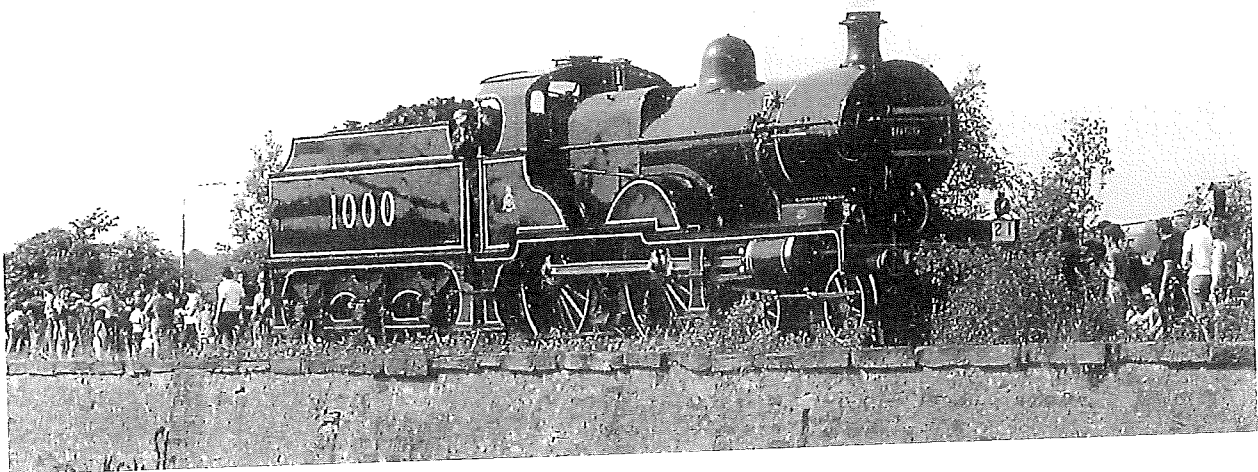


- 1 Locomotion No 1 hauling Chaldron Wagon and Forcett Coach.
- 2 NCB 'Austerity' 0-6-0T No 2502/7
- 3 LMS Class 5 4-6-0 No 44767 *George Stephenson*
- 4 LNER Q6 0-8-0 No 2238
- 5 LNER J27 0-6-0 No 2392
- 6 LNER K1 2-6-0 No 2005
- 7 CR 0-4-4T No 419
- 8 LNER D49 4-4-0 No 246 *Morayshire*
- 9 GWR 0-6-0T No 7752
- 10 GWR 4-6-0 No 7808 *Cookham Manor*
- 11 GWR 4-6-0 No 6960 *Raveningham Hall*
- 12 LNER V2 2-6-2 No 4771 *Green Arrow*
- 13 LNER B1 4-6-0 No 1306 *Mayflower*
- 14 LMS Class 8F 2-8-0 No 8233
- 15 WD No 600 *Gordon* hauling LT electric locomotive No 12 *Sarah Siddons*
- 16 LNER A4 4-6-2 No 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* hauling GNR 4-2-2 No 1
- 17 LNER A3 4-6-2 No 4472 *Flying Scotsman* hauling NER 2-4-0 No 910
- 18 GNR 4-4-2 No 990 *Henry Oakley*
- 19 LNWR 2-4-0 No 790 *Hardwicke*
- 20 MR 4-4-0 No 1000
- 21 LMS 'Jubilee' class 4-6-0 No 5690 *Leander*
- 22 LMS Class 8P 4-6-2 No 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*
- 23 Wantage Tramway Co No 5
- 24 L&Y 0-4-0T No 51218
- 25 LBSC A1X 0-6-0T No 32636 *Fenchurch*
- 26 SR S15 4-6-0 No 841 *Greene King*
- 27 SR 'Merchant Navy' 4-6-2 No 35028 *Clan Line*
- 28 LMS Class 2 2-6-2T No 41241
- 29 LMS Class 4 2-6-0 No 43106
- 30 BR Standard Class 4 4-6-0 No 75029 *The Green Knight*
- 31 BR Standard Class 9 2-10-0 No 92220 *Evening Star*
- 32 Prototype High Speed Train

We wait with keen anticipation to see how many of these veterans appear at the 2000 Celebrations in August.



