

THE L.S.W.R. IN THE 1950s

I realise that it is odd to start a talk about the LSWR in the 1950s with mention of the LNWR at Hereford, but there's a reason for this. My paternal grandfather, Thomas Davies, started his railway career with the LNWR in Hereford and eventually retired as the senior official of the LMS in Cardiff (Tyndall Street Depot) until his death in 1941. Tyndall Street was only rail connected to the rest of the railway network via the Taff Vale Railway. Relations with the Great Western were "at arm's length" and one can only wonder how his staff – which at one time numbered over a hundred – were employed. When his only son and his family eventually moved to Farnborough in Hampshire one can quickly conclude that it made sense for Granny and Grandad to set off westwards from Cardiff via the Central Wales line, Shrewsbury and London Euston. So they arrived with us care of the LSWR rather than by the direct route via Reading and the South Eastern and Chatham!

My father was born in 1898 and in 1917 was arrested on suspicion of spying (for taking engine numbers of coal trains in the South Wales Valleys). After a brief spell as an assistant librarian at Cardiff Library, he developed an interest in radio from an early age and found himself in the Royal Flying Corps in a radio detachment for the latter end of the first world war. He became a specialist in the installation of radios in aircraft when the term 'radio' supplanted 'wireless telegraphy' and with his Christian names of Wilfred Thomas soon became known as simply WT. At the end of the war Dad was posted to what was then the Royal Aircraft factory at Farnborough and soon became head of the radio installation branch. In his career dad flew in 443 different types of aircraft and his logbooks and other material have been given to the aerospace museum at Farnborough.

In the early 1920s the government decided that it was important that radio should be harnessed to provide communications between all sorts of transport alongside static locations. So dad found himself having to familiarize himself with just about every form of transport not just aircraft but airships, balloons, ships, armoured cars, men on horseback and – yes you've guessed it – trains. Dad wrote to the LSWR at Waterloo, being the largest local railway company. He received an enthusiastic reply saying that the LSWR would be happy to cooperate and could offer an excellent railway, namely the Lynton and Barnstaple. This partnership quickly resulted in a base being set up at Bratton Fleming and pictures exist of armoured cars parked outside the local bed and breakfast. The outcome of all the various trials is not the subject of today's talk but some of the illustrations which survive are quite fascinating.

One of the results of the trial on the L&B was that my parents' honeymoon was spent at Lynmouth. On return to Farnborough, and back to work, dad was soon in touch again with the LSWR, apart from activities during the war, up to 1918, dad never owned a car and believed firmly in public transport. I was brought up with the dictum 'feet were made for walking' so my mother and I (and any visitors) were expected to use public transport wherever possible. Looking back on the amount of time we spent waiting for trains and buses would be totally unacceptable in today's "time is money world" and dad would readily spend a whole day making one business journey; he had responsibility for radio stations set up in a number of locations two of which were adjacent to little used railway stations Bramshot Halt between Farnborough and Fleet on the mainline and Bentworth and Lasham on the Basingstoke and Alton light railway. The former I will cover in greater detail later in this talk but dad

used to tell me about the porter in charge at Lasham who would offer dad a mug of tea when he had an hour and a half to wait for the next train.

I was born in 1932 and was immersed in trains within the first few years; the Farnborough miniature railway (10¼ inch gauge) opened in 1935 and a couple of years later moved to an enlarged site as the Surrey Border and Camberley Railway. Every 10th May (my birthday!) I was treated to a day out and despite war breaking out in September 1939 my parents continued to treat me to a visit to London. I have vivid memories of 10th May 1940 which was the day on which the Germans invaded Belgium and the Netherlands and when we visited Hamley's toyshop all the staff had been instructed to wear their gas masks which as you can imagine made a profound impression on me. I obviously, aged 8, had no real understanding of the horrors that were threatening us and it was only brought home to me much later. In fact it wasn't until I read copies of correspondence from the Waterloo station master in the Bluebell railway archives that I was aware that on the very day that I was enjoying my birthday the King and Queen were being transported away from London by train. The railway correspondence of the time is full of references to the threat of German parachutists descending on the UK and what the railways should do about it.

I don't know the actual timings of the train that we used to take us to Waterloo that day, 10th May 1940, but I do remember the train slowing down to stop briefly at Sturt Lane Junction and Dad opening the window and leaning out to speak to the railwaymen who were apparently working on installing a connection to the Southeastern and Chatham line at Farnborough North. It was never to be. Shortly afterwards we came to Brookwood where there was a train on the line to Bisley and Deepcut and also an M7 0-4-4T with the Brookwood Necropolis funeral train in the siding on the downside. That service continued until the following year when German bombs put paid to the Necropolis station at Waterloo.

I hope that paints the picture up until my more mature involvement with railways, and the LSWR in particular. In 1946 when Ian Allan published the first of his 'spotter's books' and started his loco spotters' clubs. I was already deeply involved with a successful youth club in the Farnborough area and one of our regular activities was to meet at Farnborough station to watch the trains and we were soon made very welcome by Mr Cutten and his staff. Loco spotters graduated to the Railway Enthusiasts' Club in 1952/3 and much of what follows is illustrated by pictures taken between 1952 and 1967.

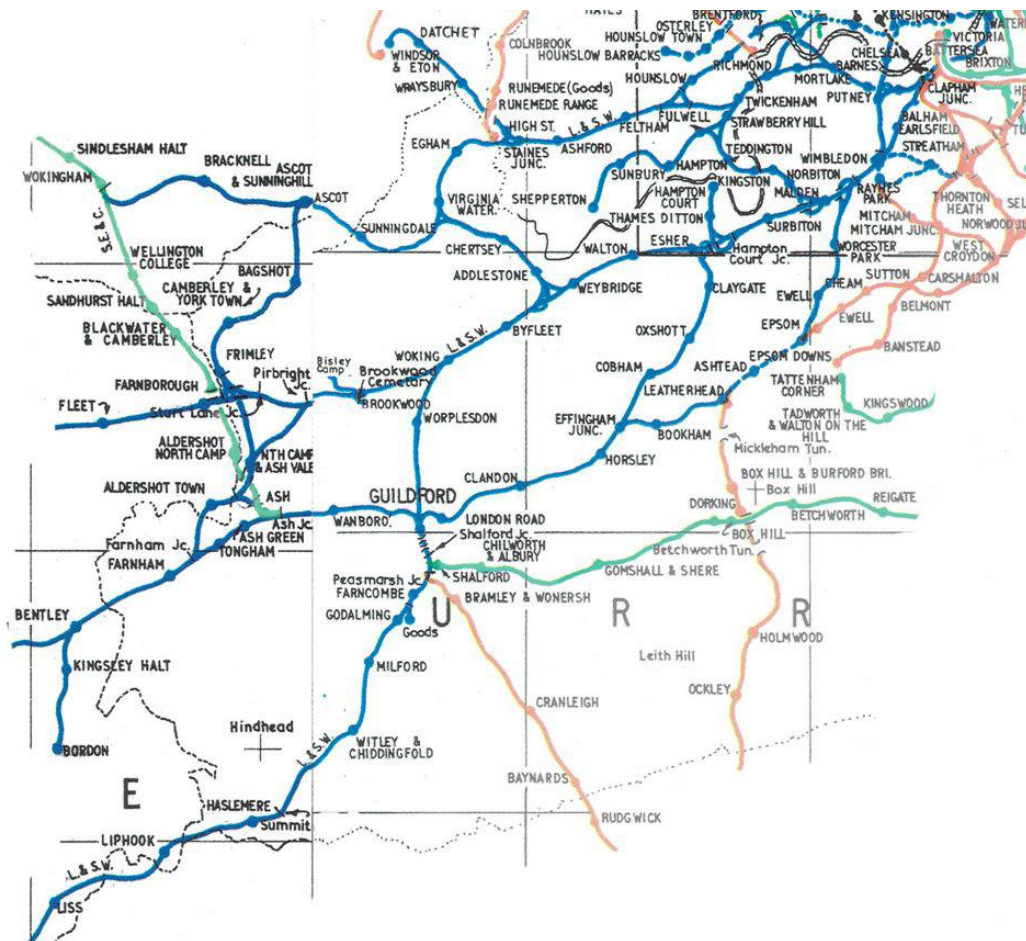
So here goes, but where to start? Waterloo was too obvious, so I searched my mind for a location that had made a particular impression on me. Clapham Junction A signal box, spanning nine of the running lines just the Waterloo side of Clapham Junction platforms. It was erected in 1907, well into the LSWR era and survived both world wars.

