



THE

RAILWAYMEN

Unity House
Euston Road
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It is right that we should celebrate the achievements of all those who pioneered our railway heritage.

The National Union of Railwaymen, representing 180,000 workers employed in our industry today, is proud to be a part of the events designed to record the 150th Anniversary of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.

When remembering the designers and engineers, the rolling stock and the "road" construction, let us not forget, however, the railwaymen without whom all this would have come to nought.

Some of their story is set out in this pamphlet and that of their trade union.

All over the world there is striking evidence of a new railway era. The people of Britain must jealously guard their existing railway system and make sure that financial backing is provided to enable it to face the challenge of the 1980's and into the next century. And this must include a new deal for railwayworkers.

Sheffield

LIVERPOOL & MANCHESTER RAILWAY—1836—FIRST RAILWAYMAN VICTIMIZED FOR WORKER ORGANIZATION

On Monday, February 1st, a number of the men had given verbal notice that unless the firemen's wages were increased they would all cease work. One of the drivers, John Hewitt, on being challenged by the management adhered to his intention to strike, and was instantly discharged. Most of the other drivers and firemen struck work at once in support of this first railwayman to be victimized for taking part in an organized movement.

Not all the men who struck work were under written contract with the company, but four of those who were, were hauled before two local magistrates who found them guilty of a breach of contract and sentenced them each to a month's hard labour in Kirkdale Prison where they were put to the severe labour of working the treadmill six hours daily. At the next meeting of the Liverpool and Manchester Board, a letter was read from the four prisoners who expressed sorrow for their 'offence' and appealed to the directors to intervene to mitigate their sentence. The Treasurer was, however, instructed to reply that the directors had no power to liberate them. A week later a further letter was read, this time from the Chaplain of the jail, pointing out the hardships of working the treadmill and pleading on the men's behalf for more lenient treatment. This time the directors 'were disposed to mitigate the severity of the men's labour' and one of their number, Mr. Currie, who was a Chief Magistrate, undertook to convey the feelings of the meeting to the Governor of the jail.

ROUND ROBIN

The directors repeatedly claimed that men who had a grievance were entitled to submit a petition which would be given careful consideration in the board room; but even in exercising this right the railwaymen of the day showed their fear of dismissal. They made their petitions "round-robin" ones like that submitted to London and Birmingham Railway in 1846.



Before The Days Of The Union

The directors are in principle opposed to combination of any description for the purpose of interfering with the natural course of trade. They think that masters and men should be left in every establishment to settle their own terms, and arrange their own differences without foreign interference or dictation. 'London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Circular', 1852.

Instil Spirit of Obedience

Most companies thought it desirable to employ only literate men. Even in the literacy tests applicants for employment were required to pass, the attempt was made to instil a spirit of obedience. Those seeking employment on the Great Western Railway in 1837 were required to write these words:

'Zealously strive to excel. Industry is commendable. Perseverance deserves success. Quietude of mind is a treasure.'

Fines and Suspensions

An elaborate system of fines and suspensions kept the discipline of the railway service as severe as it was in the Army. On the Eastern Counties Railway, in August 1850, two drivers were fined 2s. 6d. each because a cotterpin broke in a drawbar on their train of 56 wagons. The cost of a new cotterpin was 3d.

Blacklisting and Evictions

Thousands of railwaymen lived in cottages owned by the companies that employed them. For these, joining a trade union might mean not only the sack and "blacklisting"—which precluded similar employment with other companies—but also eviction and ultimate resort to the dreaded workhouse. In May 1871, some of the engine drivers who struck work on the London and North-Western Railway were evicted from their company-owned homes in Camden Town.

Discipline

Discipline on the Taff Vale Railway was perhaps the strictest of all. The rules of that company included the warning that '. . . not an instance of intoxication, singing, whistling or levity while on duty will be overlooked, and besides being dismissed the offender will be liable for punishment.'

London Brighton & South Coast RAILWAY.

COPY OF A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD Of TUESDAY, March 26th, 1867.

That, in accordance with the recommendation of Mr. Craven and Mr. Hawkins, the Directors will with great pleasure give a gratuity of TWO GUINEAS to each DRIVER and ONE GUINEA to each FIREMAN who has not deserted his post this day, while so many are endeavouring to force the Directors to comply with demands which they consider unreasonable.

