

THE CIRCULAR

Bradford Railway Circle

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Editorial

What would we do without our regular travelogues from our Hon. Secretary? How much thinner would our Circular be? Thank you, Peter, for keeping us informed & entertained with your excellent articles & photographs.

I'm very disappointed to report that there hasn't been any interest in reviewing e-books offered by Pen & Sword. Maybe an e-book isn't such a tangible asset as a printed copy, but the books are still very interesting and generally well written and profusely illustrated. We have a few reviews in this issue, of printed copies that P&S have provided in past months, and there are a few more reviews awaited, which will appear in the December Circular, but what will happen after then? Your March Circular might be a very thin magazine indeed! Of course, we can overcome this if more members would put pen to paper (or, preferably, fingers to keyboard!) and write an article about their travels, or their model railway, or any aspect of railways that they care to write about. Remember, it's your magazine, and it needs your support, and that means articles & photos – more, please! My thanks, anyway, to those who have taken the trouble to provide material for this issue.

Returning to the topic of e-books, the list of titles previously emailed to members is reprinted in this issue, and a recent catalogue of Pen & Sword's titles is also available for reference if required. It's a win-win position – you get a free e-book, and P&S get an honest review, which hopefully will help them sell more copies.

Portugal: The Return (Part 1)

Peter Holden

5-14 November 2022 – Portuguese Traction Group

Andy Roberts and I decided to participate on this rail-based holiday as Andy had never visited Portugal, and for myself the tour was to traverse many lines I had not travelled over during my previous visits.

Well, as ever another tour operator, another way of doing things!

The “Enthusiasts’ Trip” (or train full of nutters! (Me included)) was booked quite a while ago. Originally it was to depart two weeks earlier, but for some spurious reasons PTG postponed for 2 weeks. Following this change PTG then asked if we would mind flying from Stansted instead of Gatwick, “so we would be with the main group” We had chosen to fly from Gatwick as we could check in to the Premier Inn at Gatwick Airport and then spend the evening prior to departure at a rather nice Harvey’s pub in nearby Turners Hill. We accepted a £100 each refund and a room at the Radisson Blue at Stansted, and changed.

Leaving home on 4th November I travelled to Kings Cross on the 06:55 Grand Central service formed of 180 108. With no particular rush to arrive at Stansted, a visit to the Royal Oak, Borough for a few top-quality ales, followed later by a meal in the Wetherspoons that is located in Liverpool Street Station, this before boarding the 20:10 Liverpool Street to Stansted Airport formed of 12 car Stadler unit 745 106.

There was to be a strike by RMT members on Saturday 5th November, hence our need to travel on the 4th.

5th November - An extremely leisurely start to the day as our booked Ryanair flight was not until the afternoon. There is nothing of interest at Stansted, so we checked in very early and camped out in the “Windmill” Wetherspoons for a few hours. As ever, not massively expensive compared with other airport outlets.

“Fly with the main group” we were told! No such thing. There were around eight flying from Stanstead out of a total of around one hundred. Some did indeed choose to keep their Gatwick bookings, perhaps we should have done also.

Whilst on a European Trade Union event in Brussels in 2019, I heard first-hand about the poor treatment of the Ryanair crew. Not good at all. So, when using this airline, I always now buy food and a drink, reason being the staff receive a bonus only if they sell anything. This bringing very their poor wages up considerably to a pittance.

On arrival into Porto Airport, we were met by our Tour Manager David. He made sure we all boarded the correct Metro train into the city centre, and also that we knew where to change trains for our booked hotels in the vicinity of Porto Sao Bento Station. One slight criticism of this operation was we were provided with street maps sourced from Google Maps, these being notoriously inaccurate! Marked on was the most direct route to the hotel. However, this route involved climbing up very many steep steps with our suitcases. I managed it easily, so the drugs I’m on do work! Following a slight disparity between the map provided and the reality of the actual location of our hotel, we checked in to the hotel for just a one-night stay.

Sunday 6th November - Following a good breakfast, we make our way via a more sensible route to Sao Bento Station. A marvellous example of Portuguese tile decoration is on show in the main station building, well worth a visit, the train shed however is somewhat more basic. Cases were to be deposited in a van which would transfer cases to our next hotel. Having spoken to the van driver on his arrival I was sure this was indeed our van, so I was happy to leave my case with him. True to form with these holidays, as ever “the sheep” would not leave their cases until someone from PTG told them to do so! Great fun!

PTG had secured the use of our own train for the duration of the holiday. It comprised of three 1940’s-built Schindler carriages. A polite note from PTG warned that if you sit in the front coach, participants are likely to have the drop-down windows fully open at all times, and various body parts hanging out of them! Needless to say, we chose the rear of the three carriages. The carriages were quite spacious having double revolving seats, thus no tables. I was more than happy with our chosen carriage for the next week!

Being very much the “new boys” on this holiday, it was clear we were amongst regular PTG travellers. As ever there is always at least one participant being rather giddy and quite loud. I decided that I would learn to ignore him, rather than chuck him out of the window!

Off we go, bang on time with 2 X class 14 diesels 1436 & 1461 (CP version of our class 20s built between 1966/ 1969) on the front and a class 26, 2609 (built by Alstom in 1974) electric on the rear. After a short thrash up the short spur from Sao Bento to Campanhã Station, we sadly sat for around an hour before progressing south. This did nothing for the day’s itinerary.

The delay was caused by engineering work necessitating single line running. I took a few pictures and had a close look at the very well-turned-out locos. All in all, a most splendid train.

