

The Mystery Photo Challenge

Challenge Images No. 22 — Numbers 261 to 270

The CRA's Mystery Photo Challenge had its origins as the 'Lockdown' Challenge in the darkest days of Covid, bringing entertainment and camaraderie for CRA Members, at first on a daily basis. Having chalked up a magnificent 200 editions, it evolved into a now fortnightly posting on the CRA Chatline.

Images are selected by the Photo Team because their existing catalogue information has important gaps that need filling. Sometimes the cataloguing has questionable aspects that need validating or correcting, so the existing catalogue entries are only shared a week or so after the image is posted to promote fresh analysis and avoid perpetuating what may turn out to be apocryphal.

As comments and contributions subside, usually when a firm conclusion is reached, a revised catalogue entry is proposed and subject to any final comments from members the catalogue is amended. The role of these in-depth challenge summaries then is to capture and share more widely the wealth of information and fascinating insights gathered for each photo, and record the various contributions made by members. So that the wealth of detail and insight can be made available to people coming to the photo in the future, a link to the relevant summary will be included in the catalogue record for each 'challenge' image.



Challenge No. 261

"Two LNWR 0-6-0s this time. What can we say about the location and likely date?"

Howard Quayle quickly identified this as a photo of two 'Cauliflowers' near Redhills on the CK&P. Noting the stopping passenger headlamps, he suggested it may have been a westbound train that had been strengthened and double-headed on some occasion, perhaps for Keswick traffic.

Les Gilpin suggested the date might have been the 1930s, before the bridges were strengthened to allow 'Black Fives' to

run to Keswick, while **Neil Smith** pointed out that as the second coach was a Stanier vehicle it couldn't be earlier than 1933 and Howard added that according to Bowtell, bridge-strengthening east of Keswick was completed, and the new Keswick turntable installed, by Summer 1939. Howard further suggested the 'Cauliflowers' seemed to have disappeared from the line by 1950/1.

While the sun on the right-hand side of the train gave the immediate impression this was a westbound train, a Facebook friend suggested that it is actually an eastbound train approaching Penrith.

Howard checked maps, and he and **Ken Harper** agreed, Ken adding that the bridge under the second coach was the one over Mile Lane, and the last coach is crossing the bridge over the NER Redhills Curve. At this point the photographer would be looking south-west, and the angle of the sun suggests it is a late afternoon or evening train.

Given the second loco at least is in LMS livery, and the pre-existing catalogue record has the date as the 1930s, the most likely date would seem to be the mid- to late-1930s.

The revised catalogue record for Challenge No. 261 will read:

Image: M00642

Date: 1930s (mid-late)?

Date Logic: The second coach is an LMS Stanier / Period 3 vehicle, introduced from 1933

Description: Two unidentified LMS ex-LNWR 'Cauliflower' 0-6-0s double-head an Up stopping passenger approaching Penrith on the CK&P line.

Location: Redhills

The photo looks to be taken from around here:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=17.0&lat=54.65175&lon=-2.76937&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.652379,-2.769006>



Challenge No. 262

"Where's this Class 37 standing, where might it be going and roughly when?"

Quick as a flash, **Tony Jenkinson** spotted this was taken at the south end of Carnforth station. The photographer is standing on the Down Furness line platform looking south / south-east with 37211 on the Down WCML. Tony, **Howard Quayle** and **Jay Hartley** gradually narrowed down the date to between Summer 1982, 37211 having lost its buffer beam valances probably in September 1981, and early 1987, by which time the loco had an orange cantrail stripe not present here.