As you will see from this picture, taken in 1965, it was unexpectedly dark. I can assure you that in hot weather the working conditions were almost unbearable, and combined with the frequent doses of smoke and steam one wonders how the place survived for so long. A 'tin hat' was added to the

place during the second world war and the weight of this caused one end of the gantry to subside in 1965



(PFTF ref: N511E)



After the war, I served my 2 years National service in the RAF Calshot at the mouth of Southampton Water. In May 1951, I started a routine of weekends at home which involved a Hants & Dorset bus from the camp, to Southampton Central station, a Portsmouth train from Southampton Central as far as St Denys, changing to another train that started there, and worked all stations as far as Woking, reaching my home station of Farnborough at 3.30 pm. It never carried many passengers

I started commuting regularly from Farnborough to Waterloo in May 1953, following demob from the 2 years National Service in the RAF. My regular train was the 07:37 from Farnborough which had originated as the 6:02 from Southampton docks. In those days there was no certainty as to what the motive power would be and there was plenty of variety. In one month our train was headed by a 'Remembrance', a 'Lord Nelson', an 'Arthur', a BR standard class 5 and, best of all, a T9. The winter months were a problem because the stock for our train was left out in the open at Southampton

overnight and the inevitable happened with the steam freezing up between carriages. By the time the train reached Farnborough one had a choice of joining the warm front of the train but with no seats available or joining the rear with plenty of seats but no heating. We were a mainly young and sociable group and chose to be near the back of the train! I say "mainly" because one of our "gang" was Roger (SR) Arnold who had started his railway career with the LSWR. One of the regular sights was the trains of milk tanks which almost reached Waterloo but found their destination in the Windsor line platform at

Queens Road. Here is a view of Remembrance class 32331 'Beattie' passing through Vauxhall with the milk empties returning west.



(PFTF ref: N513E)

If we head west we'll ignore Woking which is showing too much Southern influence, and pause at Brookwood which in LSWR and days interesting junction. We'll explore the area later but during both world wars there survived a military line beyond Bisley to Deepcut and Blackdown camps. The station at Deepcut was quite remarkable in that it housed a large and well stocked WH Smiths bookshop and this picture shows the building still in a good state of repair in the years following the end of WW2.



(PFTF ref: B48/3)

As you might expect the military influence in the area was considerable. This is a view of Aldershot military station in its later days when most of the platform canopies had been taken down and a special train is at the platform. The MOD police are in attendance but what they were expected to do is not very clear. The military platforms were at the end of a short branch on the upside less than a mile from Aldershot station itself.



(PFTF ref: W1105)

This is another view of Aldershot military station this time looking towards the buffer stops end from near the junction with the main line. The military station itself was only one of three termini here, the others being AMPS (Aldershot Military Power Station) and a wharf on the Basingstoke canal.



(PFTF ref: W1106)

For many years, one of my favourite class of locos has been the T9 – here in 1954 is 30338 entering the up platform at Ascot with empty stock from an Ascot Race special from Reading, off the Western Region, which has disgorged its passengers at the Racecourse platform; the driver stopped short for photographer

Brian Connell as he thought that Brian could then get a better picture.



(PFTF ref: B11/3)

Now for a couple of views of motive power on the main line, firstly a couple of Arthurs with down trains between Brookwood and Sturt Lane East Junction in 1955.

This is Sir Persant.



(PFTF ref: B41/3)

and here is Sir Irseult.



(PFTF ref: B41/4)

Let's go back to Brookwood simply to linger on the down platform; here is an S15; 30840 was one of the class designed and built in LSWR days. Other S15s were built in the Southern Railway era. Note the LSWR goods shed in the background, since removed to make way for the inevitable car park.



(PFTF ref: B41/8)

On the same occasion the photographer was awarded with a rarer sight: a D15 30465 4-4-0, built in 1912. In 1955 you never knew what might come next!



(PFTF ref: B41/10)

Drifting back down the line we get a view of another of my favourites – 30578 was one of the 0395 class introduced way back in 1881, and doesn't it look it? This picture was taken in 1955, but on 8th May the

previous year the REC (Railway Enthusiasts' Club) had specified one of the class for a special train from Farnborough to Southampton Docks. The organizing committee treated itself to footplate rides in those days and I was fortunate to ride from Basingstoke to Eastleigh; those recording the speed assured me that we topped 60mph. I can believe it as boiler casing looked as if it was about to take off, we had to cling on for dear life, and, worst of all, the fireman lost his teacan overboard.



(PFTF ref: B48/8)

Veering off to the left at Pirbright Junction we come to Ash Vale; not the most pleasant of stations, it always seemed to be cold and windswept; as a child I hated the last part of the walk from home, that boring road from North Camp level crossing to Ash Vale. However about 1946 my eagle-eyed dad spotted a range of LSWR luggage labels in a cupboard and a conversation with the booking clerk disclosed that, if we booked to some unusual destinations, there was quite a wide range for LSWR tickets to be

purchased. So those are my grounds for including Ash Vale in my featured locations.



(PFTF ref: J97)

We head south, and with the help of a couple of reverse junctions, discover what appears to be a rather cute country cottage. However, when this picture was taken on Christmas Eve 1960 there was still a set of steps leading down to the platform below. A freight train ran every weekday between Guildford and Tongham, mainly to serve Aldershot gasworks. This is Ash Green station on the LSWR line that until 1937 carried passenger services from Guildford to Farnham and, in earlier days, through to Alton and Gosport via the Meon Valley. I have a particular affection for this line because it was to

Tongham that I was deeply involved in running my first special train.



J1465)

(PFTF ref:

By the end of 1960 the members of the Enthusiasts' Club had been meeting regularly on Sunday mornings at Aldershot gas works to explore the possibilities of the railway system, and specifically saddle-tank locomotive "Patricia". Typically one of us youngsters would operate the locomotive watched over by the fireman and his dog. We would work up to the junction with the BR line and were well aware that no trains operated on the BR side of the system on Sundays and wondered whether it might be possible to see the daily coal train operate on the line towards Farnham which appeared to be becoming more and more weed grown with every passing week. So we did try and persuade British Rail to allow us to run a train through to Farnham Junction but to no avail.