That any such Driver who was previously receiving a lesser sum shall at once be advanced to the first class and receive 7s. 6d. per day, and each Fireman 4s. 6d. per day, with the assurance that, come what may, the Directors will employ them at the above rates so long as they perform their duty.

That believing a large majority of those who are still out will (upon reflection) regret having pushed matters to such an extremity, they are willing to receive back into the service any of the old hands who may rejoin it not later than Thursday next.

BY ORDER,
A. SARLE, Acting Secretary.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE A.S.R.S.



MICHAEL THOMAS BASS was one of the wealthiest brewers in the country, but as M.P. for Derby he was well known for his support for humanitarian causes. In the summer of 1871 some of his railwaymen constituents, aware that he was a shareholder of the Midland Railway and one of its best customers, asked him to plead with the directors for a reduction of their intolerably long hours of labour. Mr. Bass intervened on their behalf, not only at shareholders' meetings but also at question time in the House of Commons.

In addition, he employed Charles Bassett Vincent as his full-time agent to help organise the railwaymen, and from February 1872 he subsidised a weekly newspaper called *The Railway Service Gazette* which put the case for railway trade unionism.

Ensured of the backing of Mr. Bass, in November 1871, a small committee of London railwaymen, presided over by Dr. Baxter Langley, a radical lawyer, formed the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, which they registered as a trade union on 2nd March, 1872.

From 24th-26th June, 1872, 62 railwaymen from all parts of England and Wales met in the Sussex Hotel, Bouverie Street, London, at the first Delegate Conference of the A.S.R.S.. They agreed that the objects of the new society should be:—

“To improve the general condition of all classes of railway employees; to provide temporary assistance when thrown out of employment, through causes over which they have no control; to provide legal assistance when necessary and to provide a superannuation allowance for old and disabled members.”

A subscription of 3d. a week was intended to meet all these contingencies. Membership was open to “any person employed on any railway in Great Britain and Ireland.” It was the first all-grades railway union.

Three of the Delegates paid a heavy price for their enthusiasm for the new venture. On reporting back for duty they were informed that their services were no longer required on the railway.





The Creation of the National Union of Railwaymen

SIGNING THE AGREEMENT AT THE FUSION CONFERENCE OF THE AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF RAILWAY SERVANTS, GENERAL RAILWAY WORKERS' UNION AND UNITED POINTSMEN AND SIGNALMEN'S SOCIETY: FEBRUARY, 1913.

At its inception the N.U.R. had nearly 180,000 members of which 23,158 had belonged to the G.R.W.U. and 4,101 to the U.P.S.S., whilst the remainder had been members of the A.S.R.S. But such was the inspiration caused by united leadership, that membership quickly soared to 273,000 by the end of 1914. For the first time in history the majority of railwaymen were enrolled in one trade union.

The N.U.R. was established with the declared object of securing "the complete organisation of all workers employed on or in connection with any railway in the United Kingdom." It thus rejected both "sectionalism" and "localism" in favour of "Industrial Unionism." Charlie Cramp, who became Industrial General Secretary of the Union in 1920, wrote one of the clearest statements justifying the new structure:—

"The conception of industrial unionism held by the N.U.R. is that the nature of the product of any industry determines the definition of the industry in so far as it applies to the organised workmen who are employed in any capacity in it. The railway, providing transport as it does, must be regarded as an industry. All those whose labour in any way contributes to the carrying on of this industry are either railwaymen or railwaywomen, and thus being part of the industry, their conditions are ultimately governed by the facts and prosperity of the carrying concern which does produce transport as its chief commodity for sale."

OBJECTS OF THE N.U.R.

