

# NORTH DEVON RAILWAY REPORT

DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS

Sponsored by  
DARTINGTON HALL TRUSTEES  
TOTNES DEVON

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The findings of the North Devon Railway Enquiry

DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS

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THE NORTH DEVON RAILWAY ACTION COMMITTEE

Chairman : W. T. C. Buckingham

Secretary : E. Harwood

THE NORTH DEVON RAILWAY ENQUIRY

Director : David St John Thomas

The North Devon Railway Action Committee was formed late in 1962 before the publication of *The Reshaping of British Railways* (the Beeching plan). The Committee included representatives of nearly all the local authorities and a number of other organisations which contributed funds to cover the cost of a fact-finding Enquiry.

Mr David St John Thomas was engaged to direct the Enquiry and to report on the railway situation and make recommendations. This report is addressed to the Action Committee.

The Trustees of Dartington Hall have sponsored the actual publication of the report, as they did the author's *Rural Transport : A Report* (1960) and *Lake District Transport Report* (1961).



DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS

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## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject to the provision of new bus services for local passengers, and to the improvement of the train service *via* Barnstaple for long-distance travellers, the Taunton-Barnstaple line should be closed entirely (page 26-7).

The train service between Exeter and Barnstaple should be reduced, but speeds increased and connections improved at Exeter (page 27-8).

The Ilfracombe line should be retained for passenger traffic but closed to goods. The track should be singled (page 28).

Ordinary goods traffic should be retained at Bideford and Torrington, and a skeleton service for long-distance travellers run as far as Bideford (page 29).

Widespread economic and personal hardship cannot be avoided unless some services are maintained at a loss. The nation should contribute directly to the cost, an annual subsidy of about £1,000 per route mile of railway retained being suggested (page 31).

## FOREWORD

*By Jeremy Thorpe, M.P. for North Devon*

Good communications are vital to the prosperity of the countryside. Without them economic growth will be checked and depopulation accelerated.

However, faced with Dr Beeching's proposals the layman is inevitably at a disadvantage in evaluating the likely social consequences of railway closure. It was for this reason that the North Devon Railway Action Committee was formed. The Committee has had two objectives: to commission an independent survey to assess the transport needs of the North Devon area, whether by road or rail; and to prepare to take collective action to ensure adequate communications for the area as a whole.

Mr Thomas's resulting report is an invaluable document. It will be of interest far beyond North Devon, for the problems of this region are shared in part by many other areas. For example, two of the lines proposed for closure lead to areas scheduled as development districts on account of high local unemployment; they are also vital to the holiday industry. A third line serves a remote and scattered rural area; whilst redundancy amongst displaced railway workers will be more acute in the South West than anywhere else. Mr Thomas's disclosures of the grossly wasteful administration of the railways in recent years will cause grave concern.

What clearly emerges from the report is that any closure must be compensated for by the immediate provision of greatly improved bus services, if necessary subsidised, coupled with extensive road improvements. Unless this is done some rural areas will be condemned to a slow death.

I commend this report to anyone who is concerned for the future prosperity of our countryside.



## CHAPTER I

### *THE GENERAL SITUATION*

**R**ECEIPTS from the conveyance of passengers and goods cover less than half the cost of running North Devon's railway system. Many individual trains and stations do not earn a fifth of their costs. In total the loss on the passenger system works out at £5—£6 per annum per head of the district's population. The transfer of all traffic now carried by train to the roads would make relatively little difference to road congestion.

Yet North Devon's removal from the railway map would cause widespread economic and social hardship. Fewer tourists would visit the resorts; fewer newly-retired people would come to settle in the area; the chances of solving the long-standing unemployment problem would be substantially reduced; and generally North Devon would be placed at a severe disadvantage compared with the rest of Southern England.

North Devon's railways are little used, but they are still essential: that the area is highly dependent upon what could easily be dismissed as a white elephant is a paradox which must be understood clearly, both locally and by the Government, if action which might lead to distress and depopulation is to be avoided.

The first point to be emphasised is that road transport is chosen almost automatically for both passenger and goods journeys to and from, and within, North Devon unless there is a specific advantage in using the railways. From this it follows that the majority of people and goods still using trains are doing so because no alternative exists or because the alternative is much slower or more expensive. Research undertaken for this report has produced abundant evidence to support this statement. Not only was it found that people still travelling by train had a particular reason for doing so, but it was possible to tell precisely what that reason was in the majority of cases before actually questioning the people concerned.

Passenger traffic falls into three main categories:

1. Long-distance. The long-distance services and connections are undoubtedly the most important. As will be explained later, the majority of passengers on long-distance train journeys do not regard coach and bus travel as a feasible alternative. Those prepared to go by coach and bus mostly do so already.

2. All-the-year-round local travel. With few exceptions the railways are now carrying only the leavings from the bus services. Thus there is little local traffic on the Taunton-Barnstaple line

between Taunton and Wiveliscombe, and between South Molton and Barnstaple, where bus services are good. But the railway still provides the only public transport for a number of villages in the sparsely-populated area in between. In the Taw Valley between Crediton and Barnstaple the more important wayside stations remain relatively busy as there is no bus service. Between Barnstaple and Bideford, and again between Bideford and Torrington, most local passengers go by bus, but the smaller number making the entire Barnstaple-Torrington journey choose the railway as there is no through bus and connections are poor.

3. Excursion traffic. Cheap tickets, including runabout tickets, entice to the railways some travellers who would otherwise have used a bus. These are the only train travellers who would not be seriously inconvenienced by the closure of the railways without the introduction of special bus replacements.

Likewise, the railways' goods traffic is mainly in two categories:

1. Goods which are the natural prerogative of the railways—mail, newspapers and perishables for which there is no road equivalent in speed and regularity, and coal for which the railways are still more effective and cheaper on long-distance hauls.

2. Miscellaneous goods mainly in small consignments for which road transport has not troubled to compete.

The combination of traffic obviously suitable for rail transport (such as long-distance passengers and milk) with traffic obviously unsuitable (such as people going from village to village and the occasional peak-time load from a firm which normally transports all its goods by road) has led to an unhappy compromise.