Here is that special train at Tongham on Saturday, 26th September 1953. We were still a youth club and only some of us were railway enthusiasts. We had consulted our Ian Allan ABC and discovered that there were two LSWR classes where only one example survived – both 4-4-0s – S11 31400 and L12 31434. We chose the S11, only to be told that it had been taken into Eastleigh works and was unlikely to survive. So we settled for the L12, seen here, only to be phoned a couple of days before the trip with the

news that the S11 had been repaired, after all, and we could choose either locomotive!



(PFTF ref: 8432)

We head further south. Until 1859 the South Western got no closer to Portsmouth than Godalming. The original terminus was situated just south of the present Farncombe station and was visited by REC special trains on a number of occasions. Most of these views were taken on 5th October 1957.

The station building was the substantial original but sadly has been demolished and the site is now occupied by Jewsons builders' merchants. However, part of the yard was taken up by a small housing development and the railway was not forgotten; the new road was named Old Station Way!



(PFTF ref: 2154A)



(PFTF ref: xxxxx)

When Jean and I first moved to Godalming in 1964 a number of older residents told us how, following the opening of the Portsmouth Direct line in 1859 and the New Godalming station (and Farncombe) on the through line there was never any certainty as to whether down trains – even those going down to Portsmouth - would use the New or the Old station. The horse-drawn taxis would gather at the Charterhouse Arms pub at the junction of Chalk, Borough and Charterhouse Roads and listen for the engine whistles which would tell them which way the train was heading; they would then race furiously to be the first to meet the train. In due course the arrangements were rationalized and only trains terminating at Godalming used the old station. By the time of the Grouping in 1923 there were no passenger facilities at the Old station, but it continued as a staffed goods station until the late

60s. The bus stop nearby on the main road continued to be known as "Old Station" well into the 70s. This view is taken from the buffer stops end looking towards the junction with the main line at Farncombe.



(PFTF ref: 2154B)

It so happened that, shortly before we moved to Godalming, I was invited to join a panel of railway 'experts' at Charterhouse school for a meeting of their railway club. One of my fellow panelists turned

out to be the then editor of the Railway Magazine, H A Valance, who lived in a house perched above the Portsmouth line in between Farncombe and Godalming stations. He told me that there was a

Another view of Godalming Old Station, looking towards the junction with the main line at Farncombe.

picture in the bar of the Charterhouse Arms pub, showing the horse-drawn taxis awaiting trains outside the pub and the following day we met there and I saw the picture for myself.



(PFTF ref: B108/8)

I could have picked on any number of stations on the Portsmouth Direct as LSWR survivors but I chose Liss because I have many happy memories of changing trains at Liss; the Longmoor Military Railway's fairly spartan terminus was on the up side of the main line. The LMR had originated in LSWR years, though admittedly the Army's railway's glory years were post South-Western. The War Department were very obliging to railway enthusiasts and on one occasion in February 1955 they converted what was normally a Wickham railcar working into an 0-6-0 saddle tank plus one coach so that a group of us could complete (almost) total circuit of the south of England by

steam-hauled passenger trains; it was the day the Meon Valley line closed.



(PFTF ref: 1517)

This is Liphook on the Portsmouth Direct line, one station up from Liss, which I have just shown.



(PFTF ref: 1518)

We now retrace our steps to Brookwood, not to the Army's Bisley and Deepcut line, but on the downside of the main line is a large cemetery – the Brookwood Necropolis. As I have already mentioned on my 8th birthday, 10th May 1940, the day Hitler that invaded the Netherlands, my parents took me to London to visit Hamleys' toy shop. That's why I am so sure of the date when an M7 with the Necropolis train was in the down siding at Brookwood about to make its way to the station you see here. I wouldn't have known about the train had my dad not explained it to me. This was Necropolis North which served Roman Catholics and

Non-Conformists. In this view we are looking from near the junction with the main line southwards. This picture was taken in July 1955, at which time both this and the south station were largely intact but the rails had been lifted. The funeral service ceased in May 1941 when Hitler dropped one of his bombs on its London terminus next to Waterloo.



(PFTF ref: B47/12)

There was a time when one had to travel from Axminster to Lyme Regis to see the Adams Radial 4-4-2Ts in action. However increasingly railway societies became more daring, and asked to move locomotives out of their normal "hunting grounds". In March 1961 we brought 30582 to Waterloo and toured the LSWR's suburban lines including this visit to Chertsey.



(PFTF ref: W1111)



(PFTF ref: xxxxx)

We return to Woking and take the down mainline towards Farnborough which was well qualified as an LSWR station and largely preserved in its original, quadrupled, state. It's where I spent my early loco-spotting days and where I set myself a number of challenges. One of these was to travel on a train out of the up bay and here it is heading for nearby Sturt Lane West Junction and the curve to Frimley in March 1963. It wasn't the first time I had travelled on a train that took the route towards Ascot at Sturt Lane. I was commuting to London in 1953 and, not unusually, there was a problem somewhere on the route to Waterloo. Eventually our train, the 7.37am from Farnborough which had originated in Southampton Docks, was allowed to leave without explanation or apology, and I soon realised that we had diverted from the main line. As we crawled through Frimley and Camberley my fellow passengers showed signs of concern but I settled back into my

seat and prepared to enjoy an unscheduled rail tour. Bear in mind that there were no loud speakers at Farnborough in those days to tell us what was going on. We only had such a luxury during air-show time nor of course were we blessed with on-train information! Over the years diversions from the main line between Wimbledon and Clapham Junction via East Putney became quite frequent.



(PFTF ref: MHW1314)

The stationmaster at Farnborough in the early 1940s was Mr. A.G. Cutten, who had started his career with the LSWR and took a kindly and benevolent attitude towards the young lads who showed such an interest in his railway. His office was on the downside at the west end of the buildings, near the steps to the covered footbridge. He saw us admiring the impressive signal gantries and looking up at the signal box, so one day he suggested we might like to chat to the signalman. This was the first of many such visits to this electro-pneumatic installation, the spontaneous first visit being followed by many visits officially endorsed by the District Office at Woking.



(PFTF ref: MHW1431)

These are the down starters, homes and intermediate distants right outside Farnborough signal box, which is on the left of the picture. Note on the extreme left the shunting signal controlling entry to Farnborough yard which was shunted every day except Sundays. Some of the freight traffic was exchanged with the Royal Aircraft Establishment, which had its own locomotives and some internal use rolling stock. Whilst mentioning the RAE railway I could recall during the early years of the war walking with my mum down the main road from Farnborough to Cove and being held up because of a train stopped in the middle of the shopping area and being faced with a number of vehicles inscribed 'Ambulance'. It later transpired that the Air Ministry hoped to use Farnborough airfield to bring back to the UK wounded personnel but – not surprisingly – it turned out that bogie ambulance coaches didn't fit

well on the rather tortuous line between airfield and mainline station. In fact I'm amazed that these vehicles got as far as they did because I would not have believed that bogie carriages could have coped with the stretch of line from Farnborough station yard to Union Street



(PFTF ref: MHW1479)

Without the help of the signalman one could never be sure what might appear next, such as this former LSWR inspection saloon being propelled by a T9 4-4-0 on driver route familiarization duty



