

# SATURDAY, JUNE 11, WILL BE MEMORABLE

## Extra Coaches May Be Needed For Last Runs on Dornoch Railway

AT the moment it looks as if Stationmaster George Sim will have to put on extra coaches to carry all the passengers who may want to travel on the last train out of Dornoch a week to-morrow (June 11) — the branch line to the Mound goes out of existence under the British Transport Commission's reorganisation plan on the following Monday (June 13).

Mr Sim, who has been stationmaster at Dornoch for the past six years—he is an Aberdonian—told "The Northern Times" on Wednesday, "A lot of people have been telling me they are going to make this last journey — quite a few told me they had made the first one—on Monday, June 2, 1902, when the line was opened. So I am prepared to put on another coach, and it would be only right that local folks should make this a memorable occasion for engine driver Tom Fraser and his guard, Donald Bain. I understand that many Embo people will also be there."

Altogether, it should be a busy scene on Dornoch station. "But it all depends on the weather," added Mr Bain.

The last run from The Mound to Dornoch on June 11 will be at 2.5 p.m.

As has been stated, the line is to close down with effect from June 13, and Mr Sim said it was on June 13 six years ago that he took up his duties at Dornoch. Where station personnel were going he did not yet know.

Mr Fraser, who is 64, started as a cleaner at Dornoch shortly before the First World War.

### M.P.'s QUESTIONS

Sir David Robertson and the Highland M.P.s have asked for a debate in the House of Commons before June 13, the closure date for certain railway branch lines and passenger stations north of Inverness.

The Mound-Dornoch branch line and Rogart passenger service are affected in Sutherland.

In the Commons last week, Sir David asked Mr Edward Heath, Minister of Labour, what information he had received from the British Transport Commission regarding the number of railwaymen and women who would lose their jobs on 13th June, and he also asked the Minister what alternative work he expected to find for them in Caithness and Sutherland where the unemployment rate was always the highest on the mainland of Great Britain.

Mr Heath—I am informed that 79 posts will be affected and that all those concerned will be offered other work by British Railways.

Later, in a letter to the Minister, Sir David said the House was obviously pleased about Mr Heath's reply, "and I felt it would be ungracious to ask the obvious supplementary, 'How many are being employed in Caithness and Sutherland and in the Highland area?' Perhaps you will kindly let me have this information by return."

### ALTERNATIVE WORK

"When the Highland deputation was here 10 days ago they stated that the information they had received from the British Transport Commission on redundancy was that 121 men would be discharged on 13th June, jobs for 43 would be found in the area, leaving a balance of 78 men who would either have to shift to other areas or be sacked. Perhaps you will let me have the facts.

"If most of them have to move from the Highland area that means further depopulation which has been and still is our greatest affliction. Of course, many of the men may refuse to move because they have homes in the Highlands, their children are at school there, and it would be too great an upheaval."

Mr Heath replied that his information was that of the 79 posts, 69 of those affected would be offered alternative work in Caithness and Sutherland, or in Ross and Cromarty. The remaining 10, who were salaried staff, would be offered posts elsewhere in Scotland.

### FLAGS AND BUNTING

WHEN Dornoch light-railway was opened on June 2, 1902, every house in the burgh was decorated with flags and bunting (writes a correspondent). And the fishing village of Embo turned out en masse to see the first train passing by.

All along the line, from Dornoch to The Mound, the public showed their interest by having more than one run on the train, the drawings on the opening day being—Dornoch £16, Embo £10, Skelbo £4, and The Mound £5.

Mr William Whitelaw, chairman of the Highland Railway Company, and his directors, were met at The Mound by Mr Donald Maclean, Golspie, vice-chairman of the Dornoch Company, and his directors, who travelled in the Duke of Sutherland's private train, Dunrobin,

and joined the ordinary train to Dornoch at The Mound.

At Dornoch station they were met by the Town Council, who had marched in procession from the municipal buildings, preceded by Dornoch Brass Band. Provost Sutherland was accompanied by Bailies Mackintosh and Mackay, Dean of Guild Murray, and Councillors MacLachlan, Mackay and Johnstone. About 1000 people waited at the station and on the arrival of the train there was a hearty burst of cheering.

### DUKE'S GESTURE

The construction of the railway was due in large measure to the public spirited enterprise of the Duke of Sutherland, who had not only given the land free of charge, but had also subscribed £5000 towards the work, with a guarantee of £3000 to the railway company.

The opening ceremony was performed by Mr D. Maclean, factor for the Duke of Sutherland.

Mr Andrew Carnegie, of Skibo, said he appreciated the new attractions which the railway would bring to Dornoch.

The most practical, and most important, part in the construction of the line was played by Mr William Roberts, engineer-in-chief to the Highland Railway Company. In the designing he experienced difficulties because of the limited space at The Mound. It was the first railway to be built by him under the Light Railways Act, and he made a good job of it. His son, Donald, was resident engineer.

Now comes the closure of the railway, 58 years afterwards, but in the present age the bias is on road travel, and by this means it is to be hoped that Dornoch will continue to prosper.

### YOUR BABY

#### FIRST SOLID FOOD

##### From a Correspondent

Baby so far has been thriving splendidly on a milk diet, but after about four months milk alone does not suffice. If growth and development are to continue unchecked, the little one requires a supplement to the feeds, and an ever-increasing number of mothers find that an ideal First Solid Food is "Ovaltine" Chuckles. There are sound reasons why Chuckles should prove so popular. They have been scientifically produced in the Ovaltine Research Laboratories from the finest ingredients of the highest quality, and specially fortified with additional vitamins B and D and essential minerals. When crushed and added to the feed they form a nutritious fluid of outstanding value and one, moreover, which is economical, as a carton of Chuckles can be bought for 1/5. Details regarding the quantities to use are given in a table found in each carton.

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