

RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

for the retention and modernisation of railway services

39 MARSHAM COURT, MARSHAM STREET, LONDON S.W.1. (Tel. 01-834 1335)

Chairman: M. P. L. CATON, Ph.D.

Vice-Presidents:

John Betjeman Esq., C.B.E., Lord Kinross, Lord Popplewell, C.B.E. J.P., Prof. C. L. Mowat, M.A., Ph.D.
The Very Rev. J. H. S. Wild, M.A., (Dean of Durham)
Torquil Nicholson Esq., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E., Dennis F. Taylor Esq.

PROGRESS REPORT No. 77

DECEMBER 1968

MINISTERIAL GRANTS

✓✗ In a written answer in the House of Commons on 15th November, the Minister of Transport announced that financial aid to the nation's railways is to be given on social and economic grounds. The total sum available for this purpose will be £62,000,000 annually, payable from 1st January next. Not only will many London commuter services benefit, but help will also be given to 135 services in the provinces which might have been in danger of being closed down or severely restricted. The Minister expects to give grants for a further 56 services still under consideration. In only 12 cases has the Minister decided not to make grants. ✗

The editor thinks that the Society will welcome this news, as we have always maintained that the alleged saving to the community occasioned by the closure of a railway line is, in many cases, far outweighed by the financial loss and inconvenience suffered by the economy as a whole.

It is essential, however, that British Rail should not rely on social/economic grants to extricate it from its difficulties, but should institute more efficient operating methods in accordance with the principles so often proclaimed in these columns. Only by so doing can it justly expect to receive continued help from the Exchequer.

FALSE FIGURES

✓✗ The battle against false figures continues. The Society has recently been informed by the Ministry of Transport that the purpose of the financial information given to a Tucc *, which is made public at the time of a closure hearing, is to give an idea of the saving in taxpayers' money which could result from the proposed closure. The Tucc can then set this against the magnitude of the hardship which they envisage the closure would cause.

* Tucc = Transport Users' Consultative Committee.

This abbreviation is used throughout this report so as to save much-needed space.

WHY NOT BUY A COPY OF "THE GREAT ISLE OF WIGHT TRAIN ROBBERY" FOR A FRIEND AS A CHRISTMAS PRESENT? Copies may be obtained through any bookseller, or, in case of difficulty, direct from the Railway Investigation Society, Spring Vale, The Grove, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, price 7s. 6d. each (postage 1s.)

FALSE FIGURES (contd)

That the figures provided fail abysmally to serve this purpose is crystal clear, since, as we have so often said, they do not allow for contributory revenue (i. e. , that amount the receipts on a particular railway line contribute to other rail services) and charge a track cost two or three times that of a basic railway, to say nothing of ignoring the many social costs which nullify much or all of the saving to British Rail.

How can the TUGCs do their job properly in such circumstances?

The Society continues to press the matter with the Ministry of Transport, British Rail and the TUGCs. Meanwhile, whenever a closure hearing takes place, we are publishing our own figures and appealing to all concerned to ignore the official ones. Our statements have already received much publicity in the press. At one hearing, that into the proposed closure of the Yarmouth Southtown-Lowestoft Central line, the Town Clerk of Lowestoft said publicly that he preferred our figures and that he hoped that the TUCG would ignore those provided by British Rail.

FAKED LOSSES IN EAST ANGLIA AND THE WEST COUNTRY

All members, irrespective of where they live, will, no doubt, be interested in a summary of recent Society statements on the above subject.

All the figures given below are per annum.

Yarmouth - Lowestoft line

BR figures: - Costs £44,100; revenue £10,000. Both British Rail and the Ministry of Transport have refused to give a breakdown of these amounts.

<u>RIS figures:</u> -	£
Track maintenance and renewal (10¼ m. at £650 per mile; single track)	6,660
Crews, fuel, maintenance of one DMU (2 car)	15,000
1 manned level crossing	1,500
Management	500
	<u>23,660</u>

Barnstaple - Ilfracombe line

BR figures: - Costs - movement £15,500; terminal £23,400; track signalling £56,400; total £95,300. Revenue - £13,300.