Our first destination of the day was Aveiro, a distance of around 41 miles to the south. One may have imagined that our arrival here could have been a major problem as we were to transfer onto a service train to have a run on the Vouga narrow-gauge line from Aveiro to Sernada. However, would you believe they held the 4 car DMU for around one hour until our arrival. I can’t imagine a service train waiting for a charter train in England! Following a short break in Sernada for photos to be acquired, we boarded the Vouga Historic Train, a vintage narrow-gauge train, to retrace our tracks to Aveiro. The tour brochure was very cleverly worded, inferring that this “should” be a narrow-gauge steam loco. It turned out to be Alstom diesel loco, 9004 (built 14th February 1998) instead! It was rather noisy on the inclines, so I was happy. It has to be said that if not for the 2-week postponement we would probably have had the steam locomotive available to haul our train.

A prompt change back at Aveiro onto our charter train and we leave to make our way to traverse the Aveiro Dock Branch. The branch is around 8 miles in length and most interesting. As you may realise the weather even in November is quite sunny and was perfect for our photo stop at the end of the branch. I was off the train very quickly and managed to catch a few decent images, before the multitude joined me! I found of



9004 at Sernada, 6/11/22

Peter Holden



1461 & 1436 on Aveiro Dock Branch, 6/11/22

Peter Holden

interest that one could open the carriage doors as we were moving! OK for a few pictures.

It's now mid-afternoon as we carry on to firstly visit the very short branch from the junction at Coimbra B, to the city station of Coimbra, a large University city. This line sees very few trains these days and is supposed to be closing for conversion to a metro/tramway very soon. As we leave at around 17:30 for the last section from Coimbra to Entroncamento it is falling dark very quickly indeed. Alas, this issue would not have arisen had the tour run on the scheduled dates, as not only were we now two weeks nearer to winter, but the clocks had also gone back. We were to spend quite a few days travelling the last few hours of the itinerary in darkness. Coach transfer took us to the Hotel dos Templários in the small nearby town of Tomar. Evening meal was provided on this occasion, and a few beers made a pleasant end to the day. The hotel was first rate, the food was great, and decent (-ish) beer was also available.

Monday 7th November, Beira Baixa Line – Covilhã - Following breakfast and depositing our cases into the transfer van, we decided to walk the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Tomar Station, arriving in good time to take a few pictures of our charter train before its booked departure time of 09:08. Locomotives for today's run are a Class 15 1557, its works plate stating it was manufactured by MLW Industries, Montreal, Canada and was 2,000HP, it was introduced in 1973. And electric class 26 2609 once more. We depart behind the electric to travel along the 12-mile Tomar branch to Entrocamento, here reversing to head towards Castel Branco. En-route, our train ran on to a freight-only branch to visit Rodão Paper Mill. Most of the group went off for a talk about toilet roll production. I chose to have a wander around the siding area and take a few pictures. This was one of several add-ons that were not on the original itinerary. I witnessed our train driver receiving a good telling off from the on-train inspector for shutting down the class 15 diesel. The electric loco was now at the front of the train to travel back up the steep incline to the main line. Only thing was the siding we had arrived into was not electrified! Hence the diesel had to push the train from the rear. Plenty of noise and clag produced!

Another reversal and we head forwards once more towards Castel Branco for a short lunch break. All well and good, but there was not too much on offer at some of the lunch time stop offs, this being one of them.

Departure was slightly late for the next section from Castel Branco to Villa Formoso, a distance of around 100 miles. Villa Formoso is on the Spanish boarder where cross boarded sleeper trains run. However, the line is closed at the moment for an upgrade. Indeed, the station itself is being rebuilt, so I was surprised that we were to reverse there. I am sure that the Health & Safety brigade in England would have had a melt down at the sight of a hundred or so spotters invading the building site of the Station! Having reversed we then completed the third side of the triangle of lines at Guarda before continuing to our overnight stop in Covilhã. Again, buses took us the short distance to our hotel for the night, where a splendid buffet meal was laid on. All in all, a very good day indeed.



1557 at Guarda, 7/11/22

Peter Holden

Tuesday 8th November. Covilhã – Entrocamento – Setúbal - Following breakfast, once more we chose to walk down the hill to Covilhã Station. Here was a marvellous photo opportunity, especially for the ones who joined me and climbed down off the platform to go to the side of the train where the sun was!

It appeared our train had stabled overnight in the station, so we have the same two locomotives as the previous day.

Departure today is on time at 09:00 for the 125-mile run south to the major railway town of Entrocamento. Well, our train kept being held up along the way, so much so we were around 60 minutes late. For some reason our train was stood for a further hour in sidings behind the main station. I imagine the “pilot man” had gone for lunch with the train being late. So, around 2 hours late we progress down a freight only line to the Container terminal. Allegedly this was the first passenger train to do so.

The brochure stated whilst in Entrocamento there would be time to visit the Portuguese Railway Museum! Also, for a chosen privileged few (??), a visit to the Works. Well, that all went out of the window! We eventually pulled into the station for a short break whilst changing locos, just as the monsoon season arrived. To be fair the deluge only lasted around 30 minutes but was spectacular to say the least. I am just glad I managed to grab a bite to eat and a few beers, getting back onto the train just as the rain started.

Following lunch, we continue south with our trusty Class 14s back at the helm, heading firstly to Barreiro, here reversing before heading to our next hotel stop in Setúbal. This time for three nights. Great!