Rule 1, Clause 4(a), states that the objects of the Union shall be to:—

1. Secure the complete organisation of all workers employed by any Board, Company or Authority in connection with railways and other transport and ancillary undertakings, thereto in the United Kingdom.
2. Improve the conditions and protect the interests of its members.
3. Obtain and maintain reasonable hours of duty, rates of wages, adequate retiring allowances, and other conditions of labour.
4. Settle disputes between its members and their employers, and to regulate the relations between them by the collective withholding of labour or otherwise.
5. Further the interests of members by representation in Parliament and on local governing bodies, and to employ the Political Fund of the Union in procuring such representation.
6. Work for the supersession of the capitalist system by a Socialistic order of society.
7. Regulate the relations between this Union and its members, and to settle disputes between the Union and any member or members, or between any member or members and any officer or officers of the Union by way of appeal as provided in these rules.
8. Provide temporary assistance to members when out of employment through causes over which they have no control, or through unjust treatment, or through any disputes existing between an employer and a member or members of the Union.
9. Provide legal or other assistance when necessary in matters pertaining to the employment of members, or for securing damages or compensation for members who suffer injury by accidents in their employment, or when travelling to or from work; also to use every effort to provide for the safety of its members whilst at work and of the travelling public.
10. Make grants to and share in the management and control of any college or institution having for its object to educate and train Trade Unionists in social science in, and to take part in, the political and industrial life of the Labour Movement.
11. Provide donations to any institution from which members may derive benefit, and to have power to render, as occasion may arise, assistance to other Trade Unions, and other lawful purposes.
12. Provide Accident Benefit to members who may have met with an accident whilst following their employment.
13. Provide a grant of money to members upon their normal retirement or when permanently disabled.
14. Provide for their interment when death occurs before retirement and to aid the young orphan children of members.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The General Strike which took place in May 1926 brought railwaymen out with other workers in support of the miners. The coal owners had given the miners an ultimatum of accepting wage reductions of from 20 per cent to 40 per cent or being shut out. Volunteer labour was recruited to try to run a railway service but with only slight success. The General Strike ended on May 12th, 8 days after it began but railwaymen stayed on strike for a further two days to get terms of reinstatement.

STRIKE-FREE RECORD

Since 1926 the Union's 53-year strike-free record has only been broken once—a one-day protest in 1962 against the wholesale closure of railway lines, train services and Workshops under the Beeching Plan.

INDUSTRIAL PEACE

Union Officers and headquarters personnel have, on the other hand, prevented or curtailed quite a number of outbreaks of an unofficial

character. It is a little known facet of Union activity that they are frequently called upon to make and keep industrial peace. District Organisers of the N.U.R. are equally involved, settling misunderstandings and dealing with grievances. Unstinting praise has been given by successive managements in respect of this aspect of Union intervention to solve difficulties.

JOINT NEGOTIATING MACHINERY

Any institution is only as good as the people who run it, be it a Government, an industry or a trade union. This is equally true of railways. Men of sound technical knowledge have always been plentiful but there have not always been those with the ability to conduct human relations. The early Railway directors were despots, ruling their employees by fear—fear of dismissal, of eviction or severe disciplinary measures. As the power of the workers grew through trade union organisation, the attitudes of management began to change. A saner system of resolving differences emerged through joint negotiating machinery.



A LEWIS GUN—NEWCASTLE STATION—1926 STRIKE.

SAFETY AT WORK

Many men died building the early railways and thousands more have been killed since in the course of duty. Railway work is not the safest of occupations.

The men who formed the A.S.R.S. knew that many accidents need not have occurred if railwaymen had not been called upon to work unreasonably long hours. Men who are weary with fatigue are not the most cautious. In an accident on the North Staffordshire Railway in September, 1873, a banking engine had been taken back on the same line as the train, leaving wagons standing on the incline. The Guard omitted to apply his brake and this van and nineteen wagons ran down the incline and into the pilot engine. The Guard, who died as a result, had been on duty nineteen hours. The Driver and Firemen of the banking engine had both been on duty for thirty two hours.

In 1873 the number of railwaymen killed was 782 and in 1875, 767 were killed and 2,815 injured. Safety costs money. It was frequently impossible both to give adequate protection to the men and to pay dividends which the railway shareholders regarded as satisfactory. Col. Rich, a Board of Trade inspector of the railways, in commenting on the fact that 187 men were killed in shunting operations in the year 1899 alone, agreed that one way to reduce the danger of accidents was to increase the number of men employed but "it was all a matter of expense."

In those days the Companies reported two categories of accidents to the Board of Trade—those "from causes beyond their servants' own control" and those they said were "due to their servants' own misconduct and want of caution." According to their reports nine out of ten came under the latter category. This meant that thousands of men injured were not entitled to compensation. If the accident was regarded as being the fault of another railway servant then compensation was also declined. Any payments made were 'benevolent' and often dependent upon the employee being a contributor to a provident fund.

