# 50 YEARS OF THE JOINT LINE

## Historical Survey

In reality, the origin of the Great Western and Great Central Joint Railway goes back to the latter part of the 1870's, when the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway realised that, if it were to survive without suffering the indignity of amalgamation or absorption, it would have to bring its own traffic south and into London over its own metals. As its very name implies, this Railway with its network of lines on either side of the Pennines, served one of the most industrialised parts of Great Britain, consequently its freight traffic was heavy, but as the greater part was consigned to merchants in London and the South of England, the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire found that they were just "collectors" for other larger Companies like the Great Northern, Midland, and London and North Western Railways.

After several years of indecision the plunge was taken, and in 1893 an Act of Parliament was obtained, authorising the construction of the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway's line southwards from Annesley, through Nottingham, Leicester, and Rugby, finally linking up with the Metropolitan Railway's northern extension, which had by this time reached Quainton Road in Buckinghamshire. From here it was proposed that running powers should be obtained to Canfield Place (now known as Finchley Road), whence a short line would be projected to an entirely new London terminus at Marylebone.

Midland Crescent, Finchley Road

One of the most vigorous supporters of this project was the Chairman of the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Company, Sir Edward Watkin, who, holding the same position on the Metropolitan Railway and serving on the Boards of the East London Railway, the South Eastern Railway, and the Channel Tunnel Company, had visions of passengers entraining at Manchester and travelling right through to Paris without change of carriage. Unfortunately, ill-health brought about Sir Edward Watkin's premature retirement.

In 1897 the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Company's Board of Directors decided to change the name of the Railway to that of GREAT CENTRAL. It was felt this was necessary in view of the vast new territory that was to be covered by the line, and the publicity thus created would serve to herald its forthcoming entry into the capital. Work was pushed ahead and the first express reached Marylebone in 1899.

Long before the first passenger train ran into London over this route, it became apparent that the congested Metropolitan line, with its very severe gradients over the Chiltern Hills, was not conducive to the heavy freight and excursion trains that it was proposed to run, and an alternative entry into London would have to be found. It was a realisation that became only too obvious during the first few months of the line opening, when it was found that Metropolitan signalmen were giving priority to their own Company's local and freight trains, to the detriment of the newcomer's expresses.

At about this time, the Great Western Railway were anxious to shorten their route to Birmingham, in order that their trains could compete more favourably for that city's traffic with their rival, the London & North Western Railway, who possessed a route some twenty miles shorter. In 1897, under The Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Act, authorisation was given for the construction of a line from a junction with that Company's main line at Old Oak Common, to a junction with heir Maidenhead to Oxford branch at High Wycombe. It was proposed that the existing line thence to Princes Risborough should be realigned and brought up to main line standard, and a new line projected from Princes Risborough to a junction with the Great Western's existing Birmingham line at Aynho, just south of Banbury. With this in mind, the Great Central approached the Great Western with a request for running powers over a line that had yet to be constructed, but the Great Western Railway were, under certain conditions, prepared to offer far better facilities that of joint owner-ship; so, under The Great Western and Great Central Railway Companies Act of 1899 (Section 8), that part of the railway between Northolt Junction and High Wycombe became vested in a joint committee of the two Railways. By virtue of the same Act (under Section 10), authority was given for a line to be built from Princes Risborough to a junction with the Great Central main line at Grendon Underwood, some three miles north of Quainton Road.

Work commenced early in 1901 and on the 20th November, 1905, the first goods train passed over the line; on the same day the section of line between Ashendon, nine miles west of Princes Risborough, and Grendon Underwood was transferred to and vested in the Great Central Railway by agreement with The Great Western and Great Central Joint Committee. Ashendon later became the junction where the joint line terminated and the two Companies' lines parted to follow their respective routes.