Tony wondered what the hopper behind the loco was, perhaps an empty ballast hopper en route from Carnforth Bottom End Sidings to Shap, movements he'd often

observed in the 1980s and early 90s. **Rory Wilson** suggested it might a PGA used to carry gypsum, including between New Biggin and Oxwellmains in the mid 80s. Jay thought it might be an MGR hopper, so perhaps empties to Knockshinnoch or Falkland. Coal from Ayrshire to Fiddlers Ferry was a regular trip around 1985-86 with a variety of traction, Classes 20, 37 and 56 all being seen. Finally, **Peter Smith** suggested the train could well be an Oakleigh Sidings (Northwich)—Falkland Junction train of empty HAAs (or sub variants thereof) returning to Killoch that he said nearly always had a single Class 37 as motive power in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: WOR80090

Date: 1982 (summer) - 1987 (early)

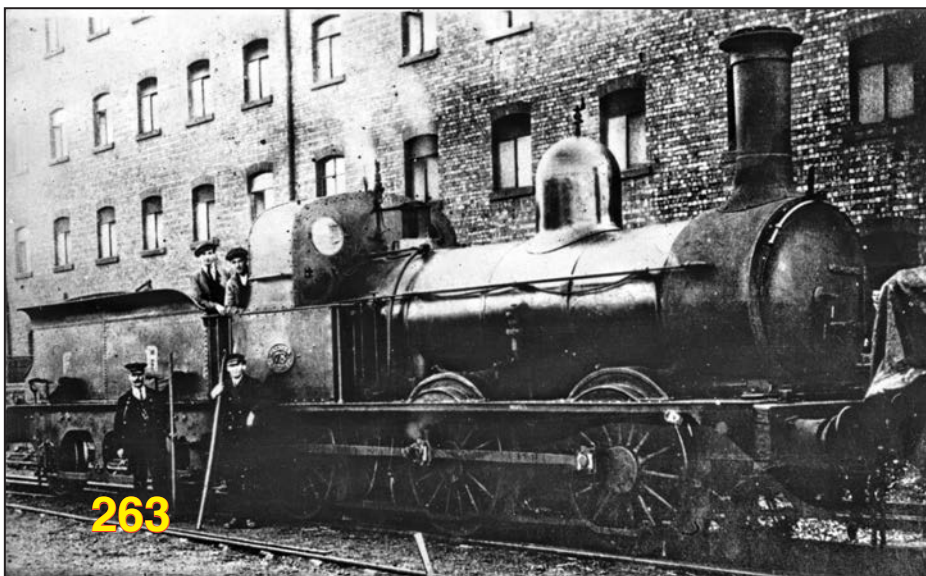
Date Logic: 37211 had its last classified repair in September 1981, which would be when it lost its buffer beam valances. By May 1987 it had an orange cantrail stripe.

Description: Class 37 diesel 37211 heads north on the WCML past the south end of the station with hoppers.

Location: Carnforth

The photographer is probably standing around here looking south-south-east:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=17.6&lat=54.12920&lon=-2.77258&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.129111,-2.772269>



Challenge No. 263

"Where's this Furness loco shunting?"

Ron Herbert thought straight away that the building behind the loco looked to be the Cornmill in Barrow, but was struggling to find a photo that proved it. **Peter Holmes** agreed saying that Walmsley & Smith's corn mill adjacent to Devonshire Dock, Barrow, was the only example on the FR of a mill or warehouse of that size. Peter posted the image of an engraving (right) wherein the

mill is on the right, the building to the left being a bonded warehouse. Ron pointed out that the wooden structure in the middle of the engraving is Cornmill Crossing signal box.

Neil Smith agreed too, posting an image of the Cornmill (right) from the Sankey collection on which he'd circled the likely position of the loco. He commented that this would be the 'town' side of the mill, as the 'dock' side had a vertical wooden chute. Neil added that the loco is 'Sharpie'



No. 78 of 1873, taken after it was rebuilt in 1899, and before withdrawal in 1915.

Howard Quayle provided some background details on the corn mill of Walmsley & Smith from the late Ken Norman's 1994 book on the Furness Railway. The mill was opened as Barrow Steam Cornmill in 1871. It was sited on the eastern side of Devonshire Dock, and

unloaded grain directly from the holds of ships tied up alongside into the storage silos (immediately south-east of the mill). Damaged during the air-raids of May 1941, the mill finally closed in 1967 and was demolished soon afterwards.

