of duty at No. 2 box, had cause to be grateful for the way he dealt with a Saturday night misdemeanor for which we 19/20 year old's could probably both have been sacked. I am sure he didn't find it easy and we suffered a very uncomfortable weekend before receiving an 'ear bashing' on the next Monday afternoon shift which we both accepted gracefully. He didn't suffer fools gladly though and the biggest mistake you could make was to try and 'pull the wool over his eyes'. His knowledge of marshalling yard working from all angles was second to none and his actions when controlling the re-railing of derailed vehicles, of which there were many incidents, without recourse to the breakdown train and a serious effect on train working, was always worth seeing.

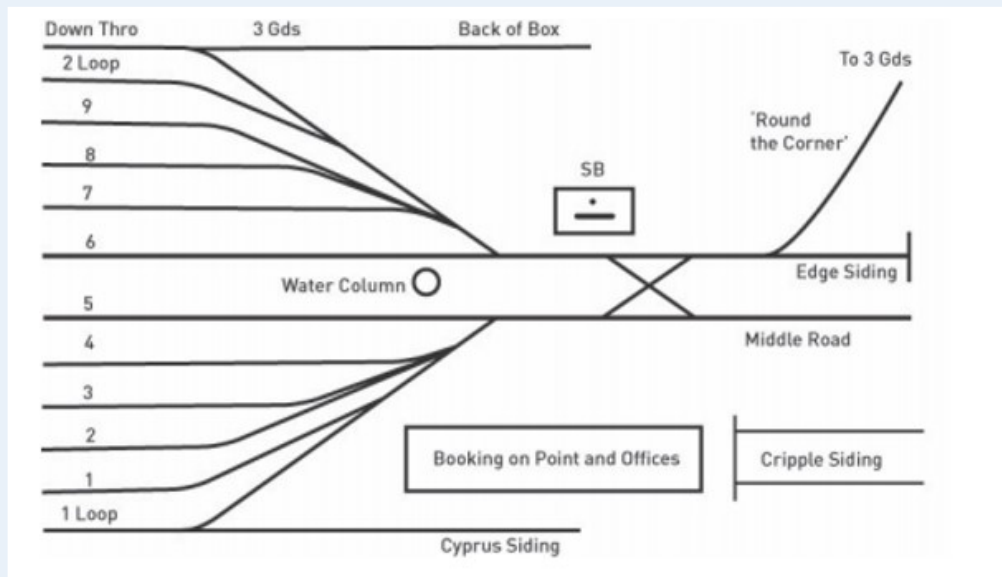
It quickly became apparent that most things learned at signaling school did not apply at this post and it was widely acknowledged to try and apply a semblance of signaling rules and regulations would have brought the job to a stand. Signalmen's Inspectors kept away and overall signal box safety visits as applicable were undertaken by the AYM. The Signal box Special Instructions Card (SSIs) mainly consisted of special bell signals, of which there were many as no route indicators were provided, some examples of these being: - Class H Freight Train for the 'Old Road' (Grand Junction North). Normal 1-4; Dudley Line. 1-4-4: Walsall Line. 1-4-2: Train along Cyprus Siding Normal 'is line clear?' bell signal preceded by 1-4-1: Light Engine for the shed 'round the corner' 2-3-2: Shunt movement on 3 goods (usually L.E.) for the shed normal 2-3-3, withdrawn with 2-5. But if the movement was for the yard, then this was followed by a telephone call from No. 3 SB with details and withdrawn with 5-2. Despite what the Signalmen's regulations may have stated the 'call attention' bell signal was rarely if ever used, so a degree of self-attention to bell signals on top of everything else was an obvious necessity.

(Below) April 1961 view of the Old Yard '5 End' taken at close of play 6 am Sunday Morning. Ready for Monday morning will be the 6K58 MO 3.30am Crewe and in 5 the 6K61 MO 4.50am Warrington.