Consequently, in addition to their efforts to improve pay and conditions in those early days, the A.S.R.S. was involved in an intensive campaign to reduce excessive hours, to prevent accidents by pressing for safer working methods and to seek compensation for victims of accidents or their dependants. The Union sought the support of the public, presented Bills to Parliament and arranged public meetings. Every pressure was put on the Railway Companies who were gradually forced to introduce some improvements. The A.S.R.S. presented evidence to the Royal Commission on Railway Accidents in 1874 and to further Royal Commissions in 1880 and 1900. The Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act of 1900 embodied many of the safety measures advocated by the Union. In the General Election of 1880 the A.S.R.S. through all its branches sent questions to every candidate about railway accidents and after the election three hundred Members of Parliament were pledged to a change in the law. The result was the passing of the Employers' Liability Act and later the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. The number of fatal accidents on railways began gradually to drop. The Union took the opportunities presented under the Acts of Parliament to represent the members in claim for compensation and has done so over the years. In 1979 the N.U.R.'s Legal Department obtained damages totalling over £1,900,000 for members.

WORKING HOURS

In 1890 the scandal of the excessively long hours of work imposed on many railway workers was again brought to light through the outbreak of a strike on the Scottish railways on 21st December, 1890. Train crews on the North British and Caledonian Railways had been obliged to work, 19, 22, 23 or even 25 hours at a stretch. Between 1st January, 1889, and 14th February, 1891, a North British Railway engine driver worked an average day of 13 hours 40 minutes. The strike was in protest against these intolerable conditions, and in favour of a ten-hour day. The strike had focussed public attention on the work of the Select Committee on Railway Servants' Hours of Labour, then sitting in Westminster. The officers of both English and Scottish Societies gave abundant evidence of the overworking of railwaymen and demanded a legal limitation of hours. They cited a case of a goods guard of the Midland and South-West Junction Railway, who was killed in a shunting accident and at the time of his death had been on duty for 22 hours 18 minutes consecutively and had worked an average of 18 hours 46 minutes per day on the last three days of his life.

The directors of the Cambrian Railway objected to one of their servants, Stationmaster Hood, telling the Committee about a porter, Humphreys, who was employed on a 19-hour spell of duty. Though he had an unblemished record of 22 years' service to the company, Hood was given a month's notice. This high-handed action was an affront to the House of Commons whose members admonished the directors of the company on 7th April, 1892. But Hood was neither reinstated nor compensated. Parliament did, however, pass in 1893 the Railway Regulation Act which gave the Board of Trade power in some circumstances to compel railway companies to revise duty rosters so that the men's hours could be brought "within reasonable limits."

Despite this legislation, however, a sixty hour week or more was common enough sixteen years later. Some of the Conciliation Board decisions of 1909 laid down a standard working week of 66 hours for some grades and 72 hours for others. The normal working day, excluding overtime, was 10, 11 or 12 hours according to the nature of the work.

The fight for an eight hour day was spear-headed by Walter Hudson, M.P., who, just before the turn of the century had been President of the A.S.R.S. but it was not attained until immediately after the first world war.

The guaranteed day of eight hours and a guaranteed 48 hour week for Conciliation Grades which came in the 1919 agreements, continued for another 26 years. Railway Workshop Staff had a 47 hour week.

A Court of Inquiry brought a 44 hour week for wages grades and a 42 hour week for clerks in June, 1947. Supervisory staff received the 42 hour week in 1949 and this was extended to wages grades in 1962. All salaried staff were, at the same time, placed on a 40 hour week. The 40 hour week for wages staff did not materialise until February, 1966 and then only after a threatened strike by the N.U.R. and discussions with the Prime Minister.

1981 sees a step forward to a 39 hour week for wages staff and 37 for salaried staff.

THE UNION AND POLITICS

There are some who take the view that trade unions should steer clear of politics and be free from political affiliations. Past and recent events have proved that this is not practical and indeed, not possible. Politics and political decisions have, in fact, been behind every major event which has affected both the Railways and the Railway Unions.

The A.S.R.S. was founded by a politician. A great many of the early Railway directors were Members of Parliament. The first man killed on Railways was an M.P. The Labour Party owed its origins to the A.S.R.S. In the political climate before the turn of the century, the A.S.R.S. soon realised that they would get scant sympathy or see much progress through the existing political parties.

In 1899, James Holmes, a delegate of the A.S.R.S., induced the Trades Union Congress to pass a resolution:—

“... instructing the Parliamentary Committee to invite the co-operation of all Co-operative, Socialist, Trade Union and other working class organisations to jointly co-operate on lines mutually agreed upon in convening a special congress of representatives from such of the above-named organisations as may be willing to take part to devise ways and means for securing the return of an increased number of Labour Members to the next Parliament.”