Having checked in to the hotel we found a rather good Italian restaurant for an evening meal and a few beers. From now on the evening meals were not part of our holiday package. This night was finished off in the hotel bar.

Wednesday 9th November. Lagos - The itinerary for today was to have seen our train visit two branch lines to the south of Lisbon, firstly the coastal town of Sines, then on to Neves-Corvo. Alas, the day's itinerary was completely scrapped with not too much of an explanation as to why forthcoming.

PTG, had put in place various options as replacements for the day's itinerary. We chose an out and back to Lagos at the far western end of the Algarve line utilising our charter train. It turned out to be a splendid day's train travel. Our charter train enjoyed some quite fast running with not too many stops to await passing trains at the loops along the route. Once again, today's locos were class 14s 1436 & 1461 top & tail. There was clear evidence of the main line both south towards Faro and the line along the Algarve being upgraded along the route.



1436 at Lagos, 9/11/22

Peter Holden

I first visited the Algarve area around 1994. There have been many changes to the railway since then. Having reversed at Tunes we made our way along the unelectrified section to Lagos. Many of the main stations have been completely rebuilt. One could question the cost of such major refurbishment to a line that to be fair does not warrant such expenditure. There was plenty of signage referring to EU funding on show. It infuriates me that many EU member countries, quite rightly, both applied for and received funding for such improvements which is great, whilst at the same time some of our elected so-called representatives to the EU could not be bothered to even attend

meetings. At Lagos the old steam semi roundhouse shed still stands but is fenced off to way above a standard that may have seen me pay a quick “gap in the fence” visit! We were told there was at least one old steam loco inside. The old station too is now fenced off. We enjoyed a good 90-minute break here in Lagos during which we found a nice quiet café bar adjacent to the station and enjoyed a few beers and a spot of food. The tranquillity of the café was then scuppered by a man and a battery hammer drill making adjustments to some of the fixtures and fittings! Some of the participants went off to explore the town during the 90 minutes stop. We departed on time for a spirited run back north. The trains reversal at Tunes was carried out very promptly all helping our on-time arrival for our second night in Setúbal. We chose to eat in our hotel on this occasion, perhaps not the wisest decision as things were somewhat slow!

[to be continued in next issue]

Book Reviews

The Class 60s - A Highly Illustrated Portrait of Class 60s at Work’, by Mark V Pike (Review by Chris Davis).

The book is a pictorial record of the class 60s at work, there being no introduction to their build or technical details. In the last few years, it is fair to say the class 60s have developed quite a cult following as their operational numbers have declined. Indeed, your reviewer, a keen photographer, will actively follow the allocation of class 60s on freight workings.

The book is printed in portrait format, with two and occasionally three photos to a page, all in full colour. Apart from rail tour duties and rare passenger rescue workings, all photographs are on freight operations. Captions are very detailed regarding the workings photographed, and with additional information regarding the class 60 highlighted in the photograph. There are quite a variety of freight operations covered, namely petroleum, aggregates, containers, automotive, timber, M.O.D. traffic and engineer’s workings. As for the locomotives, there are at least 21 different liveries to be found in the publication. The photographic coverage goes back over 20 years, and provides a record of locomotives and freight traffic now lost. Colour reproduction on glossy paper is excellent.

As your reviewer is in the north of England, the lack of areas covered by the book becomes immediately apparent. The majority of locations covered in the book are based in the south of England and parts of South Wales. There seem to be only three photographs of locations that could be classed as northern England. A glaring omission is that a book covering class 60 workings does not have a single photograph of the class on Merry-Go-Round coal operations. Class 60s have been staple traction on biomass trains for several years now, and they are not featured. Other omissions include the West Country china clay trains and the Peak District stone workings.

For a complete coverage of the Class 60s at work, your reviewer cannot help feeling the book could be improved by using material from other photographer's collections to fill in the missing geographical areas and workings.

The Class 60s - A Highly Illustrated Portrait of Class 60s at Work, by Mark V Pike, published by Pen & Sword (Key Books imprint). 96 pages, price £15.99. ISBN: 9781802820249

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, by Robin Jones (Review by Frank Robertshaw)

There are a lot of people who I would consider to be my heroes and many of them would be Victorian Engineers. For example, Thomas Telford, Daniel Gooch, George & Robert Stephenson, Thomas Walker and of course Marc & Isambard Brunel.

It is a pleasure to be asked to review this book as I am a great admirer of Isambard Brunel who of course was involved with the Greatest Railway ever, The Great Western Railway in Great Britain.

The first three chapters are mostly concerned with the work of Marc Brunel who is Isambard's Father. He was a good Engineer but I think that he was often overshadowed by his well-known son. He is well remembered for his work on the Thames Tunnel in London which opened in 1843. A good account of the work on the tunnel is recorded in the book.

Chapter Four deals with Clifton Suspension Bridge over the river Avon in Bristol. This is a lovely elegant bridge which I have travelled over and under many times when I lived in the area. There were many difficulties involved in the bridge building which are described in the book. Isambard never saw the bridge opened as he died in 1859 and it was finally built with the support of the Institute of Civil Engineers. Isambard had a hand in the building of the docks in Bristol but unfortunately there is nothing left to see of this side of his work today.

Chapter Six is one of the shortest chapters in the book. It deals with Brunel's broad gauge railway. It was 7ft gauge when the rest of the country used what was to become the standard gauge for the whole country, 4ft 8½ inches. In my opinion it was one of Isambard's poorer ideas, and it is right that it only takes a short chapter in this book.