And finally **Geoff Holme**, back from his holidays and having checked various sources, endorsed the location, corroborated by a handwritten note on his copy of this George Taylor photo that the photo was taken at the Cornmill.

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: GTL-011

Date: 1899 - 1915

Date Logic: Taken after rebuilding in 1899, and before withdrawal in 1915 (dates from Baxter).

Description: Furness Railway 'Sharpie' 0-6-0 No. 78 with posed crew and shunters, while shunting on the town side of Walmsley & Smith's corn mill adjacent to Devonshire Dock.

Location: Barrow, Cornmill

The photographer is thought to be standing around here looking south-east:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=18.3&lat=54.11096&lon=-3.23340&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.111260,-3.234214>

Challenge No. 264

"This one's a complete mystery ! What are we looking at?"

Of all the challenges we've posted in recent years, this one had almost no information associated with it and we weren't even sure what we were supposed to be looking at. Nevertheless, with just two or three incisive comments, all was revealed, and it turned out to be a long way from Cumbria!

Noel Machell observed from the vents on the ridge of the house roof, and from the style of the parked car that this was a relatively modern image. **Jay Hartley's** eye was drawn to the notices by the crossing, one of which he thought read 'Do not touch the live rail' which suggested we were in Southern Region territory.

Then straight away, **Richard Foster**, with a little help from his colleague **Stuart Johnson**, identified the location as Chilham Road level crossing between Ashford and Canterbury West. Richard added that the crossing was converted from manual gates to CCTV on 15 December 2003, so the photo was taken some time before this. The crossing keeper's hut is on the far right of the photo.

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: HAG115

Date: before 2003

Date Logic: Crossing converted to CCTV December 2003

Description: A view south-east towards Chilham Road level crossing, between Ashford and Canterbury West. The crossing keeper's hut is to the right.

Location: Chilham Road crossing



The photographer is thought to be standing around here looking south-east:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=17.0&lat=51.24635&lon=0.98247&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=51.247646,0.981431>



Challenge No. 265

"A view from a DMU, where, and heading which way?"

Very quickly, attention focused on the Alston branch, near Featherstone looking north towards Haltwhistle, but the debate over exactly where, and just which bridge this was, continued for a couple of weeks, and there's still some element of doubt.

A Facebook friend wondered whether the line had once been double track as the line runs well left of centre through the bridge. **Keith Fenwick** commented that it was common for overbridges to be built for double track in anticipation of traffic growth which usually never came.

Howard Quayle quoted a note on the Disused Stations website confirming that most stations on the Alston branch were built for double track. He suggested the bridge is No 9, north of Featherstone Park station near the hamlet of Park, where there was an informal but much-used stopping place known as Park Village Halt. He noted that the line running north of the bridge, through a short shallow cutting followed by a right-hand curve, fitted that location, and spotted a signal post on the 1920 25" OS map that also fitted, but observed that the bridge on the map has a pronounced skew which is not really evident in the photo.

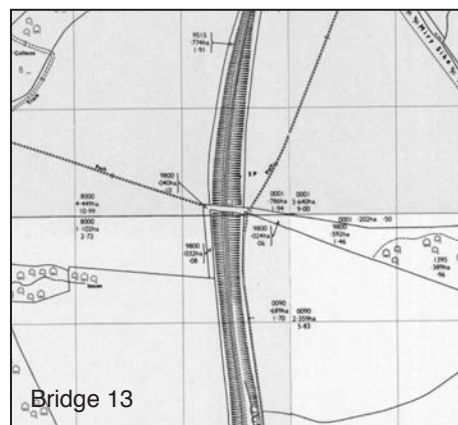
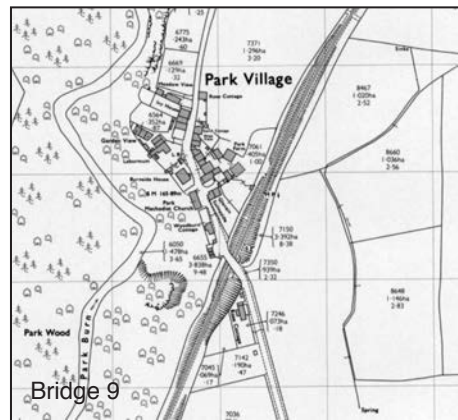
Meanwhile, a Facebook friend pointed out what seems to be a lady disappearing up the path on the left with two bags of shopping, which might suggest the photo was taken from the rear of an Alston-bound DMU.

