

RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

for the retention and modernisation of railway services

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P R O G R E S S R E P O R T

No. 84

SEPTEMBER 1970

RAILWAYS UNDER THE NEW GOVERNMENT

✓x The Conservative election manifesto contained an assurance that investment in British railways, which has been reduced in recent years, will be restored to a level which will permit an adequate modernisation programme to be maintained.

This is welcome news. It appears to go a long way towards meeting what we advocated in our first proposal to election candidates. However, it was most alarming to read that the new Minister of Transport, Mr. J. W. W. Peyton, when he was appointed, commented that he would have strong misgivings about major investment in railways. x

Does the Minister take the opposite view to his party? Or has he already been influenced by the group of civil servants - referred to recently by Mr. Chapman Pincer in the Daily Express - who are advocating the virtual abandonment of railways in Britain (except for certain freight traffic and commuter services)? Years of experience have taught this Society that civil servants can yield immense power, often by subtle moves which go unnoticed by the public and even Parliament. The vast majority of civil servants are, of course, responsible people. But, if there are any who intend to pursue policies in blatant opposition to the election pledges of the ruling party, it is the duty of the Government, if it is to be effective, to take urgent steps to put the offenders where they can do no harm.

✓x We have sent our preliminary views on the need for the development and stabilisation of the railways to Mr. Peyton and to Mr. M. Heseltine, the new Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. The chairman of the Society was fortunate to meet Mr. Heseltine during the election campaign. Dr. Caton took this opportunity to point out to Mr. Heseltine how rail closures had failed to reduce the railway deficit, because of the resulting erosion of traffic on remaining routes. Mr. Heseltine well appreciated that the Beeching plan had not had the anticipated effect, but he would not give any assurance for the future. However, he said that the Conservatives, if elected, would not embark on any further closures until they had carefully studied the figures to which they had had no access when out of office. x

RAILWAYS AND THE GENERAL ELECTION

✓X During the recent general election campaign, the Society sent a questionnaire to the candidates of the three main political parties to ask if they agreed to the following:-

- (1) That, in view of the success of recent railway modernisation schemes, such as the London Midland Region electrification, a greater proportion of transport investment should be directed to the development of the railway system, which is capable of carrying a much greater share of the nation's passengers and freight without further destruction of environment.
- (2) That the rail closure policy of recent years has failed to produce an overall financial saving to the taxpayers and that the only result of this policy has been to deprive large areas of adequate transport facilities.
- (3) That the present policy of grant aid to unprofitable but socially-necessary rail services should be continued.

The response was encouraging. Replies were received from 207 candidates, 55 of whom were elected to Parliament. Of the latter, about 25 agreed with all 3 questions, about 15 were pro-rail and about 15 quoted from the manifestoes of their parties.

A letter from the Society has been sent to those who replied favourably to point out that there are two issues of major importance which concern the future of the railways. Firstly, there is the need to substantially increase the present £80 million annual investment limit; this is insufficient to permit the railways to achieve viability and to provide services of which they are technically capable. Secondly, we have explained how any attempt to initiate a future batch of closures would be both socially harmful and economically damaging to the future of the railway network. X

TRAFFIC NOISE STUDY

The Ministry of Transport is conducting in certain Birmingham suburbs a study into how much noise from major roads and motorways affects property prices and the life of local inhabitants.

The Ministry is also to undertake a long-term study of a town before and after an announcement of a major road scheme. This is to be done with the help of the geography department of Reading University. For obvious reasons, the site chosen is to remain secret until after the study has been completed.

ROAD V. RAIL

When British Rail puts a capital investment scheme to the Ministry of Transport for approval it is required to discount all future cash inflows and outflows to present values.

The London transportation study included road networks valued at "one year rate of return basis", the year being 1981. This means that the roads are assumed to be built and operating at once, so that the benefits occur at the same time as the networks are being built. Since in practice, there is always a gap between commencement of a facility and its benefits, the ignore

of the "timestream" effect inflates the rate of return.