## ENGINEERING FEATURES

### Northolt to High Wycombe

As a civil engineering feat, it is a masterpiece into which nearly ninety years of Railway working and development have been incorporated. Some of the engineering features worthy of note are the long viaduct crossing the Grand Union Canal just north of the Buckinghamshire village of Denham, comprising nine arches, eight of which span forty-seven feet each, and the one through which the canal passes sixty feet. This is followed

almost immediately by another viaduct spanning the River Colne; this has four arches each of fifty feet and one of eighty feet span through which the river runs. Just past Denham the river Misbourne is crossed by a viaduct sixty feet high, having five arches spanning fifty-one feet each; this is followed almost immediately by yet another viaduct of five arches, each spanning seventy-seven feet, which crosses the A413 road to the famous Chalfont villages.

Another notable feature is the 1 1/4 mile long cutting in which Gerrards Cross station is situated, averaging some forty-five feet in depth. It is estimated that some 1,200,000 cubic yards of earth were removed during its construction, much of which, no doubt, went to form the embankment just north of Beaconsfield which is eighty feet high. A truly remarkable piece of work is the massive retaining wall at High Wycombe, which required a million and a quarter Stafford Blue Engineering bricks. The whole section of the line from Northolt to High Wycombe is a great credit to the Railway's Engineer, Mr. J. C. Inglis, and to the main contractors, Messrs. Pauling & Go. Ltd., who undertook the construction of twenty-three miles of line for £561,735.

## High Wycombe to Princes Risborough

As already mentioned, the section of line between High Wycombe and Princes Risborough was originally built as a branch, and, despite the severe realignment it was given to permit the passage of main line trains, it still left much to be desired: its course was sinuous and its gradients steep. At its northern extremity the last two miles fell at 1 in 164 for half-a-mile, 1 in 100 for three-quarters of a mile, and a further three-quarters of a mile at 1 in 88. Realising that such gradients facing a southbound train, even if moderately loaded, would prove a severe handicap, a new line was constructed for up trains to which the gradient has been eased out to 1 in 167. This deviation occurs about a quarter of a mile south of Princes Risborough and extends for two and a half miles, in one place the two lines being over half-a-mile apart. Although the original line is open throughout its entire length, there is a small tunnel through which the new line passes, eighty-four yards in length.

Travelling north-westward along the line from High Wycombe, traces of the original line are apparent immediately north of the station, where the old bridge can be seen below the level of the existing track. When the regrading and realignment took place, the new track generally was lowered as far as West Wycombe, after which it rises considerably until just before Princes Risborough, where the old track alignment becomes incorporated in the new. West Wycombe station is peculiar in that land was taken for four tracks with centre fast roads and outside loops serving the platforms, but the platform loops with a wide space between have alone been laid, the reason being the extremely sharp bend immediately north of the station, which, if fast lines had been laid, would have had such a severe speed restriction imposed on them as to render them impracticable. This section of line was taken over from the Great Western by the Joint Committee on 1st August, 1899. The realignment and widening work on this section and complete reconstruction of the next was executed by Messrs. Mackay & Davies, of Cardiff.

## Princes Risborough to Ashendon

On the remaining section from Princes Risborough to Ashendon the grades are fairly easy, and it is ironical that, after having left such a tortuous section of line, a long easy bend is rounded just north of Princes Risborough on to four miles of dead straight line. Some very fine overbridges are to be seen on this part of the line, but the Chearsley viaduct, with its five arches each spanning forty feet, is the most outstanding feature.