<u>RIS figures:</u> -	Track maintenance and renewal	£
	(15 m. at £650 per mile; single track)	9,750
	Signalling	2,000
	9 manned level crossings	13,500
	Movement (BR figure)	15,500
	Management	700
	Terminal	nil
		<u>41,450</u>

However, if the 9 manned level crossings were converted to automatic working, the capital cost would be more than covered from the sale of scrap track since the line was singled. Moreover, the Society's estimated costs would be reduced to £27,950.

King's Lynn - Hunstanton line

BR figures: - Costs £60,300; earnings £22,000.

RIS figures: - Costs £28,610. (based on calculations similar to those used for the above two lines)

✓✗ The RIS costs given above have been checked by expert consultants and are based on the costings given in the book entitled "I tried to run a railway", by G. F. Fiennes, former General Manager, British Rail, Eastern Region. ✗

It can be seen that the deficit on these three lines, even when one accepts British Rail's alleged revenue figures, are considerably reduced when based on the RIS costings. However, on the revenue side, both British Rail and the Ministry of Transport have refused to supply any figures concerning contributory revenue. ✗ The RIS believes that, if British Rail took into account contributory revenue, the lines would be found to be operating at a profit. An example of this is on the Isle of Wight where for the 13 mile Ryde-Ventnor lines British Rail figures revealed that the contributory revenue was over £1,000,000 (see "The great Isle of Wight train robbery" a RIS publication).

At none of the Tucc public inquiries held into the proposals to close these lines was finance allowed to be discussed. Thus British Rail's figures could not be challenged. ✗

EAST ANGLIA'S PLIGHT

✓✗ After being in existence for three years, the East Anglia Economic Planning Council has produced its first report, "East Anglia; a study" (HMSO, October 1968. £2).

Concern is expressed about the withdrawal of railway passenger services and emphasis is laid on the necessity for diverting more freight from road to rail. All lines already proposed for closure should be reconsidered by the Minister of Transport when he examines the social and economic benefits of grant-aiding unremunerative rail passenger services. In pointing out that a wide area of Norfolk is now without either freight or passenger services, the report says that this is liable to make the county unattractive to industry. The Minister has been asked to urge British Rail to provide competitive freight services in East Anglia.

In the Eastern Daily Press of 9th October, Jonathan Mardle in an article on "The poor East Anglian", which was inspired by the Planning Council's report, stated that "the only things East Anglians possess more abundantly than other people are motor cars - and that is not so much a sign of affluence as of the poverty of our communications." ✕

CAMBRIDGE-COLCHESTER LINE

✕ That part of the Stour Valley line between Shelford and Sudbury (31 miles) was closed on 6th March, 1967. This formed the major portion of a 51 mile route which connected the growing places of Cambridge and Colchester via the rapidly-growing towns of Haverhill and Sudbury. ✕

Mr. D. F. Taylor, one of our vice-presidents, in a letter in the East Anglian Daily Times of 17th April, 1967, claimed that the closure of this line was "bureaucratic and illegal" and showed that the line was operating at a profit even on British Rail's figures. However, at the public inquiry in August, 1965, British Rail gave the following figures to the TUC: - costs £77,700; earnings £32,000; deficit £45,700. On the 20th September, 1966, the then Minister of Transport (Mrs. Barbara Castle) gave her consent to the closure of the line. Yet on the 5th December, 1966, British Rail gave the following figures to the TUC: - costs £77,700; earnings £32,000; contributory revenue £48,000. Thus, when contributory revenue was included, total earnings became £80,000, giving the line a profit of £2,300.

Furthermore, British Rail and the Ministry of Transport have since agreed that, if a new timetable had been operated, giving an improved service compared with the rundown timetable, movement costs would have been reduced by £22,400. Therefore, the improved timetable would have increased profit to £24,700, or, if allowance were made for a bus subsidy of £6,800, to £31,500 per annum.

Mr. Taylor has unsuccessfully put this case before the Ombudsman and continues to fight for the re-opening of this line.

