

## 50 YEARS AGO

Readers will recall that soon after the formation of the London Passenger Transport Board in July 1933, the two outer sections of the Metropolitan Line were closed – passenger traffic, or lack of it, saw Quainton Road – Brill close at the end of traffic on 30 November 1935, followed by the Aylesbury – Verney Junction service some seven months later after traffic on 4 July 1936. The Metropolitan Line then stopped firmly at Aylesbury, apart from a very meagre service provided as far as Quainton Road between May 1943 and May 1948.

But 50 years ago, on 10 September 1961, the Metropolitan contracted even further when the section Amersham – Aylesbury South Junction passed from London Transport to British Railways (London Midland Region) control at midnight. This coincided with the end of locomotive-hauled passenger trains on the London Underground, the last day being Saturday 9 September 1961, although last trains were actually in the early hours of 10 September.



**Left:** This event was celebrated by the running of a special train on Saturday afternoon from Baker Street to Amersham, the limit of electrification. The six Dreadnought coaches were hauled by electric locomotive No.18 “Michael Faraday” as far as Rickmansworth and between Rickmansworth and Amersham by BR 2-6-4T 42070. The special train terminated at Amersham but continued on empty to Aylesbury<sup>1</sup> to reverse.

**Photo: London Transport**

By then, work was well underway with the four-tracking of the Metropolitan Line between Harrow North Junction and Watford South Junction. This was one of the projects contained in the 1935-40 New Works Programme, and like the others, had to be deferred in 1940 because of the constraints of the Second World War. However, it is true to say that although some preliminary work had been done, it was nowhere near as substantial as that done on the Northern and Central Line extensions. In the case of the Metropolitan Line scheme, this was resurrected, albeit in modified form, and very little was wasted, unlike the Northern Line extensions.

Although the modernisation of the Metropolitan Line had restarted during the 1950s with modernised signalling, the four-tracking officially began on 12 October 1959. The original plans for electric rolling stock had by then changed. The original plan was to have compartment stock and 60 T Stock motor cars were available for this and the remaining Dreadnought coaches were to be converted to EMU working to make up the required trains, and the fleet would be fitted with retarders and e.p. brakes. Of course, the Second World War intervened and only one eight-car train (plus one odd car) was so equipped, which comprised two motor coaches, five ex-Dreadnought trailers and two ex-Dreadnought trailers (which became control trailers). The bulk of the remaining Dreadnought coaches were therefore never converted to EMU working and the stock situation remained status quo after the war. This meant that there were 58 T Stock motor cars for 16 T Stock trains (with 2 motors per train, this meant only 32 were required for service, far more than required<sup>2</sup>).

Back to wartime, it was recognised that as good as the compartment stock was for comfort on longer distance commuter services on the Metropolitan Line, it had a number of operational disadvantages and safety implications. These included the possibility of outward-opening doors that were not fully

<sup>1</sup> One further loco-hauled special took place to celebrate the Underground's Centenary in May 1963, this train taking passengers to Aylesbury. See *Underground News* No.558, page 436.

<sup>2</sup> The total of 60 T Stock motor coaches was reduced to 58 in 1944 and the two underframes from the two cars were used for the prototype trailers.

closed hitting the tunnel walls, and no emergency access for passengers throughout the train. Moreover, by the time the scheme was resurrected and completed, the compartment stock would be reaching the end of its working life and would need replacing anyway. A number of mock-ups were thus built, trying to incorporate and combine the compartment stock layout with air-operated sliding doors, and some examples of these can be found in "Steam to Silver" by J. Graeme Bruce (pages 104-109), where more comprehensive details can be found. To summarise, the end result was two cars of saloon type running in service prior to any new replacement stock being built in bulk. With the number of T stock motor coaches being plentiful, two new (trailer) bodies were built on the underframes of two withdrawn motor coaches – 2707 and 2752 – at Acton Works. It is recorded that their original bodies were scrapped on 1 November 1944.

The first car, numbered 17000 (ex-2752), made its debut in 1946 and was officially recorded by London Transport as entering service on 28 January. The interior seating layout was as unique as it was revolutionary. With most of the seats being in the centre of the car in back-to-back groups of three, on one side a continuous gangway was provided, while the other side was divided into three sections with the dividing (or 'partition') seats (which had space for four passengers) extending to the body side. There was accommodation for 57 seated passengers in 'shaped' seats, while other features included fluorescent lighting, luggage racks (over the seating areas) and passenger open/close door push buttons.

The second car, ex-2707, was numbered 20000 and entered service on 11 June 1947. It was far more luxurious than 17000. In common with other 'saloon' stock types, it retained the traditional centre gangway arrangement with pairs of individually shaped seats on each side of the gangway. Seating 56, it too had fluorescent lighting and passenger door control push buttons, but one pair of double doors on each side had a centre pillar – a feature that was provided on air-door tube stock up to 1928.

Although both cars were totally different in both interior and exterior appearance, they were both finished in London Transport red livery. There were, however, formed up in a train of T stock, and to operate the air-operated doors, control trailer 6727 was suitably modified with the necessary equipment – the train had to carry an additional guard to operate the air door equipment.