## The Area Served by the Line (1)

At Northolt where the Joint line commences at its southern end, the Great Western, travelling in a north westerly direction, passes over the Great Central down line which, coming in from the east, turns sharply and ascends a 1 in 153 gradient to the junction situated on an embankment. The up line to Marylebone veers away at the same level as that of the Great Western lines. Immediately on the junction is South Ruislip station:until 1947 this station had been known as "South Ruislip and Northolt Junction," but as the Central Line of London Transport was at this time being projected as far as West Ruislip, the change of name was agreed upon to save confusion with other London Transport stations in the area. South Ruislip serves a very large residential area today, but most of this traffic is catered for by the London Transport line, and very few of the Joint line trains stop there. Ruislip Gardens, the next station along the line, was opened in 1934 to satisfy the needs of an adjoining housing estate that was developing rapidly, and, although it did have a brief spell of prosperity shortly after opening, it has now suffered the fate of its neighbour, South Ruislip, in that, few trains have reason to call there as the requirements are adequately provided for by the Central line. The station that follows, West Ruislip, also changed its name in 1947. Previously it had been known as "Ruislip and Ickenham," as it is situated between these two places, but London Transport's Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines which are crossed by the joint line just outside this station, have stations at both Ruislip and Ickenham. West Ruislip, like its two neighbours, served aresidential area, but traffic was never heavy. Since the Central line terminated here, the station has achieved a new importance in that it has become an interchange point, and most of the suburban trains out of London make this station their first stop.

Just beyond West Ruislip station are situated the joint line's only set of water troughs. Although these are only twelve and thirteen miles from Paddington and Marylebone respectively, they have occasionally proved invaluable. From this point onward the line rises continuously for over ten miles.

A mile and a quarter beyond the troughs may be seen the remains of South Harefield Halt, closed in 1931 through lack of traffic, and when one considers how far distant the halt is from Harefield village, and that there is no suitable bus route near, it is not surprising.

Immediately beyond South Harefield Halt may be seen the embankment of what was once Denham East Junction, leading to the Great Western Railway's Uxbridge (High Street)

branch. There is no record of this junction ever having been used by a regular passenger service although rails were laid in. Subsequently the track was removed, and the spur remained derelict for some years. During the last war the spur was laid out as a siding, and remains so to this day. The line has always been worked from the spur facing west; there were no through trains between Uxbridge (High Street) and London, but a convenient auto service ran between that station and Gerrards Cross providing useful connections. The line was closed in 1939 as a wartime economy and has never been reopened to passenger traffic, although a freight train still serves the Uxbridge (High Street) goods yard several times each week.

The next station is Denham (for Harefield), which has assumed considerable importance during recent years, first as a centre of the film industry and later as the station serving one of the larger bases of the U.S.A.F., quite apart from the rapid building development that is taking place there. Following Denham is a halt known as Denham Golf Club Platform, which was of particular interest up to two years ago in that the platforms did not face each other, but were staggered. A by-road to the Chalfonts passes under the railway at this point, and as the up platform was situated east of this overbridge it is assumed that this arrangement was to prevent the bridge being strained by the dead weight of locomotives concentrated on one side of it only, as would be the case of all up trains stopping at the halt. A new platform is now in use, and this faces the original down platform, but a new bridge was laid in just prior to this platform being brought into use. When built, this halt was primarily for the use of golfers using the Denham links; during the 1914-18 war it was extremely busy with the Training Camp of the King's Royal Rifles which was built adjoining. Today it serves a thickly populated little estate known as Higher Denham.

Gerrards Cross is now one of the busiest stations on the line, but it was the railway that was responsible for the development of the area, consequently concentration is centred round the station and working out to a considerable depth, resulting in the morning and evening business trains being well patronised.

Gerrards Cross is followed by yet another halt-Seer Green and Jordans (for Beaconsfield Golf Club). Opened in 1915, it carried for the first three years of its life, the name Beaconsfield Golf Links. The village of Seer Green is some way distant, as also is Jordans, but despite this a large traffic is enjoyed. Midway between Seer Green and the next station, Beaconsfield, the summit of the line is reached, 315 feet above sea level.

Beaconsfield station, which is a considerable way from the little town on the Oxford Road from which it takes its name, enjoys a very large passenger traffic. As in the case of Gerrards Cross, the railway has been responsible for the development of the area which has been so extensive here that the station is today situated in the middle of a new town. Primarily dormitory, many light industries have found their home here, especially film production.