David Gibson, however, produced photos from the Benchmark Survey of both Bridge 9 (top right) and also Bridge 13 (right), at Hillhead Close south of Featherstone Park. Viewed as a whole, the shape of Bridge 13, being square to the track, matches the photo much better than Bridge 9 which is visibly skewed. Hmmnn! On closer inspection though, there is only a thin section of bridge face visible below the arch against the retaining wall on Bridge 9, and that matches the challenge photo better than Bridge 13 where a greater width of the face is visible. Hmmnn again!

John Pickup posted sections of the OS maps around the respective bridges. The map of Bridge 13 (far right) shows that the line is in a cutting for quite a distance south from the bridge and that going north the line is already curving and continues curving through the bridge. In contrast, the map of Bridge 9 (far right) shows the line going north is straight up to and a way beyond the bridge, and also the cutting on the LHS drops away sharply to ground level, and then below. So the topography around Bridge 9 matches the challenge photo much better than that around Bridge 13.

And there the question of the exact location rests, though the balance of evidence including the topography and course of the line does favour Bridge 9.

As far as the likely date is concerned, it was suggested that as the signal remained in place, the date of the photo should be no later than 1966, when 'one engine in steam' working began, rather than 1968 which was the approximate date in the



catalogue. However, **Richard Foster** and **Tony Jenkinson** drew attention to a reference that stated that some fixed 'distant' were retained, including one south of Featherstone Park.

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: DJN-045

Date: 1966-68?

Date Logic: Originally dated c.1968, but 'one-engine in steam' working was introduced in 1966 which led to removal of signals, though some fixed 'distant' remained.

Description: A view towards Haltwhistle from a DMU, probably from the rear of an Alston-bound service, and probably taken as the train departed from the unofficial Park Village Halt, north of Featherstone Park station, in which case the bridge is No 9. Just possibly, the bridge could be occupation bridge No. 13, south of Featherstone Park.

Location: Park Village Halt?

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Challenge No. 266

"'Crab' 42920 on a parcels, but we can't reconcile the recorded catalogue location"

This Challenge proved exceptional, in that despite prolonged discussion over several weeks the location of the photo could not be conclusively identified. What was achieved, however, was to rule out the location beguilingly recorded in the catalogue as Hest Bank. Even extending that all the way north to Bolton-le-Sands, and south to the River Lune IBS, the detailed surroundings, not least the distant chimney, could not be made to fit.

Andrew Naylor, observing what appear to be multiple tracks, wondered if the 'Crab' was running wrong line, but **John Pickup** believed there was a third track beyond the track the 'Crab' is travelling on; an interpretation supported by what appear to be chairs on the visible extra rail.

Other possible locations suggested, but ultimately either not confirmed or positively ruled out, included the Midland line south of Carlisle, the Blackburn—Hellifield line north of Whalley, and the WCML south of Garstang & Catterall. The slightly revised catalogue record will read:

Image: PEJ235

Date: 13/08/1955

Description: LMS 5MT 'Crab' 2-6-0 42920 (5B Crewe South) heads a parcels train

Location: Unknown



Challenge No. 267

"Where's this hard working loco taking its train?"

Very quickly, **John Dickie** and a Facebook friend homed in on the Cockermouth area, and particularly noted the siding to the right behind the train, more easily seen in the zoomed image. Initially it was suggested the location was west of Cockermouth station, passing the siding to the gas works.