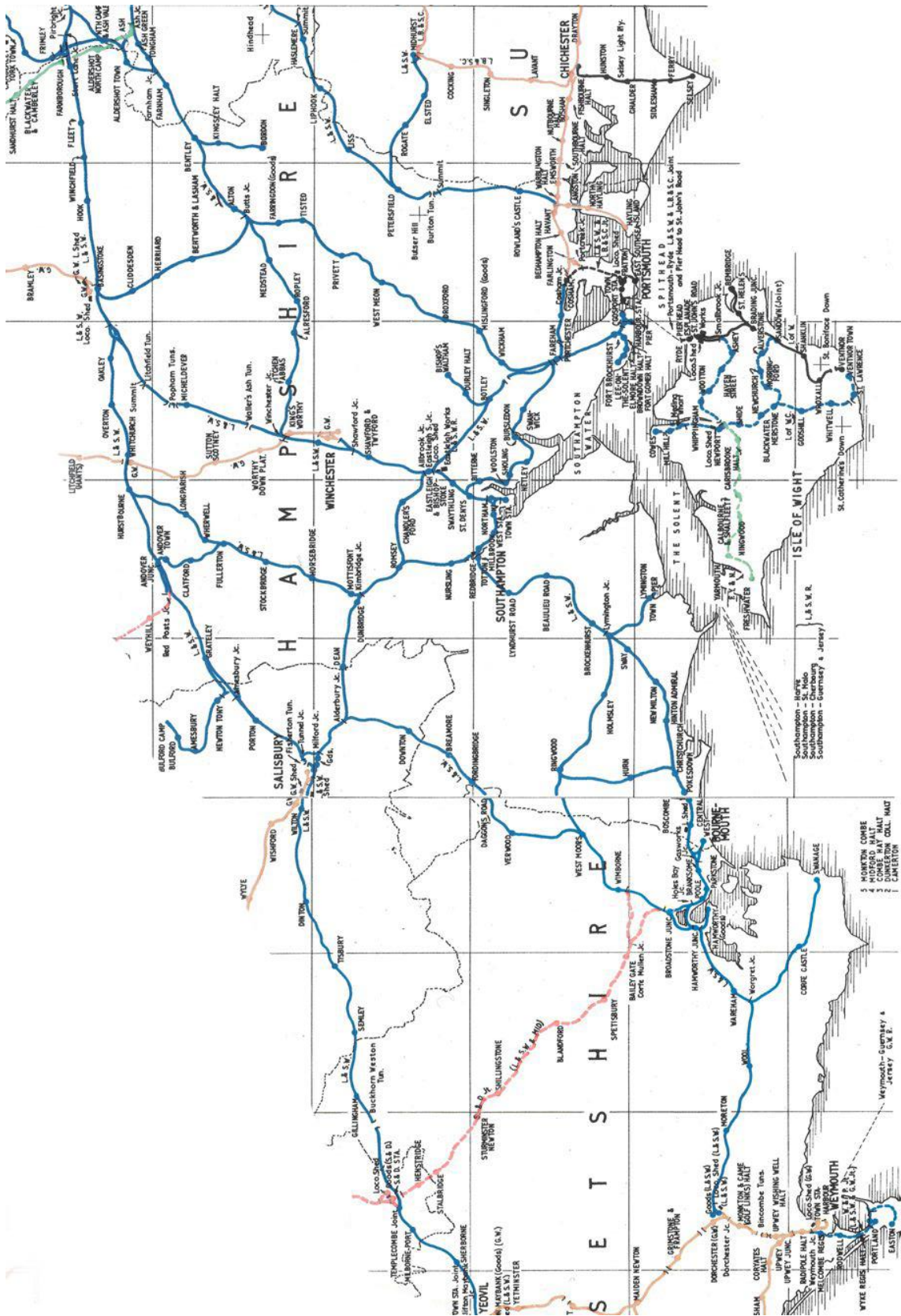
(PFTF ref: 8119)

Leaving Farnborough and heading west in the 1950s we would have passed Bramshot Halt which deserves quite a lot of attention. Two basic platforms were provided on the up and down local lines when the Halt opened to passengers on 10th May 1913. It was described as a private facility, only for members of the adjacent golf club. The public timetables listed the trains from Waterloo and back there that could be stopped at Bramshot for Golf Club members. Interestingly, throughout the second world war, the published timetables continued to show the facility available to golfers, despite the fact that the internal Southern Railway documents listed the Halt as closed. The reason it later transpired that the intention was to convince Adolf Hitler that the Golf Club was still just that, whereas in fact, it had been taken over by the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) at the outbreak of war.

We will come back to that in a moment, but in the meantime, plans had been laid for a large new military camp, to be known as Southwood Camp. This was certainly a large undertaking I remember it well. Written records claim that a workforce of 4000 was involved in its construction; I'm not sure whether this can have been true, but it is certainly on record that large numbers of labourers were conveyed by train from Waterloo to Bramshot every day from the summer of 1939 onwards.

Dad, being railway orientated as he was, saw an opportunity to make use of Bramshot Halt as it was located close by Cove Radio Station for which he had a working interest. So one day, he found himself wishing to return home from Bramshot and asked the clerk at the reception desk to arrange to stop the next up train. There was a direct phone line installed between the RAE office at Bramshot and the RTO (Rail Travel Officer) at Basingstoke station. The young lady at Bramshot told Dad that a train would be calling in the next few minutes and Dad was very impressed when a train pulled up only minutes later. As he joined the train, he was somewhat surprised to find that it was packed with Canadian soldiers in uniform and, instead of continuing slow speed to Farnborough, the train gathered pace and eventually deposited my Dad at Addison Road, near Kensington where, it turned out, the passengers were to be fed and watered. They had just crossed the Atlantic and this was the first sustenance since being on board ship. Mum was puzzled as to what had happened to her husband as those were the days before mobile phones!

After Bramshot Halt, the next point of interest would be Fleet Station which was notable for having a pneumatic powered signaling system which was powered by a coal-fired pumping station on the up side of the line; this was followed by extensive loops at Winchfield which were signaled for through running on the downside. We run through Basingstoke (more of that later) and take a rather unexpected turn to the left. We are now on the Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway, a line that died once, was revived, survived at both ends and eventually succumbed completely. But not until we had taken an M7 and a push-pull set down to Thorneycrofts works, by the 1960s the limit of the line at its Northern end.



Here is our train in March 1963 being propelled from Basingstoke southwards down the former Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway, giving the impression that it was heading for Alton. Sadly it would get no further than Thorneycrofts' works.



(PFTF ref: W1071)

Here we are at Thorneycrofts, and as far as I'm aware ours was the only passenger train ever to venture there, after the closure of the through route to Alton on 12 September 1932. The M7 propelled us down the embankment from the mainline to Thorneycrofts works where until only a few years earlier traction engines and steam lorries had been manufactured.

1924 and finally closed completely on 1st June 1936. However short sections survived at both ends; I've just mentioned the Thorneycrofts factory at the Basingstoke end. At the Alton end was Treloars Hospital which retained a mile-long line and a platform to cope with coal and other heavy items until quite recently.



(PFTF ref: MHW1093)

The Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway was opened by the LSWR on 1st June 1901 and survived only until October 1917 when the track was lifted to help the war effort. Somewhat unexpectedly it reopened under the aegis of the Southern Railway in August



(PFTF ref: W1070)



(PFTF ref: W1068)



(PFTF ref: W1068)

We will come back to Alton, but before doing so, and going south, we should head in the up direction to take a quick look at the Bordon branch.

