ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY : A CHRONOLOGY

compiled by Richard Maund

This present compilation - which follows from an earlier chronology ([1]) of the lines forming the Isle of Man Railway – contains amendments arising from research in contemporary sources, and expands the details about the "preservation" era.

The Isle of Man Railway had a number of subtle differences from equivalent lines in the UK, as Manx railways were not subject to London legislation. For example, stations did not need platforms and could be opened or closed without statutory procedure, so stopping places could be slight, have brief lives, and leave no trace, such that a later generation might be unaware of their existence. When a station was omitted from the timetable, this did not necessarily mean that it immediately went out of use, for some "closed" stopping places continued to be regarded as request halts – in some cases it is difficult to ascertain their true status at a given date. James Boyd refers to St. Germain's: "The station disappeared from the timetable …. but tickets were still being issued in the following August" ([2]), while Paul Abell, a volunteer, wrote in 1968: "Nobody is quite sure whether Lezayre station … is still open - but the driver will stop if he sees anybody waiting." (St. German *(sic)* was in the 1968 fare table while Lezayre was not; neither station was in the 1968 timetable). Thus it is virtually impossible to compile a chronology that is fully definitive – but this aims to be as complete as possible.

The line's history devolves into two distinct phases – either side of the year 1966. An outline history of each phase is necessary to set the scene, followed by the chronological details in each case which generally derive from three principal secondary sources:

- *Isle of Man Railway Album*, R P & R P Hendry (*pére et fils*), David & Charles, 1976 (cited below as *Hendry 1976*);
- *Manx Northern Railway*, R P & R P Hendry, Hillside Publishing, 1980 (cited as *Hendry 1980*)
- *The Isle of Man Railway*, J I C Boyd, Oakwood Press, 1993-6 (3 volumes) (cited as *Boyd* - showing volume and page thus: 2/123*)*.

Their authors' differing accesses to IoMR company archival material (not willingly given at some periods and therefore not consistent) results in these sources not always being mutually compatible - nor, in some cases, are they even internally consistent. Some information from them about intermediate stations which opened later than their relevant lines has proved suspect, and wherever possible has been validated from the railway timetables which the island press of the time carried as regular advertisements or from specific press reports.

Passenger dates refer, unless otherwise stated, to *publicly advertised regular* services. Where that was preceded or succeeded by unadvertised public operation this is noted, where known.

1. The commercial railway – *Mr Sheard's railway* – pre 1966



There were four lines, built by three companies, which came under the same ownership in 1905 (this chronology is concerned solely with those lines which came under the aegis of the Isle of Man Railway Company – a statutory company). For the forty years prior to the railway's first closure, a major driving force was **Daniel Allan Mylchreest Sheard** (who always suppressed his given first name), born 23 June 1891, joined the railway as a youth, rising to Chief Clerk & Accountant from 5 May 1926. Pending the "early retirement" at the end of 1927 of his predecessor, he was made temporary Assistant Secretary & Manager on 1 July 1927, taking up the substantive Secretary & Manager dual post from 1 Jan 1928 ([3]). This elevation came just as bus competition started in the south and centre of the island on 16 May 1927. This he tackled from 8 July 1927 by a significant increase in rail services in the affected area, reductions in fares, and commencement of conducted inclusive day tours. A year later, on 25 June 1928, the railway started its own fleet of buses, to combat the rivals. A short war ended in victory for the IoMR's buses (and the railway services gradually declined again in

consequence). As the years progressed, the company's financial health came to depend on its bus operations – with the railway as a sideline. Indeed, the railway's very survival depended on careful footwork by Sheard to cross-subsidise it by the road operations; even this, however, could not disguise its steady decline. That the railway closed soon after Sheard's death on 18 June 1965 (4) - still in office – is not coincidental.

When William Lambden, a professional bus man, was appointed as successor on 16 Aug 1965 (5) he inevitably identified the real costs of rail operations and found that the core bus business (itself facing financial challenges, eventually leading to nationalisation of the buses from 1 November 1976) had been cross-subsidising rail. The railway closed fairly suddenly in November 1965, marking the end of rail operations by the owning company on an unsupported "commercial" basis. No trains ran in 1966.

Goods operation notionally remained to the end, but traffic had gradually faded away, to the extent that parcels and small merchandise traffic was the mainstay of the winter trains in later years. The short Foxdale branch closed during the second world war, but the other three lines continued until November 1965.

At the time of withdrawal of rail services in 1965, the company provided a collection of data from which the following are extracts to show the traffic volumes, revenues and labour costs at the end of the 'Sheard era'.

ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY

TOUR BOOKINGS FROM DIFFERENT STATIONS, CALENDAR YEARS 1964, 1965.

	1964			1965		
Stations	Two Day Rail only	Two Day Rail & Bus	Runabouts	Two Day Rail only	Two Day Rail & bus	Runabouts
Douglas	45½	88½	6,601½	4	91	6,782
St.John's	-	2	19	-	-	7
Peel	-	5½	3½	-	6	23½
Ballasalla	-	3	21	-	5	23½
Castletown	-	27	48½	-	16	44½
Colby	-	13	11	-	18	6½
Port St.Mary	-	11	44½	-	6	59½
Port Erin	-	25	230	-	33	321½
Kirk Michael	-	11	1	-	-	-
Ballaugh	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sulby Glen	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ramsey	-	58½	17½	-	10	5½
Total ...	45½	244½	6,997½	4	185	7,273½

ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY

PASSENGER BOOKINGS FROM DIFFERENT STATIONS, CALENDAR YEAR 1965.

(Excluding Special Weekly etc., tickets).

	Single		Return		Excursion		Total
Stations	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	
Douglas	241	11,079	268	16,951	1	1,956	30,496
St.John's	18	2,786	60	229	-	9	3,102
Pool	28	2,108	-	656	-	48	2,840
Port Soderick	-	878	-	-	-	-	878
Ballasalla	25	1,969	2	400	-	80	2,476
Castletown	33	4,086	4	1,350	-	24	5,497
Colby	3	891	-	488	-	36	1,418
Port St.Mary	86	3,045	31	1,278	-	70	4,510
Port Erin	242	8,897	105	4,618	1	242	14,105
Kirk Michael	4	542	-	81	-	3	630
Ramsey	112	1,780	5	404	-	14	2,315
Total ...	792	38,061	475	26,455	2	2,482	68,267

ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY COMPANY.

BOOKINGS FROM DOUGLAS - MAY 10th, 1965 to SEPTEMBER 30th, 1965.

	Single		Return		Excursion			Value		
To	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	Total	£	s	d
Braddan	-	64	-	890	-	-	954	46.	2.	0
St.John's	1½	232	-	325½	-	15	574	57.	8.	9
Pool	38	915½	47	4,337	-	665	6,002½	1,053.	3.	0
Port Soderick	22	1,357	18	-	-	61½	1,458½	50.	3.	8
Ballasalla	9½	279½	6	679	-	56½	1,030½	129.	9.	11
Castletown	41½	625½	48½	1,384½	-	125	2,225	310.	12.	1
Colby	2	70	-	13½	-	4	89½	11.	9.	10
Port St.Mary	24	422	13	688½	-	92½	1,240	245.	16.	6
Port Erin	48½	1,100	90	5,168	-	582	6,988½	1,628.	17.	7
Kirk Michael	-	105½	6	1,116	-	120	1,348½	329.	18.	11
Ballaugh	-	41½	-	97½	-	8	147	35.	19.	8
Sulby Glen	2	60½	1	288	-	4	355½	93.	13.	7
Sulby Bridge	-	37	-	30½	-	2	69½	14.	16.	7
Ramsey	52½	382	36	1,098	1	205½	1,775	432.	2.	11
Total ...	241½	5,693	265½	16,116	1	1,941	24,258	4,439.	15.	0

ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY

SUMMARY OF EARNINGS - STATION BY STATION.

	Calendar Years	1963	1964	1965
		£	£	£
DOUGLAS	Passengers & Sundries	39,328	40,774	35,980
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	15,587	15,814	17,306
ST.JOHN'S	Passengers & Sundries	847	857	590
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	100	126	116
PEEL	Passengers & Sundries	2,731	2,663	1,689
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	308	304	269
PORT SODERICK	Passengers	27	31	29
BALLASALLA	Passengers & Sundries	1,304	1,382	861
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	82	70	72
CASTLETOWN	Passengers & Sundries	2,463	2,460	1,611
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	1,600	1,440	1,495
COLBY	Passengers & Sundries	1,187	1,163	607
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	14	11	10
PORT ST.MARY	Passengers & Sundries	2,567	2,524	1,493
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	404	444	363
PORT ERIN	Passengers & Sundries	3,328	3,206	2,377
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	361	372	318
KIRK MICHAEL	Passengers & Sundries	799	780	356
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	55	16	34
BALLAUGH	Passengers & Sundries	423	318	112
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	22	9	-
SULBY GLEN	Passengers & Sundries	179	188	66
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	12	5	-
SULBY BRIDGE	Passengers & Sundries	85	-	-
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	2	-	-
RAMSEY	Passengers & Sundries	417	465	354
	Parcels, Goods & Lorries	1,962	1,497	529

This gives total earnings, for the year 1965 until closure in November, of:

Passengers & Sundries	£46,125
Parcels, Goods & Lorries	£20,512
GRAND TOTAL	£66,637

WAGES

YEARS - 1963, 1964 & 1965 at STATIONS.