To quote the most obvious example, because there is no bus service in the Taw Valley, most passenger trains, including those to and from London, stop at up to 11 stations between Exeter and Barnstaple, and every train (except on summer Saturdays) stops at all 12 stations between Taunton and Barnstaple. This has induced many long-distance travellers who value their time to drive to Exeter or Taunton stations. The passenger from London who is met by a car at Taunton can often be in Barnstaple half-an-hour earlier than if he did the whole journey by train. Their Victorian crawl has inevitably depleted the railways' long-distance traffic to and from North Devon and made it less worthwhile for them to improve their service.

The situation on the goods side is not quite so clear-cut but in the long run could be even more serious. Large merchants with steady business have to a great extent deserted the railways because the train services and charges are geared to smaller, irregular consignments.

In North Devon, more than in most areas, the railways have lost the very type of freight they are now seeking to carry. Conversely

they carry much which ultimately they would like to abandon.

A cursory glance at the railway system is sufficient to show that changes are overdue. Certain trains run almost empty year by year, and weekly takings at some stations do not always pay a single day's wages for the staff employed there. Receipts cover only 2 per cent of the cost of the Torrington-Halwill passenger service. If the railways are to play an active part in North Devon's future, they must reorganise radically.

The theory that how the railways are run is a purely domestic matter for themselves is demonstrably invalid. More energetic management in the past might well have led to a more prosperous North Devon today. It would be wrong for this report to be content with stating what railways, and bus replacements, are necessary to the local economy *now*. It is equally important for the area that what remains of the railway system should be viable, worth British Railways' while to keep running well into the future.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SYSTEM

THE only historical point essential to any understanding of the present position is that development was largely governed by the relationship between the two companies serving the area.<sup>1</sup> For many years the rivals found it more important to compete than to co-operate to furnish the best service; and later they signed an agreement to preserve the *status quo* on their respective routes to Barnstaple, resulting in both being left substantially single track, as they are today.

The Taunton-Barnstaple line belonged to the Great Western Railway; the rest of the system belonged to the London & South Western Railway, later the Southern Railway, and was within the Southern Region of British Railways until all lines in the South West were brought into the Western Region on 1 January 1963. (To be strictly accurate, the Southern lines were temporarily transferred to the Western for commercial—not operating—purposes in 1958, but were returned to the Southern.)

The most direct route to North Devon from London as well as from Bristol and the Midlands lies through Taunton. But since the war the Taunton-Barnstaple Junction line has lost importance. Most through passenger traffic, and all goods traffic, now comes *via* Exeter and Eggesford in the Taw Valley. For people and goods travelling from Bristol, the Midlands, Wales and the North, this adds 22 miles.

The main line from Exeter to Barnstaple goes on to Ilfracombe. The Barnstaple to Bideford and Torrington section is now regarded as a branch and worked as a self-contained unit. The continuation of this line from Torrington through Petrockstow to Halwill is regarded as another self-contained branch.

#### TAUNTON—BARNSTAPLE

At one time the GWR ran daily expresses in summer, with through coaches from Paddington to Ilfracombe. Since the war, working from beyond Taunton to Ilfracombe has been resumed only on summer Saturdays, and even this was reduced in 1962.

<sup>1</sup> An account of the history of railways in North Devon is included in the author's *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain: Volume One: The West Country* (Phoenix House).

Except on summer Saturdays, all six trains from Taunton to Barnstaple Junction stop at all 12 intermediate stations, taking about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  hours to cover the 46 miles. The route is steeply graded, has a maximum speed limit of 60 m.p.h., and abounds with more severe restrictions at specific points. Nine coaches or 28 goods wagons are the maximum loads. Maintenance is heavy: repairing the Tone Viaduct near Wiveliscombe (now in a critical condition) and other viaducts, bridges and tunnels, could well swallow the entire receipts from the branch were this to be kept open for another ten years. Yet in three ways this branch has potential advantage over the Exeter-Barnstaple line. Firstly, of course, it is more direct for the majority of long-distance passengers to and from North Devon. Secondly, although the track is single, except between Taunton and Milverton, passing loops at the intermediate stations are adequate. Thirdly, before the war the line was equipped with automatic token exchangers. (Drivers of all trains on the single lines in North Devon have to carry a 'token' or 'staff' as part of the signalling system—a different token between each pair of signalboxes. By hand, the exchange between signalman and driver should not take place while the train is moving at more than 15 or 20 m.p.h.; automatically—using apparatus similar to that used by the Post Office for picking up and dropping mail from moving trains—it may be done at speed).

Four economies have been made on the Taunton-Barnstaple line in recent years.

1. Barnstaple Victoria Road station, a terminus where trains between Taunton and Barnstaple Junction had to reverse, has been closed, and the Barnstaple East Loop (closed for many years) has now become part of a continuous section from Swimbridge to Barnstaple Junction.

2. Through goods traffic has been removed, being sent *via* Exeter instead. This has reduced the opening hours of signalboxes, saved engine power, and resulted in better use of the goods trains already running between Exeter and Barnstaple Junction. But some goods are still handled at the former Barnstaple Victoria Road. Thus trucks which pass through Taunton on their way to Barnstaple *via* Exeter may eventually go the first mile back toward Taunton on the Barnstaple-Taunton branch, and will have travelled 71 instead of 45 miles, not making any allowance for shunting movements at Exeter.

3. Morebath station has become an unstaffed halt, largely with a view to closing its signalbox.

4. As from June 1963, except on Fridays and Saturdays, the last down evening train from Taunton connects with the 4.30 p.m. instead of the 6.30 p.m. from Paddington, enabling signalboxes to be closed earlier.

## EXETER—BARNSTAPLE

As far as Yeoford, North Devon trains share the route of those bound for Okehampton, Padstow and Plymouth. The track continues double on the North Devon line as far as Copplestone, and again from Umberleigh, but is single for the 19 intermediate miles. Engineering works were built for double track, and but for the pre-war agreement with the GWR to stop developing routes to North Devon, the Southern would have completed the doubling. Since the war the use of an American signalling system (C.T.C.) has been suggested: this would greatly ease the flow on the single-track section, but is now considered too expensive. Meanwhile the loops at several of the intermediate stations still cannot accommodate full-length trains, and when two have to be 'crossed' (usually on summer Saturdays) one of them must shunt its tail back into a siding, a tedious procedure long since abolished on routes to other holiday resorts the size of Ilfracombe.