This view shows an M7 0-4-4-T and two coaches at Bordon, viewed from the buffer stops end. This was terminus of a branch from Bentley – but it was more than that. It connected with the Longmoor military railway which, as we have already seen, also connected at its southerly end with the Portsmouth Direct line between Guildford and Havant. In this view the Army's facilities are behind the Southern Railway building on the right.



(PFTF ref: J94)

There was only one intermediate stopping place on the branch – Kingsley Halt - where there was an ungated road crossing and a line of poplar trees which appeared to protect passengers on the platform from the (often prevailing) wind –but actually without much effect.



(PFTF ref: J95)

When the train from Bordon arrived at Bentley it normally used the up through platform, as seen here. Most passengers from Bordon would be travelling in the London direction. However departures were normally from the bay platform on the down side, seen here on the right of the picture. The bay was separated from the down through platform by substantial iron railings and a gate. The purpose of this was to control the crowds of squaddies returning from weekend leave on the way

back to camp on a Sunday night – and to help with ticket checks.



(PFTF ref: J96)

It's now time to head back to Basingstoke and further west and have a quick look at some typical LSWR country stations, which in 1962 had hardly changed from how they appeared 50 years earlier. Both stations were on the line from Adderbury Junction, just south of Salisbury, to West Moors and Wimborne. First is a view of Fordingbridge, opened in 1866 and closed in 1964



(PFTF ref: C2305)

Secondly, this is Breamore, the next station north of Fordingbridge; not surprisingly with the same opening and closing dates.



(PFTF ref: C2306)

East of that line, and running south from Andover, was another line, also closed in 1964. This was a favourite haunt of T9s and here is 30284 with a train bound for Andover Junction near Horsebridge.



(PFTF ref: C615)

Further north on the same line was Fullerton Junction; this was where a branch from Hurstbourne, on the main line between Andover Junction and Basingstoke, joined the Andover – Romsey route. This picture shows 30284 again, having turned at Andover shed, leaving Fullerton Junction with a train for Southampton. On the right of the picture can be seen the branch to Hurstbourne. By the time this photograph was taken in 1957 the Hurstbourne line was only open as far as Longparish for freight.



(PFTF ref: C616)

Here is another T9, 30732, running light at Horsebridge



(PFTF ref: C618)

Still lurking around Horsebridge here is yet another T9, 30726, heading a typical passenger train



(PFTF ref: C620)

Another station on the line – Stockbridge, between Fullerton Junction and Horsebridge with T9 30287 on a northbound train



(PFTF ref: C621)

On the same day we explored what remained of the Fullerton – Hurstbourne line. This was the then terminus of the line at Longparish. By then the branch was officially closed completely, but a couple of years earlier we had been fortunate to make a couple of trips to Longparish in the company of Mr. A.L. Whitmore, the stationmaster at Fullerton Junction, who was responsible for the branch and its two stations. In 1955 there was still a clerk stationed at Longparish, though his duties can hardly have been onerous. This view is looking towards Hurstbourne.



(PFTF ref: C622)

This is Wherwell, the only other station on the branch to Longparish and, originally, Hurstbourne. During World War 2 the line was busy with freight, including explosives for the RAF which were stored adjacent to the railway.



(PFTF ref: C623)

The only station on the line south of Fullerton, that we have not so far visited, is Mottisfont, so here it is with a delightful view of 30732 at the platform, in 1957.



(PFTF ref: C624)

Back at Fullerton Junction - here is another T9, 30707, with a northbound train, probably bound for the MSWJR and Cheltenham. Before we leave that area, I should mention that Fullerton Junction, until 1956, was the only place (so far as I'm aware) where you could regularly – latterly three days a week – three T9s on trains at the same place and the same time.



(PFTF ref: C625)

A little earlier I touched on the subject of taking locos away from their home areas to work special trains – in connection with an Adams radial 4-4-2T in London rather than at Lyme Regis. In May 1955 I admit to

being guilty of doing just that, bringing Beattie well tank 30587 up from Wadebridge to Andover. It all started with plans for a half-day tour from Andover on the branch to Amesbury and beyond to Bulford

Camp siding. How about making it rather more interesting with some unusual motive power? An LSWR line called for LSWR motive power, and what better than a Beattie well tank – locos which had endeared themselves to us during our travels in Cornwall. So when we wrote to Waterloo we asked for a Beattie tank, and received an agreement to all of our requirements. Bookings came in thick and fast, but ten days before the trip I received a letter telling me that a Beattie tank was not possible. How about an M7? No we said, you agreed to the Beattie. How about an O2, there's one coming out of Eastleigh works? No way. Stephen Townroe, District Motive Power Superintendent had recently been to the Farnborough clubrooms to give a talk and, on leaving,

I've just mentioned Eastleigh and in 1955 trains south from Andover could reach Southampton by two routes, either T9 hauled via Romsey and Nursling or M7 hauled by the more circuitous route via Romsey, Chandlers Ford and Eastleigh. Here is one of the latter at Eastleigh in July 1955.

Instead of heading for Southampton we travel north to Alton (via the Watercress line of course) there to await the next train south on the Meon Valley line. This was by far the most pleasant way of reaching the Portsmouth area from Farnborough, where many of us lived at the time. Here is an M7 approaching Alton with a train from Fareham which will form the next working down the Meon Valley

The first station down the Meon Valley was Farringdon – hardly a “station”, rather a goods yard with a short platform for possible passengers as an afterthought. This is what it looked like in 1959 when still in use for freight.

like most of his railway official colleagues, had said that if we ever needed any help we only had to ask. We did, and two days before the tour I received a letter telling us that, after all, a Beattie tank would be available. And here it is, at Andover.



(PFTF ref: W1040)



(PFTF ref: B43/12)



(PFTF ref: B24/12)



(PFTF ref: C1664)

Going back ten years or so, before passenger services were withdrawn on the Meon Valley line, this is how Farringdon looked.



(PFTF ref: N6D)

This is Tisted signal box, when still in occasional use. I have abiding memories of travelling on the last up train in winter, when the guard would have to extinguish all the acetylene lamps at most of the stations including Tisted.



(PFTF ref: N6F)

Tisted station from the road approach in passenger days



(PFTF ref: N7A)

West Meon signal box; this box opened six days a week until the end of passenger services and through running – though during war it opened 24 hours and towards the end there were at least two Sundays when it was open.



(PFTF ref: N11A)

Are you feeling disorientated? Just pretend that we have returned up the Meon Valley to Alton in time to catch a snippet of the Basingstoke and Alton Light Railway from the Alton end (you may recall that we have already travelled on it at the Basingstoke end). Treloars hospital at Alton was a largely military

hospital during the last war but reverted to civilian use and hence the NHS in 1948. It continued to have deliveries of coal, oil and other heavy goods by rail at a platform set up adjacent to the railway, named Treloars Siding.

These are two views of a special train which ventured



(PFTF ref: W1100)

We now find our way to Guildford for a sortie down the Portsmouth Direct; we don't need to stop at Godalming, we've done that, so our first stop is Petersfield, change for Midhurst. This was, after all, the LSW's route to Midhurst, in competition with the Brighton. This is Petersfield signal box on the upside of the main line and with a good view of the busy level crossing.

Viewed from the station footbridge at Petersfield is the train for Midhurst in its own platform separated from the main station by the level crossing, not exactly convenient.