AN ENERGETIC VICE-PRESIDENT

Among the new vice-presidents elected at the Society's annual general meeting this year was Mr. D. F. Taylor. In a letter in the Eastern Daily Press of 27th January, 1968, he challenged the Eastern Region of British Rail to publicly substantiate the financial information it had given for four East Anglian lines proposed for closure, namely, King's Lynn - Hunstanton, Dereham - Wymondham, Norwich - Sheringham and Yarmouth - Lowestoft. To date British Rail has failed to answer this challenge.

Among other letters which Mr. Taylor has written to the editor of the Eastern Daily Press was one published in the issue dated 16th October. In discussing the British Road Federation's scheme for a national road building authority, Mr. Taylor said that the scheme "deserves support, as does the Society's policy for an end to Rail closures and the development of a really first-class rail network. The country needs both if it is to succeed economically."

The attention of our readers is also directed to a letter from Mr. Taylor in the October issue of Modern Railways and to another in the Railway Review of 8th November.

THE GREAT ISLE OF WIGHT TRAIN ROBBERY

Sales of "The great Isle of Wight train robbery" continue satisfactorily, but more help from members in introducing it to booksellers is essential. A note to our Publicity Officer, Mr. R. V. Banks, 121, Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent, giving names and addresses of prospective stockists, is all that is required.

Robert Aickman, founder of the Inland Waterways Association, in addressing a public meeting organised by the National Council on Inland Transport at Caxton Hall, London, on 27th September, said, "This book is a masterpiece. Had it been published in Gladstone's time, the Government of the day would have been forced to resign."

We hope that the book will be widely read in all areas threatened with rail closures. Chairman of TUGCs are being sent copies. Members should see that MPs, local authorities, etc., have their attention drawn to the book. The Minister of Transport has not yet commented on it, although he was sent a copy several weeks ago. British Rail, of course, remains discreetly quiet in view of the unanswerable disclosures made in the book.

WESTERN REGION STATION GRADING

Western Region intend to grade their stations as "inter-city", "restricted" and, presumably, "other".

Inter-city. Bath, Bridgend, Bristol Temple Meads, Cardiff General, Carmarthen, Cheltenham, Chippenham, Didcot, Exeter St. Davids, Fishguard Harbour, Gloucester Central and Eastgate, Hereford, Neath, Newport, Newton Abbot, Oxford, Paddington, Paignton, Penzance, Plymouth, Port Talbot, Reading General, Swansea, Swindon, Taunton, Torquay, Truro, Weston-super-Mare, Worcester Shrub Hill.

Retaining a restricted range of facilities. Abergavenny, Acton Main Line, Axminster, Barnstaple Junction, Barry, Beaconsfield, Bicester, Bodmin Road, Bridgwater, Bristol Stapleton Road, Caerphilly, Camborne, Cardiff Queen Street, Charlbury, Cholsey, Crewkerne, Dawlish, Droitwich, Ealing, Evesham, Exeter Central, Exmouth, Frome, Gerrards Cross, Gillingham (Dorset), Goring, Great Malvern, Haverfordwest, Hayle, Hayes, High Wycombe, Honiton, Kemble, Kingham, Liskeard, Llanelli, Maidenhead, Malvern Link, Merthyr, Moreton-on-Marsh, Minehead, Newbury, Newquay, Okehampton, Pangbourne, Pewsey, Pontypridd, Princes Risborough, Redruth, St. Austell, St. Erth, Saltash, Sherborne, Slough, South Ruislip, Southall, Stroud, Teignmouth, Tisbury, Tiverton Junction, Totnes, Treherbert, Trowbridge, Twyford, West Drayton, West Ealing, West Ruislip, Westbury, Whimple, Whitland, Worcester Foregate Street, Yatton.

TIMETABLES

The Society is making a study of railway timetables. Our Technical Committee is investigating the matter in detail and we hope soon to put forward some ideas as to how timetables may be improved. Any suggestions from members will be welcome. Please send these to: - Mr. R. H. Whittaker, The Flat, 5, Berkeley Mews, Portman Sq., London, W. 1.

We have recently written to British Rail with a suggestion that full timetables should be

displayed at those stations which have only a train departure sheet at present. The latter are, in our opinion, inadequate, especially on basic railways where staff are no longer available to answer enquiries.