W buses get a 25% capital grant from the Ministry of Transport under section 32 of the Transport Act, 1968. Why not a similar grant for new trains?

RAILWAYS IN GREATER LONDON

Eight million bus passengers per year travel to London Bridge station. Six and a half million passengers interchange between bus and rail at Finsbury Park.

While the need for the new tube railways now being constructed under London may have been definitely established, it does seem shortsighted to totally ignore the undoubted necessity for more suburban surface railways.

OBITUARY

Professor C. L. Mowat

✓✗ We very much regret to report the death in late June at his home in Llanfairfechan, Caernarvonshire, of Professor C. L. Mowat, who had been a vice-president of the Railway Invigoration Society for several years. Professor Mowat, who, for the past ten years, had been head of the history department at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, worked in America for over twenty years. Elected this year as president of the Historical Association, he was the author of several notable books in his own field, including a biography of David Lloyd George. But to members of this Society, Professor Mowat will be remembered, as a writer, chiefly for his book entitled "The Golden Valley railway: railway enterprise on the Welsh border in late Victorian times" (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1964). This gives the story of the Hay to Pontrilas line, in Herefordshire, which was closed to passenger traffic in 1941. Written by one who was not only a distinguished historian but also a very keen railway enthusiast, this book is a model of what such a work should be. In his relations with this Society, Professor Mowat was no figurehead but one who took a lively interest in our affairs. At one time, he was our area representative for North Wales. A man of an unassuming and kindly nature, he will be sorely missed by all those members of the RIS who were privileged to be associated with him. The Society's chairman has sent on our behalf a letter of sympathy to his widow and family. ✗

BOOKSHELF

✓✗ "Towards 1990": an independent proposal for the integration of public transport in Wessex, by N. P. C. Madsen and J. C. Honeysett. (1970) 2s.

Obtainable from J. C. Honeysett, of "Willington", Broadoak, Botley, Southampton. ✗

Included in this interesting booklet are proposals for the electrification of the Winchester-Alton line and for the present hourly 4VEP service from Bournemouth to London to be diverted via Alton to connect there to the rear of the regular Alton-Waterloo semi-fast train.

Electrification of this branch line is but one of many such schemes proposed for lines in

Wessex. Some others mentioned are Basingstoke-Reading, Basingstoke-Salisbury, Salisbury-Romsey-Eastleigh, Reading-Tonbridge, Bournemouth-Weymouth and the Fawley and Swanage branches.

In the House of Commons on 13th July, Mr. Frank Iudd, the member for Portsmouth West asked the Minister of Transport "what consideration had been given to the report 'Towards 1990'." remarking that an integrated public transport system was a necessity in an area scheduled for growth, such as Wessex. Mr. M. Heseltine, the Minister's Parliamentary Secretary, replied that the Ministry of Transport was studying the many interesting aspects contained in this report.

* * *

Ministry of Transport. Railway accidents: report to the Ministry of Transport on the safety record of the railways in Great Britain during the year 1968. HMSO. 1970. 9s. 6d.

This year's issue is considerably shorter than many previous ones. The main cause is that summaries of published accident reports have been omitted. This makes the publication less valuable to the student than hitherto.

The trends in casualty and fatality figures are described as satisfactory. It is the general trend rather than figures for individual years which is important. However, train accidents and "significant collisions and derailments" are rising. Passenger train derailments have remained steady at 25-30 over the last four years. Significant accidents per million passenger train miles have remained at about 0.45 over the same period. The increase in goods train derailments is due to an increase in short wheelbase wagon derailments. This is described as the biggest safety problem facing British Rail.

Although this is an interesting report, it is of real use only to the serious student.

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Ministry of Transport. Road accidents, 1968. HMSO. 1969. 11s.