Still at Petersfield we're now looking southwards through the station, noting the island platform and hence the third, loop, platform which at one time was used for Midhurst services, adding to the chaos on the level crossing

During the summer of 1962 T9 class 30120, repainted in LSWR livery worked Nine Elms duty 11 on Saturdays, deputising for the normal West Country Pacific, here seen at Basingstoke with an up train on 7th July 1962.

there in October 1960



(PFTF ref: W1101)



(PFTF ref: B24/1)



(PFTF ref: N35C)



(PFTF ref: N36B)



(PFTF ref: C2314)

Here LSWR No.120 is at the platform at Fleet station on the same day, with a few admirers. The next stop for this train was Farnborough, but until 1955, as we discussed earlier, there was also the stop at Bramshot Halt, another pair of platforms between Fleet and Farnborough.



(PFTF ref: C2315)

This picture shows the very last train ever to call at Bramshot Halt; this return special from Southampton Docks to Farnborough, hauled by an 0395 class 0-6-0, is at the up platform on 8th May 1954



(PFTF ref: W1034)

I apologise for the intrusion of a Bulleid Pacific and a U class 2-6-0 but the purpose of this view is to show the good use made of the LSWR-built military platforms on the down side at Farnborough during the annual Air Show weeks. This view was taken in September 1957.



(PFTF ref: 239C)

I was fortunate to travel on the footplate of this train between Basingstoke and Eastleigh. Unfortunately, the riding was so rough that the fireman lost his tea can on the section down to Eastleigh and I must admit to having doubts as to whether the boiler would remain covered for the rest of the journey. Also at Farnborough's military platforms is 0395 class 0-6-0 30577 nearly ready for departure for Southampton Docks on 8th May 1954, though this loco will hand over at Eastleigh to a USA 0-6-0T



(PFTF ref: 8464)

On another occasion we headed in the up direction from Farnborough, starting from the little-used up bay. Not for the first time we found ourselves at Bordon. In this view we are looking towards the end of the line with the branch train at the platform; notice the generous – though corrugated iron – warehouse, thanks to the Army.



ref: C491)

(PFTF

Bentworth and Lasham station on the Basingstoke and Alton. We've already seen trains at both ends – but now we see the middle part, as it was in 1958. You won't see this today. Between the wars Lasham was the location of one of a number of radio stations linked to the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough; in 1928 Dad had to visit Lasham, and he went by train. No wonder he complained; I have a 1928 Bradshaw and there was nearly an hour to wait at Basingstoke in both directions. The whole trip took him nearly 12 hours, including a long time enjoying a mug of tea with the station staff (a single porter) at

Bentworth and Lasham. Trains between the two junctions took about 45 minutes.



(PFTF ref: C831)

This is Bentworth and Lasham, seen from the opposite direction to the previous picture, as it was in 1958. This was the first station out of Alton and was later replaced by Treloars Hospital siding.



(PFTF ref: C832)

Herriard station on the Basingstoke and Alton line in 1958. The platforms were still there under the bushes – and maybe still there today.

Among the trees in this 1958 view is Cliddesden station, renamed Buggleskelly in the 1939 Ealing Studios film *Oh Mr. Porter* when the last trains ran over the entire line.



(PFTF ref: C833)



(PFTF ref: C834)

This is Amesbury station with an REC train in April 1955. With lines going North, South, East and West Andover was already a busy junction, but to add to it, a few miles west from Andover is Grateley; junction for a branch northwards on to Salisbury plain, serving not only Amesbury but Bulford Camp. The line closed to regular public services in June 1952. The Army and the RAF continued to make heavy use of the line and we decided (in the REC) to ask for unusual motive power. In this view from the station footbridge we are looking south towards Andover Junction.



(PFTF ref: N475F)

This platform view at Amesbury is deceptive as the line of barrows awaiting luggage doesn't suggest that this is a station closed to normal passenger traffic.



(PFTF ref: N476A)

Back to Andover Junction and down the line southwards to Fullerton. This was the junction for a line from Hurstbourne, on the main line between Basingstoke and Andover, and Fullerton, effectively providing a through route, without reversals, from Basingstoke to Southampton. First picture is the old station at Fullerton, before the Hurstbourne to Fullerton line was opened. It didn't last long into Southern days, closing to passengers in July 1931, and completely between Hurstbourne and Longparish. Only two stations on the line, Longparish and Wherwell. Freight continued between Fullerton Junction and Longparish until May 1956.



(PFTF ref: B42/3)

Busy times at Fullerton Junction. The area was a stronghold of T9 4-4-0s.



(PFTF ref: B42/6)

Fullerton Junction station, south of Andover, looking from the south. On the right is the branch to Longparish (originally to Hurstbourne). At the time this picture was taken in 1955 freight trains still ran 5 days a week as far as Longparish. During WW2 the RAF had ammunition storage depots adjacent to both stations on the branch, and traffic was quite heavy.



(PFTF ref: B42/12)

This is what remained of the line beyond Longparish in 1955 when the last train to Hurstbourne had obviously departed.



(PFTF ref: B42/4)

The Fullerton Junction stationmaster, Mr. Whitmore, and clerk both at Longparish station when Longparish was still staffed on weekdays. Longparish was staffed by a clerk almost to the end.



(PFTF ref: B42/11)

Travelling south from Fullerton Junction we come to the station at Mottisfont. Here was a fine example of an LSWR distant signal seen from both front and back.



(PFTF ref: 6236)



(PFTF ref: 6237)

In Eastleigh works yard we find two locomotives with interesting histories. 0-6-2T 30757 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and 0-6-2T 30758 *Lord St. Levan*, were both built in 1907 for the Plymouth, Devonport and South Western Junction Railway's Callington branch opened in 1908.

Numbered by the SR in 1923 as 757 and 758 (with an E prefix until about 1931) they remained at work on the branch until the arrival of the LMR 2-6-2Ts in late 1952 when their use became limited. Both went to Eastleigh in mid 1956, 30758 being withdrawn in December of that year whilst 30757 lasted until December 1957

Both were repainted in LWSR colours following grouping, only being painted in Southern colours in 1926/27.

We don't linger at Eastleigh but head towards Fareham, stopping at Botley, junction for the Bishops Waltham branch. An M7 is seen here with the branch goods for Bishops Waltham, at that time operating six days a week. In this view at Botley we are looking past the signal box towards Fareham.

This is Botley station with the main building on the up line.

The signalman at Knowle Junction collects the tablet from the driver of a train off the Meon Valley Line.



(PFTF ref: 8074)



(PFTF ref: 8072)



(PFTF ref: C694)



(PFTF ref: R3667)



(PFTF ref: B23/9)

Meon Valley train in the bay platform at Fareham. Except for a short section at either end the MV closed completely in February 1955



(PFTF ref: B4/1)

Fareham station from the road approach



(PFTF ref: R3659)

At one time the railways south of Fareham were a fascinating bunch. This picture shows a passenger train at Fort Brockhurst – the only intermediate station between Fareham and Gosport, and junction for the branch to Lee on Solent. The latter closed to passengers in January 1931, and completely in 1935. In the latter years its continued existence was largely due to the Royal Navy's air station, which was still there in 1951 though in the hands of the RAF by that time.



(PFTF ref: B20/2)

Just prior to reaching Gosport station there was a triangular junction, originally serving Stokes Bay pier. In this view, looking on to the pier, normal services have clearly ceased.



(PFTF ref: B21/5)

Here is Stokes Bay pier when some trains were still running. This was the station where Queen Victoria and her entourage changed from train to ship for the journey across the Solent to East Cowes.