The members of the A.S.R.S. “were virtually the sponsors of the conference” held in London on 27th and 28th February, 1900, to form a Labour Representation Committee (the forerunner of the Labour Party). The Union was the second one to affiliate to the new organisation, being beaten by only a short head by the Steel Smelters. Richard Bell, General Secretary of the A.S.R.S., was a member of the first executive of the L.R.C. To this day the N.U.R. (A.S.R.S.) has always had representatives elected to the N.E.C. of the Labour Party.

But many railwaymen remained distrustful of the new venture and most other trade unions fought shy of affiliation. The dramatic events on the Taff Vale Railway in August 1900, helped to change their minds.

TAFF VALE DISPUTE

The strike, for a 2s. a week rise in wages, began as an unofficial one, but when Mr. Beasley, the General Manager of the T.V.R., used the services of William Collison's National Free Labour Association to send blacklegs down to Cardiff from London, the Executive Committee gave financial backing to the strikers. As a result of the Taff Vale Judgment in the House of Lords on 21st July, 1901, the Union was obliged to pay damages amounting to £23,000 to the Company and with costs, the total bill came to £42,000.

The trade union leaders found that the Liberal and Conservative parties were in no hurry to supplant the Taff Vale Judgment by new legislation and they had second thoughts about the Labour Representation Committee, affiliated membership of which leaped from 375,930 in 1900 to 969,800 in 1903-4. In the General Election of 1906, 29 of the Committee's 50 candidates were elected and the Parliamentary Labour Party came into being to be joined, shortly afterwards, by 12 Lib-Lab., M.P.'s.

A Bill introduced by Keir Hardie became the Trades Disputes Act of 1906 which legalised peaceful picketing, gave full protection of Union funds and declared that no civil action could be entertained against a trade union in respect of any tortious act alleged to have been committed by it.

THE OSBORNE JUDGMENT

Not all members of the A.S.R.S. were happy that the union was committed to support the Labour Party. Walter V. Osborne, Secretary of the Walthamstow Branch, objected strongly to the introduction of a compulsory political levy to augment the Labour Party's funds. In July 1908, he took legal proceedings to restrain the Society from using any of its funds for political objects. He was given generous support from the *Daily Express*. On 21st December, 1909, the House of Lords ruled that Osborne was entitled to restrain the A.S.R.S. from raising a compulsory political levy.

The effect of the Judgment was not merely to prevent all trade unions from paying their M.P.'s (there was no State payment of M.P.'s until 1911) but also to preclude activity in local elections and even educational work.

The injustice of the situation was seen in the fact that the 21 railway directors in the House of Commons were unaffected by the decision and were still entitled to draw their salaries from the companies. The three railwaymen M.P.'s, on the other hand, were deprived of their income from the Union.

The anomaly created by the Osborne Judgment was not removed for a period of four years. Under the Trade Union Act of 1913, however, a trade union was allowed to spend money on political objects, given the fulfillment of three conditions; a majority of the members would have to approve the political objects of the union in a secret ballot; the political fund would have to be kept entirely separate from the general fund, and any person who objected to contributing to the political fund would have the right to contract out by signing a form on which he indicated this intention.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT, 1971

Nearly sixty years later the Conservative Government introduced the Industrial Relations Act which put the Unions back to where they were at the time of the Taff Vale judgment.

The railway Unions were amongst the first to face the full brunt in their pay negotiations.

The Secretary of State, Maurice Macmillan brought a modified offer which involved payment of the £20 minimum from a future date but this did not satisfy the Unions who decided on a work to rule and an overtime and rest day ban.

It was then that the Government decided to bring in the new Industrial Relations Act provisions giving legal powers to suspend the work to rule and impose a cooling off period.

What had started as an industrial dispute over wages had become a major confrontation with the Government.

As soon as the fourteen day cooling off period ended, the Government applied to the Court for a compulsory ballot of Union members. The Government had maintained all along that the views of the Union leaders and Executive Committee did not reflect those of their members. The common ill-informed opinion of the Conservatives was that somehow there were two separate bodies of workers—the Union and the members instead of their being one and the same. It was a serious miscalculation. The ballot on a wording drawn up by the Government themselves was an overwhelming vote of confidence in the Union Executive Committees. It spelled the collapse of the Government's case and was largely instrumental in the passing of the death sentence on the universally discredited Industrial Relations Act.