The report gives the following cost figures for the United Kingdom: - fatal accidents £4400 serious injury £450, slight injury £215, damage to vehicle and property only £87 - in each case, per accident. The economic cost of road accidents in the UK in 1968 was £215,000,000.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

London and Home Counties

✓ Eight members paid a very interesting visit to the Victoria line on 23rd June. They were met at Seven Sisters by a member of the Chief Mechanical Engineer's Department and were then taken on a staff train to the depot at Northumberland Park. After a conducted tour, the members returned to Euston, where they were met by a member of the Operating Department for a visit to the Control Room. The Branch wishes to express its appreciation to London Transport for making the

visit possible.

 Fares on London Transport were increased from 14th August. The Greater London Council has authorised construction of the Fleet line and of the Piccadilly line extension to London Airport, subject to the making of substantial government grants. As a result of a decision by Chigwell Urban District Council not to continue payment for weekend opening, Roding Valley station (Central line) was closed on Sundays from 2nd August and on Saturdays from 8th August.

A local action committee has been formed to press for the re-opening of the Lewes-Uckfield line. ✕

The Branch Secretary has received comments from one member concerning the Southern Region timetable. The Secretary's personal view is that the smaller format is preferable, but he would welcome the views of other members so that he can find the consensus of opinion.

The annual general meeting of the Branch will be held on Wednesday 23rd September, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

East Suffolk/East Norfolk

An official of the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company has been interviewed on the BBC1 programme "Look East" on the subject of bus services provided by the Company in rural areas. He stated that some of these may have to be withdrawn because of the cost of operation as compared with the amount of fares received. The Branch Secretary knows, as a result of discussions with bus crews and inspectors, that, even if buses were available, there are insufficient staff to man them. Holidaymakers as well as residents wait hours in some cases for buses to turn up. Prospects of the bus company ever keeping their promises to take over adequately the job of British Rail are ridiculous.

Northern England

✓✕ A plea to the new Minister of Transport to re-open disused railway lines linking south-east Northumberland with Newcastle, in order to ease road congestion was made in the House of Commons on 15th July, by Mr. E. J. Milne, the member for Blyth. Although the suggestion was not accepted by the Minister, the Branch is very grateful to Mr. Milne for raising in Parliament the important need to re-open lines closed to passengers. Ever since its formation in 1967, the Branch has been of the view that certain lines in the North-East should be re-opened and developed to provide efficient and economic travel, which could be a valuable asset to the area.

Faced with the prospect of future cuts in rural bus services in the Hexham district, a local councillor, Mr. Sam Wright, who is also a former railwayman, has called for the re-opening of Fourstones, Greenhead and Gilsland stations (closed in 1967) on the Newcastle-Hexham-Carlisle route. The Branch fully supports Mr. Wright's suggestion regarding these stations, where platforms are still in existence and considers that re-opening, as unstaffed halts, would be a feasible proposition. The local parish council is urging that the 08.30

Newcastle-Carlisle train should call at Haydon Bridge, another station on the same route and the Branch considers that much could be gained by this step. X

It would appear that British Rail's Eastern Region are satisfied with the performance so far of "The Highwayman", the train introduced in May that offers travel between London and the North-East for the bargain fare of thirty-five shillings. This facility has been launched for the summer period, but the Branch hopes that the train's running will be extended to operate throughout the winter.

Members of the local Urban District Council have expressed alarm about the reduction of passenger facilities at Carnforth station, which for many years was an important inter-change point on the west coast main line. The Branch shares the concern of the Council members and feels that improvement of the situation at the station would be entirely justified.

The welcomed policy by the Eastern Region's Hull Division of encouraging greater use of the Hull-Scarborough route continues. An important step forward was taken in May when Kenn Dodd, the well-known comedian, assisted in publicity of the route's services. One of the managers mainly responsible for the route's promotion has said that so much work has been done regarding publicity that the Minister of Transport could not think of closing the route for "many years to come".