This route is not equipped with automatic token exchangers, and non-stopping trains have to slow to allow exchange by hand at the seven stations at the beginning or end of single-line sections. Sharp curves also restrict speed in places, but the track is well laid, and the *Atlantic Coast Express* comfortably completes the 39 miles from Exeter St David's to Barnstaple in an hour with a single stop. Most trains, however, stop almost everywhere. After lengthy waits at both Exeter Central and Exeter St David's, the passenger on a through train from London may come to a halt 12 times before he reaches Barnstaple Junction.

The Exeter-Barnstaple section comes to life early in the morning with mail and goods trains, but because working even one train over the single-line sections involves keeping open all signalboxes, the service ceases early. The last train from Waterloo is the 3.0 p.m., leaving Exeter just before 7.0 p.m. On ordinary days nine passenger and three goods trains run in each direction.

## BARNSTAPLE—ILFRACOMBE

This is one of the most spectacular railways in Southern England, with steep gradients and sharp curves on either side of the summit near Morteohoe & Woolacombe. The first section, from Barnstaple Junction to Barnstaple Town, over the curved bridge across the estuary, is single track, but beyond Barnstaple Town the track is double, and the extra capacity is needed on summer Saturdays in particular, when Ilfracombe receives a number of trains *via* Taunton as well as an augmented service *via* Exeter. The normal benefit of double track—that odd trains can run at off-peak times without heavy signalling expenses—unfortunately does

not apply here. To pass one train, two signalboxes have to be open at Barnstaple Town, one controlling a level crossing and the other the junction between single and double track. Between Barnstaple Town and Ilfracombe there are eight level crossings, each one provided with gates and signals, and three controlled from full-scale signalboxes. Signalling and the heavy fuel costs resulting from the gradients make the Ilfracombe section costly to work. On ordinary days there are 10 passenger trains and one goods into Ilfracombe.

#### BARNSTAPLE—TORRINGTON

This used to be regarded as the 'main' line in preference to the Ilfracombe route but, except on summer Saturdays, since June 1963 it has lost its last daily through coaches to and from Waterloo and is an almost self-contained branch. The track is single, with passing places at all three intermediate stations. Its passenger service resembles Ilfracombe's, but there are additional goods trains, mainly carrying clay from Petrockstow (beyond Torrington) to Fremington or Barnstaple and beyond.

#### TORRINGTON—HALWILL

The last railway to be built in the West Country, this route has slight importance except for the clay traffic originating from the Dunsbear-Petrockstow area. The line is included in this report solely on account of its clay traffic, which affects the rest of the system. At present some of this leaves the area *via* Halwill, but the plan is to send it all *via* Torrington.

#### DR BEECHING'S PROPOSALS

The plan for *The reshaping of British Railways* published in March 1963 envisages the closure to passengers of the entire railway system of North Devon except for the Exeter-Barnstaple Junction section. The only intermediate stations to be retained on this are Crediton, Lapford and Eggesford. The line from Barnstaple through Fremington, Bideford and Torrington to Petrockstow is to be retained for clay traffic, it has been announced, but it has not been stated whether ordinary goods traffic will be catered for at the intermediate stations, including Bideford. If the plan is carried out in its entirety, Barnstaple will certainly be the only station handling 'smalls' traffic in the whole area. It has been said that the requirements of traders with 'mileage' traffic (complete wagon-loads) will be borne in mind in shaping the final proposals for goods.

It might be added that before the main plan was published, it

was known that British Railways were seeking to close entirely the Taunton-Barnstaple line. The revenue from the passenger service at present covers only about ten per cent of the costs. These costs are stated by British Railways to be about £80,000, allowing only £16,100 for track and signalling expenses, most of the track upkeep still being attributed to the freight side. But freight traffic will anyway cease under new arrangements, including the Taunton freight concentration scheme planned for 1964. If the branch were retained for passenger trains, therefore, they would be charged with the whole of the track costs. Even with a minimum service of diesel units and a drastic reduction in signalling arrangements, a passenger service would still cost £80,000 at the very least for a revenue of about £8,000.

Also before the publication of the Beeching plan, the possibility of establishing a freight concentration depot at Barnstaple and closing the Ilfracombe line to goods was under investigation. It was announced in 1962 that cattle traffic would no longer be handled in North Devon from January 1963, but in fact it is to continue at Barnstaple for the time being.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TRAFFIC

NUMEROUS sources of information were used to gauge the traffic carried by North Devon's railways at all seasons of the year. This general information was supplemented by a number of checks made during the Enquiry in April and May 1963. The most important of these was a complete census of passenger traffic on 7 May.

#### THE CENSUS OF 7 MAY

The first Tuesday in May was chosen as a typical fairly quiet day, when traffic would not be influenced by market and half days, or by weekend movements. An enumerator travelled by every train on all four routes converging on Barnstaple. The census shows, as it were, the bare bones of the traffic. Even in early May, before North Devon's holiday season begins, there is considerable additional long-distance traffic out of the area on Mondays and Saturdays, and into it on Fridays and Saturdays, while several hundred people still go to Barnstaple by train on the busier market days (Fridays).<sup>1</sup>

During the day a total of 1,149½ passengers joined trains in the survey area or were already on board trains entering the southernmost point of the survey at Crediton on the Exeter line. Of passengers entering the survey area, 29 and 56 were on long-distance journeys to North Devon from other parts of the country *via* Taunton and *via* Exeter respectively. A total of 1,180 passengers alighted at stations in the survey area or were on trains leaving it. 26 and 78 were beginning long-distance journeys from North Devon to another part of the country *via* Taunton and *via* Exeter respectively.

The busiest trains were on the Exeter-Barnstaple line. The average number of passengers on trains between station stops was 22.09. The average per mile would be greater, as the trains carrying the most passengers were generally those stopping least often. The next busiest section was the Ilfracombe line, where the average number of passengers between stops was 12.69. Then came the Taunton-Barnstaple line with an average number of 11.42 and finally the Barnstaple-Torrington section with an average of 9.18.

<sup>1</sup> As we were trying to assess the revenue-earning potential, only fare-paying passengers were included. Transport staff on duty and babies were omitted, and any two children aged 3—14 counted as one adult.