Chapter Seven tell us of the problems of the building of the Great Western Railway and Isambard's involvement in its buildings. The railway started at the village of Paddington and it was planned to run to a small place called Swindon. There were many problems with the building of this line and the book tells us of them.

In Chapter Eight the reader is told of the rise and fall of Swindon Works, where most of the locomotives of the Great Western Railway were built. This chapter contains some nice historic pictures of early Railways and also the Railway Village in Swindon built on the same lines as Titus Salt's village of Saltaire in West Yorkshire.

Chapters Nine & Ten tell us about some of the famous bridges and tunnels which Isambard was involved in the designing and building of. I am particularly interested in tunnels and bridges and their construction so I enjoyed these chapters. Well known is Box Tunnel - due to Isambard's vanity he designed Box Tunnel so that the sun would shine right through the tunnel at sunrise on his birthday (April 19th).

Chapter Eleven deals with the Bristol & Exeter Railway which was built to extend the Great Western Railway to Exeter and further west. This along with Chapter Twelve contains some fine black and white images.

The South Devon Railway included Brunel's Atmospheric Railway between Exeter and Teignmouth. This is dealt with in Chapter Thirteen. To me it was more of a novelty railway than a serious one. On the site now at Starcross in Devon is a museum devoted to the Atmospheric Railway (I recall visiting this museum some years ago with my children. There was a miniature Atmospheric Railway within to demonstrate how it worked and this was powered by a cylinder vacuum cleaner. It coped very well in carrying a certain 15 stone Yorkshire man in a demonstration run!!!!)

Chapter Fourteen deals with the history of the wonderful London terminus station at Paddington. Isambard had a struggle with his directors and others to get the station built, but it was built and is still in use today. If there is time for you to look around this busy station, memories of Brunel's work can still be seen. The Chapter is named 'The Ultimate Great Western Station' which I think is very appropriate. When I first saw this book, I was thrilled to see that its cover showed a part of Brunel's Chepstow Bridge over the River Wye. In Chapter Fifteen there is a larger full print of this picture of Chepstow Bridge. This is a special section for me - I know Chepstow very well as I lived a few miles from there as schoolboy and went to school in Chepstow. It was one of the happiest times of my life and I still enjoy going visiting there 75 years later. Unfortunately, the original bridge is gone but I understand that several parts of the original bridge are in use. In fairness I should say that the chapter contains some very interesting accounts of Isambard's civil engineering work.

Chapter Sixteen deals with some of Isambard's forays into shipbuilding. The most successful must be the 'SS Great Britain'. It had a very colourful life, which is dealt with in this chapter. This wonderful ship has been brought back to her birthplace in Bristol, where she can be visited. A visit there should be all the more interesting if this book has been read first.

Brunel's bridges are featured in Chapter Seventeen but a large place is made for the Saltash Bridge, which must be the largest of them. It is a fine building and still carries the main line railway trains to and from Cornwall.

Chapters Eighteen to Twenty-one are in the name of the book covered by the title of 'The Final Epitaph', which is a suitable title for the last chapters. In spite of this the closing pages of this book carry some very interesting historical images and narrative. Thank you, Robin, for a very interesting book.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, by Robin Jones. Published by Pen & Sword 2020. 224 pages; ISBN 9781526783691. Price £16-99.

Frank's Footnote. I have always been a huge fan of Isambard Brunel, and his father Marc as well. I always said that if I had a male child I would have called him 'Marc Brunel Robertshaw' and my wife Mary was in agreement to this. With hindsight, perhaps it is just as well that we were blessed with two daughters and no boys!!!!

Joint Line Operations Around Manchester and in South Yorkshire by Bob Pixton (Review by Roger Hepworth)

Having grown up near the West Riding and Grimsby Railway, travelled to work at different periods in his career along the Swinton and Knottingley and some of the south Manchester joint lines and spent the best part of his teaching career in schools of the South Yorkshire coalfield, your reviewer would have been sorry indeed to have missed out on reading this volume.

The author has clearly conducted exhaustive research into his subject and has succeeded in finding many and varied photographs, diagrams and maps, all of which are reproduced to a very high standard of clarity.

The book tells its story mainly by means of extensive captions to the illustrations as we proceed along the lines being described. Taken mainly in the steam age, the photographs illustrate - apart from the huge variety of locomotives and other rolling stock - signals, signal boxes, stations, viaducts, railway staff, collieries with their miners and pit ponies. The author not only describes in detail the lines in question, but also takes care to put them into their geographical, social and industrial context. There are ten main sections, not given chapter numbers and the first one deals with the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway. The origin of the line is described and the reader is then taken down the line by means of pictures dating from pre-grouping times to the British Rail era. Steam locomotives abound including many of the Great Central Railway, contrasting with later LMS and LNER and BR Standard designs and, in the case of this line, electric trains.

This approach sets the pattern for the rest of the book which then goes on to consider Sheffield and Midland Joint Lines. The reader is taken from Hyde and from Ashburys to Romiley and then beyond to New Mills and to Macclesfield. In this section, photographs of 'Jubilees' rub shoulders with Great Central and other types, with backgrounds of signals, stations and a rich variety of other infrastructure, most, alas, now gone.

Next to be considered is the Oldham, Ashton and Guide Bridge Junction Railway. During a period of regular commuting between Dewsbury and Manchester in the 1960s, your reviewer was at first intrigued by the maroon enamel nameboard on the modern-looking signal box near Ashton which read 'OA&GB Junction'. Again, by means of very full captions to the maps and the huge variety of photographs, the history and geography of this line is brought to life by the author, with full coverage of signalling installations, stations and other railway buildings.