STATIONS	DEPARTMENT	1963 £	1963 £	1964 £	1964 £	1965 £	1965 £
Douglas	Traffic	5,071		5,049		6,261	
	Lorry Drivers	2,783		3,670		4,153	
	Permanent Way	1,197		554		1,013	
	Locomotive	9,608		9,678		9,851	
	Stores	1,312		1,324		1,154	
	Offices	1,407	21,378	1,001	21,276	839	23,271
Crosby	Traffic	532		372		520	
	Permanent Way	1,007	1,539	1,072	1,444	1,139	1,659
St.John's	Traffic	616		756		798	
	Lorry Drivers	554		548		562	
	Permanent Way	1,560	2,730	1,655	2,959	1,711	3,071
Peel	Traffic	515		547		584	
	Permanent Way	1,006	1,521	1,051	1,598	1,121	1,705
Port Soderick	Permanent Way	1,082	1,082	1,023	1,023	1,128	1,128
Santon	Traffic	79		166		164	
	Permanent Way	990	1,069	1,019	1,185	769	933
Ballasalla	Traffic	748		782		887	
	Permanent Way	1,004	1,752	996	1,778	1,074	1,961
Castletown	Traffic	664		701		718	
	Lorry Drivers	520		579		579	
	Permanent Way	1,278	2,462	1,065	2,345	1,119	2,416
Colby	Traffic	712	712	686	686	473	473
Port St.Mary	Traffic	731		767		820	
	Permanent Way	736	1,467	1,024	1,791	1,088	1,908
Port Erin	Traffic	1,605		1,706		1,872	
	Lorry Driver	568		572		561	
	Locomotive	535	2,708	571	2,849	603	3,036
Peel Road	Permanent Way	1,018	1,018	772	772	654	654
Kirk Michael	Traffic	-		-		60	
	Permanent Way	1,046	1,046	908	908	905	965
Ballaugh	Traffic	588	588	299	299	37	37
Sulby Glen	Traffic	412		507		687	
	Permanent Way	509	921	537	1,044	544	1,231
Sulby Bridge	Traffic	471		541		689	
	Permanent Way	509	980	710	1,251	517	1,206
Ramsey	Traffic	1,196		1,097		681	
	Lorry Driver	543		554		629	
	Locomotive	1,619	3,358	1,693	3,344	1,824	3,134
			£46,331		£46,552		£48,788

Of the 1965 figure, £6,484 was lorry drivers, giving a total for railway staff of £42,304

Standard abbreviations:

C = service withdrawn or station closed. Dates in this section are **"with effect from"** dates: the date from which trains did not run (usually a day or so later than the date of the last train) or the date of the public timetable *immediately following* that in which the station last appeared.

RQ = request stop. Stations known to have been served "on request" after a nominal closure date are marked **RQ**. In most cases, the date that such use finally ceased is not known – some of these stations just faded away. Dates given are first day of validity of timetables with or without reference to the halt, respectively; a stopping place *could* have opened or closed between timetables but, as those were published weekly in the press, that seems unlikely

G = Goods **P** = Passengers **p** = Parcels

Immediately after station names, the letters in [square brackets] denote that the location was shown in the Railway Clearing House *Hand–Book of Stations*, and what traffic was handled; locations where no such notation is shown were not mentioned. For simplicity, only mentions in the 1904, 1938 and 1956 editions are noted. Only two amendments were made subsequent to the 1956 issue of the *Hand-book*, both in leaflet 5 dated Sep 1958: the deletion of Foxdale (very belatedly!) and of Peel Road.

Remember that withdrawal dates are "with effect from". Lines were also open for goods.

DOUGLAS - PEEL

Opened 2 Jul 1873; ceremonial opening 1 Jul 1873 when two trains ran for VIPs ([6])

Peel-based workings (including morning schools and "commuter" journeys to Douglas) ceased from 3 Oct 1960

St. John's – Peel: C – **P** 3 Oct 1960; **Reopened – P** 22 May 1961

Douglas – Peel: C – P 3 May 1965; **Reopened – P** 7 Jun 1965

(the relevant stations closed for the same two periods)

C 15 Nov 1965 ([7])

Stations

Douglas [PpG] Opened 2 Jul 1873; ceremonial opening 1 Jul 1873; **C** 15 Nov 1965.

Quarter Bridge Halt / Belle Vue sidings: Opened - P 25 May 1928 ([8]); **C – P** 16 May 1929; also used for TT Races on *at least* 6, 8 and 10 Jun 1932. **Belle Vue sidings** were laid in here ca. 1935-1941 for receipt of material from Foxdale - the sidings would have been more in the nature of private sidings than a "goods depot"

Pulrose Racecourse / workmen's halt: *the racecourse existed from 17 Jul 1912* ([9]) *until closed for WW1, and again from 1919 until Sep 1931 but it is not clear that trains ever called here. The possibility of a halt for workmen's trains in connection with the construction of the Pulrose estate in the mid 1930s seems to have come to naught* ([10])

Kirk Braddan (sometimes **Braddan** or **Braddan Bridge**) **[1904 and 1938 – no mention, 1956 - P] Opened - P** 6 Jun 1897 ([11]); normally used only on summer (May - September) Sunday mornings by church-service shuttle trains from Douglas; also used for TT Races on *at least* 6, 8 and 10 Jun 1932; no service during first (1915-18) and second (1940-46) world wars ([12]); added to *Hand-book of Stations* by leaflet L29 dated Sep 1946; **C** Sep 1965 (although the railway's summer season ran until 12 Sep 1965, the last open air service advertised in *Isle of Man Examiner Holiday News* was on 5 Sep 1965).

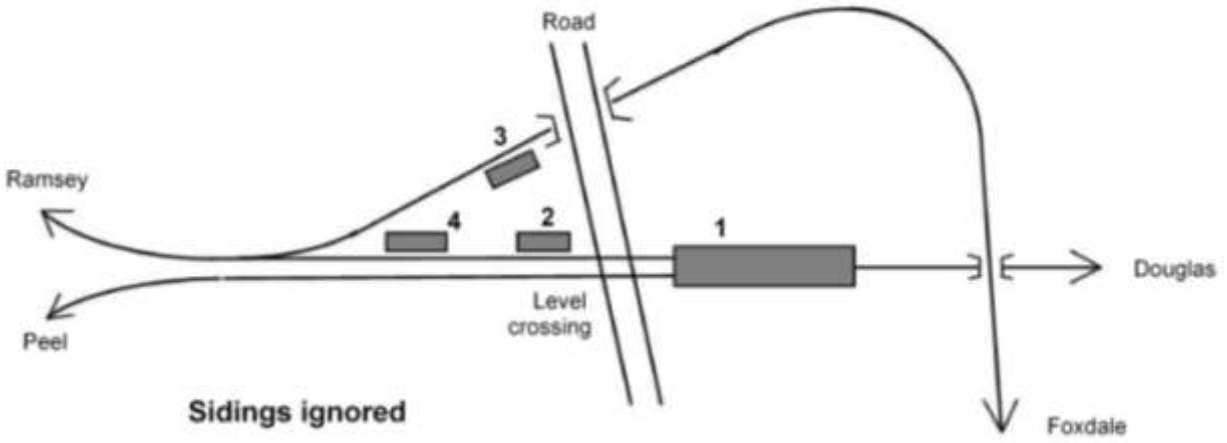
Strang Racecourse Platform: Opened - P 15 Jul 1873 for excursions (the locality hosted both horse racing and athletics events, over the years; the course was overtaken in 1912, but it is not clear when use of it and of stopping place finally ceased ([13])

Union Mills [1904 and 1938 – Pp; 1956 – P] Opened 2 Jul 1873; no calls 30 Nov 1954 – Easter 1955 ([14]) and 21 Jul - 31 Aug 1960; **C** 22 May 1961 ([15])

Crosby [PpG] Opened 2 Jul 1873; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) 23 Sep 1935 – 26 Jun 1937; apparently office unstaffed by 1961; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Glen Helen: Opened - P 4 Jun 1876 (summer only) ([16]); **C** 29 Sep 1878 ([17]). Special calls were advertised at this location – as **Ballacraine crossing** – for TT Races on *at least* the following dates: 13, 15 and 17 Jun 1927, 4 and 8 Jun 1928 and 6, 8 and 10 Jun 1932

St. John's [1904 – IoMR PpG, MNR PpG; 1938 and 1956 – PpG] Opened 2 Jul 1873; **C** 15 Nov 1965



The lines at St. John's were constructed by three separate companies. This explains the unusual layout and the number of stopping places that have existed here:

1. IoMR station: **Opened** 2 Jul 1873; enlarged by MNR by provision of tracks and platform on north side for their use, to become joint station Sep 1879 (although MNR withdrew from joint station arrangement 1 Jul 1884); **C** 15 Nov 1965

2. *Boyd* 1/122 and *Hendry 1980*, p.131 claim that a temporary MNR terminal platform existed pending commissioning in Nov 1879 (*Hendry 1980*, p.122) of the permanent signalling for the MNR/IoMR junction at the east end of the layout. As the MNR was worked by the IoMR, and Ramsey line trains had nowhere to run round *other than* the new northern platform and loop of the now joint station (which could have been worked temporarily in the absence of fixed signals), such temporary platform seems unlikely - or at least very short lived.