Graham Worsnop however, being a local resident, couldn't visualise any hill like that if the photo was looking west on that side of Cockermouth. But if it was taken the other side of Cockermouth Station, on the Embleton side, looking west, he suggested the sidings could be the oil tank sidings, and the hill could be Fern Bank, to the south of the station.

Keith Fenwick and **James Ingrams** agreed, suggesting that the photo is taken from Lorton Road overbridge, east of the station, looking west. We believe the photo was taken from about here, looking west:

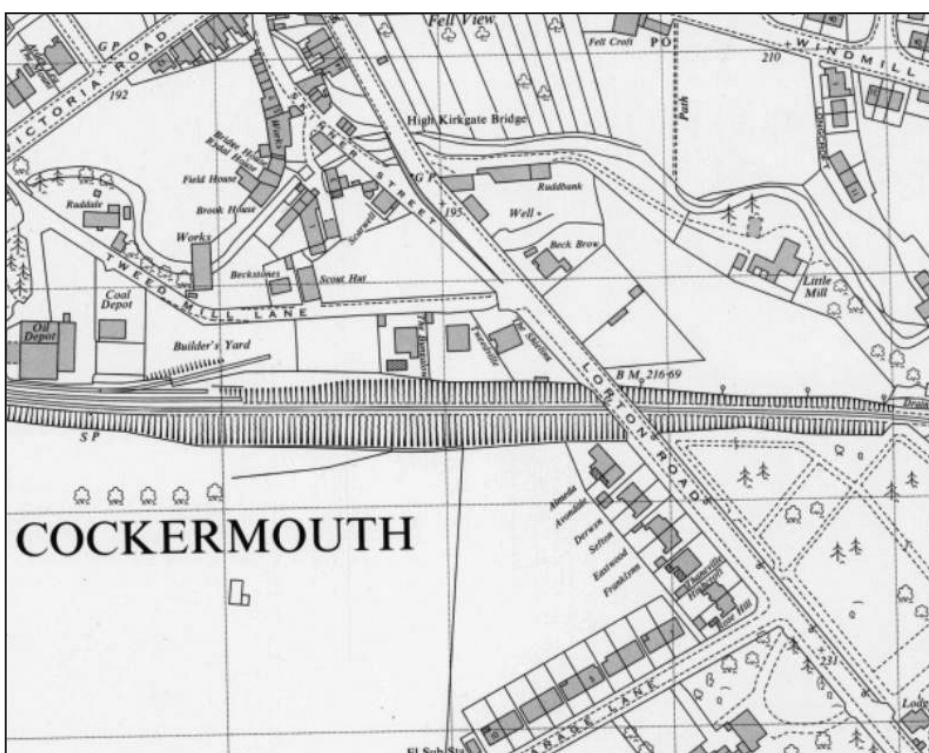
The revised catalogue record will read:
<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=17.4&lat=54.65968&lon=-3.35633&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.659650,-3.356773>

Image: PA0771

Date: c1935?

Description: An unidentified LMS ex-LNWR 'Cauliflower' 18in Goods 0-6-0 approaches Lorton Road overbridge with an Up stopping passenger.

Location: Cockermouth, east of



Challenge No. 268

"Engineering work with 37513 and 31201 too?"

Tony Jenkinson was quick off the mark with this one suggesting the location was Salthouse Junction in Barrow looking north-east. **Les Gilpin** agreed, pointing out the formation of the erstwhile Piel branch (which Tony noted later served Roosecote Power Station) to the right and the original Furness Railway formation to the left.

Jay Hartley also agreed, but said this wasn't an engineering train as the train comprised bolster wagons with shaped cradles that were used to carry pipes for the Morecambe Bay gas field. He believed the pipes came from Leith and were unloaded at Ramsden Dock. Jay suggested the train in the picture has propelled out onto the Down and will be going to Barrow to run round.

Geoff Holme suggested the photo may have been taken from the top of the steps of Salthouse Junction box, which was closed and demolished within a week of closure on 6 September 1992. That would give a very tight date window for the photo, and it seems likely the photo was taken in September 1992.