“TRANSPORT REVIEW”

celebrate

100 YEARS
of
continuous publication

The *Railway Service Gazette*, which had been set up by Michael Bass in 1872, passed into hostile hands and sniped at the Union's leadership. The Executive, to counter these attacks, purchased the *King's Cross Journal* for £75, renamed it *The Railway Review*, and issued the first

Railway THE Review

AND THE SOCIETIES' RECORD:

A Weekly Newspaper for the Railway Service.

No. 82

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1982

PRICE ONE PENNY

RECENT ACCIDENTS.

DECEMBER was a noticeable month for serious railway accidents. January has proved not to be less so. Starting with the serious collision in the Cannonbury Tunnel of the North London Railway, scarcely a fortnight elapsed before an explosion of a North Eastern locomotive at Stockton killed five of the company's servants. Ten days ago another serious accident occurred at Horsey on the Great Northern Railway, followed three days after by a still more serious one on the North London Railway, near Old Ford. The first is attributed to the fault of the signaller; the second by the jury to a fault of the driver, and by the other jury to a fault in the construction of the fire-box of the engine, the third is put on the shoulders of one of the drivers, and on the company for not providing fog-signalmen in proper time, while the fourth is clearly attributable to a faulty draw-bar in the wagon belonging to a private firm. There may be in the last case a consideration as to how far it is advisable that goods traffic should be allowed while a heavy passenger train is running, but that does not remove the immediate cause of the collision.

Coming back to the first collision, our readers will have seen that a confusion was caused in the mind of the Great Northern signaller by a disambiguation between the separate instructions given to him by the Great Northern and North London Companies, and now that attention has been so strongly called to the manifold distinctions which have been made, the occurrence of a similar accident need not be apprehended. The explosion at South Stockton, though hardly likely to be many of the company's servants, caused no injury to the general public. Let it be assumed, however, that the engine had been a passenger one standing on a crowded station when it exploded, then picture the serious consequences ensuing to the public, and the financial loss which would have fallen on the North-

over the one. A still simpler mode would be in perfect the arrangement as often tried by which a red working with the distant signal strikes a lever on the engine and opens the whistle, thus informing the driver that the signal is against him. For anything we know to the contrary there may be a perfect invention of this kind. What is certain is that such an arrangement can be so far perfected as to act efficiently during a fog and effectively prevent the driver of one train unknowingly moving into another. Of this the jury were either ignorant or took no notice.

The collision on the North London at Old Ford could have been prevented had proper care been exercised in the making of the draw-bar. The material was not of the best quality in the first instance, and being weakened by the punching of a hole at the extreme end of it to receive the cotter, ultimately gave way, and thus caused the collision. To say that the wagon did not belong to the company does not take from them their responsibility, because they have the right to insist on such conditions as to the material and structure of the freighter's wagons as shall make them as durable as are the company's. There is no evidence that the North London Railway Company ever required into the efficiency of this wagon. They accepted it as fit for their road from off another line and with it took on themselves the responsibility of its fitness. The jury sensibly recommended that in future the end of the draw-bar should be secured by a nut properly screwed on and fastened, but with such a precaution as that, a periodical and proper examination will be necessary. A continuous brake would also have prevented the catastrophe. The Heberlein chain brake is used on goods wagons in Germany, and at once has stopped every wheel in the goods train, and the defective wagon from hauling the down line. Unlike the chain brake in use in this country the normal position of this brake is to be on, and in running requires to be lifted off. If, however, this brake was not used on the wagons of our railways, another can be found which will be just as efficacious if it is known that the companies are really desirous of applying continuous brakes to goods trains.

On the whole the character of the accidents stands out very well in each of these unfortunate accidents. Those who were concerned in the working of the trains in the collisions may not be entirely free from blame, but it is within the power of the companies to have prevented each of the accidents. Railway management has attained to much efficiency in the country. We cannot, however, help thinking that the recent



Presented to the Rail Union House - see supplement for story

How we can face the challenge of the NEW RAILWAY AGE



- The British nation needs to railway reform to survive.
- The NLR is well aware of problems facing the railways. We have proposed serious new ideas, and should be backed - urgently.
- We will co-operate. But the ideas are presented to the Railways Board and the Government only.
- The NLR wants more money for investment. Without it the railway cannot carry its present traffic.
- The NLR wants greater and immediate authority to improve the railway, necessary to meet the 1982 grant. There is at least enough up to the 1982 value of it to fund. There will be more in the middle of the year.
- The NLR wants a full subsidy to help meet the staggering increase in the industry's fuel bill. There will be more fuel in the middle of the year.
- The NLR wants to vary favourable division on the road extension of electrification - in the national interest, as a major step to saving conventional traction.
- The NLR wants an early favourable decision on new proposals for a leased freight.
- Given these demands we believe Britain could have railways returned to state.