3. MNR station: **Opened** 1 Jul 1884 ([18]); MNR *local* passengers and goods dealt with here - any through carriages and wagons for IoMR backed in/out, thence to IoMR station ([19]). Station also used by Foxdale trains from 14 Aug 1886 ([20]). From 26 Jul 1898 *through* Ramsey – Douglas trains ceased to back in/out, and instead called at new platform (item 4, below) but the station itself remained open for goods, and for Ramsey line *local* and Foxdale passengers until ca. Apr 1905 when staff and booking office transferred to IoMR station. Retained as unstaffed platform for Foxdale trains; building converted to dwelling late 1906 ([21]). **C – P** 2 Jul 1940

4. MNR platform: **Opened** 26 Jul 1898 ([22]) as extra *platform* of MNR station, for local passengers on *through* Ramsey – Douglas trains; **C** ca. Apr 1905 when Ramsey line local passengers reverted to use of IoMR station, as pre-1884. The IoMR took over operation of all lines 20 Apr 1905, so the change at St. John's probably happened on or shortly after this date. **C** ca. Apr 1905

Peel [PpG] Opened 2 Jul 1873; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Peel Harbour line on east quay – goods only: an adjunct to the Knockaloe branch and in use about the same time (1915-1920) – probably into use for materials for that branch and for disposal of its and the camp's redundant materials ([23])

Knockaloe branch – goods only: **Opened** 26 *or* 27 Aug 1915 ([24]); **C** 14 Oct 1920 ([25])

DOUGLAS - PORT ERIN

Opened 1 Aug 1874 ([26])

C 15 Nov 1965 ([27])

Stations

Port Soderick [1904 and 1938 – Pp; 1956 – P] Opened 1 Aug 1874; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) from 23 Sep 1930 (regular winter calls again during winter 1936/7 only); reduced to summer only from 25 Sep 1961 ([28]); **C** 13 Sep 1965 (from start of autumn service).

Ballacostain (also known as **Pistol Castle Halt; Rifle Range** and **Balnahow Halt**): Unadvertised private halt. **Opened** mid 1902; **C** post 1944 ([29]) Added to *Hand-book of Stations* by leaflet L29 dated Sep 1946.

Santon [1904 and 1938 – PpG; 1956 – P] Opened 1 Aug 1874; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) from 23 Sep 1930; resumed regular calls from 7 Jun 1946 ([30]); **C** 26 May 1958

Ballasalla [PpG] Opened 1 Aug 1874; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Castletown [PpG] Opened 1 Aug 1874; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Ballabeg [1904 and 1938 – Pp; 1956 – no mention] Opened 4 Jun 1876 ([31]); reduced to **RQ** from 2 Jun 1930; regular calls again from 21 Sep 1936 – two each way in winter, plus request stops in summer; **C** 4 Oct 1948 ([32])

Colby [PpG] Opened 1 Aug 1874; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) 23 Sep 1930 – 1 Jun 1935; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Colby Level Halt: Opened - P 3 Oct 1927 ([33]); **C** 23 Sep 1929; Military wartime halt here or nearby.

Port St. Mary [PpG] Opened 1 Aug 1874; **C** 15 Nov 1965

Port Erin [PpG] Opened 1 Aug 1874; **C** 15 Nov 1965

The **Manx Northern Railway** was worked by the Isle of Man Railway from opening until 6 Nov 1880. MNR worked the **Foxdale Railway** from its opening by prior agreement. From 27 Feb 1904 MNR and FR agreed to sell their railways to IoMR – but MNR continued to work the railways pending various legal approvals. IoMR's purchase became effective and they took over working both lines from 20 Apr 1905. ([34])

ST. JOHN'S – RAMSEY - Manx Northern Railway

Opened 23 Sep 1879; shareholders' special ran 29 Aug 1879 ([35])

Ramsey-based workings ceased and line closed each winter season from 25 Sep 1961 apart from nominal goods and maintenance workings during 1961/2 ([36]); **C** 13 Sep 1965 ([37])

Stations

Poortown / Peel Road [1904 and 1938 – PpG; 1956 – P ("Halt")] Poortown Siding Opened – G 1885 ([38]); **Opened - P** 18 Jun 1883 ([39]), renamed **Peel Road** 24 May 1885 ([40]); reduced to **RQ** from 2 Jun 1930; omitted from timetable – perhaps inadvertently – in winter 1936/7; unstaffed from 1937; **C** 2 Jun 1952 ([41])

St. Germain's [1904 – listed but no facilities; 1938 – P; 1956 – P ("Halt")] Opened 23 Sep 1879; reduced to Saturdays only 1 Jul 1886; increased to full weekday service from 25 May 1928; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) from 23 Sep 1930; **RQ** all year from 21 Sep 1936; **C** 4 Jul 1960 ([42])

Gob-y-Deigan: an occasional stopping place, in the 19th century, for pre-arranged stops for *groups only* (not available for individual passengers) ([43])

West Berk: an occasional stopping place, in the 19th century, for pre-arranged stops for *groups only* (not available for individual passengers) ([44])

Kirk Michael [PpG] Opened 23 Sep 1879; Schools trains to/from Ramsey withdrawn from 25 Sep 1961 ([45]); **C** 13 Sep 1965

Bishopscourt (sometimes **Bishop's Court**): **Opened - P** 23 Sep 1879 as a private, unadvertised request halt for the residence of the Bishops of Sodor & Man (with a prior call by the directors' special on 29 Aug 1873). A call was publicly advertised for 27 Jun 1927 and an IoMR statement shortly afterwards said: "During the summer, stops will be made at Bishopscourt … by request" ([46]) - but the facility remained unadvertised in public timetables until mentioned by footnote of service by a Monday market train in each issue from 29 Sep 1930 until issue expiring on 16 Sep 1935 (apparently except summer 1931 which may have been an oversight). Added to *Hand-book of Stations* by leaflet L29 dated Sep 1946. Use lapsed about 1950 although in 1957: "The tenant of Bishop's Court was given the right to stop the train to Ramsey Mondays Wednesdays and Saturdays in view of the withdrawal of the bus" ([47]). Facility not advertised - and it might not have been used.

Orrisdale: Opened - P 4 Mar 1882 as locally advertised stopping place at level crossing - Wednesdays and Saturdays only ([48]); reduced to **RQ** 1883 and probably **C** soon afterwards. *Hendry 1980* p. 92 records a siding hereabouts ca. 1879-1895

Ballaugh [PpG] Opened 23 Sep 1879; apparently office unstaffed by 1965; **C**13 Sep 1965

Ballavolley Halt (for wildlife park): **Opened - P** 19 Jul 1965; **C** 13 Sep 1965

Sulby Glen [PpG] Opened 23 Sep 1879; apparently office unstaffed by 1965; **C** 13 Sep 1965

Sulby Bridge [PpG] Opened 23 Sep 1879; reduced to **RQ** in winter (regular in summer) from 23 Sep 1935; **RQ** 21 Sep 1936 – 26 Jun 1937; apparently office unstaffed by 1963; **C** 13 Sep 1965

Lezayre [1904 and 1938 – Pp; 1956 – no mention] Opened 23 Sep 1879 ([49]); reduced to **RQ** (and unstaffed goods siding) 15 Oct 1900 ([50]); reduced to summer only from 23 Sep 1929 (also omitted – apparently inadvertently – from summer 1930 timetable); **C** Sep 1939 ([51]); **Reopened** 14 Oct 1946; reduced to **RQ** from 7 Jul 1947; **C** 25 Sep 1950 ([52]). Unadvertised use for schoolchildren apparently continued until relevant trains withdrawn from 25 Sep 1961 ([53])

Milntown: Used on occasions to serve agricultural show (for example, on 4 Aug 1898) and

temporary army camps between 23 May 1904 and 1910 at least ([54])
Ramsey [PpG] Opened 23 Sep 1879; **C** 13 Sep 1965
Ramsey Quay line – goods only**: Opened** Dec 1882; **C** part 1924, remainder 1951 ([55]).