But averages are misleading. The census amply demonstrated that the bulk of the traffic falls to a small proportion of the trains, especially on the Taunton, Ilfracombe and Torrington lines. The first train to reach Taunton carried more passengers than all the other five arrivals of the day. The *Atlantic Coast Express* carried more passengers to Ilfracombe than did the preceding five services put together. Well over half the traffic from Barnstaple to Torrington was carried by three out of ten trains. Even on the Exeter-Barnstaple line, where average as well as total use was better, the elimination of two patently under-employed trains in each direction would have brought the average number of passengers per stop on the remaining services up to almost 30. Similarly, the majority of passengers used a small number of stations. Barnstaple Junction was the busiest, with  $330\frac{1}{2}$  passengers joining trains and  $287\frac{1}{2}$  leaving them, apart from people changing from one service to another. Among the other busier stations were:

|                       | Joining         | Leaving          |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Barnstaple Town       | 144             | $127\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Ilfracombe            | $89\frac{1}{2}$ | 93               |
| Braunton              | 71              | 78               |
| Bideford              | $74\frac{1}{2}$ | $71\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Torrington            | $65\frac{1}{2}$ | $43\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Mortehoe & Woolacombe | $41\frac{1}{2}$ | $42\frac{1}{2}$  |

The position on the Taunton-Barnstaple line is shown in the following table, the significance of which becomes even clearer when it is remembered that over half the arrivals at Taunton (64, mainly people going to school or work in Taunton from Dulverton and Wiveliscombe) were on the first train in the morning. One train carried a single passenger, and on 71 occasions trains stopped at stations without passengers joining or leaving.

|                            | Joining          | Leaving          |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Taunton                    | $119\frac{1}{2}$ | $116\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Milverton                  | $10\frac{1}{2}$  | 10               |
| Wiveliscombe               | $35\frac{1}{2}$  | $28\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Venn Cross                 | $5\frac{1}{2}$   | 14               |
| Morebath Halt              | 4                | 5                |
| Morebath Junction Halt     | 2                | $4\frac{1}{2}$   |
| Dulverton                  | 54               | 34               |
| East Anstey                | 10               | 5                |
| Yeo Mill Halt              | —                | 1                |
| Bishop's Nympton & Molland | 4                | 3                |
| South Molton               | 10               | $10\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Filleigh                   | 2                | 2                |
| Swimbridge                 | 4                | 5                |
| Barnstaple Junction        | 27               | 49               |

On the Ilfracombe line, Wrafton station averaged only 0.5 passengers per train, and on the Torrington line, Instow and Fremington between them averaged only about half a passenger per train. The intermediate stations between Crediton and Barnstaple Junction were used as follows:

|                 | Joining | Leaving |
|-----------------|---------|---------|
| Yeoford         | 12½     | 33½     |
| Copplestone     | 6½      | 3½      |
| Morchard Road   | 10½     | 11      |
| Lapford         | 30½     | 37      |
| Eggesford       | 20½     | 20      |
| King's Nympton  | 16      | 23      |
| Portsmouth Arms | 10      | 16½     |
| Umburleigh      | 11      | 14½     |
| Chapelton       | 8½      | 13½     |

### THE GENERAL PATTERN

The autumn, winter and spring Monday-to-Friday average number of railway journeys made partly or wholly in North Devon is about 1,500.<sup>1</sup> In summer much depends on the weather, but the figure would frequently be between 2,500 and 3,000, and occasionally well above. On summer Saturdays the total would occasionally approach 10,000, including a maximum of about 4,000 long-distance journeys both to and from the area, over half travelling to or from stations on the Ilfracombe line.

On summer Saturdays the Taunton-Barnstaple line still carries considerable through traffic. On other days its importance is now chiefly local, though it affords the earliest service to London in the morning and the latest return in the evening, perhaps 150 passengers alighting at Barnstaple on the last Friday night train before a Bank Holiday weekend. Dulverton is the busiest intermediate station, with 1,000 passengers and parcels even in winter, while heavy freight traffic at South Molton chiefly comprises fertilizers, animal feeding stuffs and coal.

The rest of the system may be judged as a whole, centred on Barnstaple Junction. In the down direction, the first trains from Exeter carry a high proportion of short-distance passengers, mostly alighting at Barnstaple. The morning trains on from Barnstaple to Ilfracombe and Torrington are poorly patronised. The better-loaded

<sup>1</sup> Figures still refer to whole-fare passengers, children counting as half. In fact relatively few school children are carried, the Devon and Somerset County Councils supplying only 78 season tickets between them for children's journeys on railways in the Enquiry area, including the Torrington-Halwill section.

trains from Exeter later in the day chiefly carry medium and long-distance passengers. Roughly one-third of them alight at Barnstaple, one-third remain on the train for stations on the Ilfracombe line, and the remaining third change to the Torrington connection. Ilfracombe and Torrington trains leaving Barnstaple Junction thus carry about an equal number of passengers, with a slight balance in favour of Ilfracombe at all times and a stronger one when holiday-makers and trippers form an appreciable part of the traffic.

But whereas the Torrington trains leave Barnstaple Junction with their maximum load, the Ilfracombe trains call additionally at Barnstaple Town, and there collect local travellers, especially for Braunton (where the railway serves a growing area better than the bus does) and Morteohoe & Woolacombe. This local traffic can reach considerable proportions on fine days in summer. Taking all factors into account, therefore, the Ilfracombe line is considerably busier than the Torrington one, though in winter as few as 60 passengers a day may travel through to Ilfracombe itself. Additionally, while Ilfracombe people travelling to London generally catch a through train from Ilfracombe, Torrington and Bideford people—without through coaches—are more tempted to go by road to Barnstaple, or even drive as far as Taunton.

Ilfracombe probably receives about one-quarter of its holiday-makers by train, a higher proportion than the rest of North Devon. In 1962 about 35,000 holidaymakers seem to have travelled by train to stations on the Ilfracombe line. About 75 per cent of this line's long-distance passengers come in the three months of the summer timetable. Goods traffic is light, totalling only 6,000 tons annually at Ilfracombe itself, but parcels traffic by passenger trains is heavy, including advance luggage (often of motoring holidaymakers as well as railway travellers), a large proportion of Ilfracombe's perishable catering requirements and, in the opposite direction, fruit, flowers and mushrooms for London and the Midlands.