Despite the many closures that have taken place in the North over the past years, an encouraging development recently took place at the Northumberland town of Blyth. The line between Newsham and Links Road has lately been re-opened on a single track basis to deal with certain freight traffic arriving by sea at Blyth Harbour. Although the line was never used by passenger trains, it is understood that use of the line had ended shortly after the closure last year of Crofton Mill Colliery.

✓X A statement on the future intentions of the Tyneside Passenger Transport Authority is due to be issued in the autumn. The Branch expresses the hope that the importance of rail travel will be taken into account. It also hopes that the two plans issued last April by the consultants dealing with the Tyneside and Wearside Transportation Study will be thoroughly examined by the Authority, as the plans include proposals for rail development. X

As mentioned in the last progress report, rail passenger services between Newcastle and Tyne Commission Quay were discontinued from 4th May. Part of the route over which the service operated belongs to the Port of Tyne Authority. The service was replaced by alternative bus facilities. However, despite this and the social and economic implications of withdrawal, the Branch is somewhat puzzled about the circumstances under which the matter has been handled by British Rail.

Normally, when British Rail wishes to discontinue a service, appropriate notices are displayed at stations concerned and announcements are made in local newspapers, so that users have the opportunity of lodging objections with the Transport Users' Consultative Committee during a period of at least six weeks. In the event of any objections being made, that Committee is required to report to the Minister their views on the proposal and withdrawal cannot be proceeded with until his consent is obtained. Even when withdrawal is approved by the Minister, the closure date is usually announced by British Rail at least several weeks in advance.

Even though this statutory procedure for withdrawals of rail passenger services still applies and should have, no doubt, been followed in connection with the Tyne Commission Quay closure, discontinuance of the service was simply announced in the press and over the broadcasting media less than a week before the date of actual closure. As far as is known, no notices about closure appeared at either Newcastle Central or other local stations and no mention of the closure was made in British Rail's Eastern Region public timetable. Therefore, anyone at the present time who consults the Eastern Region public timetable would gain the impression that the Tyne Commission Quay trains, which were run in connection with Bergen Line and Fred Olsen Line ship sailings from the Tyne, were still running. Strange as it may seem, the current Eastern Region public timetable commenced on 4th May, the date when the Tyne Commission passengers were ended.

Mr. R. L. E. Lawrence, General Manager of British Rail's London Midland Region, said, during a visit in May to Carlisle, that at the moment the potential traffic does not justify development of a freightliner depot in the city, but added that rail facilities in west Cumberland were quite adequate to deal with a substantial increase in freight business.

✓✗ Sixteen local authorities and other bodies (including the Branch) and thirty-two individuals have objected to the proposed withdrawal of passenger trains on the Keswick-Penrith line. A public enquiry will be held in Carlisle during September. A previous proposal to withdraw the service was refused seven years ago. ✗

AREAS

Devon and Cornwall

On 2nd May, British Rail held a very successful "Open day" at St. Blazey locomotive depot in Cornwall. This attracted a large cross-section of the public. Although locomotives were the main attraction, British Rail commendably took the opportunity of having stands to advertise passenger, freight, car-carrying and other services. The Society has written to British Rail commending it on the event and expressing the hope that a similar display would be arranged in north Devon.

✓✗ Further efforts to save the Barnstaple Junction-Ilfracombe line have, so far, been unsuccessful and it seems likely that it will close on 4th October as planned. ✗

A welcome increase in freight traffic to Barnstaple (the freight centre for north Devon) has occurred as a result of the new licensing laws for road haulage which restrict drivers' hours.

It seems likely that the freightliner services from Plymouth and Par (Cornwall) may be withdrawn, as they have not developed as had been hoped.

Mid-Hampshire

✓✗ The Transport Users' Consultative Committee held a second public inquiry on 3rd July into the proposed closure of the Winchester-Alton line. This was to consider the passenger counts taken on the line since the previous inquiry and the revised bus timetables submitted by the Aldershot and District Traction Company.