ST. JOHN'S – FOXDALE – Foxdale Railway
Opened - 14 Aug 1886 ([56]); **C – P** 2 Jul 1940 ([57]); used for moving "quarry waste" for airfield construction until 1942 and occasional military movements until 1944; thereafter, only maintenance movements, of which the last were 22 and 26 Jan 1960 to remove track materials from Foxdale ([58]). Lower end of branch used on 3 Jun 1967 for stabling surplus coaching stock. Track lifting completed May 1976.
Stations
Waterfall (sometimes erroneously **Waterfalls** on MNR tickets) **[1904 and 1938 – Pp** *(sic)***; 1956 – no mention] Opened** 14 Aug 1886; reduced to **RQ** by 1898; reduced to summer only from 23 Sep 1929; **C** 17 Sep 1934 ([59])
Foxdale [1904 and 1938 – PpG; 1956 – P *(sic* !*)* **]** see explanation above

2. The "Preservation" era – post 1966

2.1. The Marquess of Ailsa: 1967-8
Archibald David Kennedy, 7th Marquess of Ailsa (3 December 1925 – 7 April 1994) leased the whole system from 1 April 1967 for 21 years, with a break clause after five years – initially still financially unsupported by government, so at least in theory as a commercial venture. Trains ran on all three lines although operation now was summer only so far as passenger trains were concerned. Valiant (some would say foolhardy) short attempts were made at year-round goods operations (see separate paragraph below). After the first season, Lord Ailsa's first General Manager, Sir (Frederick) Philip (Alfred William) Wombwell, 6th Baronet (1910–1977), departed and the Marquess functioned for a year as "Proprietor & General Manager". After the 1968 season (with continuing losses greater than expected), he gave up operation, ceased goods activities, and returned to his family seat at Maybole in south-west Scotland.

2.2. Isle of Man Victorian Steam Railway Co. Ltd.: 1969-71
Having obtained a government grant for three years, the Port Erin line was run by this company (of which the Marquess was a director), trading as the Isle of Mann *(sic)* Victorian Steam Railway, under the general managership of A M B (Max) Crookall. The Peel and Ramsey line were not reopened (and never did so subsequently). At the end of the 1971 season, the Marquess exercised the break clause in his lease and thus ended his involvement with the railway.

2.3. the railway company again: 1972-7
For 1972, operation reverted to a reluctant IoMR (still the infrastructure owner) with an Isle of Man Tourist Board (i.e. Manx government) subsidy for continued seasonal tourist operation of the Port Erin line only. In 1975 and 1976 only part of the line was worked, but the full length was restored in 1977.

2.4. Nationalisation: 1978 onwards
From 13 January 1978 the railway company was effectively nationalised, and from that date the Port Erin line has been run under the auspices of the Manx Government, at the outset in conjunction with the already-nationalised Manx Electric Railway Board, initially as "Isle of Man Railways" *(note the plural)*, subsequently as part of Isle of Man Passenger Transport Board, of the Department of Tourism & Transport, of the Department of Transport, and from 1 April 2010 as Isle of Man Public Transport, a division of the Department of Infrastucture.

Any regularly advertised passenger operation from 1967 was only in summer so it is axiomatic that subsequent operations have been "seasonal" – with the dubious exception of the weekly shoppers' service 1981-4 (which had other motives – see below) and the Santa operations which sprang up later. Nevertheless, the operating season has steadily extended over the years and now runs from late February to early November – plus Santa and other December specials!

This section has been compiled from contemporary primary sources wherever possible, including public and working time tables and notices, and supplemented by *Steam Railway News* reports.

Standard abbreviations:
C = service withdrawn or station closed. Dates in this section are **last day of service.**

RQ = request stop.
See separate paragraph below about goods traffic.

Prior to the formal 1967 re-opening, a photographers' railcar special ran Douglas – Peel – Kirk Michael on 28 May, a full "dress rehearsal" service ran Douglas – Peel on 1 Jun 1967 and a special train ran Douglas – Castletown for school children and Lord Ailsa's family on 2 Jun 1967 ([60]).

DOUGLAS - PEEL
Reopened 3 Jun 1967 - ceremonial opening in morning and normal advertised public services in afternoon; **C** 30 Sep 1967; **Reopened** 29 Apr 1968 [also 12, 13 and 15 Apr]; **C** 7 Sep 1968
Stations: The stations open (with same dates as the line itself) during this period were:
Douglas; Braddan; Union Mills; Crosby; St. John's; **Peel**

ST. JOHN'S – RAMSEY
Reopened 4 Jun 1967 *(no service on this line on 3 Jun 1967)*; **C** 29 Sep 1967; **Reopened** 1 May 1968; **C** 6 Sep 1968 ([61])
Stations: The stations open (with same dates as the line itself) during this period were:
St. John's; **St. German** *(sic)* (no advertised times in 1967 or 1968 but shown in 1968 fare table)**; Kirk Michael; Ballaugh; Wild Life Park** (former **Ballavolley Halt** renamed); **Sulby Glen; Sulby Bridge** (advertised in 1967; no advertised times in 1968 but **RQ** and shown in 1968 fare table); **Lezayre** (advertised in 1967; no advertised times in 1968, nor shown in 1968 fare table) **C** 29 Sep 1967; **Ramsey**

The above two lines did not operate regular public service after the 1968 season.

DOUGLAS - PORT ERIN
Reopened Douglas – Castletown 11 Jul 1967 (the laying of a gas main under the railway prevented use west of Castletown)
For 1967 and pre-season 1968 operated only Douglas – Castletown:
1967: 11 Jul – 30 Sep
1968: 5 and 6 Feb ([62]), *12, 13 and 15 Apr and from 29 Apr*
Reopened Castletown – Port Erin by publicly-advertised special 2 Jun 1968 and school specials the previous week
From Jun 1968 to 1974 operated Douglas – Port Erin:
1968: 2 Jun – 7 Sep ([63])
1969: 25 May – 13 Sep
1970: 19-23 May (for schools parties, but also advertised for general public) and 25 May – 12 Sep
1971: Easter (10-12 Apr) and 24 May – 25 Sep (planned operation 17-22 May was cancelled)
1972: 22 May – 15 Sep
1973: 24 May – 14 Sep
1974: 23 May – 27 Sep
Sunday operation began – as "excursions" – during 1973 season and became regular from 1974 ([64])
C Douglas – Castletown 27 Sep 1974 ([65])
For 1975 operated only Castletown – Port Erin (with occasional light engine or empty stock moves from/to Douglas) 18 May – 26 Sep
Reopened Ballasalla – Castletown 16 May 1976
For 1976 operated only Ballasalla – Port Erin: 16 May – 24 Sep
Reopened Douglas – Ballasalla 15 May 1977
From 1977 to 2001 operated Douglas – Port Erin:
1977: 15 May – 23 Sep
1978: 15 May – 30 Sep
1979: 30 Apr – 28 Sep
1980: 5 May – 3 Oct
1981: 19 Apr – 2 Oct (see also para. below about winter shoppers' service)
1982: 4 May – 1 Oct (also 11, 12 Apr) (see also para. below about winter shoppers' service)
1983: 9 May – 30 Sep (also 3, 4 Apr) (see also para. below about winter shopper' service)
1984: 22 Apr – 28 Sep (see also para. below about winter shoppers' service)
1985: 6 May – 27 Sep (also 7-12 Apr)
1986: 5 May – 26 Sep (also 30 Mar - 4 Apr)
1987: 19 Apr – 2 Oct
1988: 2 May – 2 Oct (also 1-8 Apr)

1989: 1 May – 30 Sep (also 24-31 Mar)
1990: 13 Apr – 29 Sep
1991: 29 Mar – 30 Sep
1992: 17 Apr – 27 Sep
1993: 9 Apr – 31 Oct
1994: 1 Apr – 2 Oct (also 23-30 Oct)
1995: 14 Apr – 1 Oct (also 21-29 Oct)
1996: 1 Apr – 29 Sep (also 19-27 Oct)
1997: 28 Mar – 28 Sep (also 25 Oct – 2 Nov)
1998: 10 Apr – 4 Oct (also 24 Oct – 1 Nov)
1999: 2 Apr – 3 Oct (also 23-31 Oct)
2000: 1 Apr – 29 Oct
2001: 2 Apr – 28 Oct