Soon after leaving Beaconsfield the railway plunges into White House Farm Tunnel, which is 357 yards long, and it was in this tunnel that an unfortunate occurrence took place while the line was being constructed, when an unforeseen fall trapped and killed six men. A

monument to their memory may be seen in High Wycombe cemetery. Another point of interest just beyond the tunnel is the Penn Viaduct built in red brick which differs from the other similar works, which are constructed from Stafford Blue Engineering Bricks. This variance was at the request of Sir Phillip Rose, whose drive the viaduct spans, and it is said he was of the opinion that the red brick specified would blend better with the surroundings. When Queen Victoria drove from Windsor to Hughenden to visit Disraeli, it is recorded that she used this drive up to Penn House, where she changed carriages. A proposal was once put forward that a halt should be constructed between White House Farm Tunnel and this viaduct, to serve north Loudwater, but the scheme was not developed.

After emerging from the tunnel, the line follows the north side of the Wye valley, the branch from Maidenhead being on the south side, Before High Wycombe station is reached these two lines converge, the Maidenhead branch rising from a much lower level. High Wycombe is the most important town served by the line, and the first station here was built in 1854, but was completely modernised in 1903 to cope with the additional traffic that it was anticipated the new line would attract. Messrs. Pauling & Go. Ltd. undertook the work for £18,040. There are two through platforms, which are staggered, and one terminal bay. At the time this line was built, High Wycombe was little more than a fair-sized country town, but it had become noted throughout Britain for its chair-making industry. It was on this account that the first siding built there allowed accommodation for over 200 wagons, although the present capacity, after considerable extension over the years, greatly exceeds this modest figure, and yet at times it is still insufficient to satisfy the needs of this rapidly expanding town, which has become the centre of many industries, both heavy and light.

High Wycombe has spread to such an extent that, the next station, West Wycombe, is more useful as a station serving the western extremity of the town than as the station for the village whose name it bears. Saunderton is a considerable distance from the village of this name, and, as the light industrial plant adjoining the station is only an import of recent years, one is left to wonder what purpose the station really served. Princes Risborough, which follows, ranks as the station of second importance on the line, as it is from here that lines branch to Watlington, Thame and Oxford, and Aylesbury. The line to Aylesbury, constituting the Joint Railway's only branch line, was taken over by the Joint Committee on lst July, 1907. The Watlington and Oxford branches were exclusivelyGreat Western. After Princes Risborough comes the last halt on the line and the smallest: Ilmer Halt, consisting of only two wooden platforms open to the elements, is barely the length of a main line coach. The next station, Haddenham, is the last on the line and, apart from serving the adjoining village, the wartime airfield in the area has now been taken over as theAylesbury and Thame airport, which has increased this station's importance.

Ashendon Junction, where the two lines separate and the "Joint Line" ends, is some four miles further on. Here the Great Western continues its north-westerly course, while the Great Central diverges to the north, passing under the Great Western up line which, having ascended a short incline at 1 in 200, crosses on a girder bridge and descends at 1 in 150 to the level of the down line.

Throughout its entire length the Joint line is double tracked, except for the first two miles north-west of Northolt Junction, where it is quadrupled; all stations except those on the High Wycombe to Princes Risborough section have main lines passing through the centre with loops serving the platforms. These loops average 725 yards in length and most can easily accommodate 80-wagon freight trains.

## Locomotive and Train Working

The line was opened throughout for passenger train working on 2nd April, 1906, and the first train for Marylebone left High Wycombe behind engine number 359, a 4-4-2 type tank locomotive, which is still in service in Cheshire, although her number has now been altered to that of 67436.

For the four years following the opening of the line the Great Central had complete monopoly north of Princes Risborough, as the first Great Western express services did not commence running over this route until 1910.

Passenger traffic between Paddington and Aylesbury over the new line was also instituted on 2nd April, 1906, but it should be understood that the Great Western had been routing trains via Maidenhead and High Wycombe to Princes Risbcrough, Aylesbury and Thame, for the whole of the period that the High Wycombe to Princes Risborough line was being realigned and reconstructed.

