

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Brian,

9 September 2013

STATION NAMING

It good to enjoy each month being keeping up to date with the daily events on London's Railways in *Underground News*. This magazine has expanded its perimeter with the development of the DLR and London Overground. My childhood home was on the Stanmore branch, and we frequently had day trips on the North London Line to Richmond/Kew, by changing trains at Kilburn, then a short walk to Brondesbury station. In these days the Oerlikon stock was on line and these were a very different from the lovely 1938 Bakerloo stock.

When TfL took an interest in developing the North London/East London and others lines to provide the successful additional circle around London, some station names should have looked at that are similar due to being established by different companies developing their own routes in the same locations. Some revision would make it less confusing and be more appropriate for today user.

Some examples: Finchley Road & Frognal to become FROGNAL, Caledonian Road & Barnsbury to become BARNSBURY, Leyton, Midland Road to become MIDLAND ROAD, and Haringay Green Lanes to GREEN LANES

New names that could also be considered provided to make traveling more straightforward and take away duplication: EDGWARE ROAD (Bakerloo) which does not relate in any way to the Circle and District lines station with the same name, and BRONDESBURY PARK, a new local name provided here to overcome confusion with Brondesbury.

*Yours sincerely, John Sketcher.
Welwyn Garden City. By E-Mail.*

Dear Mr. Hardy,

11 September 2013

BUS REPLACEMENT SERVICES

Mr. Whitehead's letter in the September issue touches on a point which has worried me – his item 6 about bus replacements. I have been concerned when reading in Planned Engineering Works in *Underground News* that when the High Street Kensington – Edgware Road – Baker Street section of the Circle Line has been closed, passengers have been directed to use ordinary bus services.

This would be acceptable in a properly integrated system: the 27 bus provides a parallel service. But the bus drivers will not know that these passengers are making a forced interchange, and will require them to touch in Oyster cards. Consider somebody travelling from Putney Bridge to Baker Street. He will be charged for the journey from Putney Bridge to High Street, but then will be charged again when he has to transfer to the bus. Is any document handed out at High Street to advise bus drivers that the passenger has been required to make the transfer? If the passenger has to make a further journey on the Underground, he will pay a third fare when re-entering at Baker Street. The same situation applies in the reverse direction, of course.

TfL will no doubt reply that fares are capped at a daily maximum. That is a useful facility, but little consolation to the passenger who set out to make a simple one-fare journey.

TfL are now suggesting abolishing cash fare payments on buses. There are numerous objections to this proposal, but it very much looks as if that idea, and numerous other aspects of the Oyster Card, are very much all for the benefit of the organisation, with little thought for the needs of the customers. The thousands of people who have to make a bus trip from home to their nearest Underground station on their journey to work have to pay two fares, in each direction. That would be unthinkable in nearly every city of Europe, where journeys are charged from origin to destination, irrespective of transfers between different modes of transport.

*Yours sincerely, Ted Relton.
Kesgrave, Suffolk. By E-Mail*

Dear Brian,

11 September 2013

MET. LOCOS ON THE GN&C

The second locomotive working on engineers trains on the GN&C in 1935 (see *Underground News* No.622, page 544), was No.16. Full details are in K.R. Benest's "Metropolitan Railway Electric Locomotives" –

First edition: Lens of Sutton 1963 page 36.

Second edition: TLURS undated c.1985, page 85.

The latter gives dates 22 July 1934 to 22 April 1936. Both mention "modifications to collector gear" and isolation of two motors.

*Yours sincerely, Greg Child.
Watford.*

Dear Brian,

1 October 2013

CIRCLE LINE T-CUP SERVICE

I visit London infrequently, but having used the Circle Line recently since the change to the T-cup service I have been musing on possible improvements. Reading the article by John Hawkins "Crossrail via the Circle Line" in the October *Underground News* jogged me to putting my thoughts on paper. I claim no originality as I'm sure others may have had similar thoughts.

I believe that the primary objective was to arrange the Circle Line as a point-to-point service to improve recovery when problems arose whilst maintaining the core service around the Circle itself. This the T-cup does, but with the loss of through trains from the west side of the Circle beyond Edgware Road. There is probably an over-provided service between Hammersmith and Edgware Road (a point also made by John Hawkins).

My thoughts are that a two-handled T-cup Circle service, viz: Hammersmith – Edgware Road – Aldgate – Victoria – Edgware Road – Barking would continue to meet the benefits of the one-handled service whilst bringing additional benefits. The "H&C" service would cease as such with journeys presently running from Hammersmith taken up at Edgware Road by trains from the Circle continuing on to Barking. Specifically, conflicting movements at Praed Street Junction would be reduced (there being fewer trains to/from the Hammersmith direction), and a service from the west of the Circle through Edgware Road would be re-instated. I'm not familiar with the timetabling of the present services but I think it likely that with the reduced mileage, savings would be made with both train sets and crew.

The possible disadvantages that I see are the reduced service between Hammersmith and Edgware Road and the loss of through trains between Hammersmith and the Barking line. Regarding the former, would this not be outweighed by the other benefits? And potential travellers around Hammersmith and Wood Lane stations have District and Central services respectively to the east London area. Passengers from/to the Hammersmith direction would need a change if wishing to go to/from Aldgate East and beyond, but not only would they have a same platform change anywhere from Edgware Road to Liverpool Street, but numbers are likely to be significantly less than those who are currently now forced to change at Edgware Road.