Trailer 17000 was not at all liked by the majority, with its unusual layout and seating arrangement, and was withdrawn for further interior modifications at Acton Works. It re-entered service on the Metropolitan Line on 2 November 1949 in modified form, but renumbered 17001. In its new guise, its interior very much formed the basis of what was adopted for the A60 stock – it was favoured even more than car 20000. Car 17001 had all transverse seats arranged in the 3+2 layout. Some seats were provided with high back, others with lower backs. With the evaluation trials at an end (and to save the cost of an extra guard on the train), the cars were withdrawn in 1953 and are recorded as being scrapped on 25 May 1955.

And so we come to September 1961 and the end of locomotive-hauled trains on the Underground. Before that, the last timetable with through Metropolitan Line trains to Aylesbury on Sundays was WTT No.182 of 4 January 1960. The generally 45-minute interval service between Baker Street and Aylesbury required six sets of 6-car Dreadnought coaches, shown in the timetable as SS111-SS116. 'SS' denoted steam stock, while electric locomotive working in the timetable was shown as L1, L2 etc. – four locomotives were required on Sundays because on trains terminating at Baker Street did so in platform 3 with the locomotive being able to run round the train. The arrangements on weekdays was quite different, as we will see below. It should be noted that the 'L' numbers were loco set numbers in the working timetable and not the actual numbers born by the locomotive. As far as your writer is aware, neither the locos or coaching sets actually carried train set numbers. The London Transport Aylesbury service on Sundays began with the 09.15 northbound from Baker Street (an earlier service from Harrow was provided by an 08.10 from Marylebone). In the southbound direction, the first departure from Aylesbury for Baker Street was 08.50, then at 11.05, from when the 45-minute service kicked in. The 2hr 15min gap between the first two LT trains was broken up by trains to Marylebone at 09.21 and 10.09.

From WTT No.185 (12 September 1960), the through LT service to Aylesbury on Sundays was withdrawn and two SS6 Dreadnought sets provided an hourly shuttle service to and from Amersham. These two trains were therefore the only Dreadnought stock out on Sundays. This service was replaced by a British Railways DMU shuttle on Sundays from WTT No.189 of 12 June 1961 and apart

from the meagre service of main line trains between Marylebone and Aylesbury, which lasted only until September 1966, it was to be September 2000 before through trains ran again on Sundays between Aylesbury and Marylebone via the Metropolitan.

We now return to the last timetable which had loco and coach working, and that was WTT No.189 of 12 June 1961. This lasted only for three months, when loco working was withdrawn. During that three months, nine SS6 trains (111-119) were required on Mondays to Fridays and seven (111-117) on Saturdays. The number of electric locomotives required was nine (L1-L9) Mondays to Fridays and eight (L1-L8) on Saturdays. There was still a substantial Saturday morning and midday peak, but this was on the wane and was to decline sharply in the following few years. Today's Saturday (and Sunday) 'busy' services are largely because of leisure and shopping traffic, although people still have to work, but not in the same way as they did 50-plus years ago. Locomotive and coach working in WTT 189 may be summarised as follows:

#### MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS:

Train	Start	Stable	Start	Stable	Stable
111	06.05 AY(N)				00.26 AY(1)
112	06.45 WEN			18.27 CM	
113	05.22 NN(S)			20.08 NN(N)	
114	06.47 NN(S)			20.47 WEN	
115	06.39 AY(1)	09.16 RK	15.15 RK	20.00 NN(N)	
116	06.52 AY(S)	09.18 NN(S)	17.21 NN(S)	21.44 NN(N)	
117	06.09 NN(S)	09.55 LIS	15.43 LIS		01.26 AY(N)
118	06.00 NN(N)	10.35 NN(S)	16.06 NN(S)		00.14 NN(N)
119	08.12 CM	10.03 NN(S)	16.48 NN(S)		23.26 AY(S)

Train	Start	Stable	Start	Stable	Stable
L1	05.22 NN(S)			20.00 NN(N)	
L2	06.31 NN(N)	09.18 NN(S)	16.06 NN(S)	20.08 NN(N)	
L3	06.09 NN(S)	09.51 LIS	15.41 LIS		01.06 NN(S)
L4	06.47 NN(S)			19.12 NN(N)	
L5	06.00 NN(N)			19.03 LIS	
L6	06.00 NN(N)	10.35 NN(S)	16.48 NN(S)	20.08 NN(N)	
L7	06.09 NN(S)			21.44 NN(N)	
L8	06.58 NN(N)	10.03 NN(S)	17.21 NN(S)		00.14 NN(N)
L9	07.45 LIS †	09.55 LIS	15.45 LIS	20.45 NN(S)	

Electric locomotive(s) were assigned to coaching stock that started from Neasden. Aylesbury trains reversing at Baker Street did so in platform 4, with a locomotive already available at the north end to take the train north. The loco at the south end thus formed the next northbound train, probably laying over in the loco spur. Late at night, Aylesbury trains reversed at Baker Street in platform 3 to enable the locomotive to run round the train, which involved shunting onto the outer rail Circle Line and then back via platform 2, north of the station and then back onto the train.