## Locomotives

During the construction of the line, the contractors employed two 0-6-0 tank engines that had originally been built for the London Brighton and South Coast Railway between the years 1872 and 1880 and known as "Terriers." They were very sturdy and powerful little locomotives that were built for working the South London suburban service of that Company, fifty in all were built. It is amusing to realise that, although this line was built for the exclusive use of Great Western and Great Central trains the first two locomotives to work over the first twenty or so miles of it were, of London Brighton and South Coast origin.

To work the large suburban territory that the opening of this line had acquired for the Great Central, forty tank engines of the 4-4-2 wheel arrangement were built at that Company's Gorton works, but by 1911 the rush hour traffic was becoming so heavy that the need for a more powerful type of locomotive was felt, and the first of a new type went into service that year. They were of the 4-6-2 wheel arrangement and were an immediate success. Unfortunately the 1914-18 war intervened when all railway workshops were turned over to the manufacture of munitions, with the result that by 1917 only 21 had been built; the second batch of ten, which all followed into service within a few months of each other, came out of Gorton works in 1923. By this time the Great Central Railway had become one of the constituents of the London and North Eastern Railway, but the new system's Chief Mechanical Engineer, the late Sir Nigel Gresley, was so impressed with their performance that he instructed that another batch of thirteen should be built. They were delivered at

varying dates during 1925 and 1926 but due to the heavy commitments of the Railways' shops at this time, the order was contracted out with the famous firm of Hawthorn Leslie.

These locomotives worked suburban services to and from Marylebone exclusively, until they were displaced, just after the last war, by engines of a more advanced design, although they are still performing similar work in other areas of the Eastern Region. For their suburban working in off peak periods, the Great Western Railway placed a large number of Auto trains in service which were powered by locomotives of the 48XX class, which was a small 0-4-2 tankengine, or the 54XX class 0-6-0 tank design. Heavier trains were usually entrusted to 2-4-2 tank engines of the 36XX class, until these engines gave way to tank engines of the 4-4-2 wheel arrangement and known as the "County" class, but just prior to the suburban workings being taken over bytrains to and from Marylebone, tank engines of the 2-6-2 wheel arrangement in the 6100 series were introduced, and still work the through Aylesbury services via Maidenhead. As far as main line locomotives are concerned, it would be safe to say that no other main line in the whole of Great Britain has had such a variety of locomotives pass over it in the past fifty years, and although it is not possible to enumerate them all here, one or two types are worthy of particular note, first and foremost the beautiful Great Central "Atlantics," affectionately nicknamed by the menthat drove them as "Jersey Lillies," of which there were twenty-seven built between 1903 and 1906. At the opening of the line these engines were performing the principal express duties with excellent results, and in 1905 they were followed by four compound engines of similar type with three cylinders instead of two. Apart from working on some of the fastest passenger schedules, these locomotives took their turn with the large six-coupledengines on the Grimsby fish trains. Without a doubt the Robinson 4-4-0 engines, first built in 1902, were the most successful, and by 1925 there were no less than 85 such locomotives at work on the London and North Eastern Railway. As in the case of the Great Central 4-6-2 tank engines, Sir Nigel Gresley was so impressed with the efficiency of these locomotives that he ordered 24 to be built for working the difficult London and North Eastern routes in Scotland - a legacy passed to that Company by the North British Railway. For many years after the grouping, eleven of these engines were transferred to the Great Northern section of the L.N.E.R. to operate their Yorkshire and Scottish Pullman link. The last large engines to be built under Great Central administration were six 4-6-0's, and, although the initial engine was placed in service in 1917, the remaining five did not appear until 1920-1921. The second locomotive of this class was named "Valour," and served as a war memorial to all Great Central employees who lost their lives in the 1914-18 war.

Mention should be made here of the 2-8-0 freight locomotives which first made their appearance in 1911. So successful were these engines in service, that the Railway Operating Division of the Royal Engineers adopted them as the design most suitable for theatres of action abroad in the 1914-18 war. Very few engines of Great Central origin exist now, and all express trains to or from Marylebone that pass over the line are usually hauled by ex-L.N.E.R. "Pacifics" or the two-cylinder 4-6-0's designed by Edward Thompson which were built in such large numbers in the years just after the war. Most of the freight traffic is entrusted to engines of the 2-8-0 type originally built by the Ministry of Supply during the war for operational service, after which they were acquired by British Railways.

