



The view from the driver's side of an unrebuilt 'Royal Scot' 4-6-0 No.6137 *The Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire)* heading an up express on the four-track stretch north of Crewe.

Amongst the ranks of railway photographers there was probably no-one better known and respected than Eric Treacy. More than any other, his work portrayed the sheer drama and 'full-on' action of steam locomotives at work. His skills were first learned in Liverpool to where his calling had led him.

Eric was a native of North London whose early employment in the City as an insurance clerk had been seriously unfulfilling. He had a background of Sunday School teaching and youth work in his home parish and this led him to successfully apply for the job of running a boys' club in Scotland Road, Liverpool, a charity founded and sponsored by Shrewsbury School to benefit local youngsters.

Part of Eric's duties involved a fortnightly visit to Shrewsbury by train from Liverpool Lime Street via Crewe to account for his progress. No doubt he occasionally went from Birkenhead Woodside to Chester and on to Shrewsbury via the Great Western Railway, but he preferred the London Midland & Scottish, particularly if he had to change at Crewe and spend a little time there watching steam's hustle and bustle. Eric claimed that it was the sight of the rays of sunlight piercing through the smoke and steam underneath the great roof of Lime Street station that first inspired him to take railway photographs.

Eric was energetic in arranging trips for his young charges and, more ambitiously, camping holidays usually involving more travel by train. One of the regular camping sites used was on the North Wales Coast to the east of Penmaenmawr where a dip in the sea meant crossing the Chester to Holyhead main line. Eric took many pictures of his charges enjoying these trips. Photographing people was to become one of his skills, not least because he had the gift of charm to get people to laugh and relax. However, one of his first railway shots depicts an unrebuilt 'Royal Scot' on the 'Irish Mail' passing the North Wales camp site, heralding the start of an interest that was to grow and happily occupy his leisure hours for years to come. Some of Eric's early shots with a Box Brownie were not too good, so he managed to fund the purchase of a 35mm Leica camera. Many of his pre-World War II photographs were taken with this camera,

including those illustrated here. Eventually the necessity of obtaining better sharpness induced him to invest in plate cameras.

Eric felt a calling to be ordained and, with the help of the Liverpool Diocese, he attended the necessary training on the Birkenhead side of the river, regularly cycling through the Mersey Tunnel to do so! He completed the training and after serving the diocese as a curate, he was appointed to the Vicar of St. Mary's, Edge Hill, in 1936 at the age of 29. LMS staff made up a large proportion of his congregation at the church for his parish included Edge Hill and Wavertree stations, several goods yards, carriage sidings and the famous 'Gridiron' sorting sidings. Above all, a stone's throw from the church was Edge Hill locomotive shed. Someone upstairs had found him the most suitable parish!

As Eric's connections with his railway flock grew, he began to be accepted in the railway environment of his parish and would often

THE EARLY PHOTOGRAPHER LARGE PASSENGER THE 1930S

BY MARTIN S. WELCH

appear on his bike at the various depots "doing his rounds", always with his camera to hand to take any photographs of interesting subjects which might present themselves. He often took pictures of the railwaymen on duty and always gave them copies. His enthusiasm and friendliness led to him getting on to the lineside to photograph moving trains, having first obtained a lineside permit from the LMS Public Relations Department to which he sent some photographs for the company's use.

Eric became particularly involved with the staff at Edge Hill MPD, almost as an industrial chaplain. In May 1937 one of the depot's top link crews suffered fatal burns in a blowback incident when their Liverpool-bound train entered Primrose Hill Tunnel, north London, shortly after leaving Euston. Eric held a memorial service at St. Mary's for the two men. The service became an annual event and Eric dedicated a memorial tablet to the men at the shed.

Through his contacts at the depot and with the PR Department Eric had managed to experience occasional footplate trips, usually between Liverpool and Crewe. His first journey on a 'Royal Scot' was memorable for being an extremely rough ride. On another trip in the down direction with a 'Royal Scot' driven at high speed by Camden driver Laurie Earl, Eric had visions of going through the buffer stops at Lime Street and across the road into St. George's Hall. However, Laurie brought the train safely to a stand at precisely the right spot having gained ten minutes on the schedule from Crewe.