Geoff observed that in the photo the signals have been removed and a Stop Board erected on the Down Main to show the limit of how far trains could be propelled out of the Dock line before going back to Barrow. That confirms closure has taken place. In the days immediately after closure a flow of pipes commenced to Ramsden Dock, but it was puzzling that the wagons stretch back beyond the Stop Board. The loco should have stopped well before this point at the end of the points for entry to the yard which are behind the photographer. Was this perhaps a trial run with empties before the traffic actually started, in which case the train would just have arrived from the east?

Tony had noted some additional images of the same events including the two to the right: Jay commented that in the first photo Carnforth guard Carl Slater was preparing to jump off the loco and that it looked like driver Malcolm Appleby standing in the cab doorway; the second photo (right) shows the train in Barrow station having run round.

There then ensued several fascinating conversations about the arrangements around the closure of Salthouse Junction box, and why the layout had been left inconvenient for the running of these and other trains to and from Barrow Docks. The details can be accessed by Chatline members.

Finally, **Howard Quayle** commented on the former Stank Mines branch that used to connect into the junction. A short distance down the branch, where the line curved to cross over the Roose-Leece road, was possibly the intended junction with the so-called 'Bardsea Loop'; effectively the planned second main line between Plumpton Jct and the suburbs of Barrow.

http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/features/bardsea_branch/index.shtml

Howard recalled asking the late Michael



Andrews whether he had found any firm plans for this 'Leece Lane' junction. He recalled him saying that he had never found any, suggesting that, beyond the earthworks at Red Lane, Bardsea, the precise route was never defined.

Howard continued by explaining that the stub mentioned by Geoff finished in a buffer stop just east of the old Rampside Road bridge (behind Barrow Workhouse),

and he noted a single mineral wagon parked there in 1962 or 1963, which looked like it was being loaded with road-borne sand (from the neighbouring Parrock Hall Sand Pit). It didn't seem as though much traffic went down there, even in the 1960s.

The revised catalogue record is over the page.

Image: WOR80618

Date: September 1992?

Description: Class 37 diesel 37513 on the Down line with a train of empty cradle wagons used for transporting pipes for the Morecambe Bay gas field from Leith to Ramsden Dock. The train may have been propelled out of the Dock line (behind the photographer) before proceeding to Barrow to run round, but may have been a test run with empties which had just arrived on the Down line. Class 31 diesel 31201 stands on the Up line.

Location: Salthouse Junction

We believe the photo was taken from about here, looking north-east:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=18.7&lat=54.10894&lon=-3.20202&layers=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.109053,-3.202228>

Challenge No. 269

"Familiar territory, but where exactly?"

Tony Jenkinson was up late again puzzling out the location for this one and felt sure the location was close to Docker Park north of Arkholme on the F&M joint line.

Noel Machell though was puzzled both by the length of the train, as Carnforth portions of Leeds trains were generally only 2 or 3 coaches long, and by the loco 41196 being allocated to Lancaster Green Ayre, as he believed that depot didn't have turns over the F&M joint. **Ron Herbert** was similarly puzzled but confirmed the reporting number 412 was correct for the 2-43 pm Carnforth-Leeds. He wondered if the Compound had perhaps been having repairs at Lancaster's parent depot, Carnforth.

A Facebook friend posted this link suggesting the challenge photo was taken from the bridge in the Flickr photo, and there was general agreement that it looked to be the location: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/144388905@N03/31084405765/>

Derrick Codling thought the explanation of the length of the train was that this was perhaps a busy weekend when the 2-43 pm Carnforth and 2-46 pm Morecambe portions that normally combined at Wennington ran separately as full trains.

Noel wondered if the train was the Morecambe train diverted, as that was normally 5 or 6 coaches. **Peter Smith**, confirming the location once again, thought that if that were the case the reporting number would have been the 414 of the Morecambe train. He felt the most likely explanation was that this was a busy weekend, possibly around Easter, as the photo was dated April 1955.