The following section is entitled Joint Lines in South Yorkshire and the reader is taken along the Swinton and Knottingley line via Pontefract, pausing for detailed looks at signal boxes, stations, collieries and their locomotives.

Then comes Connections to Wakefield, a section which describes the origins and later history of the West Riding and Grimsby line which is to this day a vital link in the Doncaster to Wakefield and Leeds main line. Among the wealth of other photographic gems, two pictures of the little station at Hampole, just north of the

present-day station of Adwick, brought back to your reviewer vivid memories of sunny summer 1950s trainspotting days on the bridge at that location.

The next three sections deal with joint lines around Doncaster with photographs of documents, stations, signal boxes, trains, railway staff and the collieries which they served.

The short final section entitled Homes and People in the Yorkshire Coalfield succinctly sets the railway system into its context and features photographs of miners' housing, working conditions and recreation, including the inevitable whippet racing and brass band!

A short Acknowledgements section is followed by a Bibliography and a useful index. All in all, this book offers a well-researched and detailed overview of the railway lines in question. Despite – or maybe because of – its attention to detail, this book is highly readable from cover to cover, as was the case with your reviewer or it can equally well be dipped into as a reference work.

Joint Line Operations Around Manchester and in South Yorkshire by Bob Pixton published by Pen and Sword Transport (Great Central Railway series) 2021. ISBN 978 1 52673 595 9. 254 pages, price £30.

A Privileged Journey - From Enthusiast to Professional Railwayman, by David Maidment (Review by Ian Button)

The author has produced a number of books for Pen & Sword, most notably 24 in the "Locomotive Portfolio" series (mainly GWR types), and has been a true railway enthusiast from a very early age. This book isn't about locomotive classes, but instead describes the growth and development of the author's interest in railways – at school, at college, and in the early years of his railway career (the rest of his railway career and afterwards is covered in a separate volume).

The book consists of 15 chapters, but there is an unusual bonus, as these are interlaced by eight "tableaux" in which David paints verbal pictures of scenes from his railway-enthusiast life. The author has a wonderful ability to describe the circumstances and events, and his feelings at the time, in such vivid detail, that the book really comes alive, and will enable any reader to relive his own experiences in similar railway settings. One wonders how such detail can be remembered – it can't be fiction, so David either has a photographic memory or he took copious notes ever since his trainspotting days began. (His reminiscences are recorded in the NRM's oral history archive).

The book begins with his early childhood, and then his schooldays in Surbiton. He obtains his first camera, and recounts family holidays in Devon, and then we learn of the Railway Society at Charterhouse School where teachers see David's potential and encourage his efforts. He spends a school vacation on work experience at Old Oak Common (making many useful contacts), and proceeds to college in London (studying German literature, not any type of engineering!) with daily commuting from Woking and a couple of trips to Germany, and (supported by his earlier contacts) he enters employment with BR as a Traffic Apprentice at Old Oak Common.

David has long been interested in locomotive performance, and much of the book is devoted to his trips when he logged all the timings and other parameters. As a young Traffic Apprentice, he had many interesting tasks – maintaining records of locomotive coal consumption and repairs, rostering locos and crews for their duties, and accompanying crews on the footplate in order to learn the practical side. So there is much information about ride quality, coal quality, reasons for delays, and so on. He was (still is) a steam enthusiast, so it is fortunate that he was able to spend so much time with steam locomotives in the days when they were being phased out. In truth, a thrusting young apprentice apparently destined for the top was expected to follow senior management's strategy of concentrating on modern traction. He makes this point himself when noting Lance Ibbotson's (BR WR Asst General Manager) criticism of his apparent lack of enthusiasm for visiting the still-under-construction diesel depot at Cardiff! (NB Mr Ibbotson was a hard-nosed businessman, and pro-Beeching: a book about Lance's own railway career will be reviewed in a future Circular).

Besides the text, there are many black-and-white photos, mostly taken by the author, and selected to match up with the journeys he describes. After the main text, there are 16 tables comprising 76 logs, mostly on the Western and Southern regions of BR, recording the performance of WR Castles & Kings, and SR Lord Nelsons and King Arthurs, as well as many other classes. David had the railwayman's perks of privilege tickets and limited free passes, and he certainly made the most of his opportunities, apparently knowing the public and working timetables well enough to adjust his plans according to delays as each trip developed.

As always, this Pen & Sword book is beautifully produced on heavy glossy paper, and the photos have reproduced very well.

Overall, this is a really fascinating account of railway enthusiasm evolving into deep professional interest - highly recommended!

The "Railway Children" charity in India, co-founded by the author, will receive proceeds from the sale of this book.

A Privileged Journey - From Enthusiast to Professional Railwayman, by David Maidment, pub.2015 (reprinted 2020) by Pen & Sword, paperback. 264 pages, price £18.99. ISBN 1526781581

Books for reviewing

Here is the list of railway titles that Pen & Sword have offered the Circle free, in each case in exchange for a review article (to appear in The Circular). Reviews can be any length, but I would say a minimum of half a page to do a book justice. If you are interested in receiving a PDF file or ebook version of any of these, please let me know the title & format required. I'll put a limit of 2 titles per person for the time being (I don't want The Circular to be too heavy with reviews), First come, first served for any individual title - we can't be reviewing them twice!