#### INTERESTING LOCO WORKINGS (Other than loco+coaches) – see page 508

- L7 06.09 NN(S) at rear of SS 117 to Baker Street platform 4 to form next northbound train. L3 then shunts to loco spur and forms next SS6 train.
- L6 06.00 NN(N) at rear of SS 118 to Chesham and forms first southbound through train. L5 at the north end of the train forms second through train ex-Chesham.
- L2 06.31 NN(N) light engine to Rickmansworth to be attached to 07.28 southbound.
- L4 06.47 NN(S) with SS 114 runs empty to Baker Street via the Finchley Road loop.
- L8 06.58 NN(N) light engine to Rickmansworth to form 07.59 southbound.
- L2 on arrival at Chesham at 18.27 forms 19.21 to Harrow and Neasden depot with L6 at rear.
- L4 light engine 18.40 Rickmansworth to Neasden depot.
- L9 light engine 20.25 Baker Street via Bakerloo Line from Finchley Road to Neasden depot.
- L3 00.37 Rickmansworth works 'staff' to Neasden, thence to depot (without coaches).

AY(1)	Aylesbury platform 1	NN(N)	Neasden depot (north end)
AY(N)	Aylesbury North Siding	NN(S)	Neasden depot (south end)
AY(S)	Aylesbury South Siding	RK	Rickmansworth
CM	Chesham	WEN	Wendover
LIS	Liverpool Street		

### SATURDAYS:

Train	Start	Stable	Start	Stable	Start	Stable
111	07.10 AY(S)			14.45 CM		
112	06.05 AY(N)					01.26 AY(N)
113	06.23 NN(N)	08.53 NN(S)	12.12 NN(S)			00.14 NN(N)
114	08.11 CM			17.47 NN(S)		
115	06.46 AY(1)	10.15 AY	12.38 AY			23.26 AY(S)
116	06.47 NN(S)					21.45 NN(N)
117	06.09 NN(S)	09.58 LIS	11.45 LIS	13.23 AY	21.10 AY	00.26 AY(1)

Train	Start	Stable	Start	Stable	Stable	Stable
L1	06.09 NN(S)					00.14 NN(N)
L2	06.09 NN(S)	09.58 LIS	11.46 LIS		21.45 NN(N)	
L3	06.23 NN(N)			17.47 NN(S)		
L4	06.23 NN(N)	09.43 LIS	11.43 LIS	14.30 LIS		
L5	05.50 NN(N)				21.28 NN(S)	
L6	06.30 NN(N)					01.03 NN(N)
L7	06.47 NN(S)	08.53 NN(S)				
L8	07.45 LIS	09.46 NN(N)	12.12 NN(S)	16.08 NN(N)		

### INTERESTING LOCO WORKINGS (Other than loco+coaches)

- L1 06.09 NN(S) attached to the rear of SS 117 (with L2 at south end) to Baker Street platform 4 and forms next train northbound. L2 then shunts to loco spur and forms next SS6 train.
- L3 06.23 NN(N) attached to the rear of SS 113 (with L4 at north end) to Chesham and forms first southbound through train. L4 at the north end of the train forms second through train ex-Chesham.
- L5 05.50 NN(N) light engine to Rickmansworth to be attached to 06.54 southbound.
- L6 06.30 NN(N) light engine to Rickmansworth to be attached to 07.35 southbound.
- L7 06.47 NN(S) with SS 116 runs empty to Baker Street via the Finchley Road loop.
- L8 light engine 09.18 Rickmansworth to Neasden depot.
- L8 light engine 15.16 Chesham to Neasden depot.
- L5 light engine 21.08 Baker Street via Bakerloo Line from Finchley Road to Neasden depot.
- L6 00.37 Rickmansworth works 'staff' to Neasden depot (without coaches). Unlike Monday to Friday, does not run via Neasden station platform 4.

Returning to Saturday 9 September 1961, most of the coaching stock and locomotives stabled as per the timetable, even though that was their last day of service. The only exceptions were that the locomotive stabling at Liverpool Street on a Saturday afternoon was amended to depart light engine at 14.39 and run to Neasden depot (via the Bakerloo Line from Finchley Road), and the coaching set which stabled at Chesham returned to Neasden by L8. That cleared the 'outstations' apart from the set stabled at Wendover.

At that time, 64 Dreadnought coaches remained, of which 58 were disposed of with a fortnight – surprisingly quickly for withdrawn stock. At some stage, 24 coaches made their way to Brackley and were disposed of from there in 2x12-car rakes on 19 and 25 September. These were undoubtedly the three sets that finished service at Aylesbury on the last night and most likely the Wendover set that finished there the previous (Friday) night. Two six-coach sets were taken to Watford goods yard and (as 12 cars) departed from there on 15 September, while from Neasden on 12 September 10

coaches departed, and another 12 the following day. This makes 58 coaches, leaving six remaining at Neasden for the 1963 Centenary celebrations.

Your writer has been unable to find any Timetable Notice or Traffic Circular entry for the movement of stock to Watford and Brackley. Perhaps it was done "by local arrangement".

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