Driver Laurie Earl of Camden (left) and a shed official at Edge Hill depot. In the background is the spire of St. Mary's Church where Eric Treacy was vicar. Note the sludge residue (the white material behind the driver, loaded into wagons and an old loco tender) from the use of lime soda in softening the shed's water supply to preserve copper fireboxes.



RAPHS OF ERIC TREACY — LMS IN LOCOMOTIVES ON MERSEYSIDE



Driving a 'Royal Scot', No.6137, on a Liverpool to Crewe turn.

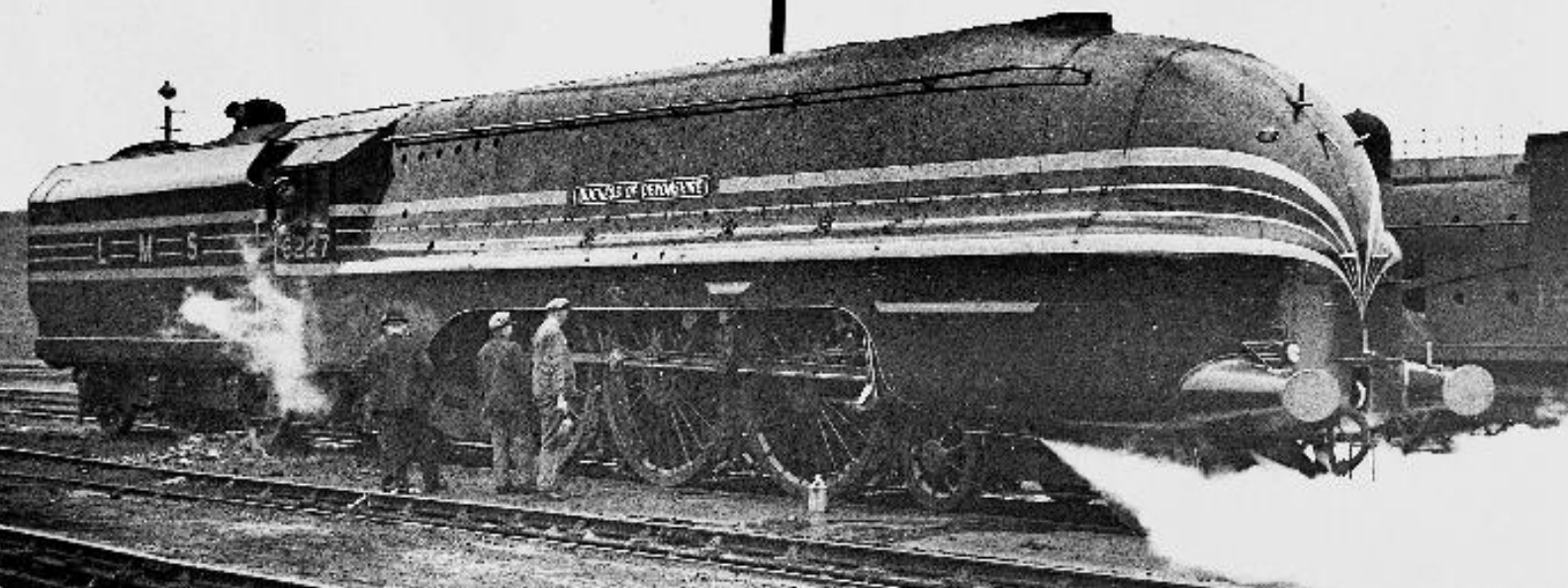
Brand-new Pacific No.6202 — the 'Turbomotive' — attracts the scrutiny of railwaymen at Liverpool Lime Street as it awaits departure on a running-in turn, the 12 noon Liverpool-Plymouth. The first coach is a GWR vehicle.