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: PEG349

Date: April 1955

Description: LMS 4P Compound 4-4-0 41196 (11E Lancaster Green Ayre) approaches Snab Green bridge (No. 21), near Docker Park west of Arkholme, heading Up express passenger 412, the 2-43 pm Carnforth-Leeds, unusually as a 7-coach train, perhaps during the Easter period.

Location: Arkholme, west of

Geoff posted the summary below of the Section C notice for closure of Salthouse Junction box.

CNG24C/2 84

SECTION C

SIGNALLING AND PERMANENT WAY ALTERATIONS - continued

SUNDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER - BARROW-IN-FURNESS - SALTHOUSE JN. - DALTON JN.

SALTHOUSE JN.

Salthouse Jn. box will be abolished and the new absolute block section will be between Barrow-in-Furness and Dalton Jn.

A new 8-lever ground frame, named Salthouse Jn. ground frame, will be provided on the down side of the line adjacent to the connection from the down main line to the sidings.

The ground frame will be electrically released from Barrow-in-Furness box and will operate as follows:-

Lever 1 - Release lever for connection down main to sidings.

Lever 2 - Facing point lock for connection down main to sidings.

Lever 3 - Connection down main to sidings.

Lever 4 - Trap points at exit from sidings.

Lever 5 - Ground signal reading up main through crossover to sidings.

Lever 6 - Up main end of up main to down main crossover.

Lever 7 - Down main end of up main to down main crossover.

Lever 8 - Release lever for crossover.

A telephone will be provided at the ground frame, communicating with Barrow-in-Furness box.

The connection between sidings 1 and 2 will become hand operated.

All connections not mentioned above will be secured out of use pending removal.

All signals not mentioned above will be recovered (including Barrow-in-Furness down distant signal, on the same post as Salthouse Jn. down starting signal).

A reflectorised "Stop" board will be provided, facing Barrow, applying to movements in the up direction on the down main line, 200 yards on the Dalton Jn. side of the connection to the sidings.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS

A new 2-aspect (Y/G) colour light down main distant signal will be provided 1500 yards in rear of the down main home 1 signal. The yellow aspect will be 12 feet above rail level.

A "Train arrived complete" plunger will be provided on the down main line platform (platform 1), adjacent to the signing on point door.

DALTON JN.

The signal post door plate on the down main intermediate block home signal will be removed and the signal will become the down main starting signal.

(RRNW/OS/87/167) (26)



We believe the photo was taken from about here, looking north-west:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print/#zoom=17.0&lat=54.15833&lon=-2.65335&layer=s=6&b=1&o=100&marker=54.157518,-2.652785>

Challenge No. 270

"This one's off piste, but where, why and when?"

This one of an APT set somewhere strange was comprehensively nailed in short order. **Les Gilpin** immediately spotted, and **Phil Harrison** agreed, that it was heading south on the S&C maybe around Ormside, with Cross Fell and Murton, Dufton and Knock Pikes providing the backdrop. **Keith Fenwick** went one better and posted a photo of his (below right) taken from the same spot on Helm Road, a little north of Helm Tunnel.

With the location firmly sorted, Phil suggested the date could be during the period of test runs around October 1979. **Peter Smith** agreed, putting the date between July and October 1979. He further suggested the APT set in question was 370004, as the formation matched that running with test car 9 and usually hauled by the prototype HST power car W43000 for high speed testing. Peter posted this link which covers the APTs in great detail: <http://www.25kv.uk/APT/php>

The revised catalogue record will read:

Image: SCT00273

Date: Jul - Oct 1979?

Description: An unidentified Class 40 diesel hauls an APT set south, just north of Helm Tunnel, probably during the period of testing on the WCML between Preston and Glasgow. The set is likely to be 370004, the formation matching that running with test car 9 and usually hauled by the prototype HST power car W43000 for high speed testing.

Location: Ormside, south of

We believe the photo was taken from about here, looking north:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=17.0&lat=54.53549&lon=-2.45936&layers=168&b=ESRIWorld&o=100&marker=54.534689,-2.461173>