Bus services in the Alton area have recently been the subject of much criticism, as, due to shortage of drivers, some journeys have been cancelled without warning and strike action has followed attempts to revise schedules. In view of this situation, it seems unlikely that the bus company would be in a position to provide the additional services set out in the timetable submitted to the TUCC.

British Rail distributed 6s. vouchers, two per household, in Alton. These could be used during July to obtain reductions on day return tickets to London. This is a welcome trend, but would have been more effective if the vouchers had had a wider availability. A trip to, say, Bournemouth or Portsmouth would have been more acceptable to many during this holiday month as well as giving a boost to the Mid-Hants. line. ✕

Greater Manchester

✓✕ Notices have been posted at stations along the Bury-Rawtenstall branch to announce its proposed closure to passenger traffic. The last date for the receipt of objections by the Transport Users' Consultative Committee was 25th July. The Society has been active in distributing pamphlets which encourage members of the public to write to the TUCC protesting against the proposal. Whilst most people are sympathetic, it is not known how many have taken the trouble to write. The Society will be represented at the hearing by a private member. Our corporate member Summerseat Action Committee will be very strongly represented. This group has been very active in its own village. Bury County Borough Council, Rawtenstall Borough Council, Ramsbottom Urban District Council and the Bury branch of the National Union of Railwaymen are all believed to have lodged objections with the TUCC. In correspondence with Rawtenstall BC and Ramsbottom UDC the Society has stressed the importance of keeping the line open. ✕

Manchester Rail Travel Club is being run by the staff at the divisional headquarters of British Rail in the city. Membership, which is free, now exceeds 1,000. The periodic newsletter draws attention to the local grant-aided services as well as main line services and the very popular mystery excursions.

An attempt by the Lyme Handley Railway Preservation Society to purchase the recently closed Marple (Rose Hill) to Macclesfield line was foiled at the outset by British Rail's insistence on receiving a substantial payment within three weeks as compensation for not pulling up the track. The sum raised fell well short of that required and so it looks as if the line is finally doomed. The committee of the Preservation Society worked very hard in the short time available, but enough support was not forthcoming.

✓✕ Work has commenced on the conversion of the Manchester (Oxford Road) to Altrincham line from 1,500V d.c. to 25kV a.c. This will enable through running from the Crewe line, with consequent up-dating of rolling stock and complete withdrawal of the ageing 1,500V stock. ✕

Merseyside

✓✕ Southport County Borough Council is pressing British Rail to restore the through rail service between that town and Preston. This link was severed when the Southport-Preston line was closed in September, 1964. The Council has proposed that a service of through trains between Southport

and Preston via Burscough Bridge should be introduced. The Acting Area Representative has written to the Council to suggest that, in the course of its discussions with British Rail, it should press for the diversion of Ormskirk-Preston trains to serve Burscough Bridge station on the Southport-Wigan line and thus allow closure of the Burscough Junction North-Burscough Junction South line. There have been no interchange facilities between the Ormskirk-Preston and Southport-Wigan lines since withdrawal of the three daily Ormskirk-Southport trains on 5th March, 1962. Both spurs from Burscough Bridge Junction to Burscough Junctions north and south are still in position and, so far as can be ascertained, British Rail has no intention of lifting either, as these are in occasional use by freight trains.

A letter has been sent to the Liverpool City Planning Officer to suggest the diversion of all Liverpool-Ormskirk trains via the old Cheshire Lines Committee line between Kirkdale and Aintree. This would allow Warbreck station to be re-opened and Orrell Park station to be closed. The advantages of this would be that a greater part of Walton would be served, better rail/bus interchange services could be provided and the proposed very costly reconstruction of a dangerous road bridge at Orrell Park station would be eliminated. ✕

The valuable assistance of our member Mr. P. T. Byrne in both these matters is acknowledged.

Norfolk (North and West)

Hunstanton Urban District Council is to protest strongly to the regional traffic commissioners about the failure of the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company to maintain an adequate bus service for the town.