Almost every type of locomotive that has been produced by the Great Western Railway during the past fifty years has passed over the line, and ever since Great Western expresses started using this route in 1910, their trains have very much followed the pattern of those running on their West of England main line. In the early days the "Saint" and "Star" class of 4-6-0 was responsible for most of the traffic until they were superseded by the "Castles" in 1923 and the "Kings" in 1927. Nearly all secondary trains are hauled by "Halls" and from time to time a "County," a mixed traffic engine introduced in 1945, is used. In former years an earlier "County" class of 4-4-0 type was a familiar sight on passenger trains. Freight trains often appear behind 2-6-0 and 2-8-0 locomotives and the daily pick-up goods that serves the line is now worked by one of the 2251 class introduced in 1930, replacing the "Bulldog," "Duke" and "Dean Goods" classes.

Since nationalisation former London Midland and Scottish tank engines may be observed hauling Marylebone suburban trains and London Midland and Scottish 4-6-0's can be seen working through on parcels trains. Standardisation of motive power on British Railways has also produced changes, and several of the designs produced since "nationalisation" can now be seen.

## Train Services

The Joint Line is an extremely busy one, and this can be fully appreciated when it is realised that there are no less than two hundred and sixteen train movements within its bounds every weekday, and a further seventy-six between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday. Express services from Paddington using the line provide the shortest route between London and Banbury, Leamington Spa, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, and the Cambrian Coast. Although the expresses from Marylebone cannot claim similar advantages over other routes, their northbound services, with their more frequent stops, do provide excellent cross-country travel facilities, and people living in the north-west Home Counties wishing to travel to any of the northern provinces, are saved the tedious journey into London from which to catch their train. Three named expresses use this route; they are the "Inter-City" for Birmingham and Wolverhampton, the "Cambrian Coast Express" for Shrewsbury and the Welsh coast, and the "Master Cutler," from Marylebone to Sheffield (the up train uses the Metropolitan and Great Central route through Amersham). There is one other named service using the line during the summer months, and that is the "Starlight Special" between Marylebone and Edinburgh.

As will have been realised from foregoing chapters, the Joint Line has a dense suburban trafiic to cater for and this is dealt with mainly by trains working to and from Marylebone. During off peak periods, an hourly service is in operation between High Wycombe and Marylebone and two-hourly from Princes Risborough in each direction. During the peak hours these services are considerably augmented.

There is no through service to Paddington from any of the stations south-east of High Wycombe on the joint line, and there is only one train from Paddington in the reverse direction at 4.34 p.m. which does not stop before Gerrards Cross.

During off peak periods, much freight may be observed passing over the line, heavy castings which obviously originated in the Black Country, to coal from the Nottinghamshire coalfields, and fish from Grimsby all destined for London, while in the reverse direction there is a train devoted exclusively to beer, while another which calls at High Wycombe is known locally as "the Chairs."

## The Aylesbury Branch

This line, which had independent beginnings, was authorised by Act of Parliament in 1861 and opened two years later. Originally broad gauge, the line was converted to standard in 1867.

It is single throughout its entire length of seven miles, and the junction with the main line lies immediately to the north of Princes Risborough station. Only one station and two halts are served, the first being Monks Risborough and Whiteleaf Halt, which has only been open for thirty years or so. The next station, Little Kimble, dates from about nine or ten years after the line was opened, but the next, South Aylesbury Halt, in common with Monks Risborough and Whiteleaf, is of comparatively recent origin, and serves the needs of an adjoining housing estate. At Aylesbury the station is shared with trains of the Metropolitan and Great Central Joint line, and one of the platforms is devoted to branch trains. Through services to London by this route are infrequent, passengers for Paddington having to make the circuitous journey via Maidenhead. There are additional services between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury.