Consultation of the summer 1939 LMSR timetable provides some information on the likely trains involved in this running-in diagram. A number of semi-fast non-stop trains ran from Crewe, usually departing from Platform No.2 north bay, to Liverpool Lime Street in the morning peak at 7.50am, 8.35am and 9.15am — journey time, 68 minutes. The

locomotive on this turn would, after arrival at Lime Street, go on to Edge Hill MPD for turning, checking-over and servicing. It would then return to Lime Street to join the midday departure to Plymouth which it would work as described to Shrewsbury, arriving at 1.56pm. A Manchester London Road to Cardiff and Kingswear portion was picked up at Crewe, the combined train splitting again at Hereford. Meantime, the locomotive being run-in would turn on Shrewsbury triangle and then stand in the station centre road until the balancing northbound train arrived. There was time for a quick visit to Shrewsbury shed, if needed. The northbound working is thought to have been the 3.29pm Shrewsbury to Liverpool via Crewe, this train having come through from Plymouth. This train is shown to include a Glasgow portion plus coaches from Cardiff and Paignton to Manchester London Road, these sections to be detached at Crewe. This train would eventually arrive at Lime Street at 5.21pm. There would then have been ample time for the locomotive to make a second visit of the day to Edge Hill MPD before returning to Crewe on an evening semi-fast, the 7.20pm from Liverpool seeming to be the likely candidate.

To the end of steam days, this working for the running-in of new and repaired engines seems to have been perpetuated. The author recalls seeing his first 'Princess Coronation' No.46230 *Duchess of Buccleuch*, obviously just turned out from Crewe Works in the British Railways experimental blue express locomotive livery, as he passed through Shrewsbury returning from his 1948 summer holiday in Wales. Simmering quietly in the centre road, the





New 'Princess Coronation' Pacific No.6227 *Duchess of Devonshire* is checked over at Edge Hill depot on 24th June 1938 before working the 12 noon Liverpool Lime Street–Plymouth as far as Shrewsbury on a running-in turn under the supervision of the bowler-hatted inspector. Note the special design of 'streamlined' headlamp.

Having photographed No.6227 being prepared, Eric Treacy then enjoyed a footplate ride and recorded the view from the fireman's side on the approach to the Runcorn Viaduct over the Mersey.



work to make way for the remodelling of the track layout. Therefore, as the turntable at Longsight MPD was not long enough to take the Pacifics, it was the practice to work them back to Stockport to turn via the 'Khyber Pass', south of the station, using the Davenport–Cheadle line link. The Crewe to Holyhead passenger services were also used for running-in purposes from time to time in later days.

One of Eric Treacy's first experiences of the running-in turn seems to have been in 1935 when he observed the new 'Turbomotive' Pacific, No.6202. Consecutive photographs from his camera show it coupled to the same GWR coach at Lime Street and then at Crewe, indicating that he probably travelled on the train to see how the locomotive performed. The Lime Street photograph shows the new engine being given a close inspection by curious railwaymen who had not seen the like before. Over the following years Eric was to photograph this locomotive many times, as it appeared every day on Euston and Liverpool expresses.

Eric's happy and fulfilling period at Edge Hill came to a sudden end in 1939 at the outbreak of the war when he decided to offer his services as an army padre to a local artillery regiment. At the end of hostilities he was not able to return to Liverpool Diocese but was offered the living of the Parish of Keighley in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He was happy to accept the post and so a new but equally rewarding prospect lay before him.

The author is a member of the LMS Society and these prints are from negatives in his collection.

locomotive was awaiting its train from the West of England, a fine spectacle to be witnessed again on various occasions through the early 1950s. South of Shrewsbury the workings were the province of GWR 'Castles'.

Pacifics were also run-in on the Crewe to Manchester local trains, the locomotives being turned on the turntable installed by the LMS at London Road station. This turntable was removed in the early days of electrification



'A 'Princess Royal' 4-6-2 pounds up the 1 in 93 gradient from Lime Street in the vertical rock-sided cutting through the city of Liverpool.