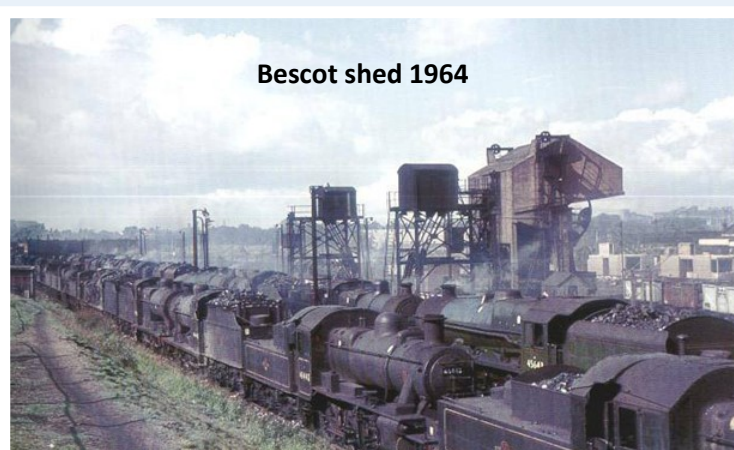
'Cyprus' siding runs to the back of the building on the left from the facing connection from 1 down goods (Loop) into the yard. Then sidings 1-5 on the left of the yard to the water column, siding 6-9, 2 down goods (loop) and 3 down Goods (down through) on the right from the facing connection in the down through on the far right is the continuation of 3 loop known as 'back of the box'. The wagons on the far right are in the New Yard Sorting Siding.



Layout of Downside Old Yard '5



The signalman kept a Train register book record of train movements as normal and in addition completed a "Freight train and Shunting Record" sheet which included such things as arrival/departure, time train engine released, wagons attached/detached, load on departure, engine number, etc. and covered the 24 hour period 6am - 6am. The Yard Inspector would use the details on this sheet for his own records and collect each sheet daily. No computerization in those days! The Old Yard 5 end stood at the North end of the Old Yard Sorting sidings of which there were 9 roads but in fact trains were also made up on No. 2 down goods (2 Loop to us) and also if short of space on the 'Down Through' or more correctly 3 Down Goods. Also in this yard were two C&W sidings in which minor repairs were undertaken access to these sidings controlled by No.2 SB. In addition, as part of these sorting sidings, although about ¼ mile away there was the down storage sidings, in which there were 5 roads, these sidings being accessed via the 'Down Through' and known as the 'frame' because access to these sidings was by the way of a ground frame which the shunters operated. This same frame also contained the points that let you into or out of the new yard onto the down through. 'Cyprus Siding' referred to the short length of line that was really a continuation of No.1 down goods, (Loop to us), between the facing points that lead into the yard and the protecting signal at No.2 SB. This was quite a useful portion of line which could be utilized to advantage when space became tight in the main yard. 'Cyprus' siding runs to the back of the building on the left from the facing connection from 1 down goods (Loop) into the yard. Then sidings 1-5 on the left of the yard to the water column, siding 6-9, 2 down goods (loop) and 3 down Goods (down through) on the right from the facing connection in the down through on the far right is the continuation of 3 loop known as 'back of the box'.



Bescot shed 1964

Thanks for the story and pictures Tony-Part 3 next month!



Roger's Train Spot



With Roger a little under the weather, I have shared a couple of his Pictures which just go to show that things can go wrong for even the best of us. Tuesday May 25th saw Roger take his position on Codsall station to record Bullied pacific 34046 Braunton on a test run from Crewe to Crewe via Shrewsbury, Bushbury and Stafford running on time. Waiting to press the shutter, too late he realized he was about to be **PHOTOBOMBED** by the local Birmingham—Shrewsbury running a couple of minutes late! Better luck next time Roger and hope you are feeling better now.



June Quiz

Can you name this station situated a little north of Wolverhampton? Opened in 1837 and originally named after a nearby pub, it was renamed in 1881 and closed in 1951. Pictures: Ivan Whitehouse



May Quiz answers

1. Stourbridge Town
2. Worcester Foregate Street
3. Wrexham Central
4. Shippea Hill
5. Cheltenham St James
6. Maidstone Barracks
7. Portsmouth Harbour
8. Gloucester Eastgate
9. Canterbury
10. Yeovil Pen Mill
11. Chappel & Wakes Colne
12. Tutbury and Hatton
13. Morfa Mawddach
14. Bradford on Avon
15. Birches and Bilbrook Halt
16. Port Issac Road
17. Bradford Exchange
18. Oldham Mumps
19. Bury Bolton Street
20. Stratford upon Avon

That's all for this month folks!