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE

The Society is at present very short of secretarial assistance and, in particular we lack a distribution officer to send out progress and other reports. Any member who could spare a little time, however limited, to help the Society in this way is asked to contact the Chairman (address on p. 12). There is no need for anyone offering such assistance to be resident in the London area.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The magazine "Help" recently ran a feature called "The tubes are ugly - change them", which suggested a blitz on London's uglier stations by volunteers working under the supervision of designers. Clearly, with the railways' assent, the principle is one that could be extended throughout the country. Any members of the Society who have design ideas for stations or who would be prepared to work in the volunteer groups should write to: Mr. R. Macqueen, 20, Culgaith Gardens, Enfield, Middlesex.

ADDITION TO EDITORIAL STAFF

We welcome Mr. E. H. Longland to the editorial staff. His address and initial responsibilities are shown in the editorial announcement on p. 12.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (For conditions of acceptance, see previous issues)

The Kyle of Lochalsh line and ticket numbers.

I travelled over the Kyle line on Saturday, 28th September. During that week, all trains had been reasonably well filled. An interesting fact on the 28th was that 25 schoolgirls went by train from Duncraig to Kyle, returning on the 17.50 ex Kyle. Duncraig station was to have been closed, but was kept open to serve a boarding school. Could not Duncraig be shown in the timetable and made a stop on request made by phone to Kyle or Strathcarron before the train leaves these stations?

I took down some ticket numbers. If any other members were travelling over the line, perhaps they could check the number of their tickets and thus permit some sort of census. Inverness to Kyle: single 2148; return 1861; weekend return 2342; cheap day 9540. Inverness to Achnasheen: single 3750; return 4198. Inverness to Plockton: single 5383. Dingwall to Kyle: cheap day 2952. Dingwall to Garve: single 2765. All tickets were issued on 28th September, 1968.

From this data we can only approximate. Tickets from intermediate stations (unmanned halts for the most part) are issued by the guard. Passengers to and from the Outer Isles book right through to or from Stornoway. There is some traffic from Skye. Thus there are a fair number of tickets issued at Kyle. On Saturdays there is some local traffic. Folk from Achnasheen and east thereof go into Dingwall or Inverness for shopping. From Strathcarron westward, they go to Kyle, although, as there is not much at Kyle, there is also some traffic to Inverness. Should we keep

track of traffic from Inverness, we should have about a third to a half of the traffic on the line.

Would this sort of thing be worth doing on a national scale?

Edward L. Acton,
"Onam", Kinnairdie Avenue,
Dingwall, Ross-shire.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREA REPRESENTATIVES

(Edited by Mr. H. R. Purser, 30, Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex.)

Readers seeking further information on particular items should write to the appropriate representatives.

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

Chairman : Mr. R. V. Banks, 121, Ashford Road,
Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent.

✓ A well-attended joint meeting with the Railway Development Association was held on 1st October. A Branch meeting was held on 10th October when progress and future action were discussed. A meeting was held on 19th November at which Mr. A. S. Travis of the Channel Tunnel Association presented an illustrated lecture on "The Channel Tunnel in the twentieth century." ✗

Ideas for the future of St. Pancras after it closes as a main-line terminus are requested.

Readers' ideas will be collated and circulated to all interested parties. Since British Rail has yet to admit that it has planned anything for the building, our ideas should carry some weight.

✓✗ The unadvertised rail service from Kensington Olympia to Clapham Junction is run for the benefit of GPO workers, but other members of the public are free to use it. Timings are fixed in accordance with the working hours of GPO staff and the present weekday service is as follows: -

	SX	SX		
Clapham Junction dep.	0818	0846		
Kensington Olympia arr.	0826	0854		
	WThFO	SX	MTO	FSXQ
Kensington Olympia dep.	1636	1706	1736	1808
Clapham Junction arr.	1644	1714	1744	1816

SX Saturdays excepted MTO Mondays and Tuesdays only

WThFO Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays only

FSXQ As required, except Fridays and Saturdays.

Members are asked to use this service when possible and, if they can, to count the passengers. Constructive ideas for the improvement of this service are requested by the Branch Chairman. The service is useful for reaching Olympia from South London for example, with a wide range of connections available at Clapham Junction from or to many stations to the south and south-west of the capital. ✗

A group has been formed with the aim of re-opening the line from Sandy to Gamlingay - part of the Cambridge-Bedford route. Details are obtainable from the Treasurer, Mr. C. E. Nicholls,

c/o Barclays Bank, 2, High Street, Sandy, Beds.