At the July meeting of the Council, Mr. M. R. Thomas mentioned several days in June and July when buses on the King's Lynn-Hunstanton route were cancelled without notice. He stated that the Company, which had a monopoly in the area, had broken its pledge, given at the inquiry into the proposed closure of the King's Lynn-Hunstanton railway line, to provide an adequate substitute bus service. Mr. Thomas is our Area Representative for Norfolk (North and West).

Somerset, Dorset and Western Hampshire

✕ Regarding the Wareham-Swanage branch line, there is still no news of the Minister's decision on the appeal by the local authorities against the licences for the alternative bus services. In the meantime, the Hants. and Dorset Motor Services, Ltd., have applied to the traffic commissioners for a variation of the existing services to Swanage. Both Swanage UDC and Wareham RDC have joined those who appose this application as being yet a further reduction in transport services in the Purbeck area. The principal argument put forward was a grave staff shortage. It is significant that when our Area Representative intimated to the Minister his doubt as to the ability of the bus company to run the alternative services the reply was that the Minister had been assured by the company that it was well able to provide the staff. ✕

PASSENGER SERVICE CLOSURES

The information which follows is additional to that contained in branch and area reports.

- (a) Effectuated: Nothing further to report.
- (b) Approved by the Minister: Bridgend-Treherbert.
- (c) Proposed: Parkeston Quay West (Harwich) (used only by certain special trains).
- (d) Reprieved: Whitland-Pembroke Dock. (The Minister is prepared to pay a social grant). Penally Halt, on this line, was re-opened on 29th June as a request halt; it had been closed since 15th June, 1964.

PRIVATE RAILWAY VENTURES

Dean Forest Railway Preservation Society has been formed to purchase the Lydney Town and Parkend line (3½ miles), which was part of the former Severn and Wye Railway. Although the complete Railway was closed to passengers in 1929, the section to Parkend remains open for certain goods traffic. However, British Rail has announced that the line may be closed down entirely in the near future.

Bristol Suburban Railway Society has plans to run a service of diesel multiple units and special steam-hauled trains between St. Philip's station, Bristol (closed to passengers in 1953) and Warmley. This would go over part of the Bristol (Temple Meads) to Bath (Green Park) line, which lost its passenger trains a few years ago. Further information may be obtained from Mr. M. R. Gayton, of 9, Middle Road, Kingswood, Bristol.

Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway Society has been planning for the past three years to run a service on the three-mile section of track which runs between the two stations named in its title. This section was part of the Lakeside-Ulverston line, which lost its passenger trains in 1955. The society is now negotiating with British Rail for the purchase of the track, but this is dependent on the granting by the Ministry of Transport of a light railway order.

NARP

✗ The editor has received a copy of the July issue of "News from National Association of Road passengers". The Association is the USA counterpart of this Society. According to the "News", membership of NARP increased by 3,149 during the first half of 1970, bringing the total to about 7,500. The Association is thus halfway towards its aim of a total membership of 15,000 by the end of this year.

✗ Rail remains the safest means of travel, according to the US Department of Transportation. In 1969, the fatality rate on US railways was .07 for each 100 million passenger miles. Commercial aircraft was next with a rate of .13. The bus rate was .22 and automobiles and taxis 2.30. Accidents and fatalities were rail 9, air 131, bus 150, automobiles and taxis 37,200. ✗

(With acknowledgement to NARP)

A FEW ISLAND REMINISCENCES

by Alan C. Tarbat

It was a late evening hour in August, 1928, when I first arrived at Calbourne and Shalfleet station, to be met by a Victoria (the last I remember of those vehicles) that took me the mile and a quarter to Calbourne Rectory, to which living my father had lately been instituted. A magical drive down a long country lane followed.

This station, though slightly nearer Shalfleet, stood remote and splendid. Not only did it have a good train service, but it sold "pop" as well. An enormous board displaying the notice "Rates for Rabbits" adorned one wall of the booking office. Calbourne station was, before the days of 'buses, used regularly by villagers from as far off as Mottistone, a good four miles away, for the weekly market at Newport. They thought nothing of the double tramp, the return one laden with goods.