On the Torrington line, Bideford station issued 25,918 tickets (plus 536 season tickets) in 1962, and 42,640 tickets were collected. The seasonal nature of some of the business may be gauged from this comparison between February and July:

|                       | February | July  |
|-----------------------|----------|-------|
| Season tickets issued | 4        | 101   |
| Other tickets issued  | 1,279    | 2,937 |
| Tickets collected     | 1,856    | 5,418 |

Also in 1962, 27,000 tickets were issued at Torrington, including those for journeys on the Halwill line. Much of the revenue of the Torrington line comes from goods traffic. At Bideford coal and other freight received totalled 23,000 tons in 1962. Milk and cream from

Torrington alone produces a revenue of £2,000 monthly, and clay from Petrockstow rather more. At present some of the clay leaves the district *via* Halwill, but Dr Beeching's proposal is to send it all *via* Torrington. Gloves are another important item from Torrington itself. Some of the clay is exported, and much of North Devon's house coal is imported, at Fremington, where the quay is served by rail only.

It is not proposed to deal in detail with the freight traffic from Exeter to Barnstaple as its organisation is sound, and it is not threatened with withdrawal. It should be stated, however, that even this line, on which all goods for Barnstaple and beyond are now concentrated, was shown as carrying less than 5,000 tons per week in British Railways' map of traffic densities published in 1962. It is, of course, intended to close most of the intermediate wayside stations to goods as well as to passengers.

### TRAFFIC POTENTIAL

The suggestion most frequently encountered during the Enquiry was that much of the loss of traffic during recent years has been unnecessary, and that even now the railways could win substantial additional business without undue effort or expenditure. This Report must unfortunately endorse the first part of the statement, particularly so far as goods traffic is concerned. In interviews and correspondence, industrialists and agricultural and other merchants produced forcible evidence to demonstrate that the railway service has not met their requirements adequately. Criticism particularly concerned delays in considering complaints and suggestions. These delays have no doubt partly arisen from those very changes in regional boundaries and other administration which have so weakened the competitive position of railways in North Devon.

It is not so easy to endorse the point that greater efficiency could win much extra traffic for the rails. North Devon's long-standing under-employment has encouraged entry to the road haulage business, which therefore offers highly competitive charges and services. Most of the firms which have largely abandoned rail transport are well-pleased with their road-haulage arrangements—though they may still depend on the railways for extra cartage at peak times, for small consignments which do not justify a lorry, and for goods which may have to be delivered urgently. Even now traffic is drifting from the railways to the roads, and this process is accelerated by the fact that larger firms with road transport are absorbing the smaller ones still using trains.

On the freight side, therefore, it is hard to be optimistic, though a much faster and cheaper service which promised to become a permanent feature of North Devon's life, and was not merely

experimental, might eventually make a useful impact. This question of permanency is vital. At present firms who distribute goods by road from selected railheads are loath to develop a depot in North Devon for fear that the whole area will eventually be removed from the railway map; and yet more important, industrialists requiring rail transport for even a small proportion of their needs regard the railway position as an obstacle to moving to the district. The greatest possible benefit would result from British Railways securing long-term contracts for bulk timber, cement, oil and other traffic which would ensure retention of the line to Barnstaple on a long-term basis. The forestry position deserves especially close examination, and the County Planning Committee might possibly take part in consultations.<sup>1</sup>

The passenger outlook is brighter. Many people go to some trouble to avoid using North Devon's railways who would be pleased to travel by train were the services faster. With efficient arrangements at Exeter, a much speedier journey between Exeter and Barnstaple than at present, a shorter stop at Barnstaple, and a rapid continuation to Ilfracombe, a large potential of medium and long-distance passengers might be tapped.

<sup>1</sup> It was recently announced that British Railways are to keep open the West Highland line from Glasgow to Fort William largely because they have won a long-term contract in connection with pulp mills to be built at Fort William.

## CHAPTER IV

### *HARDSHIP AND INCONVENIENCE*

**T**WO distinct types of disruption would result from reducing North Devon's railway system as Dr Beeching's plans suggest.

1. The area's economy and competitive position would be generally weakened.

2. Hardship and inconvenience would be suffered in varying degrees by an appreciable number of individuals.

Although personal hardship cannot be overlooked, in the long run the chief object must be to protect the area's well-being as a whole.<sup>1</sup> The first difficulty is that the best and cheapest railway service for the North Devon of the future would require the elimination of those very stations whose closure is likely to cause most—or at least the most severe—individual hardship. As has already been stressed, the efficiency of the railways has been impaired by their service of isolated pockets of population which bus companies have not found it worthwhile to add to their routes.

*The Holiday Trade.* Undoubtedly the implementation of the Beeching Plan would cause the worst damage to Ilfracombe, North Devon's largest resort and also the town with the most consistently high unemployment rate. The present bad railway service has already inflicted much harm, but trains still bring a quarter of the visitors, and these are chiefly people staying for a complete fortnight. Some small catering establishments receive three-quarters of their guests by train, and two-thirds of the hoteliers and boarding-house proprietors replying to a questionnaire indicated that the

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, under the 1962 Transport Act, the Transport Users' Consultative Committees, which investigate objections to proposals for the withdrawal of passenger services, are empowered to make recommendations to the Minister of Transport solely on grounds of positive hardship, as against mere inconvenience. This means that if and when British Railways present their case for closing the North Devon lines, the South Western Transport Users' Consultative Committee may well be more impressed by details of personal hardship caused by the elimination of an intermediate stop at a hamlet without a bus than by evidence relating to the larger towns or North Devon as a whole. Questions of general economic prosperity, of the size of traffic, and of the cost of running a simplified service, may be considered by British Railways on the one hand and by the Minister on the other, but are frequently ruled out of order by the T.U.C.C.s which in theory represent the public. There have been many criticisms of these arrangements. See the author's *The Rural Transport Problem* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963).

closing of the railway would have serious repercussions on their business. Boarding houses without parking space would be especially badly hit. As part of a separate enquiry last summer, a cross-section of rail arrivals were questioned about their choice of Ilfracombe; almost all said that had the town not been on the railway system they would have gone elsewhere. Many of them were young or old people, who either could not or would not have made even the last part of the journey by road, least of all by ordinary stage-service bus. The traffic would drop sharply even if passengers and luggage could be transferred smoothly from train to bus at Barnstaple. For example, few holidaymakers with luggage now change from train to Lynton bus at Barnstaple Junction. Lynton and Lynmouth have a prospering holiday trade and the virtual disappearance of rail-borne visitors has been relatively unimportant: Ilfracombe is a different kind of resort and a drop of even a third of the people who now come by train would have serious consequences.