The "rationalisation" of Brondesbury station on the North London line took effect on 16th September. The issuing of tickets was restricted to single, off-peak and cheap-day return fares. There are coin-operated machines and an omniprinter in use.

✕ The Minister has agreed that passenger services should be withdrawn from the Uckfield-Lewes and Ashurst-Groombridge lines, but has deferred a decision on the Hurst Green-Tunbridge Wells-Uckfield passenger service. ✕

Any member who wishes to receive branch publications and is not receiving them at present is requested to notify the Branch Chairman.

(The Paddington-Birmingham line has now been singled north-west of Princes Risborough station. The old down platform at Princes Risborough has been closed and all trains to and from London now use the up platform. The track layout has been simplified considerably. Sub-Ed.)

East Suffolk/East Norfolk

Mr. B. R. A. Cooper, who has been Secretary of this branch since it was formed, reports that, at the Branch AGM held on 19th October, the members present elected Mr. F. I. S. Carter as Chairman and Mrs. O. E. Awty as Honorary Secretary. The new secretary's address is 28, Field Stile Road, Southwold, Suffolk.

The result of the TUCG inquiry into the proposed closure of the Yarmouth Southtown-Lowestoft Central passenger service (held on 24th September) had not been announced by mid-November.

Merseyside

Secretary: Mr. P. T. Byrne, 13-15 Kilmorey Park,
Hoole, Chester.

The area covered by this branch has been extended to include North Wales and a change in its title is impending.

Bootle County Borough Council and the Urban District Councils of Litherland and Kirkby are sending questionnaires to 20,000 people who work in their areas, within walking distance of the Bootle-Kirkby railway line, asking how they travel to work each day. This is part of a campaign pressing for the re-opening of the line to passenger traffic.

✕ A Deeside local authorities/RIS joint committee has been formed to press for the re-opening of Shotton low level station.

The passenger service between Chester Northgate and Hawarden Bridge ceased from 9th September and Southport St. Luke's station was closed from the same date. Todd Lane Junction (Lancashire) was closed from 7th October and it is understood that this case has been referred to the Ombudsman. ✕

Northern England

Secretary: Mr. R. K. Mains, 114, Manor House Road,
Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE2 2LY

✕ On 26th October the Branch held a meeting of members in Darlington Town Hall at which it was decided to continue the campaign for the re-opening of Ferryhill passenger station.

A resolution was also passed urging the Minister of Transport to allow, when a proposed withdrawal is submitted, an examination by work efficiency experts to establish whether all efforts have been made to operate the service as viably as possible.

During the afternoon of the same day, the Branch held a conference primarily for the benefit of local authorities. It was noted with pleasure that plans are to go ahead for the provision of a halt at Middleton St. George to serve Tees-side Airport. Resolutions passed urged (1) that the Darlington-Middlesbrough-Saltburn passenger service should neither be reduced nor deprived of necessary improvements, (2) the improvement of the Darlington-Bishop Auckland rail service, and (3) a full inquiry into the most economical means of re-opening and developing the Northallerton-Harrogate route.

The Branch intends to be represented at the forthcoming Tucc inquiry at Bridlington and is firmly convinced that development of the Hull-Scarborough rail service is both socially and financially desirable. A press statement on this subject is to be issued shortly. ✕

The Branch is concerned about the future pattern of rail transport in the North-West and will be making representations in this connection. Already inter-city travel is discouraged, because cheap day return fares are not issued before 09.30 on Mondays to Fridays. Electrification of the west coast Anglo-Scottish main line would certainly be welcomed as long as services on other lines were neither reduced nor deprived of improvements. With regard to the main line linking Carlisle and Carnforth with Leeds and Bradford, British Rail recently announced its intention to withdraw the Carlisle-Skipton and Keighley-Bradford stopping passenger services, which implies that British Rail is planning to gradually run down the route.