(PFTF ref: C756)

This is a Branch Line Society special train at Gosport station; it had been closed to normal passenger services in June 1953.



(PFTF ref: 5288)

An O2 0-4-4T shunting a single carriage at Southampton Terminus



(PFTF ref: N365B)

A B4 0-6-0T with a sizeable goods train at Chapel crossing, Southampton



(PFTF ref: 6312)

A C14 0-6-0T shunting on the Town Quay at Southampton



(PFTF ref: 6313)

A B4 0-6-0T with train of open wagons in Dibble's Yard



(PFTF ref: R2293)

We head west, ignoring the line to Fawley, which was opened after LSWR days, in 1926. We reach Brockenhurst and take a trip to Lymington – still with us but no longer steam

LSWR Semaphore signals at Lymington Town, photographed in 1954, when Lymington had 3 functioning signal boxes.



(PFTF ref: 6046)

An unidentified M7 with the branch train for Brockenhurst.



ref: C2312)

(PFTF

Return to Brockenhurst and take the earlier, and more interesting, route to Bournemouth – via Ringwood, West Moors and Wimborne.

From Brockenhurst the first station was Holmsley seen here.



(PFTF ref: C2584)

This is West Moors, where the line from Salisbury joined the line from Brockenhurst. The MoD fuel depot nearly saved the railway here. The next station on the way to Bournemouth was Wimborne and we'll come back there shortly; in the meantime we head over from the Bournemouth area and into Poole Harbour. Poole Harbour attracted a number of branch lines with piers or quays, but only one of these was owned by the LSWR, the others being the Admiralty's standard gauge line at Holton Heath, and the narrow gauge Goathorn china clay railway from the Isle of Purbeck.



(PFTF ref: 5532B)

Hamworthy has an interesting history; in the 1887 Bradshaw it appears in bold type and every train called there or had a connection from Hamworthy Junction. In latter days it was purely freight and the fairly frequent rail tours.

Freight with B4 30093 at Hamworthy Quay



(PFTF ref: 235C)

Station building at Hamworthy Quay



(PFTF ref: 236A)

Still with us, this is a view of Corfe Castle on the Swanage branch with trains crossing, in pre-preservation days.



(PFTF ref: 3463)

Swanage station with the branch train at the platform prior to preservation.



(PFTF ref: 4612A)

An REC special train at the platform at Dorchester South, headed by an M7 0-4-4T.



(PFTF ref: 2439B)

M7 0-4-4T with an REC special train at Portland, on the Easton and Church Hope railway – the impressive name for the extension of the railway from the mainland at Weymouth to the end of the line at the Portland quarries. Melcombe Regis always sounded more impressive than Weymouth.



(PFTF ref: 2439C)

An REC special train looks like it is going into the quarries beyond Easton station but no such luck!



(PFTF ref: 2440A)

I promised that we would return to Wimborne, again leaping over Bournemouth

Wimborne, showing M7 30059 with the 12.12pm Brockenhurst to Bournemouth West via Wimborne and Poole approaching Wimborne in September 1953



(PFTF ref: 9007)

This is Wimborne station in September 1957



(PFTF ref: J103)

Going in the up direction from Salisbury we come to the triangular junction where the line southwards leaves the mainline to Waterloo. Here is a view of Tunnel Junction in the snow. The tunnel itself is known as Fisherton tunnel.



(PFTF ref: R607)

M7 0-4-4T 30673 with a Romsey line train ready to leave platform 6 at Salisbury in 1957.



(PFTF ref: 2360A)

A T9 4-4-0 with a Wimborne line train ready to leave Salisbury



(PFTF ref: 4869)

An H15 4-6-0 shunting vans at Salisbury

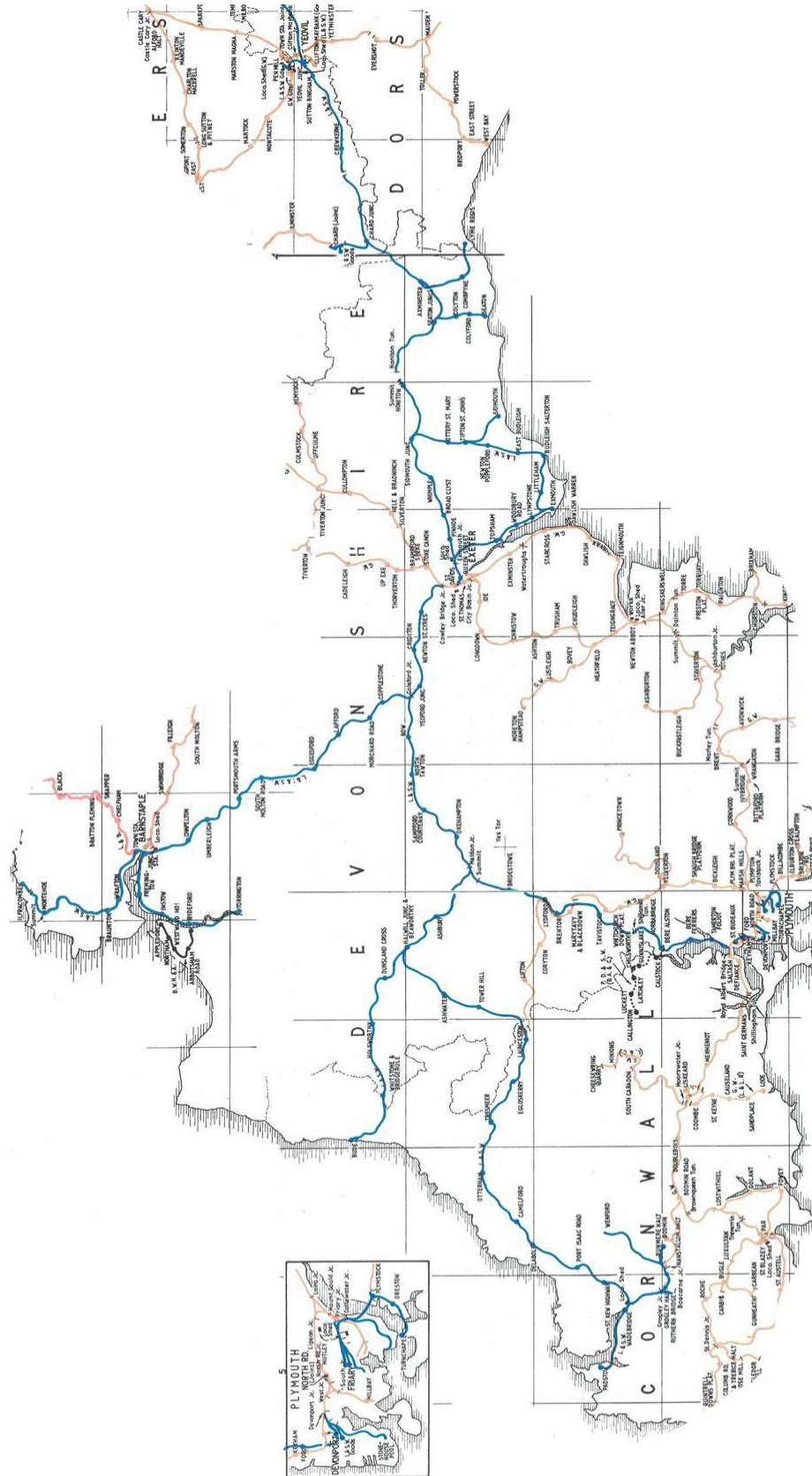


(PFTF ref: N354C)

M7 class 0-4-4T 30129 with a train at Yeovil Junction



(PFTF ref: C330)



M7 class 0-4-4T 30021 at the platforms at Yeovil Town



(PFTF ref: J1777)

On the left of this picture is the Chard Road Hotel. Until the LSWR opened its branch to Chard in 1863 and the GWR reached Chard from Taunton the station on the Yeovil to Exeter line was known as Chard Road; indeed, it didn't adopt the Chard Junction title until 1872.