Midland Railway No 1000

## CONCERNS/PROBLEMS WE FACED IN IMPLEMENTING TOPS ON BRITISH RAIL

*Ted Strong<sup>1</sup>*

These remarks – most serious, one frivolous – cover the concerns the TOPS On-Line Services' consultants faced in trying to get TOPS accepted and successfully implemented on BR. My remarks are covered under the following headings.

- Potential battle over 'turf rights'
- Top management changes during project initiation
- An FRS/CWA revolt
- Little or limited operating support
- A potential mess from the mess

### Potential Battle Over 'Turf Rights'

The first potential obstacle occurred during the evaluation phase before the BR TOPS project was formally approved. Specifically,

it was the battle on the evaluation team as to whom the project should report and by whom it should be managed. Historically, data processing projects on BR were managed by Management Services personnel who reported to the Director, Management Services. However, because TOPS was designed to affect Freight Operations, railway operators felt it should be managed by and should report to them.

This 'turf battle' was finally resolved by adopting the pattern other railways followed in implementing TOPS. Specifically, this was to nominate an operator as Project Manager reporting to a Steering Committee. The multi-functional Steering Committee

would include the top people from Freight Operations, Management Services and other affected departments. This pattern had been adopted by three North American railways who were implementing TOPS – Southern Pacific, Canadian National and Burlington Northern.

The BR project was then staffed by personnel seconded from operating functions and Management Services. Many of the staffing selections were influenced by recommendations from TOPS On-Line Services consultants who, based upon previous experience, recognised the importance of an integrated and compatible project organisation.

### Top Management Changes During Project Initiation

The top management at British Rail was in a state of flux during the critical TOPS project initiation phase. Projects of this magnitude require consistent support at the top. Consequently, it was of considerable concern that within the first couple of years executives at the following three top positions changed:

#### Chairman:

Started with Sir Henry Johnson, followed by Willie Thorp, and then by Richard Marsh.

#### Chief Executive:

Started with Willie Thorp, followed by Geoffrey Wilson, and then by David Bowick

#### Executive Director Systems Operations:

Started with Bill Reynolds followed by Ian Campbell

Fortunately, there was a stable period once David Bowick and Ian Campbell were in place. Further, these men were avid and vocal supporters of the TOPS project. Lesser changes were also of concern. One was the replacement of Jim Urquhart as COM by Leslie Lloyd. Again, it was fortunate that Jim Urquhart was allowed to remain active on the TOPS Steering Committee as he served progressively in other executive positions – ED, Personnel and GM, London Midland Region.

### Revolt of the Freight Rolling Stock/Central Wagon Authority (FRS/CWA)

At about the time of initial cutovers on the Eastern Region, an Operations Conference was scheduled at Watford. It was chaired by Leslie Lloyd, the COM. Participants included all DOSs and Board level staff personnel involved in freight operations. TOPS On-Line consultants were invited to attend along with top BR TOPS project personnel. Well into the night before the Conference, Bob Wolfe of SP and Brian Scobey of BR tried to avert a support turn-around by key FRS/CWA personnel who previously had been strong supporters of TOPS. They failed. Instead, a presentation made by the head of CWA assailed TOPS. He claimed it would be of no assistance in improving empty wagon distribution. He also charged that TOPS would provide no help to Division Control offices in carrying out their assigned functions.

This presentation sparked a heated debate on the topic "Should TOPS be continued or abandoned?" The debate tenor by most operators seemed to be veering towards support for abandoning TOPS. The debate ended when I admitted that "We Yanks can not match the debating skills of you Brits". This was followed by my statement "We're not going to debate, we're going to demonstrate". And so it was, as the TOPS implementation team moved on to Whitemoor yard for the next cutover.

### Little or Limited Operating Support

The prevailing perception throughout the duration of the project was that there was little or limited support from line operating managers. This required extra effort on the part of Messrs Bowick, Urquhart and Bob Arnott, the Project Manager, as well as other BR TOPS project personnel and TOPS On-Line consultants. These efforts included but

were not limited to:

- Chief Executive active participation with Regional GMs and COMs by scheduling trips to San Francisco for an on-ground view of TOPS in operation at Southern Pacific and by conducting joint visits with project personnel and Tops On-Line consultants to each regional office.
- 'Showing of the colours' by the Chief Executive and other key TOPS supporters by visiting many TOPS field offices after cutover and demonstrating how TOPS information obtained from the system (like EJ and X-3) should be used to improve operations.
- 'Hand holding' demonstrations with Area Managers and on-ground shunters by BR implementation team members and TOPS On-Line Services consultants.