A side benefit could be the abandonment of the "Hammersmith and City" name, an anachronism anyway, with all journeys promoted as "Circle". This would simplify publicity, maps etc. and on-board and platform announcements already adequately define the routing (and destination) of trains, so these changes would not add further difficulties. Main line passengers at Paddington would also have either of the Underground stations available for journeys to/from the north side of the Circle.

*Yours sincerely, Michael Jarvis.
By E-Mail.*

Dear Brian,

1 October 2013

LONDON UNDERGROUND

I understand the frustration felt by Michael Whitehead. Neither as a member of traincrew, nor later as a member of LUL management, have I ever been protectionist. To most members of the LURS, 'the combine/railway' or by whatever other name we call it, is the chief thing.

I have certainly written to all and sundry, including "On The Move" magazine (who actually published the letter) regarding the disparity between steam/electric journey time from Amersham to London in the 1950s and S Stock travel today.

And, yes, Wembley Park southbound Metropolitan Line is a pain.

I, too, wonder about lack of standardisation of such things as door tones, space at terminals before buffers, platform heights, bus replacement 'service' and so on. How much had PPP to do with it, I wonder?

The comments in *Underground News* No.621 about the big gaps to be minded brings me to another issue. The RATP addressed the curvature of their platforms with the BOA articulated, short vehicle train, now followed, I believe by a service version (*on line 7bis – Ed.*). LUL need short vehicle trains on the older lines with sharp curved platforms, yet, for a number of years, cars were getting longer. Of course, the longer the car, the greater the gaps between the doorways and platform edges – unless you have movable edges to the cars or platforms, which introduce their own problems.

By all means, let us have correspondence on these issues. Who knows, it may influence LU policy!!! The latest comment I have is regarding the "Cooling the Tube" project or whatever it's called. Now, let us be frank. The English weather is not often too hot. But we do have wet and cold winters – and other times of year. However, it seems many stocks still stand at outdoor termini with their doors wide open, admitting wind, rain and cold. I remember, as a guard, travelling on a stopping train from Amersham, with water still on the inside of the windows at Finchley Road. Are there plans to have rolling stock refurbs that address this? (Please say if there are). What about a new project for LUL: "Warming the Tube". That would be popular with a lot of passengers, methinks.

THE MET VIA THE CITY WIDENED LINES

With reference to "Points of Interest in the October issue of *Underground News*, my understanding of the connection of the Outer Rail to the in-bound (Up) Widened Lines at King's Cross was not so much to relieve pressure on the Outer Rail *per se*, as they had already travelled on the outer rail from Baker Street.

I believe it was **primarily** to bring Moorgate reversers into the bay platforms at Moorgate without crossing the Inner Rail on the flat at Moorgate, since they crossed under the Circle at Ray Street (just west of Farringdon (Street)). In effect, this provided the in-bound trains with a flyunder junction.

Thus the Inner Rail suffered less disruption, although, of course, the Outer Rail would also probably have benefited, since in-bound Moorgate reversers would not hold up the Outer Rail whilst waiting to cross to a bay at Moorgate.

CROSSRAIL VIA THE CIRCLE LINE

This project always amazed me from the time I first heard of it. I was surprised so much time and effort was taken to refute it. It makes one's mind boggle to consider 12- or even 10-car trains trundling around the north of the Circle. We have seen the incredible disruption that the rebuilding of King's Cross/St. Pancras and associated works have caused over the last few years. Even if we allow that all the 'advantages' of the scheme were possible when completed, can we envisage the immense disruption that would be caused to the north side of the Circle Line for a period that would surely well have exceeded a couple of years!? Total withdrawal of all services along it would surely have been required for months.

I imagine the Euston Road would have to have been dug up for portions of its length, which would have inhibited a replacement bus service. And would the 12-car platforms at Baker Street not have reached as far as those at Edgware Road? Just think of the re-building needed at Edgware Road, where the site is very restricted – likewise, Aldgate, if that was included. And, surely, a number of sharp curves would have needed straightening at least to some degree. As we are seeing today (e.g. regarding HS2), new underground building is often much easier than adapting existing formations.

In fact, the more I consider the details of the plan, the more impossible it would seem to implement. One feels that 'someone' looked at a map, saw that there was a railway line between Whitechapel and Paddington and thought "why build a new line, when there is one there already?"

And, again, this does not begin to take account of the need for extra capacity in London's transport which we are assured is needed over the next decades, since it would seemingly have restricted some areas of growth.

I would be most interested to know how detailed any plans were that would have covered any of the points I have made here, let alone many more that we could think up fairly quickly. If someone has information that has not yet come to light, I for one would love to hear it!

Electrification to Aylesbury: I seem to recall that Aylesbury was on earlier Crossrail proposals, not *via* the southern half of the Met., but curving up beyond Paddington to meet the Met & GC near Kenton.

Circle Line problems: Please don't get me started on this subject! I am a Circle Line fan! It had worked for over 100 years. It is a circle: the trains just need to go round and round. Simple! I have worked on it in various jobs over the years. There are no problems with it that a simple application of basic management could not solve. Currently, it seems that the 'solution' of withdrawing it is used as soon as there is the slightest hiccup, even more than it used to be!

Yours sincerely, Eric Stuart.

By E-Mail.