Tourism at Braunton, Mortehoe and Woolacombe would also be severely affected by the closure of the Ilfracombe line, and at Westward Ho! by that of Bideford station.

*Attracting new residents.* Building homes and generally catering for retired people moving in from other parts of the country is potentially as important as tourism itself. Since the war North Devon has been singularly less fortunate than the south of the county in this type of development. This is in no small measure due to the inadequacy of the present train service. Although most newly-retired people may be motorists, they require a railway to take them rapidly back to London or Birmingham (where they may still have connections), to send their children to boarding school, or to bring summer visitors. The Londoner who retires in South Devon can comfortably travel to Town and back in a day; from the North Devon coast the double journey is either difficult or impossible. The closure of the Ilfracombe line in particular would greatly weaken North Devon's chances of keeping pace with the rest of the county in this important respect. The retention of the line to Ilfracombe, and the running of a faster service, as recommended in the next chapter, would enhance them.

*Industry.* A number of small existing factories, especially at Bideford and Torrington, would face increased charges and might be able to make less prompt deliveries if neither passenger nor goods trains continued beyond Barnstaple and if the closure of the Taunton line meant that all goods were charged *via* Exeter. (This alone would add 5 to 10 per cent on many consignments from most places except London.) Almost any factory uses railway facilities at least sporadically, and while sites remain freely available at towns elsewhere still served by trains, the task of attracting new

employment to North Devon will be extremely hard. It is worth mentioning that one of the latest factories to be opened in North Devon would have gone to another part of the country had Dr Beeching's plan been published before work started—despite the fact that most of the firm's goods go by road. There is solid evidence to support the claim made locally that *The Reshaping of British Railways* (and earlier the knowledge that it was coming) has nullified the benefits of the Local Employment Act for Ilfracombe and the Bideford area.

*Employment.* As well as indirectly restricting the number of jobs available in tourism, building and possibly industry, the rapid closure of the railways would itself add to the burden of unemployment. At present there are about 400 railwaymen in the survey area, and if the Beeching plan were fully implemented, the number would be reduced to a maximum of 100. The system is heavily over-staffed for present commitments, and a reduction would be needed even if all lines remained open. Dieselisation would involve yet further redundancy: almost 100 men at present work at Barnstaple's motive power depot. The longer the period over which the run-down was spread, obviously the greater the number of men who could be 'lost' through normal wastage, but the redundancy situation would appear to be more serious in North Devon than anywhere else in the South West.

The closing of the railways might also directly lead to unemployment among taxi-drivers, especially at Ilfracombe.

*Agriculture and Horticulture.* The closure of intermediate stations might cause severe hardship to several small firms of agricultural merchants whose deliveries and storage are entirely geared to the railways. Otherwise agriculture is not likely to be seriously affected. Little livestock now leaves the area by train, but facilities are maintained at Barnstaple Junction. The horticultural and poultry farming position is more serious. To quote two examples, large quantities of mushrooms and of turkey chicks are sent from Braunton and Dulverton stations respectively.

*Individual hardship.* Severe individual hardship would be caused in a number of villages by the withdrawal of trains without the provision of a new bus service. There is no bus at all serving the villages and hamlets between Lapford and Chapelton inclusive on the Exeter-Barnstaple line. On the Taunton-Barnstaple line, Dulverton has buses to Tiverton and Minehead, but no east-west service. The area served by Venn Cross, Morebath Halt and East Anstey stations at present have buses only on one or two days a week; the areas served by Morebath Junction Halt, Yeo Mill Halt and Bishop's Nympton & Molland have no bus at all. The only bus at Morte-hoe and Woolacombe goes to Ilfracombe.

Even if buses replaced trains everywhere for strictly local travel,

many people would be unable to make their present medium and long-distance journeys, should the full 'rationalisation' of the railways come to pass. It would be impossible, for example, for a substantial number of people who work elsewhere to return home for weekends, notably to stations on the Taunton-Barnstaple branch. For some this would mean real deprivation. Thus a widow living at Molland would not be visited each week by her only daughter working at Exeter. Unless a later service were provided from Exeter to Barnstaple than at present, the closure of the Taunton line would make it impossible for people working or attending meetings in London after lunch to reach any part of North Devon the same evening.

The closure of the railways at Ilfracombe and Bideford would greatly lengthen journey times to South Devon as well as the long-distance journeys out of the county. Attending meetings at Exeter or Torquay would become more of an undertaking for those without cars, and North Devon might well be less actively represented on some voluntary and other organisations. Attending hospitals for specialist treatment would become more difficult. The withdrawal of trains could, indeed, substantially lengthen some relatively short journeys, such as Torrington-Barnstaple, there being at present no through bus.

Inconvenience would of course be suffered by many not actually travelling by public transport themselves. Families on motoring holidays sometimes include a member who comes or leaves by train before or after the others. Children have to travel with luggage from their home towns for many purposes, and in the other direction aged aunts rely on trains for summer visits. These may seem small points, and in the general picture the fact that a man misses his hotel dinner because he has to go to the nearest railhead to collect his newly-arriving daughter may indeed be unimportant. Yet North Devon depends on tourism, and holidays are times for relaxed enjoyment, and even details may influence people to pick more readily accessible areas.

*School children and parties of young people.* Only 78 children attend county schools by train in the survey area, but something of the difficulty of providing alternative transport may be gauged from the fact that ratepayers would have to find almost an additional £1,000 annually to transport these 78 by road. (Details were kindly supplied by the education officers of Devon and Somerset.) Some children would find it extremely difficult to attend further education courses. Three boarding schools are served by Bideford station, through carriages now being run for the children at beginning and end of terms. West Buckland School, served by Filleigh station would be particularly isolated. The movement of parties of young people, a familiar feature on the district's rail-

ways at holiday time, would become more difficult, and organisers would undoubtedly be tempted to choose locations elsewhere still served by trains.

*Road congestion.* The closure of the railways would not add appreciably to general road congestion. But much of the additional traffic would be on the Taunton-Barnstaple route, where serious delays already arise at peak times. The closure of the Ilfracombe line would add to Barnstaple's traffic troubles, especially on summer Fridays and Saturdays. It might be added that great hardship would be caused if the railways were closed without more effective road-clearing measures being provided in severe winter weather. On several occasions early in 1963 Ilfracombe was isolated except by train, while for six weeks trains were the only transport for several villages on the Taunton line.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **T**HE drastic reduction of North Devon's railway system would cause widespread dislocation and accelerate the area's depopulation. At the same time it is obvious that the present losses made by the system must be greatly reduced and that such trains as remain must be useful to British Railways as well as to the area they serve.