C Temporary closures, for laying a main sewer and for track relaying:
Santon – Castletown 28 Oct 2001, **reopened** 28 Apr 2003
Castletown – Port St.Mary 27 Oct 2002, **reopened** 3 May 2004
Port St Mary – Port Erin 26 Oct 2003, **reopened** 3 May 2004

For 2002 operated Douglas – Santon and Castletown – Port Erin: 15 Apr – 27 Oct 2002
For 2003 operated Douglas – Castletown and Port St .Mary – Port Erin: 28 Apr – 26 Oct 2003
For pre-season 2004 operated Douglas – Castletown: 5 Apr – 2 May 2004
From summer season 2004 operated Douglas – Port Erin (in some years, "special events" saw trains available to the public on additional dates):

2004: 3 May – 31 Oct
2005: 21 Mar – 30 Oct
2006: 3 Apr – 5 Nov
2007: 2 Apr – 4 Nov (including "commuter" service, based at Port Erin, for TT week 29 May – 7 June; also Santa specials Douglas – Keristal 8 and 9 Dec)
2008: 17 Mar – 2 Nov
2009: 6 Apr – 1 Nov
2010: 13 Mar – 7 Nov
2011: 12 Mar – 6 Nov (also Santa/Shopper specials Douglas – Castletown 3,4,10,11,17 Dec)
2012: 24 Feb – 5 Nov (also Santa/Shopper specials Douglas – Castletown 1,2,8,9,15,29 Dec and special bus strike services whole line 20-22 Dec)
2013: 14 Feb – 5 Nov (also special bus strike services whole line 17 Jan and Santa/Shopper specials)
2014: 7 Mar – 5 Nov (also Santa/Shopper etc. specials 13,14,20,21,27,31 Dec)
2015: 6 Mar – 8 Nov (also Half-Term 12-15 Feb and Santa/Shopper etc. specials most days 3 – 31 Dec)
2016: 5 Mar – 6 Nov (also Half-Term and various specials most days 25 Nov – 31 Dec)
2017: 18 Mar – 5 Nov (also various specials most days 8 Dec – 2 Jan 2018)
2018: 9 Mar – 5 Nov (also various specials most days 6 Dec – 2 Jan 2019)
2019: 8 Mar – 3 Nov (also various specials most days 5 Dec – 5 Jan 2020)
2020: 6 – 19 Mar; all services suspended from evening of 19 Mar; service resumed 23 Jul – 4 Oct (principally ThFSSuO) and 24,25,29,30,31 Oct and 1 Nov (for half term) (also various specials most days 3 Dec – 4 Jan 2021)
2021: 27 May – 31 Oct (also various specials most days 8 Dec – 4 Jan 2022)
2022: 4 Mar – 27 Nov (also various specials 2 Dec – 4 Jan 2023)
2023: 10 Mar – 29 Oct (also various specials 6 - 31 Dec)
2024: 15 Mar – 3 Nov (also various specials 6 Dec – 4 Jan 2025)

Nominally once weekly – usually Fridays – a winter shoppers' service ran 9 Oct 1981 to 13 Apr 1984; it was principally a ploy - by claiming the railway to be in all-year operation - to seek to circumvent the legal requirement for an annual re-inspection of lines with "summer only" services by an external examiner. Thereafter, the service reverted to summer seasonal again until Santa specials started to appear from 1992. *The dates of the winter shoppers' service are not included as "openings" or "closings" below.*

Stations

Douglas: reopened 3 Jun 1967; **C** 27 Sep 1974**; reopened** 15 May 1977
Port Soderick: reopened 11 Jul 1967 **RQ** until 1974; **C** 27 Sep 1974**; reopened** 15 May 1977
Santon: reopened ca. Jun 1968 **RQ**; **C** 7 Sep 1968; **reopened** 25 May 1970 **RQ**; **C** 25 Sep 1971; **reopened** 15 May 1977 **RQ**

Ballasalla: **reopened** 11 Jul 1967; **C** 27 Sep 1974**; reopened** 16 May 1976; **C** 28 Oct 2001; **reopened** 28 Apr 2003
Castletown: reopened 11 Jul 1967
Ballabeg: special call on Centenary Day 1 Jul 1973; **reopened** 5 May 1980 **RQ**; **C** 27 Oct 2002; **reopened** 3 May 2004; not advertised since 1 Nov 2009 but still available **RQ** ([66])
Colby: reopened 2 Jun 1968 **RQ** ([67]); **C** 25 Sep 1971 (although reportedly subsequently **RQ)**; special call on Centenary Day 1 Jul 1973; **reopened** 15 May 1977 **RQ** (regular from 1983); **C** 27 Oct 2002; **reopened** 3 May 2004
Colby Level (initially just **Level**, sometimes **The Level**): **reopened** for shoppers' winter trains 9 Oct 1981 to 13 Apr 1984 **RQ** ([68]); **reopened** 9 Jun 1986 **RQ; C** 27 Oct 2002; **reopened** 3 May 2004, as **Colby Level**; not advertised since 1 Nov 2009 but still available **RQ** ([66])
Port St. Mary: reopened 2 Jun 1968; **C** 27 Sep 1974; **reopened** late Aug 1975; **C** 26 Oct 2003; **reopened** 3 May 2004
Port Erin: reopened 2 Jun 1968; **C** 26 Oct 2003; **reopened** 3 May 2004

New stopping places opened during this period:

Lough Ned (between Douglas and Port Soderick): **opened** for pre booked parties 1981, specials 16/17 Jun 1982, regular public shuttle 28 June 1982; **C** Sep 1982. Served by special shuttle from/to Douglas (up to three trips daily) to serve a country park; not advertised in main timetable but by local handbill.
Ronaldsway Halt (between Ballasalla and Castletown): First use by special train and ceremonial opening 2 Jun 1967 ([69]); **Opened** 11 Jul 1967 **RQ**; **C** 7 Sep 1968; **reopened** 31 May 1971 as **Great Meadow Halt** unadvertised; **C** Sep 1971 ([70]); **reopened** (as **Ronaldsway Halt** again) Easter 1985 but only by prior arrangement (unadvertised), until 1 Apr 1994 when advertised again, **RQ; C** 28 Oct 2001; **reopened** 28 Apr 2003; not advertised from 2010 to 2018 but still available **RQ [71]**and advertised by footnote from 2019 season. **C -** calls suspended on account of Covid-19 from 2 Jul 2021 ([72]) (last calls 27 Jun 2021); **reopened** 4 Mar 2022 (start of new season)
Mill Road (between Castletown and Ballabeg): level crossing (no facilities) at which stops were made during Southern 100 Motorcycle and Go-kart race days, in 1968 and 1969 (three days in each case).
School Hill (Castletown, between Castletown and Ballabeg): temporary platform at which special "(Bus) Strike Day" services called for school-children on Thu 20 and Fri 21 Dec 2012, and various odd dates until last use on 30 May 2013. Demolished between 17 and 21 Mar 2014.

GOODS TRAFFIC AND OTHER NON-PASSENGER WORKINGS

All such operations had ceased at the end of 1965 – on the Ramsey line from 13 Sep, elsewhere from 15 Nov. When the Marquess of Ailsa took over, two goods operations were attempted. The first, from autumn 1967 to spring 1968, was a shipping container service through Castletown to Douglas (and Ramsey, as traffic offered) under the name MAN-TAINOR *(sic)* ([73]) although MAN-TAINER is shown in some enthusiast magazines ([74]) (were there two marketing titles?). This was short lived for the loaded containers proved too heavy for the track and the economics (a road transfer from Castletown quay to the station and again at the receiving end) were at best dubious. The second was oil traffic from Peel Power Station Siding to Milntown Power Station on the outskirts of Ramsey – where a private siding connection was laid in. Three wagons each carrying an orange-painted oil tank ([75]) were used, thrice weekly. But it, too, was short lived – only about six weeks from 13 Aug 1968 ([76]). After the passenger service ceased, the tanks were worked on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays by the railcars – and allegedly fare paying passengers were carried. All sources ([77]) agree that the last loaded oil train ran 27 Sep 1968, for virtually all the railway's staff were given notice to take effect at the end of that September (some from 27 Sep, some from 4 Oct). A final movement on 29 Apr 1969 was to take the three wagons to Milntown power station ([78]) for the tanks to be demounted from their wagons and to be used as static storage; there were no intervening revenue movements. There had been movements of rolling stock between Douglas and the store shed at St. John's – indeed, at one period, a loco usually went daily between Douglas and St. John's to haul carriages out for display there. There were further train movements to Ramsey on 21 and 23 Oct 1969 to remove the siding materials and permanent way equipment ([79]). There were occasional movements by loco or railcars over the otherwise out of use Peel and Ramsey lines for maintenance purposes until Oct 1970, but thereafter the only train movement seems to have been the movement of some wagons to Braddan in Nov 1971 (out on 2nd, back on 17th) ([80]).