✓✕ Branch reports were issued in June and September, together with a memorandum on the need to develop the Darlington-Richmond line. Copies are available (6d.) from the Branch Secretary. ✕

AREAS

Devon and Cornwall

Representative: Mr. A. E. Wilkinson, 41, Cross Street,
Northam, Bideford, Devon.

✓✕ At the Tucc inquiry into the proposed closure to passenger traffic of the Barnstaple Junction-Ilfracombe line, held at Ilfracombe on 9th October, a representative of the local bus company said that it could not guarantee a service to meet connections at Barnstaple because of the delays, caused by traffic congestion, of up to 1½ hours in the summer. A local police officer emphasised the serious effect that extra buses would have on the already chaotic local summer traffic conditions. The Tucc was also told that a survey indicated that 10,000 people would not come to Ilfracombe again if rail services were withdrawn.

It is understood that British Rail plans to close the line between Paignton and Kingswear next January. Closure notices will probably have been published by the time this issue reaches our readers. Complaints have already been made regarding the deterioration of the service, such as the withdrawal of through main-line trains and no Sunday service during the winter months.

Looe station became unstaffed as from 30th September. The nearest manned station is now Liskeard. In the Cornish-Devon border country, the following stations have been reduced to unstaffed halts: - Calstock, Gunnislake, Bere Alston, Bere Ferrers. ✕

Isle of Wight

Representative: Mr. R. E. Burroughs, 3, Spring Hill,
Ventnor, Isle of Wight.

✗ The final decision on the re-opening of the four mile single track line between Shanklin and Ventnor is now not expected until the end of the year. There is little doubt that British Rail is doing all it can to oppose a re-opening. It is claiming a loss of £71,000 on the summer season's working between Ryde and Shanklin. It is believed to have stated that it now requires two £60,000 transformers to re-open the line to Ventnor, whereas only one was budgeted for when the original estimates were prepared.

Representation has been made to the Member of Parliament, who is doing all he can to convince Ministry of Transport officials that extension of the one remaining Isle of Wight line to Ventnor would make the line economically viable. ✗

Mid-Hampshire

Representative: Mr. M. F. Lockyer, 55, Lipscombe Rise,
Alton, Hampshire.

✗ The Minister's decision is awaited on the Alton-Winchester line following the public hearing in April and the report of the Tucc submitted in August. This report said, as expected, that considerable hardship would be caused to travellers from the area and to those travelling from Aldershot and Alton to Eastleigh or Southampton by reason of additional travelling times. Among other points, the Tucc expressed the view that, because of the developments envisaged in the South Hampshire study, the closure proposal was premature and that, based on such financial information as they had, any financial gain would be outweighed by the hardship caused. ✗

Last winter's complaints about missed connections at Alton have been met by timetable alterations which give a more comfortable margin. British Rail also seems to have overcome the difficulties which gave rise to a large number of cancelled trains between Alton and Farnham a few months ago.

✗ Mr. F. Clifton Sherriff, of Alresford, has supplied particulars of a census of passengers using the Alton-Winchester line during one week in October. There was little warning to the public of the intention to make this census. A worse week for such an exercise could hardly have been selected. In the early hours of the Tuesday morning, the axlebox of a grossly overloaded mineral wagon overheated and finally disintegrated near Shawford. Traffic was badly dislocated and many Mid-Hants. passengers had to use other means of transport. On the following day, when traffic was barely restored to normal, an electric train at the same spot had a collecting shoe sheared off by a bag of clips carelessly left beside the track after completion of the earlier repairs. There was again dislocation of services, with Mid-Hants. passengers using other means of transport. On yet another day, the 16.43 Waterloo-Alton train broke down at Clapham Junction, with the result that Mid-Hants. passengers missed their connection at Alton and most of them used other means to get home.

Apart from the obvious effect the above events had on figures, reports suggest that the

census as a whole was conducted very inefficiently. It is thought that the census may not give a representative indication of the normal passenger loading on the line. It is questioned whether any census-taker sitting in a first-class compartment at one end of the train can accurately record over 60 passengers alighting, in addition to those getting on, by looking out of the window during the brief period the train is standing at the platform.

