

RAILWAY SERVICE HISTORY

I started my railway life at Workington MPD (shed code 11b, then later 12d) on 25th August 1952. as a engine cleaner, after first going for a Medex to Dentonholme Good's Depo at Carlisle the Medex centre was in a part of the office's Les Varey, Peter Lewin, and Tom Parker my mate's all in the same gang the Forman cleaner was Hunter Anderson from Moorrow shed when it closed, (one of the first on BR) we use to drive poor old Hunter daft he had me and Varey in front of the Shedmaster regularly (Mr Drewson a Welshman from Abergaveney, the other side of the world to us lot I later ran thro there from Crewe and I use to think of him Hunter use to say I would pay you lot with washer's he was a decent old stick really. We were not always on cleaning loco,s some time's we had to coal the engine's by hand from a wagon along side the tender or go into the fire box and smoke box to clean it for the boiler examiner I detested that job still that was part of footplate life to reach a driver's job in years to come .

I use to look forward to see what engine would be arriving from London Euston each morning at 9/20 am with Barrow foot plate men on, nearly always Crewe North 5A Jub or a Royal Scot class 7p I use to sneak of and get on the footplate to fill the box for the fireman the length of the box on a Scot was nearly 14 foot I could not reach the front end under the brick arch, but I soon had to learn year's later at Crewe in the mean time I dreamed I was on a crack express like the Irish Mail with 17 coaches on .The Barrow men returned 10/50am x Workington to London Euston,that portion was attached to the Blackpool London at Preston the locomotive would be detached at Crewe. There was two London train's from Workington, and three in the summer they were the 06/35 with a class 4mt Fowler tank from Barrow shed we worked it as far as Barrow, some time's delayed by the 06/05 x Workington to Sellafield workers being shunted into the siding's at Seascales, the other was the 10/50 worked by Barrow men the third one was summer only called The Lakes Express via Cockermouth Keswick. And Penrith we worked it to Penrith with a little Ivatt class 2mt some times 49xxx or 46457, the coaches were attached to the Carlisle London Euston, the Windermere coaches put on at Lancaster I have fired that same train from Carlisle in later year's with a Royal Scot or a Duchess you had to have a banker out of Lancaster up the 1 in 100 for by now the train had grown to 16 or 17 coaches well over 600 ton's.

A few months had now passed and I was to see the boss for rule's exam to pass out to go fireing on shed turns, shunting, and main line I would now be a Passed Cleaner and go fireing at extra pay when required. I reported to Carlisle footplate Inspector Craig at Workington Stn and meet the train in from Whitehaven to go to Carlisle class 5 engine 6 coaches Express lights on I came back from Carlisle with a class 2P 40695,my next turn was with Herbert White on the New yard shunt (where my dad Harry was Ganger until his death in 1946)one of his mate's was a driver, Harold Goodhall was killed at Bootle near Millom on a ammunition train that blew up his fireman Norman Stubbs got the GM.By now I was wanting to move for regular fireing dutes as promotion was slow here, on looking at the vacancy list fireman were wanted on loan at Bletchley that means you are lent out to that depot for a limited time on arriving at Bletchley I was put in the shunt link for a while and stayed in Manor house hostel at Little Brickhill a big house in

it's own grounds some stayed in camping coaches near the down fast line no piece there some even stayed in small rooms under the water tank on the shed hard times those days we must have been mad, all for the love of the job who would do that to day. Work at the depot was passenger and freight as far as Oxford, Banbury, Yarnton Yard, Bedford, Cambridge, London Euston, Aylesbury Rugby.

After a spell at Bletchley I left to do N.S. in the army, while I was in the army I was made a book fireman at Workington, so after two years I reported back to Workington shed and my first turn was light engine with 43009 to Sellafield, coupled on to 7 coaches and station to Barrow with the works train my driver was Jack Cameron he walked with a limp he told me he slipted of the tender steps when he was a young fireman and a wheel ran over his foot losing two toes, for awhile I fired over west Cumbria, Rowrah, Beckermert, Barrow, Carlisle and Penrith but never got to Lowca Pit or Buck hill MD Depo but there was other excitement at times of which is for another chapter .There was to other minor events, I fired for driver Edie Lymer on his first driving turn it was a Sunday turn Workington to London Euston as far as Millom then swop over with Barrow men and work back, we had a jubilee 45630 Swaziland 12B from Carlisle Upperby all Eddies relation were watching over the fence near near Workington No 2 box, he was as heavy handed as his father I said I never shovelled coal so fast when I was on the Scots at Bletchley he just grinned and said one day you will be in charge, further along on our journey we set fire to the banks and one or two wooden chaley's along the sea shore at Nethertown. I also fired for Artha Wilson on his first driving turn on passenger train to Millom class 4MT Tank 42571 shed code 11A Carnforth engine swopted over at Millom and worked back we ended up setting fire to the bridge supports on Eskmeals over the river on our return run we spotted clouds of smoke half way over the bridge we ran onto the bridge at 55Mph the engine started to roll from side very bad I thought we were into the river the one and only time I was scared in all my railway service, and I have had some moments I can tell you, Arthur later moved to Crewe and still talk's of it to this day. I Thought I would transfere to Crewe on a 8c move for main line work my last mate at Workington was Charley Swinburn, I arrived at Crewe North on 13 Jan 1957 the time, and work is in another chapter of events

Les Jackson - Driver RTD