Web site **www.disused-stations.org.uk/i/isle_of_man/** presents an interesting compilation of location maps and photographs of Peel, Ramsey and Foxdale line stations. The historical matter (from secondary sources) is not all to be relied upon, alas.

Access to archived copies of Manx newspapers is available via www.imuseum.im/newspapers
An earlier version of this text appeared in Railway & Canal Historical Society's *Railway Chronology Special Interest Group Co-ordinating Newsletter* no. 99, June 2019, and I am grateful to Allan Brackenbury for having read that text – any remaining errors are, of course, my responsibility.

Comments, corrections or further items for inclusion are sought (with provenances, please) – send to psul@branchline.uk

Revision date: 30 December 2024

Footnotes

1 Allan W Brackenbury with J D Darby, *Journal of the Stephenson Locomotive Society* (January 1985), republished in *Steam Railway News* (summer 1985), revised in R&CHS *Railway Chronology Special Interest Group Co-ordinating Newsletter* no. 30, p. 25 (February 2002).
2 *Boyd* 3/51
3 *Ramsey Courier* 1 Jul 1927, p.5 and 27 Nov 1927, p.5; *Hendry 1980,* p. 83; *Boyd* 2/74 is misleading
4 Manx BMD Register Vol. 418, page 3190. Sheard was buried at the Douglas Borough Cemetery on 23 June 1965, which would have been his 74th birthday had he survived.
5 *Boyd* 2/161
6 *Manx Sun* 28 Jun 1873, p.4; *Boyd* 1/62
7 company's letter 26 Jan 1966
8 *Ramsey Courier* 25 May 1928, pp.6 and 7; *Boyd* 2/102 – 2/113, *Hendry 1980* p.84
9 *Isle of Man Examiner* 13 Jul 1912, p.4; no mention of any rail service in initial press reports. *From Belle Vue Park to National Sports Centre (John Wright, author, 2003*
10 Workmen: *Boyd* 2/95, 2/98, 2/100.
11 *Isle of Man Times* 1 May 1897, p.4.
12 *Boyd* 2/46 and 2/129
13 *Boyd* 1/54 (footnote) confirms construction in 1873; first traced reference to platform is advert in *Mona's Herald* 2 Jul 1873 for an athletics festival; last *traced* press reference – again for athletics - was in July 1881. Final reference is G H Wood's (IoMR secretary/manager) diary for 3 Aug 1902 (*Boyd* 1/246) containing a note about horse racing at Strang which could suggest the platform was then still in use, with trains calling (delaying services?)
14 *Boyd* 2/142 and 2/145
15 Sole train booked to call (4.15pm Douglas – Peel, primarily for school children) suspended for school holidays from 21 Jul 1960, restored from 1 Sep 1960, and withdrawn from 3 Oct 1960 when Peel shed closed and St. John's – Peel line closed for winter. Nevertheless, 24 tickets were recorded as sold in year 1961 and, according to company's letter ref A.O./T.271061 of 27 Oct 1961, date of "deletion from timetables" was 22 May 1961 (start of summer season).
16 IoMR advert *Manx Sun* 3 Jun 1876, p.8. (not 3 Jun as cited by *Boyd* 1/91); Glen Helen Hotel reopened about same date. As late as 27 May 1876 press had reported the "commencement" of the works for the station. Station was never referred to as a halt during its short life.
17 Closed with railway's 1878 winter timetable (*Isle of Man Times* 28 Sep 1878, p.8) which stated "Glen Helen station will be closed until further notice", but from the following season the road connections with Glen Helen were specifically stated as being to and from St. John's station. The 20th century dates are from press adverts or railway handbills
18 *Hendry 1980,* p.36; *Boyd* 1/165 (no contemporary press references traced)
19 *Boyd* 1/167 gives detail of such working observed by Col. Rich on Thu 9 Oct 1884
20 *Hendry 1980,* pp. 36/37 and 44.
21 *Hendry 1980,* p.80
22 *Hendry 1980,* p.73; delayed from intended date of 1 Jul 1898 (*ibid,* p.131) (no contemporary press references traced and there was no change to advertised timetable from this date)
23 *Boyd* 3/30 implies it closed at the same time as Knockaloe but *Boyd* 1/69 states: "The restoration of the Peel Quay from wartime arrangement was at length carried out *[in 1924]*" - this may refer to final lifting of the quay line's rails.
24 Although not all terminal facilities at the camp were complete, first traffic was recorded by *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 28 Aug 1915, p.6 as passing "yesterday morning" *(i.e. Fri 27 Aug*), while *Isle of Man Examiner* 4 Sep 1915, p.8, gives "Thursday morning of last week" *(i.e. Thu 26 Aug). Mona's Herald* (which *Boyd* 2/45 cited) *appears* to have 'copied' the *Times* item without correcting for the passage of time before publication. Curiously, the *Peel City Guardian* failed to record the 'event'… The branch belonged to the government but was worked by the IoMR. The only 'evidence' seen to support claims of use by passenger trains is vaguely worded press reports – e.g. at early influx of aliens in 1915; Boyd's only claim of such use from his research in IoMR company records is very oblique indeed, about ticketing (*Boyd* 3/285). The government/IoMR terms for operating the branch (*Boyd* 2/48) made no mention of passenger use. Curvature and condition of track were clearly inappropriate (Henry Allott's report – *Boyd* 2/48), while the gradient was such that goods wagons had to be propelled up the line from the Neb river bridge. Of various web references about the Alien Detention Camp, the most researched seem to be www.knockaloe.im/page_391035.html and www.isle-of-

man.com/manxnotebook/history/intrn_ww1/knckaloe/arrivals.htm which confirm that internees were marched from either Peel or St. Johns stations – not conveyed over the camp railway. Clearly there was no *regular* passenger use – and likely no such use at all. See also *The Peel to Knockaloe Railway 1915 to 1920* (Manx Transport Heritage Museum, 2018).

[25] Last aliens left on 10 Oct 1919 (*Isle of Man Examiner* 11 Oct 1919, p.5), although some British military remained. The railway remained nominally open until official date of 14 Oct 1920 (*Boyd* 2/59 and 3/73) which *may* be the date lifting started – it was reported virtually completed by Nov 1920 (*Isle of Man Weekly Times* 20 Nov 1920, p.5 - so *Boyd* 3/73 and 3/103 appear to be wrong about branch date of lifting).

[26] *Isle of Man Times* 1 Aug 1874, p.5; *Boyd* 1/76. Had been postponed from 29 Jul 1874

[27] company's letter 26 Jan 1966

[28] company's letter ref A.O./T.271061 of 27 Oct 1961

[29] R P Hendry, *Journal of Transport Ticket Society* July 1973, p. 280, gives opening 5 May 1902. Although *Boyd* 1/244 states platform and agreement for use ready in Jan 1902 this is unlikely as report of Douglas Rifle Club annual meeting (which called halt Balnahow) held 15 Apr 1902 stated negotiations were still ongoing (*Isle of Man Times* 19 Apr 1902, p.4). A "new" (replacement) platform opened in 1904 (*Boyd* 1/253) and another in 1914 (*Boyd* 2/43). One source gives closure 1929 but the halt was in use (still known to the military as Balnahow) as late as 1944 (*Boyd* 2/120).

[30] *Boyd* 2/145 is in error about service reduction from 1955

[31] *Boyd* 1/75 explains that press references to station opening in 1874 with line were in error. Opening date is that of first appearance in IoMR timetable (started Sun 4 Jun 1876, advertised in *Isle of Man Times* 3 Jun 1876); no press report of station opening traced although the fact that it was *by then* open was mentioned at IoMR annual meeting held on 12 Jun 1876 (*Manx Sun* 17 Jun 1876)

[32] R P Hendry, *Journal of Transport Ticket Society* July 1973, p. 280. Shelter destroyed by fire 11 May 1948 (*Isle of Man Examiner* 14 May 1948) but stop (four trains one way, one the other) remained in timetable that summer. The timetable from 4 Oct 1948 as *published in local press* ceased to include intermediate stations – the next to give such detail, from 6 Jul 1949, no longer mentioned Ballabeg. Reportedly retained as unadvertised **RQ** – *but why not continue advertising it if it were officially still open?* Not deleted from *Hand-book of Stations* until 1956 edition. Still shown in 1956 fare table on display in Douglas in summer 1959, at which time there was no evidence on site of any recent use. In view of distance from eponymous village it is questionable that **RQ** use ever applied. [*Boyd* offers no date for closure].