2. It is not possible to justify the retention of two routes to Barnstaple for through traffic.

#### TAUNTON—BARNSTAPLE

3. In view of the extremely heavy cost of maintenance, the poor condition of several vital engineering works, and the scarcity of both through and local traffic, this line should be closed, subject to the immediate implementation of the vital points (4)—(9).

4. Connections must be improved at Exeter between the Barnstaple-Exeter trains and expresses on the Western Region main line. In particular there must be an earlier service from Barnstaple to Exeter in the morning, and a later one back in the evening (connecting with the last main-line train of the day from Paddington) to replace long-distance facilities now afforded by the Taunton-Barnstaple route.

5. A clear undertaking should be given that for at least ten years goods to North Devon from towns beyond Taunton (except London) will continue to be charged as though the more direct Taunton-Barnstaple line were still open. They are now charged that way although carried by the longer Exeter route for the railways' own convenience.

6. The Taunton-Wiveliscombe bus route should be extended to Dulverton, *via* Bampton, at least three daily journeys being provided in each direction, including one taking children and workers to Taunton in the morning and providing a connection in to the London train. In the other direction, a connection should be provided with the 2.30 or 4.30 p.m. from London every day and also with the 6.30 p.m. on Fridays. The London bus connections should run express between Taunton and Wiveliscombe.

7. A bus service parallel with the railway the whole way from Taunton to Barnstaple would be slow and ineffective; it could not serve Dulverton and several other villages without substantial

detours. The gap between Dulverton and South Molton should be bridged in two ways. Firstly, the Southern National Omnibus Company should be asked to give priority to passengers in this district wishing to join its daily Royal Blue service along the A361. Secondly, a subsidy should be offered toward the costs of a new small bus operator (possibly a local garage) running a 20-seater vehicle linking villages in the East Anstey-Molland district with Dulverton on the one side and South Molton on the other, with at least one daily connection for Taunton and Barnstaple respectively.

8. It is imperative that improvements be planned at once for the A361, the Milverton and Wiveliscombe by-passes being especially urgent. The improvement of parking arrangements at Taunton station must also be tackled immediately.

9. King's Nympton station on the Exeter-Barnstaple line should remain open to passengers and goods as South Molton's railhead, and a morning bus from South Molton and an evening return service should connect with London trains.

#### EXETER—BARNSTAPLE

10. As stated in (9), King's Nympton station should remain open in addition to Crediton, Lapford and Eggesford as proposed in *The Reshaping of British Railways*. It is the next-busiest intermediate station, and clearly more convenient for South Molton and innumerable villages than is Eggesford, four miles further away. King's Nympton should revert to its former name of South Molton Road.

11. The early morning bus from South Molton to King's Nympton (9) should continue to Barnstaple to replace the present 8.20 a.m. train from King's Nympton. The evening King's Nympton-South Molton link should start from Barnstaple at about 5.35 p.m. One or two additional buses should run between Barnstaple and King's Nympton and back, and at least one of these should provide a connection at King's Nympton station for passengers travelling from Chapelton, Portsmouth Arms and Umberleigh to Exeter and beyond.

12. The Exeter-Barnstaple service should be reduced to about six trains in each direction daily. One or two of these should continue to be through trains from London; the others should be diesel multiple units, equipped with automatic token exchangers so that they can pass at speed through the intermediate stations at which they are not scheduled to stop on the single-track section. As stated in (4), better connections must be provided at Exeter St David's with the Western main-line trains, and an earlier up and a later down service provided each day. Should the practice of dividing expresses from Waterloo at Exeter continue, priority should be

given to the dispatch of the North Devon rather than the Plymouth section. In fact this change could be made immediately, the priority given to the Plymouth section (except in the case of the *Atlantic Coast Express*) being an undesirable relic of competition between the two railways serving Plymouth.

13. The track between Coleford Junction and Copplestone, and between Umberleigh and Barnstaple Junction, should be singled. Passing loops and signalboxes should be retained at Lapford, Eggesford, King's Nympton and Umberleigh. The loops at these stations should be long enough to 'cross' the longest trains without shunting movements. The stations and the diesel multiple units which should be used for most trains should have automatic token exchangers. (The cost of more elaborate signalling would not now be justified, especially since present signalling costs can be greatly reduced.)

#### BARNSTAPLE—ILFRACOMBE

14. The case for retaining this line for passengers is extremely strong. Not the least important argument is that traffic on the Exeter-Barnstaple section would decline seriously if the Ilfracombe link were severed.

15. The passenger service should be reduced to perhaps four trains each way daily in winter and five in summer, with additions on Saturday, the service being primarily intended for long-distance passengers, though still available for local people including summer day-trippers.

16. Wrafton station should be closed. Barnstaple Town should be reduced to a halt, dealing with passengers only, and staffed only at certain times.

17. Freight traffic on the Ilfracombe line is light, and expensive to work. It should be concentrated at Barnstaple as proposed by British Railways.

18. The track between Barnstaple Town and Ilfracombe should be singled, with passing loops at Braunton and Morteohoe & Woolacombe. Automatic lifting barriers should be installed at level crossings.

19. Combined with the use of diesel multiple units for most trains, these measures should save at least £40,000 working costs annually, although they would not eliminate the present loss. In addition to a small annual subsidy (33), an immediate grant of about £30,000 should be made towards the capital cost of singling the track and installing lifting barriers at level crossings, and the work should be undertaken as an unemployment relief scheme using local labour.

## BARNSTAPLE—TORRINGTON

20. It has been announced that this section is to be retained for clay traffic from Petrockstow, and at least while the track is there for that purpose, ordinary goods traffic—in complete wagon-loads—should be maintained at Bideford and Torrington, and a passenger-train parcels service should also be available.

21. The retention of any part of this line for passenger services alone could probably not be justified, but the additional cost of running a skeleton service from Barnstaple to Bideford without an intermediate stop would seem to be socially worthwhile. This service would be run primarily for the benefit of long-distance passengers, and it would of course contribute to traffic on the important Exeter-Barnstaple section. Through coaches should be run to Bideford from London once daily, preferably on an evening train from London with an early-morning return, the same rolling stock being employed. The disappearance of the last through carriages from June 1963 except on summer Saturdays is regretted.