The same correspondent has reported that some unstaffed stations have lost revenue, because passengers with appointments to keep dare not risk waiting for trains which may never come and about which they have no means of getting information. Local interests in the Mid-Hants. area have been urging the provision of some form of communication with unstaffed stations which would advise passengers when trains are running irregularly.

Further disquiet with British Rail over the line results from its admission that annual income of over £7,000 from outgoing parcels traffic had been omitted from its financial figures for the line. Local interests have claimed that the figures presented by British Rail at the inquiry were false and that, in fact, the line was, during the relevant period, making a profit of over £5,000.

The Minister has approved the closure of the seven miles line between Eastleigh and Romsey, the date to be announced following the arrangement of bus services. The line will remain open for freight traffic.

The goods line between Alton and Farringdon closed to all traffic on 5th August. This was the last remnant of the Meon Valley line. ✕

Norfolk (North and West)

Representative: Mr. M. R. Thomas, "Shangri-la",
16, King's Lynn Road, Hunstanton, Norfolk.

✕ The TUC for East Anglia has reported to the Minister that hardship would be caused should the King's Lynn-Hunstanton line be closed to passenger traffic. In the case of the Sheringham branch, similar action would cause considerable hardship according to the TUC.

Passenger trains on the King's Lynn-Dereham line ceased from 9th September. ✕

Somerset, Dorset and Western Hampshire

Representative: Rev. W. M. Martin, 30, Richmond Wood Road,
Bournemouth, Hampshire.

✕ British Rail has published a proposal to withdraw the passenger service from the Taunton-Minehead line (nominal closure date: 6th January, 1969). Upon the announcement of the proposal, a representative of the Butlin Holiday Camp at Minehead stated that the use of the line by their campers was 12½% greater in a period of five weeks this year than in the same period in 1967.

Corfe Castle station, on the Swanage branch, was unstaffed from 8th September. ✕

Three Counties (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire)

Representative: Mr. W. H. Parker, M. B. E., Well Meadow,
Pontshill, Ross-on-Well, Herefordshire.

Three Counties (contd)

British Rail has published a proposal to withdraw passenger trains from intermediate stations on the Bristol-Bath line (nominal closure date: 6th January, 1969).

The Minister has agreed to the withdrawal of local passenger trains on the Worcester to Stratford-on-Avon line and to the closure of Honeybourne station, but he has not consented to the closure to passenger traffic of Pershore station.

OTHER NEWS

Our member Mr. E. L. Acton, of Dingwall (Ross-shire) reports that British Rail carried out an extensive survey of the number of passengers and parcels conveyed by rail in the north of Scotland during the week ended 24th August. He also states that British Rail would like to receive a grant for the Glasgow area electric trains, as it maintains that these provide a social service.

Steam railways on the Isle of Man closed for the winter from 8th September. Re-opening next season is uncertain, so the Supporters' Association has organised the signing of a petition which is to be presented to the Governor.

Passenger service closures: -

(A) Effected From 9th September: King's Lynn-Wisbech East - March; Ayr-Heads of Ayr; Idmiston Halt * and Porton station *. From 7th October: Dunfermline Lower-Stirling; Cowdenbeath-Dunfermline Upper.

(B) Approved by the Minister ~~North Berwick~~, Newport-on-Tay East and St. Andrews branches.

(C) Proposed Bolton-Rochdale via Bury (second attempt; previously rejected 1966).

(D) Reprievd Grateley station.

* Basingstoke-Salisbury line.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Editor: Mr. L. G. Hipperson, 21, Ullet Road, Liverpool, L17 3BL

(Telephone: 051 - 733 - 3446)

Sub-editors: Mr. H. R. Purser, 30, Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex,

(responsible for branch and area reports).

Mr. E. H. Longland, 20a, Rous Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex

(responsible for news of other lines).

Material for the next issue (to be published in March, 1969) should be sent to the appropriate editor by 1st February, 1969.

PUBLISHED BY THE RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

Chairman: Dr. M. P. L. Caton, 10, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex.

General Secretary: (office vacant)

Assistant Secretary: Mr. J. M. Stanley, 11 Berkeley Court, Tulse Hill, London. S. W. 2.

(Note corrected address)

Membership Secretary: Mr. D. J. Bradbury, 59, Dore Road, Dore, Sheffield.