Speaking of rates, I have before me, as I write, a timetable of the Isle of Wight Railway for October, 1909. Then a barrel-organ, if accompanied, cost a shilling between any stations on this line other than Ryde Pier, which was fourpence more. This was exactly twice as much as for a bitch with litter of pups, packed in hampers. A sewing machine, with stand, was slightly more expensive than an empty coffin.

But I knew and loved the Island railways (at least their eastern parts) long before Calbourne times. My first trip was on a day's excursion from the Mainland with my father, an ardent entomologist. Ventnor was our destination, and I was fascinated by the tunnel that occupies so much of the stretch between Wroxall and this resort.

In early days Wroxall station possessed two unique features. One was the adaptation of an adjoining public house to form the first railway refreshment room on the Island. The second was the employment of a porter whose sole job was to deliver a lamp to each carriage before the train entered the tunnel, collecting the same on its return journey. It was said that he did quite well on the side, as, for a tip, he was always prepared to "forget" a carriage in which was seated a courting couple!

While my father was busy collecting his rare Adonis Blue butterflies on top of St. Boniface Down, I made a mad rush to discover Ventnor Town station, as it was then most untruthfully called. But, despite the fib, it occupied a glorious situation in the incomparable Undercliff Valley.

I think that, of all sections of railway in the Island, that final piece between Merstone and Ventnor West, as it was later more suitably named, was the loveliest. I used to like approaching the now much-spoilt Godshill by its "back door"; and Whitwell station, standing against its background of hillside, was most impressive. Important, too, it was at one time, serving, as it did, Niton, Chale and Blackgang. When, travelling southward from Whitwell, the tiny train burrowed into the tunnel, one emerged into the finest view in the Island, with the Channel (as a contrast to the grey Solent) a brilliant ultramarine before one.

Newport used to be a real "Clapham Junction". Trains ran to everywhere, and through enchanting scenery that no roads can rival. The other offshoot from Merstone (or,

rather, the original line) ran to Sandown. One of its stations, which served the famous Arreton Manor, was Herringford. Here there was a porter who was a great "character", and passengers would hear his strident voice: " 'Orringford, 'Orringford. 'Orringford for Harreton." Next station to this was the lovely secluded Newchurch that, incredibly, in the earlier part of the last century had both Ryde and Ventnor in its parish, which stretches in a narrow strip from sea to sea.

The Island at one time ran to two "expresses". A very exclusive little train, limited to Mainland passengers, was drawn by a Drewry Rail motor from Freshwater to Newport, with a single halt at Yarmouth. But the other express - how long it lasted I have no idea - must have been a terrific affair. This served a fast connection from Waterloo, and there was no stop at all between Ryde Pier Head and Ventnor. Crowds would apparently collect at the intermediate stations to watch the splendid creature sailing through and the officials exchange their "tokens". The Shanklin station master became almost legendary. He loved his part and would perform it with a gesture worthy of a Garrick - every afternoon at 3.30. The speed of the train passing varied from thirty to forty m.p.h.

How pathetic is the little gaggle of six stations which are all that remain of the erstwhile thirty-three! How wicked, too! "The great Isle of Wight train robbery" by R.E. Burroughs, should be compulsory reading for all students of ethics and economics.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Editor: Mr. L. G. Hipperson, Flat 1a, 12 Alexandra Drive, Liverpool, L17 8TD.
Sub-Editor: Mr. H. R. Purser, 30, Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex.

(It is regretted that there has been recent confusion as to Mr. Purser's address. A check with the Post Office reveals that his correct postal address is as shown above)

Mr. Purser is responsible for branch and area reports, Mr. Hipperson for all other matter. To ensure inclusion in the next issue (to be published in December), material must be submitted to the appropriate editor so as to reach him by 31st October (except that subsequent urgent late news will be received by Mr. Hipperson up to 9th November.)