## Administration

From the outset, although the Great Western and Great Central Joint Committee was set up to administer the line, each Company, with the consent of the other, made its own train arrangements. In later years a Joint Control Office was set up at High Wycombe, and was responsible for regulating the freight working over the entire length of the line, with suitable telephone contact at key points off the Joint line and on the parent Companies system to assist in the regulation of the flow of traffic. An added responsibility was that of watching the Great Central suburban traffic, especially in peak hours. As most of the suburban traffic was operated by the Great Central, the passenger work of this Control Office was chiefly concerned with Great Central and London and North Eastern Trains.

In 1923, when the Great Central was absorbed into the London and North Eastern system, its responsibility on the Great Western and Great Central Joint Committee was assumed by the new Company, although the actual Joint Line still retained its original title.

The arrangement was that each Company should take a turn every five years to effect the necessary staff supervision, and at the time of nationalisation this was being carried out by the Great Western, but the primary control of staff and the working was centred on a Joint Line Inspector stationed at High Wycombe.

Maintenance of the track between Northolt and High Wycombe became the responsibility of the Great Western Engineer, but from High Wycombe to Ashendon by the London and North Eastern Engineer.

Staff were appointed by both the parent Companies, and in the case of Station Masters, they alternated with one Company to another as vacancies arose. Members of the staff were also given the privilege of being allowed to return to his or her parent Company as and when vacancies arose. Members of the uniformed staff had their uniform monogrammed as for Joint staff, and it is interesting to note that uniforms were always supplied by the Great Western Railway.

## Conclusions

On the lst January, 1948, the Great Western and London & North Eastern Railway Companies were dissolved by Act of Parliament, and these two great Companies passed into the hands of the Railway Executive and the State, and in the boundary adjustment that followed, the Joint line became allocated to the Western Region and so it remains today, but the trains working to and from Marylebone are composed of Eastern Region locomotives and rolling stock. The individuality of the Joint line has gone, but many of the older generation who have occasion to travel out of London over the Joint line sense a nostalgia that is for ever sweet.

NOTABLE DATES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1854 | Aug. 1 | Maidenhead to High Wycombe railway opened. |
| 1862 | Aug. 1. | High Wycombe to Thame extension opened. |
| 1863 | | Princes Risborough to Aylesbury branch opened. |
| 1893 | | Act authorising the M.S. & L.R. extension to London. |
| 1897 | | The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway is renamed "Great Central Railway."The Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Act authorised construction of Old Oak Common to High Wycombe line. |
| 1898 | July 25. | First G. C. R. coal train reached London. |
| 1899 | Mar.15. | First G.C.R. express train entered Marylebone. |
| | April 11. | G.C.R. line opened throughout for goods traffic of all types (via Amersham).G.W. & G.C. Joint Railway Companies' Act. |
| | Aug. 1. | High Wycombe to Princes Risborough section taken over by the Joint Committee. |
| 1901 | | Work commenced on the "Joint Line." |
| 1905 | Nov. 20. | "Joint Line" opened for goods train traffic. |
| 1906 | April 2. | Joint Line opened for passenger trains. |
| 1907 | May 1. | G.W.R. Denham-Uxbridge (High Street) branch opened. |
| | July 1. | Princes Risborough - Aylesbury line taken over by the Joint Committee. |

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| 1908 | | Proposal to amalgamate the G.C. and G.N. Railways rejected by Parliament. |
| | May 1. | Northolt Junction station opened (now South Ruislip). |
| 1910 | July 1. | G.W.R. passenger trains ran between Ashendon Junction and Aynho. |
| 1912 | Aug. 7. | Denham Golf Club Platform opened. |
| 1915 | Jan. 1. | Beaconsfield Golf Links opened (now Seer Green Halt). |
| 1921 | | Railway Amalgamation Act passed. |
| 1923 | Jan. 1. | Railways amalgamated into four main companies. |
| 1928 | Sept. 24. | Harefield Halt opened (closed on 30th Sept., 1931). |
| 1947 | | Transport Act. |
| 1948 | Jan. 1. | Nationalisation |