The LSWR opened a hotel at the station – a fairly modest affair – which was still proclaiming itself as the Chard Road hotel in the 1950s.

Adams radial tank about to depart from Axminster for Lyme Regis with its two-coach train.



(PFTF ref: J2094)



(PFTF ref: 2842A)

A view of Lyme Regis station with Adams radial 30582 at the platform ready to leave for Axminster.



(PFTF ref: 2417B)

The road frontage to Lyme Regis station with stock at the platform



(PFTF ref: N357E)

Seaton Junction: M7 0-4-4T 30045 with the branch train from Seaton at the branch platform with King Arthur 4-6-0 30452 Sir Millieagrance standing on the loop next to it. Photo taken from the window of an up line train arriving at Seaton Junction in 1958.



(PFTF ref: 2899A)

Seaton Junction station; Adams 4-4-2T moving across the foot crossing whilst mothers with prams wait on the main line escorted by a porter; M7 0-4-4T shunting milk tanks in the background, in 1958.



(PFTF ref: 2840B)

M7 0-4-4T 30045 with the branch train in the terminus at Seaton; locomotive working push-pull, propelling to Seaton from the junction, and viewed from the smoke box end 1958.



(PFTF ref: 2899B)

Continuing westwards we come to Sidmouth Junction with its branch, not only to Sidmouth. but also to Budleigh Salterton and through to Exmouth

This view shows the station at Ottery St.Mary



(PFTF ref: xxxxx)

This is a view from the footbridge at Newton Poppleford, the first station on the line to Exmouth from the junction to Sidmouth.



(PFTF ref: C339)

Back to the main line, and Pinhoe station, the last before Exeter.



(PFTF ref: 7104B)

We avoid Exeter and the Western region and rejoin the LSWR beyond Cowley Bridge junction.

This is the signal box at Yeoford junction where the lines to Plymouth and Barnstaple went their separate ways.



(PFTF ref: 6761)

Until 1935 this was Lynton station on the erstwhile narrow gauge Lynton and Barnstaple railway. In the 1920s Dad's installation section at the Royal Aircraft establishment at Farnborough were instructed to investigate the use of radio in communicating between all modes of transport. Dad's letter to Waterloo station evoked an enthusiastic response offering the use of the narrow gauge line. The result was considerable activity in and around Bratton Fleming with resultant pictures, now in the museum

at Farnborough, of various military vehicles parked outside the bed and breakfast cottage in the village.



(PFTF ref: 4280B)

By this stage in their journeys the LSWR's trains to the West Country were dividing up into their constituent parts and this is an M7 0-4-4T with the Torrington portion of an up Waterloo train near Barnstaple.



(PFTF ref: 9029)

In their more youthful days these soon to be senior railway officials are seen on the platform at South Molton Road after this line had been absorbed in the Western region.



(PFTF ref: 4280A)

Further west of Barnstaple was the resort of Bude. The branch here is seen on 2nd May 1964 with a light engine passing through Dunsland Cross.



(PFTF ref: C3048)

Also on the Bude branch was Holsworthy, a typical LSWR station.



(PFTF ref: 4604B)

One station closer to Bude was Whitstone and Bridgerule; note the station nameboard still in LSWR colours.



(PFTF ref: 4604A)

This is a road side view of Bude station, just showing the front end of the local 'mechanical horse' with which every station in the West Country appeared to be equipped.



(PFTF ref: C1688)

Bude, overall view



(PFTF ref: C3043)

If we now return to Halwill Junction we find a T9 4-4-0 30719 with the 9.56am from Okehampton to Wadebridge.



(PFTF ref: C1690)

We head south-west to Launceston with an overall view of the LSWR station, looking west



(PFTF ref: C2195)

T9 30709 is ready to leave Launceston with a service for Okehampton and Exeter



(PFTF ref: 4180)

Another typical LSWR at Tresmeer, second station from Launceston on the North Cornwall line.



(PFTF ref: 4424)

This is a view of Otterham station on the north Cornwall line to Wadebridge and Padstow. In this picture the signalman is waiting on the platform to collect the token from the driver of a short freight train.



(PFTF ref: 4619B)

One station further west was Camelford with an N class 2-6-0 31834 with a short passenger train.



(PFTF ref: 4619A)

Delabole station with a two-coach passenger train.



(PFTF ref: 4605B)

Port Isaac Road; a very remote station.



(PFTF ref: C3034)

Before we go further into the extremities of the LSWR let's return to Halwill Junction and beyond, indeed as far as Meldon Junction and head southwards towards Plymouth, as you could in those days.

Brentor station is now a private residence with a garden so extensive that it also embraces the former GWR Launceston - Plymouth line running parallel.



(PFTF ref: 4202)

The former junction at Bere Alston with the 'gate coach' at the platform in the branch train for Callington; at least the branch is still open partway!



(PFTF ref: 86B)

This is another view of the Callington train at Bere Alston.



(PFTF ref: C1253)

A view from the end of Calstock viaduct in BR days with a freight train about to cross.



(PFTF ref: R381)

The end of the line at Callington from the road approach.



(PFTF ref: B55/2)

Back to Bere Alston and down towards Plymouth

Two views of an O2 0-4-4T assembling its train for the branch to Stonehouse Pool at Devonport.



(PFTF ref: 527B)



(PFTF ref: MHW371)

The gate set (S739S) from the Callington branch can be seen here at Plymouth Friary.



(PFTF ref: 5262)

LSWR advertisement at Plymouth in August 1955



(PFTF ref: B55/9)

Oreston on the Turnchapel branch



(PFTF ref: B130A/5)

In 1959 the REC chartered a DMU for tour of the Plymouth area. This included the branch to Turnchapel, sited in an old quarry.



(PFTF ref: B130A/6)

Back to the North Cornwall line, one-stop through Wadebridge to the end of the line at Padstow.

Hopefully all drivers obeyed this notice at Padstow!



(PFTF ref: 443B)

A view from the platform at Padstow with a T9 assembling its stock for the next passenger working over the North Cornwall line.



(PFTF ref: 441A)

An interesting pair of motive power side by side at Wadebridge. The Beattie well tank was heading what was known as the daily school train.



(PFTF ref: 2848A)

T9 4-4-0 30715 at Wadebridge



(PFTF ref: 2908A)

An essential stop on the journey to Wenfordbridge was the water supply in the trees at Boscarne.



(PFTF ref: 82B)

Wenfordbridge claimed to be the very end of the LSWR by rail from Waterloo. Apart from the Beattie well tanks this place was also known for its parcel and letter service, right into the 1950s, which was claimed locally to be more efficient than Royal Mail.



(PFTF ref: 2850C)

Bodmin North claimed the title of furthest from Waterloo by rail. In reality it was a very local railway with services from and to Padstow at the furthest, and motive power provided by Beattie well tanks and O2s.



(PFTF ref: 33B)