- Railways of South West Scotland - Two Generations of Photography

- Steam Traction on the Road - From Trevithick to Sentinel: 150 Years of Design and Development
- Grand Central
- The Gas Tramcar - An Idea Ahead of its Time
- British Trolleybus Systems - Wales, Midlands and East Anglia - An Historic Overview
- Class 442s: The Wessex Electrics
- Diesels in East Yorkshire - Four Decades of Change
- Britain's Preserved Railways
- Unfinished Lines - Rediscovering the Remains of Railways Never Completed
- Class 66: 3/4/7/8
- LMS & LNER Steam Locomotives - The Post War Era
- BR: From Green to Blue
- Railways of South and West Scotland
- Railway Crimes Committed in Victorian Britain
- Class 66/0
- Class 47s - From Inverness to Penzance
- Class 59s
- Class 37s
- Yorkshire Dales Buses: West Yorkshire Road Car Company in Wharfedale - The 1950s to 1970s
- Images of the British Railway Landscape - Iconic Scenes of Trains and Architecture
- Class 66: 5/6/9
- Britain's Railways Through the Seasons - Iconic Scenes of Trains and Architecture
- The Corris Railway - The Story of a Mid-Wales Slate Railway
- Railways and Industry on the Brecon & Merthyr - Bargoed to Pontsticill Jct., Pant to Dowlais Central
- West Coast Main Lines, 1957–1963
- Diesels Diverted - 40 Years of Diverted Trains 1980 - 2020
- British Transport Police - A definitive history of the early years and subsequent development
- Railways in South Wales and the Central Wales Line in the late 20th Century
- The Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway to Poppyland - From the Midlands to Norfolk & Norwich
- Mainline Passenger Trains In and Around London
- South Wales Railways Gallery
- Lost Railways of the World
- British Trolleybus Systems - Lancashire, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Northern England - An Historic Overview
- Class 47s: Inverness to Dover Western Docks, 1985-86

- Railways in Northern Lincolnshire - Four Decades of Change
- The North Yorkshire Moors Railway
- Devon's Railways - North and East of the County
- How to Build a Model Railway
- Liveries of the WR Diesel Hydraulics
- East Coast Main Line Locomotive Haulage
- Class 67s
- Norfolk Rail: 25 Years of the Wherry Lines
- Lines of the West Highlands
- Highland Railways: Four Decades of Diesel traction North of Perth
- On Tour For Steam - A Pictorial Railway Journey Across Britain in the 1960s
- GW Castles 1960-65
- Last Years of Carlisle Steam
- Black Country Steam
- Passenger Trains in the North of England

For more information on each book, browse to www.pen-and-sword.co.uk and enter the title as above (or part of it) in the search box in the top right of the page.

Since the above list was emailed, a few new titles have been advised to us :-

- Constructing Buildings for Model Railways
- Rails From Shrewsbury
- The Locomotives of Robert Riddles

Ben's Bits – "The Slow Train"

"The Slow Train" is a song by the British duo Flanders and Swann, written in July 1963. It laments the closure of railway stations and lines brought about by the Beeching cuts in the 1960s, and also the passing of a way of life. [Wikipedia]

The Slow Train, by Flanders and Swann

Miller's Dale for Tideswell ...

Kirby Muxloe ...

Mow Cop and Scholar Green ...

No more will I go to Blandford Forum and Mortehoe

On the slow train from Midsomer Norton and Mumby Road

No churns, no porter, no cat on a seat

At Chorlton-cum-Hardy or Chester-le-Street

We won't be meeting again

On the Slow Train.

I'll travel no more from Littleton Badsey to Openshaw
At Long Stanton I'll stand well clear of the doors no more
No whitewashed pebbles, no up and no down
From Formby Four Crosses to Dunstable Town
I won't be going again
On the Slow Train.

On the Main Line and the goods' siding
The grass grows high
At Dog Dyke, Tumby Woodside
And Trouble House Halt.
The sleepers sleep at Audlem and Ambergate.

No passenger waits on Chittening platform or Cheslyn Hay
No one departs, no one arrives
From Selby to Goole, from St Erth to St Ives
They've all passed out of our lives
On the Slow Train, on the Slow Train.

Cockermouth for Buttermere ...
On the Slow Train, Armley Moor Arram ...
Pye Hill and Somercotes ...
On the Slow Train
Windmill End.

To hear the song with piano accompaniment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6OHD2uCpfU>

or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QucsGZ1U6-M>

Also, Frank Turner has a more contemporary version:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1Wni9Ii33R74VdFqW1Dlcs?si=ZI3ffOK3SdSkTo9AkTIpRQ&context=spotify%3Asearch%3Aslow%2Btrain%2Bfrank%2B>

Wikipedia may be wrong in attributing all the station closures in the song to Dr Beeching. Apparently Audlem was already being considered for closure, and is not listed in “The Reshaping of British Railways”. Any comments? Were all the other stations in the song sentenced by Beeching? Obviously some were reprieved (see Bill’s table below).

[Editor’s note: Besides “The Slow Train”, can any vintage transport enthusiasts not recall another Flanders & Swann masterpiece in miniature – their tribute to the London bus? “That monarch of the road, observer of the highway code . . . big six-wheeler, diesel-engined, 97-horsepower omnibus!” Hold very tight, please! Ding, ding!]