22. The cost of continuing a train service to Torrington would be heavy in relation to the use made of it. Bideford would become Torrington's rail-head. A few buses on the Ilfracombe-Westward Ho! route should be diverted to Torrington, giving through Torrington-Barnstaple facilities and if possible train connections at Bideford station. Additionally, the daily bus between Torrington and Exeter should be retimed to make more effective train connections, especially for London.

## OTHER LINES

23. Although it is not strictly in the survey area, it might be useful to include a note on the rest of the former Southern system Dr Beeching proposes to leave north of Exeter. The intention is to retain the Torrington-Petrockstow section for clay traffic only; the retention of full-wagon-load facilities for other traffic at Petrockstow would be useful and cost little while the clay trains are still running. At present between 30 and 40 workmen travel by train from Torrington to the clay works. They should be carried by a special workmen's train (not available to the general public) over the track whose maintenance will be reduced to goods-only standard. The present railway replaced a primitive narrow-gauge line on which workmen were carried in much larger numbers as late as the 1920's.

24. The Beeching plan states that Okehampton should be retained for passenger services but that no intermediate station should be kept open between the junction with the North Devon line and Okehampton itself. Considerable use is made of North Tawton

station, however, and replacing the present railway facilities by road would be costly. North Tawton should be retained.

## RAIL-ROAD CONNECTIONS

25. It is deplorable that the bus connections for Lynton, Westward Ho! and Appledore which have always been shown in the Southern Region's timetable are not printed in the Western Region's timetable now that all lines in the South West come within Western territory. The details are omitted at the very time that places threatened with the loss of their passenger trains are promised rational bus connections for long-distance passengers.

26. Details of all bus connections from places of any importance should be shown in the railway timetable, including the Dulverton-Taunton, South Molton-King's Nympton, and Torrington-Exeter services mentioned in (6) (9) and (22).

27. Merely adapting the present stage-bus services, which are not equipped for heavy luggage and travel slowly making frequent stops for the benefit of purely local travellers, would not provide Ilfracombe and Bideford with adequate long-distance connections in the event of Barnstaple becoming the terminus. It is not disputed that the Southern National Omnibus Company might be able to carry the traffic which presented itself, but many fewer people would travel. Not only would this cause severe dislocation at Ilfracombe and Bideford, but it would lead to a drop in traffic between Barnstaple and Exeter, and the continuance of this vital section might in turn be threatened.

28. Should Barnstaple become the terminus, the damage would be greatly reduced if special buses, independent of the present service, were run for railway travellers. These buses would be controlled by British Railways though hired from the Southern National. They would be single deckers able to maintain reasonable speeds, and having adequate space for luggage. At Ilfracombe and Bideford they would terminate at a railway office, where through tickets and seat reservations would be issued and advance luggage handled. The buses would of course appear in the railway timetable, and connections would be maintained even when trains arrived late. People are so used to train-bus connections being unsatisfactory that especially in the first instance there would probably be considerable reluctance to rely upon even this special service.

29. On Sunday mornings all the year, and possibly throughout Sundays during the winter, to save opening the railways a skeleton special bus service should link North Devon with Exeter, the details being included in the railway timetable. A substantial economy would result.

## THE COST

30. At present the passenger system in the survey area loses over £550,000 annually. Much of this is unnecessary—the result of reluctance to make piecemeal economies pending the decision by the Government on the future form of the railway system. The fact that the passenger service on the Torrington-Halwill line returns only 2 per cent of its gross expenditure demonstrates that no drive has been made to run the system to a budget. With dieselisation, reductions of little-used trains and stations and other rationalisation, the loss on North Devon's railways could be halved without closing any route entirely. (Movement costs—£265,000 for 350,000 miles on the Exeter-Barnstaple-Ilfracombe section—account for a high proportion of the total costs.)

31. At a rough estimate the retention of the railway services and the subsidy of the replacement bus services recommended in this chapter would involve an annual loss of £100,000 to £125,000. The proposals in the Beeching plan itself would probably involve a loss of £50,000 to £75,000 annually in North Devon.

32. Some loss cannot be avoided without widespread hardship. In particular it must be stressed that unless trains or special buses for railway passengers are maintained at a loss beyond Barnstaple, the reduction of traffic on the Exeter-Barnstaple section will be so great as to endanger its retention, and the consequences of North Devon being entirely removed from the railway map would be grim indeed.

33. The nation should directly bear the cost of part of these essential services, whose cessation would result in damage exceeding the sum British Railways seek to save. A subsidy of about £1,000 per mile would leave British Railways with a reasonable share of the burden, bearing in mind the feeder value of North Devon's traffic to the main lines.

## APPENDIX

THE following is the summary of the statement of the annual losses made by passenger-train operation in North Devon as published by British Railways in June 1963. British Railways themselves state that the losses could be substantially reduced with the use of diesel traction. It should be stressed that these figures apply to passenger services only. Track and signalling costs are those necessary above the lower freight traffic maintenance standards. As explained on page 14, even if the Taunton-Barnstaple Junction line were retained for passengers, all goods traffic would be removed from it; the passenger trains would then be charged with the whole of the track and signalling costs.

*Taunton-Barnstaple Junction.* Movement expenses £57,700 (181,200 miles), terminal expenses £8,800, track and signalling expenses £16,100, total expenses £81,800. Earnings £8,610. Deficit £73,190. (The net estimated saving by closure includes an additional £1,060, the extra fares expected to be collected by carrying passengers to Barnstaple and beyond by the longer Exeter route.)

*Exeter-Ilfracombe.* Movement expenses £265,000 (350,000 miles), terminal expenses £35,000, track and signalling expenses £185,000, total expenses £485,000. Earnings £150,000. Deficit £335,000.

*Barnstaple-Junction-Torrington.* Movement expenses £55,000 (90,000 miles), terminal expenses £15,000, track and signalling expenses £30,000, total expenses £100,000. Earnings £10,000. Deficit £90,000.

*Torrington-Halwill Junction.* Movement expenses £21,000 (32,000 miles), terminal expenses £2,000, track and signalling expenses £30,000, total expenses £53,000. Earnings £1,000. Deficit £52,000.

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

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