

SPA 461

## GREAT CENTRAL

Steam locomotives of the former GCR and LNER at work on British Railways in the 1950s

### SIDE ONE

#### Band One

At Northwich Station, on a damp and windy morning in March 1956, a 'C13' class 4-4-2 Tank engine, No. 67413, running light, moves into the station and couples up to the waiting coaches of a local train.

A 'D11' class 'Director' 4-4-0, No. 62668 *Jutland*, approaches with a semi-fast train from Chester Northgate and slows to a stop in Northwich Station.

During a journey on board the train. *Jutland*, with driving wheels slipping on wet, greasy rails and coupling rods ringing, makes a very noisy start from Northwich, gradually accelerates, whistles through Lostock Gralam and Plumley Stations, approaches Knutsford and stops there.

*Jutland*, now heard from the lineside, starts out from Mobberley Station with a train for Manchester Central and whistles away, with the wind.

An 'O4' class 2-8-0, No. 63713, heads a goods train through Plumley Station, in June 1956.

#### Band Two

At Retford, where the Great Central Line, from Sheffield to Claborough Junction, formerly crossed the East Coast main line on a level crossing, just south of Retford Station.

On an August morning in 1956, a 'B1' class 4-6-0, No. 61138, arrives at platform No. 1 with a Sheffield-Cleethorpes train and an 'A3' class 'Pacific', No. 60088 *Book Law*, dashes over the crossing and away through the station, with a northbound express from Kings Cross.

Another 'A3', No. 60052 *Prince Palatine*, showing off to some watching footplatemen from the nearby loco sheds, makes a rousing start from platform No. 1S, with an express for Kings Cross, diverted via Lincoln because of engineering work on the main line, in May 1957.

A 'J11' class 0-6-0, No. 64394, with a train for Cleethorpes, pulls away from No. 1 platform, on an August afternoon in 1956, while a crowd of young train spotters cheer the approach of an 'A4' class 'Pacific' at the head of a down mainline express. The 'A4' whistles past and is cheekily answered by the 0-6-0, which moves slowly round the sharp curve onto the GC line and heads away past platform No. 1S and the loco sheds.

Bells from the Retford Crossing Signal Box are heard in the background as another 'J11', No. 64321, which has been held at signals on the GC line, starts a goods train, climbs towards the crossing and takes the train clattering rhythmically over it towards Sheffield, on an August afternoon in 1956.

An 'O4' class 2-8-0, No. 63608, approaching from the station, heads over the crossing with a goods train on the main line and whistles away to the south, on a May morning in 1958.

Another 'O4', No. 63782, running light on the GC line, clanks past, over the crossing and away towards the loco sheds, on a May evening in 1958.

#### Band Three

On the GW & GC Joint line, on an October night in 1957. An 'L1' class 2-6-4 Tank engine, No. 67748, heads out from Princes Risborough Station, past and away on the 1 in 167 climb towards Saunderton Tunnel with a Brackley–Marylebone train.

A 'WD' class 2-8-0, No. 90672, accelerating after a signal check at Princes Risborough, heads past and away through a cutting towards Saunderton with an up goods train from the GC line, on a May evening in 1957.

## SIDE TWO

### Band One

An 'A5' class 4-6-2 Tank engine, No. 69826, calls at Brundall Station on a windy September afternoon in 1956, with a Norwich–Lowestoft train.

A 'J11' class 0-6-0, No. 64313, approaching on a 1 in 176 rising gradient across Brackley Viaduct, heads a northbound goods train through Brackley Station, on a March evening in 1957.

An 'N5' class 0-6-2 Tank engine, No. 69350, assembles a train of wagons in the goods yard at Princes Risborough, on an October morning in 1956.

A 'D11' class 4-4-0, No. 62661 *Gerard Powys Dewhurst*, heading out from Plumley with a train from Chester Northgate, climbs past and away towards Manchester, on a windy June morning in 1956.

### Band Two

A 'B1' class 4-6-0, No. 61078, starts out from Nottingham Victoria and heads away into the tunnel with a Bournemouth–York train, on a May afternoon in 1958.

A 'D11' class 4-4-0, No. 62665 *Mons*, whistles for signals at Manchester Central. Then, when the signals clear, heads cautiously out from the station, over points and crossings, with a train for Northwich and Chester, on an April morning in 1956.

At Nottingham Victoria a 'J39' class 0-6-0, No. 64716, starts out from a platform, pauses briefly for some unknown reason, then whistles away towards the tunnel with a GN line suburban train, on a February evening in 1958.

### Band Three

An 'A3' class 'Pacific', No. 60102 *Sir Frederick Banbury*, accelerates the 'Master Cutler' Marylebone–Sheffield express on a falling gradient on the GW & GC line, after a signal check near Princes Risborough, on a November evening in 1955.

On the Met. & GC Joint line, on the northern outskirts of Aylesbury, on a December evening in 1955. A light engine moves past and stops in a nearby siding while, in the distance, an 'A3' class 'Pacific' makes a vigorous start from Aylesbury Station. The 'A3', No. 60050 *Persimmon*, heads out from Aylesbury, past and away, with the 'South Yorkshireman' Marylebone–Bradford express.

On the GW & GC line, in the middle of a clammy August night in 1959. An ex-GW '6100' class 2-6-2 Tank engine is shunting in the yard at Princes Risborough Station, where the down mainline signals are all cleared for the GC newspaper train from Marylebone, which, diverted from its more usual route via Aylesbury because of engineering works, is running very late.

The newspaper train approaches round a curve, headed by a 'V2' class 2-6-2, No. 60831, which, intent on regaining lost time, accelerates down the gradient, roars past and away through the

station where signal arms change position as the 'V2', whistling in the distance, tears away into the darkness towards Haddenham and Ashendon Junction.

Meanwhile, the engine in the yard has waited, gently hissing steam, while the crew watch the newspaper train pass and then comment on the energetic performance of the 'V2' before resuming their, in contrast, more leisurely work.