[33] *Boyd* 2/80 is in error about opening. Halt first appeared – as "Level (Colby)" - in 3 Oct 1927 timetable (*Ramsey Courier* 30 Sep 1927, p.7). Disappeared with 23 Sep 1929 timetable (*Ramsey Courier* 27 Sep 1929, p.7)

[34] *Boyd* 1/125, 1/173, 1/254, 2/15 respectively

[35] *Mona's Herald* 24 Sep 1879, p.5 and *Manx Sun* 30 Aug 1879, p.4; *Boyd* 1/118 and 1/120

[36] *Boyd* 2/154

[37] company's letter 26 Jan 1966

[38] *Hendry 1980* p. 37 and *Boyd* 1/165 state 1885. *Boyd* 1/190 suggests 1886 but that may be for the 2' gauge tramway between quarry and siding

[39] *Mona's Herald* 13 Jun 1883, p.5 (*Boyd* 1/156 is a typo).

[40] with timetable starting that date (*Manx Sun* 23 May 1885, p.6); *Hendry 1980*, p.38 explains intention had been to do so in 1884.

[41] *Boyd* 2/140 and R P Hendry in *Journal of Transport Ticket Society* July 1973, p. 280 – although www.disused-stations.org.uk/p/peel_road/index.shtml erroneously gives Jun 19***51*** while company's letter ref A.O./T.27159 of 27 Jan 1959, gave "1954". The location was reportedly retained as unadvertised **RQ** – *but why not continue advertising it if it were officially still open?* It was reported in *Branch Line News* for March 1957 as used on request. Deleted from *Hand-book of Stations* by leaflet L.5 (dated Sep 1958); still shown in 1956 fare table on display in Douglas in summer 1959 (despite no evidence on site at that time of any recent use).

[42] The station did *not* close in the 1880s as some sources aver: services were *reduced* to two/three weekday round trips from March 1884, to Saturday-only calls from 1 Jul 1886 (timetable of that date advertised in *Isle of Man Times* 3 Jul 1886, p.7 ; curiously, *Hendry 1980* does not give this date), periods with short-lived experiments with Monday calls, too, but eventually (by 1926) only a single Saturday round trip calling on request. Closure 4 Jul 1960 confirmed by company's letter ref A.O./T.271061 of 27 Oct 1961. Published sources are in error: *Boyd* 3/51 states that it disappeared from the timetable of 3 Jul 1961 but that tickets were still issued the following month (similarly at *Boyd* 2/155), while in *Hendry 1976*, p.6 and *Hendry 1980*, p.86, the authors give different dates (19 Sep 1960; 3 July 1961) for closure. Station does not feature in tables of bookings by passenger station (1954-1965), published by the railway company in1965, but had not been deleted from *Hand-book of Stations* by date of final amendment leaflet (Nov 1964).

[43] Gob-y-Deigan not mentioned in the company's public timetable advertisements in the contemporary local press (nor appearing in *Bradshaw's Guide*) but did feature in other advertising material: one source notes the group stopping facility as available in summer 1887, another cites a leaflet advertising the facility for summer 1895, and *Boyd* 1/234 quotes leaflet advertising the facility for summer 1899 and illustrates halt and waiting shelter there at *Boyd* 1/plate 45.

[44] West Berk not mentioned in the company's public timetable advertisements in the contemporary local press, nor did it appear in *Bradshaw's Guide*). www.disused-stations.org.uk/w/west_berk_level_crossing/index.shtml asserts use but offers no primary source. *Hendry 1980*, p.94 states that "[West] Berk, in common with other crossings, was frequently used by request." The level crossing seems simply to have been used on odd occasions to entrain/detrain pre-arranged groups, not warranting categorising as a regular stopping place.

[45] *Boyd* 2/155 is confusing – according to loco rosters, the schools trains last ran on Friday 22 Sep 1961

[46] advert: *Isle of Man Times* 18 Jun 1927, p.6; statement: *Isle of Man Examiner* 8 Jul 1927, p.6

[47] *Boyd* 2/149

[48] *Hendry 1980* p. 28 (*Boyd* 1/156 date of 2 Mar 1882, being a Thursday, must be incorrect). This location did not appear in the company's public timetable advertisements nor in reports in the contemporary local press. The location

was very close to Bishop's Court.

[49] *Isle of Man Times* 30 Aug 1879, in describing the new line, said: "…there is a station at the Garey for the convenience of the parish of Lezayre….": The Garey was a local estate, not the name of the station.

[50] MNR advert *Isle of Man Times* 6 Oct 1900, p.10; note **F** of IoMR/MNR timetable in *Isle of Man Times* 1 Jun 1901, p.3, implying existence of station master, appears to be in error, being overtaken by advert in same paper 8 Jun 1901, p.3 (*Boyd* 2/24 is wrong about station not becoming **RQ** until winter 1908-9))

[51] it is not clear whether this took effect from 11 or 27 Sep 1939, although it seems more than likely that this was simply unstaffing (the Station Master became a clerk at Ramsey – *Hendry 1980*, p. 84) and removal of *advertised* calls, but with retention of *unadvertised* calls for schools traffic.

[52] Omitted from timetables from 25 Sep 1950 (*Boyd* 2/140), it was still in a 1956 fare table on display in Douglas in summer 1959. It had disappeared from Ordnance Survey maps by 1957 and does not feature in tables of bookings by passenger station (1954-1965), published by IoMR in 1965 (although these exclude school contract journeys), despite *Boyd* 2/155: "… though nominally closed, recorded ticket sales during the year" [1961]. Company's letter ref A.O./T.27159 of 27 Jan 1959 confirmed that it was then still used, unadvertised, for school children. Assertions that it was recognised *formally* as an unadvertised **RQ** stop *for other than schoolchildren* until 1958 or later should be regarded with some scepticism (even though such "chance" usage has been reported). Lezayre appeared in the Railway Clearing House *Handbook of Stations* up to the 1938 edition as being available for passenger and parcels traffic, but was not in the next and final (1956) edition – even though its deletion had not been recorded in any intervening amendment leaflet…..

[53] School trains ceased when 0810 Monday to Friday Kirk Michael – Ramsey was withdrawn from 25 Sep 1961

[54] IoMR advert *Isle of Man Examiner* 30 Jul 1898,p.1; *Boyd* 1/253 (into use 23 May 1904) and 2/30

[55] Dec 1882 movements were MNR's own coal, when railway stated line not "open for traffic" (*Hendry 1980,* p. 29); official permission for use not given until Mar 1883 (*Boyd* 1/131; *Hendry 1980,* p. 29 says it had not been given by 10 Mar). East Quay section lifted 1924/5 (*Boyd* 2/68-69). Dates given in *Boyd* 1/130 overtaken by subsequent references: Last traffic - *Boyd* 2/135 (not 2/140) claims 9 Jun 1949 but *Hendry 1980* p. 86 reports track refettling in winter 1950/1 and some use in 1951, with lease surrendered that year. Remainder lifted from 1955 (*Boyd* 2/146).

[56] advert *Isle of Man Examiner* 14 Aug 1886, p.4 (a different advert is reproduced at *Boyd* 1/184 and *Hendry 1980* p. 44); *post hoc* ceremonies took place Mon 16 Aug (*Boyd* 1/183 is wrong in stating that public service did not commence until 17 Aug). Occasional **G** trains from Jun 1886 (*Hendry 1980* p. 43; *Boyd* 1/183) but opening for regular traffic was 14 Aug 1886

[57] despite the fact the company continued to advertise a single round trip on weekdays in the press throughout summer 1940, *Hendry 1980* p. 85 makes a virtually unassailable case for 2 **Jul** 1940 as withdrawal date. *Bus* round trips continued to be advertised in the *railway* timetable, until they finally disappeared with the edition of 24 Jul 1944

[58] *Boyd* 2/151 (the claim in *Railways & Tramways of the Isle of Man*, Gray, 2008, that these two movements were in Jan 19*62* is in error). *Boyd* 2/160 speculates whether there were movements in Nov 1965 but this seems very unlikely in view of the railway's closure then.

[59] Omitted – apparently inadvertently – from summer 1930 timetable. Mon 17 Sep 1934 was first timetable with no reference to halt. Later used for special parties (e.g. in 1944 - *Boyd* 2/119)

[60] *Hendry 1976,* pp.18, 19, 63

[61] In 1968 this line ran only Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays which is why its "last day of operation" date – a Friday – differs from the other closures at the end of the 1968 season. Reputedly, the oil trains – hauled by the railcars – carried passengers for the remainder of that month, but this was hardly a "regularly advertised public service". The start date of oil trains is given in *Steam Railway News* no. 8 (1968).