Bill Jagger has kindly provided a list of the stations mentioned in the song :-

Station	Pre grouping railway	Status
Millers Dale for Tideswell	Midland	
Kirby Muxloe	Midland	
Mow Cop and Scholar Green	North Staffordshire	
Blandford Forum	Somerset and Dorset	
Mortehoe	London and South Western	
Midsomer Norton	Somerset and Dorset	heritage
Mumby Road	Great Northern	
Chorlton-cum-Hardy	Cheshire Lines Committee	
Chester-le-Street	North Eastern	still open
Littleton Badsey (Littleton and Badsey)	Great Western	
Openshaw (Gorton and Openshaw)	Great Central	still open
Long Stanton	Great Eastern	
Formby	Lancashire and Yorkshire	still open
Four Crosses	Cambrian	
Dunstable Town	Great Northern and London & North Western Joint	
Dogdyke	Great Northern	
Tumby Woodside	Great Northern	
Trouble House Halt	British Railways	
Audlem	Great Western	
Ambergate	Midland	still open
Chittening Platform	Great Western	
Cheslyn Hay (Wyrley and Cheslyn Hay)	London and North Western	
Selby	North Eastern	still open

Goole	North Eastern	still open
St Erth	Great Western	still open
St Ives	Great Western	still open
Cockermouth for Buttermere (Cockermouth)	Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith	
Armley Moor	Great Northern	
Arram	North Eastern	still open
Pye Hill and Somercotes	Great Northern	
Windmill End	Great Western	

Photographic Puzzles – Pt.4 Robert Anderson

First of all, responses to the last pair of puzzle photos :-



Photo 7. 50818 – where?

Duncan Eccles says “I think photo. 7 was taken around 1957. 50818 was allocated to, and withdrawn from, Sowerby Bridge in '58. As to the location, I think somewhere in Calder Valley but can't match the background to any similar photos, so will have to just guess Sowerby Bridge”.

Robert's own answer - 50818 at Sowerby Bridge. The background of fine old mills is a giveaway for anyone who remembers 25E/56E but the movements of this loco after withdrawal are most interesting. Did it ever go to Horwich? All agree it spent some time at Badnall Wharf near Norton Bridge adjacent to the WCML between Crewe and Stafford along with five other West Riding Radials and that they were then sold on as scrap to Loom's of Spondon near Derby because their intended destination Crewe Works could not or would not accept them.



Photo 8. Where, what event?

Duncan says “I was initially thrown by the clues - "across the border, one of four main-line stations", and thought of Glasgow, but, given that Manchester Victoria suffered bomb damage in 1940, I realised which was the border in question. I have to admit to having confirmed the tour on Sixbellsjunction!”

So well done again, Duncan!

The next two puzzle photos are on the following page. Please contact the Editor with any information you would like to offer.

All four photos are © Copyright of Robert Anderson Archive ©



Photo 9 – When, where, what had happened?



Photo 10 - What, when, where?

Special Traffic Notices

Would members please take note of the following points :-

- **Fire Precautions.** Please familiarise yourselves with the positions of fire exits and extinguishers at Bradford Mechanics Institute Library.
 - **Members' Discounts.** In return for free advertising in The Circular, members receive 10% discount on cash purchases at Frizinghall Models and Railways, on proof of Circle membership (e.g. a valid Circle membership card). See inside rear cover of The Circular for details.
 - **Contributions to The Circular.** Original material, preferably in electronic format (almost any PC word-processor, preferably Microsoft Word or text format, but not Microsoft Works, please), or by email to ianbutton1@btinternet.com) or typescript – the Editor can scan & OCR (optical character recognition) typed pages.
 - **Railway Magazine bound volumes.** Any member wishing to read any volumes (we have c.1929-2010) should contact Eddy Lumb.
 - **Pictures for The Circular.** Photographic material submitted for consideration for reproduction in The Circular is accepted at the owner's risk. Landscape format is preferred for half-page reproduction, obviously, although if the photo is spectacular a vertical format full-page layout may be possible, or the picture might be used for our Circular cover picture.
 - **Disclaimer.** The opinions expressed in The Circular are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.
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Meeting Reports

Philip Lockwood

June 28th – WCML Pt.3 Preston-Glasgow, by Steve Armitage (report by Peter Holden)

A surprisingly low attendance for today's meeting, which is quite a shame, as it turned out to be in my opinion one of the finest collections of black and white steam images that I ever recall seeing at Bradford Railway Circle.

Steve has collected a vast number of first-rate images over the years. Not only that, but he truly is also a master at the art of "fettling up" images on Photoshop. By this I do not mean removing things and replacing such as an 8F struggling up Copy Pit with a long rake of coal wagons, with a L&Y Pug!, I mean making them pin sharp with only perhaps subtle changes to exposure and contrast. No doubt he must spend quite a bit of time on this process. The end product in most cases is simply amazing. Some of the old images (1930s ish) will have been taken on primitive cameras with slow shutter speeds. Nevertheless, the first ten or 15 so images around Preston were simply fantastic, Crystal clear.

As ever, Steve had done his homework and his on-screen captions for each image gave full detail of each locomotive, in particular who, when and where each loco was built, also when it was withdrawn. He did give us the number of different pre-grouping companies whose locos that featured in the talk; sadly, I do not recall this number, but it was well into the 20's - even shots of GWR locos were present. One shot Steve said was the only picture in colour of a blue Coronation at speed, he had ever come across.

All in all, brilliant! I have already booked Steve to return next year when he will be covering LMS steam in Scotland.