PUBLISHED by the RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

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RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

PROGRESS REPORT No. 84

SEPTEMBER 1970.

MEMBERS ONLY SUPPLEMENT: ISSUE No.4.

POLICY STATEMENT

✓✗ The Society is preparing a new policy statement. This will summarise our proposals for the development of railways in the 1970s and will embrace both passenger and freight traffic. It will also contain sections on transport and the environment and the relative economics of rail compared with other forms of transport.

We plan to issue this statement early in the autumn. Copies will be sent to the Ministry of Transport, MPs, local authorities and the press. ✗

RAILWAY REFORM GROUP

✓✗ The recent general election unfortunately brought about the loss of two good friends of this Society. Mr. Alan Lee Williams and Mr. R. H. Atkins, chairman and secretary respectively of the Railway Reform Group in the House of Commons, both failed to retain their seats. We extend to them our very sincere thanks for all they have done as members of Parliament to further the cause of railways.

We hope that the Railway Reform Group will be revived after the summer recess. Our officials look forward to meeting personally as many as possible of the MPs who have indicated that they support us and will be prepared to maintain and increase the parliamentary railway lobby. ✗

CAMBRIDGE-ST. IVES LINE

✓✗ Following the Minister of Transport's consent to the closure of the Cambridge-St. Ives line, the Society approach local authorities in the area to suggest that they should give consideration to granting a subsidy, particularly as this might induce British Rail to abandon the principle of the Cooper Brothers formula.

We understand that Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council is giving serious consideration to subsidising this line and that British Rail has been asked to suspend its intention to withdraw services from 5th October.

The present arrangements at St. Ives are far from conducive to custom. The notices and illuminated pay-train board are situated on the platform from which trains no longer run and where the track has been removed! If the line is to continue, the Society will suggest to British Rail that it rectifies the position at an early date. ✗

ORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

In accordance with paragraph 21 of the Society's Constitution, the National Committee has elected from amongst its members the following officers:-

Vice-Chairmen:	Messrs. R. V. Banks, J. W. Barfield, J. M. Firth,
Assistant Secretaries: (2 posts)	Mr. R. G. Pullen (one post vacant)
Membership Secretary:	Mr. D. J. Bradbury
Press and Publicity Officer:	Mr. R. V. Banks
Honorary Legal Advisor:	Mr. R. G. Pullen
Progress Report Editor:	Mr. L. G. Hipperson
Progress Report Sub-Editor:	Mr. H. R. Purser
Distribution Officer:	Mr. H. G. M. Rogers
Cuttings Officer:	Mr. B. R. Sageman
Sales Officer:	(Vacant)

MEMBERSHIP

As reported at this year's annual general meeting, membership is showing a decline as compared with last year. This is hardly encouraging when we must expand our influence at both national and local level if we are to succeed in preventing further closures and in achieving a continued policy of expansion of the railway network.

The National Committee is taking steps to remedy this situation. We are planning a membership drive when our new policy statement is published in the autumn. However, PLEASE will everyone of our supporters help us here by making the Society known wherever possible. Try talking to friends and neighbours about our work and what we are doing. Write to anyone you know who has the slightest possibility of becoming a member.

Almost everyone will be affected if we fail to retain and expand our railways. The worsening road congestion and the alarming destruction of environment which results from desperate attempts to solve this by yet more road construction is bringing more and more people round to our point of view. We need them as members if we are to succeed. Copies of our publicity leaflets will be sent to any member on request to the Membership Secretary.

VENUE OF 1971 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As reported in the last members only supplement, this year's annual general meeting decided that next year's AGM should be held outside London and that the exact location should be fixed by the National Committee after members had been consulted as to suitable locations. Suggestions included Sheffield, Birmingham, Salisbury and Crewe. Members are now invited to send their views to the General Secretary, 11, Berkeley Court, London, S.W.2. to reach him not later than 30th September.