[62] When heavy snow blocked island roads on 5 Feb 1968, *Maitland* ran passenger train 1410 Douglas – Ronaldsway - Castletown and *G H Wood* ran 1600 Douglas – Castletown and back to repatriate workers from Ronaldsway shoe and aircraft factories. The following morning a train ran 0730 Douglas – Ronaldsway – Castletown for the same workers. Thereafter road cleared. No trains ran on Peel line as that road had been cleared. *Steam Railway News* no. 6 (Apr 1968) and *Railway Magazine* no. 805 (May 1968).

[63] Charter special Castletown – Douglas ran 9 Sep 1968 (*Hendry 1976*, p.21)

[64] *Hendry 1976,* p. 102

[65] Three private charter specials ran Douglas – Castletown on 8, 9 and 10 Oct 1974 (hence 10 Oct 1974 is sometimes quoted as closing date)

[66] Isle of Man Transport communication 14 Mar 2019; reappeared, as footnote, from 2022 timetable on.

[67] Not in 1968 fare table but served **RQ**. Not in timetable during years 1972-1976 – letter from IoMR manager about 1972 timetable: "It is not intended to use … Colby as a matter of routine." However, it was noted in Jul 1972 that some trains were calling at Colby station **RQ**

[68] Halt not advertised in the intervening summers, nor is it at all clear that it was used in any summer before 1986. Letter from IoM Passenger Transport Board: "During the summer of 1986 we stopped trains on request at Colby level."

[69] *Hendry 1976,* p. 19

[70] *9* Sep 1971 according to *Hendry 1976,* p.6 - but that was a Thursday, whereas the last advertised running day that season was 25 Sep

[71] Isle of Man Transport communication 14 Mar 2019

[72] timetable; confirmed by Ronaldsway Facebook www.facebook.com/ronaldswayhalt/ page official posting of 25 Jun 2021 referring to 2 Jul timetable – and still applicable to end of 2021 season according to posting of 30 Sep 2021

[73] photograph in *Rails in the Isle of Man – A Colour Celebration*, Robert Hendry, 1993, p.40

[74] e.g. *Railway World*, May 1969, letter on p. 230

[75] photograph in *Rails in the Isle of Man – A Colour Celebration*, Robert Hendry, 1993, p.44

76 *Steam Railway News* no. 8 (1968)
77 apart from *Boyd* 2/171 (which is misleading)
78 Not as stated at *Boyd* 2/171
79 Reported in both *The Courier (Isle of Man)* and *Steam Railway News*. A report in *Railway Magazine,* April 1970 of a movement on 11 Dec 1969 does *not* appear in the local paper to which it is ascribed and must therefore be discounted unless it can be properly provenanced.
80 *Steam Railway News* no. 48 (April 1978)

A portfolio of station photographs towards the end of the Sheard era

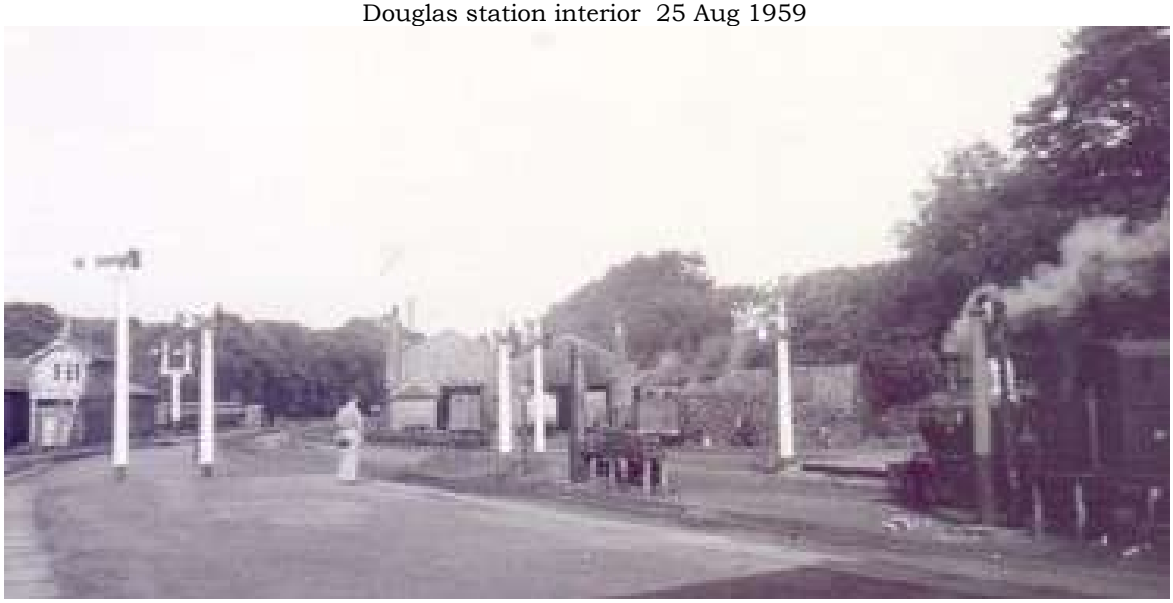
Photographs by Arthur or Richard Maund - 1959



Douglas station exterior – Victorian opulence 25 Aug 1959



Douglas station interior 25 Aug 1959



Douglas signal box, works and loco shed from the platform ends 25 Aug 1959

Peel line



Port Soderick - from the south 27 Aug 1959



Santon - looking towards Pt Erin 3 Sep 1959



Ballasalla – looking towards Douglas 29 Aug 1959



Castletown - from the west 29 Aug 1959



Castletown - train for Port Erin 29 Aug 1959



Ballabeg - looking towards Douglas. It's a platelayers' hut – the station here was burned down in 1948

For some reason Colby got overlooked.



Port St. Mary - more Victorian grandeur – looking towards Pt Erin 1 Sep 1959



Port Erin – from the stop blocks 25 Aug 1959

Peel line



Braddan – looking towards Peel 25 Aug 1959
St. Braddan's Church is behind the camera, to the left



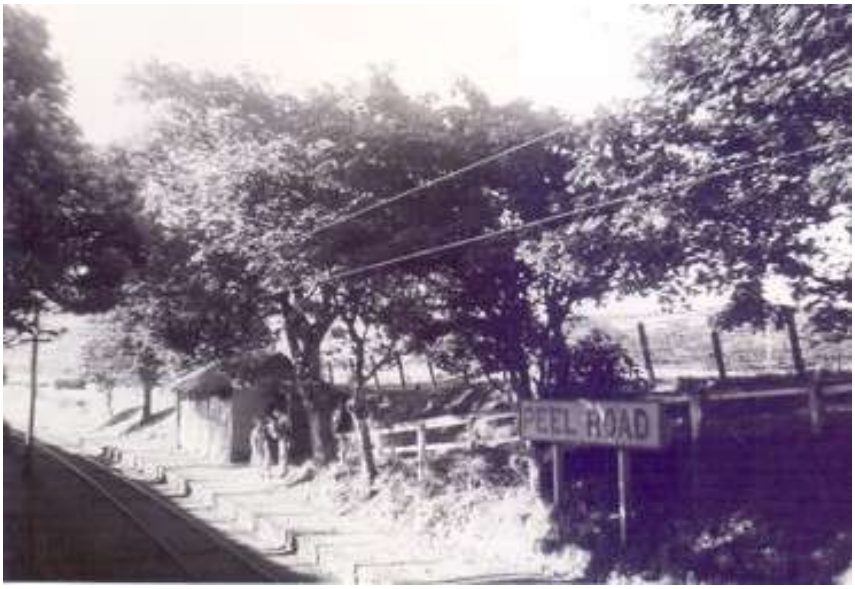
Union Mills – looking towards Douglas 25 Aug 1959

For some reason Crosby got overlooked


St. Johns – with train arriving from Ramsey 27 Aug 1959


Peel 24 Aug 1959

Ramsey line



Peel Road – looking towards St Johns 27 Aug 1959


St. Germains – looking towards Ramsey 27 Aug 1959



Gen Wyllin viaduct – people and the back of a car, at the foot, give scale 3 Sep 1959



Kirk Michael – Ramsey to the left 3 Sep 1959

Ballaugh got overlooked



Sulby Glen – looking towards Douglas 28 Aug 1959



Sulby Bridge – with Douglas-bound train 28 Aug 1959



Lezayre – looking towards Ramsey 30 Aug 1959



Ramsey – from the west. Site of harbour line to left 4 Sep 1959



Ramsey station exterior 27 Aug 1959

Foxdale line



St. Johns Foxdale line station – train approaching main station from Peel 24 Aug 1959



Between St Johns and Waterfall – looking towards St Johns 28 Aug 1959



Foxdale – from the end of the line 28 Aug 1959

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