Trade union unity

THE NLR has requested that the railway companies should be asked to consider the possibility of a joint union for the railway staffs of the NLR and the RMT. The proposal is being considered by the railway companies. A committee from the all the three railway unions was set up to consider the proposal to merge the unions. The committee is expected to report to the three unions in the next few weeks. The proposal is being considered by the railway companies. A committee from the all the three railway unions was set up to consider the proposal to merge the unions. The committee is expected to report to the three unions in the next few weeks.

FAIR COMPETITION

IN ORDER to a greater degree of competition between the railway companies, the NLR has requested that the railway companies should be asked to consider the possibility of a joint union for the railway staffs of the NLR and the RMT. The proposal is being considered by the railway companies. A committee from the all the three railway unions was set up to consider the proposal to merge the unions. The committee is expected to report to the three unions in the next few weeks.

Cash limits

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Tube violence - NUR acts

THE NUR has advised an action involving London Transport is recommended to withdraw their staffs from the Tube traffic, as from March 20, as a protest at the lack of protection against tube violence.

number on 16th July, 1880. Publication has continued ever since.

Unique in the trade union world, the *Review* has maintained a weekly schedule throughout. At the beginning of the century, it was decided to publish the newspaper under a separate company, the Kings Cross Publishing Company, in order to safeguard the funds of the union in case of libel action.

The editors, only four this century, have been largely independent, within the general policy requirements of the union.

It is the only newspaper of its kind that is sold commercially through the newsagency trade.

One of its features has always been the space given to readers' comments and contributions to the discussions on union, political and social questions.

See page 2 for a fuller statement.



1880-1980 A CENTURY OF SERVICE

The Orphan Fund



The Pioneers of the A.S.R.S. were not content to await the painfully slow amendment of the law to bring compensation to the relatives of deceased railway servants. After opening the Derby Railway Orphanage and maintaining it with the voluntary contributions of the membership between 1875 and 1879, the A.G.M. at Leeds in October 1879 agreed to add ½d. a week to members' subscriptions to finance an orphan fund from which a money allowance was to be paid to widows of railwaymen on behalf of each child under 13 years of age. The principle of giving financial assistance to the widows or guardians of all orphaned children rather than more expensive institutional care for a select few, has been followed by the Union ever since in the belief that it was better not to split up the family. The proceeds of the compulsory weekly subscription were never sufficient to cover the expenditure for the orphans. The deficiency was made good by flag day collections and the profits of charity concerts, football matches and "meat teas." In 1897 no less than 1,717 members and friends of the Middlesbrough Branch attended the annual meat tea and contributed handsomely to the fund which in that year received nearly £5,000 from the voluntary efforts of the Society's 85,000 members. The Orphan Fund continues to be augmented by the voluntary efforts of the membership and donations.



"Help" belonged to the first Treasurer of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. During the eighteen-seventies he travelled with his owner who was a guard on the London-Newhaven-Paris boat train. In a collecting box which was strapped to his back he collected over £1,000 for the orphans of railwaymen killed on duty.

The challenge of the NEW RAILWAY AGE

● The British nation needs its railway system as never before.

● The N.U.R. is well aware of problems facing the railways. We have proposed ways on how these can, and should, be tackled—urgently.

1. The N.U.R. wants more money for investment. Without it the industry cannot carry its present burden any longer.

2. The N.U.R. wants greater and immediate assistance to operate the socially necessary services. The P.S.O. grant must be at least brought up to its 1975 value.

3. The N.U.R. wants a fuel subsidy to help meet the staggering increase in the industry's fuel bill.

4. The N.U.R. wants an early favourable decision on the rapid extension of electrification—in the national interest, as a major step in energy conservation.

5. The N.U.R. wants an early favourable decision on new proposals for a Channel Tunnel.

Given these decisions we believe Britain could have railways second to none.

But a fundamental condition for the new railway age is a better deal for the people who keep this great industry going 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through all seasons.

● The N.U.R. wants a new Charter for the railway staff.

● The days of cheap railway staff are over.

● Without this new Charter there can be no solution to our problems.

Without its modern railway system there can be no economic recovery for Britain.

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