July 26th - In Search of Big Steam In Spain, by Mike Swift

Today's presentation by Huddersfield Railway Circle member Mike Swift covered mainly a visit made in 1963. This covered not only broad-gauge steam but also narrow-gauge. Spain originally didn't have their own locomotive building companies, so much was supplied by British builders supplemented by products from the USA. Well known British builders included the Yorkshire Engine Company, Hunslet and Manning Wardle to name but three. I suppose the climate will have helped, but Spain at that time seemed to have a large number of quite old locomotives still in service. On the broad gauge, Spain manufactured some large modern designs including some semi-streamlined ones. The thing of particular note for enthusiasts used to the standard gauge is just how different the locomotives looked when viewed front on.

Mike also visited the British-owned mining corporation of Rio Tinto which boasted a large collection of mainly tank locomotives but did have a splendid example of a steam Sentinel railcar.

Mike and his companions had in most cases written in advance asking permission to make a visit, this often resulted in being accommodated in company hotels, something which may not be as readily forthcoming for today's enthusiasts!.

Mike finished with a photograph taken whilst on holiday with his late wife, of a small locomotive plinthed on a roundabout, this to anyone who has watched the comedy film "Oh, Mr Porter" with Will Hay will probably identify with the locomotive "Gladstone"!

An excellent talk packed with well researched details of his subjects. Vote of thanks by Ian Button

August 20th - Outdoor Visit to Middleton Railway

On Sunday the 20th August a party from the BRC visited the Middleton Railway in Leeds. The visit started at 9am with refreshments, followed by a talk in the conference room relating the history of the railway and how it developed into the Middleton Railway Trust. The talk given by Ian Smith, Chairman of the Trust, assisted by our own member Ian Dobson. We then boarded the first train of the day hauled by Hawthorn Leslie locomotive number 6 resplendently carrying the Bradford Railway Circle headboard constructed by Jim Bennett, who sadly was unable to attend in person. We had our own coach for the run up to the top end of the line for photographs to be taken. On our return our party split up into two groups for tours of

the workshops, once again given by the two Ians. We were fortunate in having splendid weather for the visit, and the party made up of members and wives but also included what I believe is the youngest person ever on a Circle visit, Eddy Lumb's daughter Jessica, aged six months!

A most enjoyable visit by regrettably only a small group, the membership probably put off by the early start. Unfortunately, the locomotive requested by your President (the Sentinel which hauled our last visit to Middleton) was unavailable for service, but it was available for photographs to be taken. So a big thank you to everyone at Middleton for making this a most enjoyable visit.

August 23rd - From the Back of the Cupboard, by Steve Batty

Today's show by Steve comprised a selection of images that, at the time were not thought of as his best, hence put at the back of the cupboard. In hindsight these have proved with the passing of time to have gained in interest. So much has changed over time, that many of the pictures are now of historical interest. The background in many cases has vanished from the scene, with the growth of trees to the demolition of coal mines and power stations.

The majority of the pictures were in monochrome which probably added to the historical picture. The majority taken in the UK but including a small selection taken overseas.

Thank you, Steve, for an excellent show. Vote of thanks by Ian Button

Secretary's Page

Peter Holden

Greetings.

Your committee have decided to carry on with the FREE MEMBERSHIP for a further year. However, may I point out you must follow the instructions on membership renewal! If it says reply if you wish to remain a member, don't be surprised when your membership lapses if you do not reply!! Quite easy I thought!! And a bargain.

Now, a quick update regarding our meeting venue - we had requested that Bradford Mechanic's Institute Library investigate the possibility of providing better blackout facilities for the meeting room, now that we have moved our meetings to 14:00.

I am very pleased to report that they have replaced the installed vertical blinds, and also installed drop down blinds. There was a great improvement noticeable at our last meeting. Bradford Railway Circle donated towards the cost of these alterations.

Our visit to The Middleton Railway on 20th August went very well. I think all who attended enjoyed the day. It was great to see Eddie, Keeley and Jessica present.

The trip to The Fish & Chip special on the KWVR on Saturday 23rd September 2023 is now sold out, so if you have not already booked, you will have to wait for next year! Do remember your ticket is an all-line rover for the day.

I am well on the way with talks for next year's diary. Should you wish to give a talk, or indeed should you have any suggestions for guest speakers, please do get in touch (pholden1960@hotmail.co.uk / 07776475074).

I have had a couple of members suggesting that I give a talk regarding my 19 years at Neville Hill Depot. So, this will be at the meeting on 18th October. It will be primarily a talk involving quite a few humorous events / stories I was present for! Supported by a few dodgy images taken over the years.

At our December meeting on Wednesday 13th, we will hold a short AGM, followed by Members' Night. As ever, please bring along something to entertain your fellow members for around 5minutes. NOT 25 MINUTES!!!! Should you require the slide projector, please do let me know.

Circle Diary 2023

Please watch the website <http://www.bradfordrailwaycircle.co.uk> . Meetings are currently every 4 weeks, not fortnightly as before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please remember that all meetings start at 2:00pm.

P	Sep. 20	French and Belgian Steam	Colin Boocock
	Oct. 18	Neville Hill Depot, Diary of an Escapee	Peter Holden
C	Nov. 15	Railways in the Lake District	Martin Bairstow
P	Dec. 13	AGM plus Members' Night	
	Jan. 10	The Isle of Wight & Back Twice in a Day	Robert Clarke
	Feb. 7	Old Fashioned Slide Show	Alan Ward.
C	Mar. 6	Steam Days in Scotland, LMS Lines	Steve Armitage.

C - Copy date for *The Circular* – 4 weeks prior to ...

P - Publication – last meetings of March/June/September, & last before Christmas