As a result, TOPS was fully and successfully implemented on BR in spite of line operating management's reluctance.

### A Potential Mess from the Mess

Here is a recital of a personal set of actions that might have hindered TOPS implementation on BR. Frequently Jack Pfeiffer<sup>2</sup> and I were invited to lunch in the officers mess at the Board. Also, quarterly we were invited to smaller mess set up with David Bowick, Ian Campbell and Jim Urquhart. For all such occasions excellent French wine flowed in abundance. It was a great introduction to 'proper' wine for both of us.

Fortunately, both of us, even given considerable consumption, were able to stay focused. We did not stray from making sure that BR TOPS implementation was successful. Often, at the quarterly executive luncheon, I was asked how things were going. My reply always started with the good news. Quickly I was told "We don't bring you all the way over here from San Francisco to pat us on the back. Now, tell us about the things that need our attention and action". And I always did.

Now let me cover the problem that arose from these mess opportunities, having been exposed to red and white Burgundies and red Bordeaux. Here is my confession. I became a traitor to California and am addicted to French wines. My current wine cellar has some 500 bottles, all French. *Quel dommage!* – for California wines.

### An Addendum

These last comments are off target from the major subjects covered in this paper. They should be noted in some form of BR TOPS history. Jack Pfeiffer passed away in May 1999 after a long siege with Alzheimer's disease. Reproduced below are excerpts from written remembrances I prepared for the memorial service held to honour Jack's life,

"Jack was our Resident Manager in London for the BR TOPS project from 1971 through 1976. Jack worked closely with Jim Urquhart, Bob Arnott, Harry Reed, Ken Green, Brian Scobey and many others. All of these men would hang a Hero's Medal on Jack for his many contributions on the project".

"Jack said many times that the BR project provided him his proudest moments as a consultant – clearly a shining hour and crowning glory for him. The BR TOPS project was written up as a case study for the Business School at Manchester University, with Jack and his role mentioned prominently".

### A Conclusion

My feelings relative to the BR TOPS project almost mirror Jack's – clearly consistently proud moments as a consultant. However, they must be shared with my participation at Southern Pacific on the design, development and implementation of the original TOPS project from 1962-1970. Many of the concerns and problems at BR cited in this paper occurred earlier at SP. So in some respects many of the described problems at BR were *deja vu* and handling them successfully a repeat performance.

1 Ted Strong was CEO and Executive Vice President of TOPS On-Line Services, Inc. and a founding partner in the San Francisco based management consulting firm, Strong, Wishart and Associates.

2 Jack Pfeiffer was a Vice President of TOPS On-Line Services Inc. and a Partner in Strong, Wishart and Associates.

## NORTHUMBERLAND'S OTHER RAILWAY

Harry Reed

When the North Eastern Railway was formed in 1854, industry was growing in Northumberland. The industries for which the county became famous – coal, iron, chemicals, glass and ship building – were expanding fast, as was the population. In 1874 when the Blyth & Tyne Railway was amalgamated into the North Eastern, the latter had a complete monopoly in south and east Northumberland.

The west and central areas of the county were then, as they are today, very rural in character. Indeed, the largest centre of population in the area was Bellingham where one thousand people lived. Nevertheless, railway mania existed even in this wild, thinly populated area. Various schemes of varying degrees of daftness were postulated but eventually three separate railways were built between 1858 and 1870.

These three railways had in total some 80 miles of single track. They were:

#### a) Border Counties Railway

It ran for a distance of 42 miles from a junction on the Newcastle & Carlisle Railway about a mile west of Hexham to Riccarton Junction on the Border Union line.

#### b) Wansbeck Valley Railway

Some 25 miles long, it ran from the Morpeth, Blyth & Tyne railway terminus at Morpeth to Reedsmouth on the Border Counties Railway. (Reedsmouth is the spelling which applied to the station throughout its existence yet most modern maps spell it Redesmouth.)

#### c) Northumberland Central Railway

As built, it was 13 miles long from Scots