

THE JOURNAL OF
THE LONDON UNDERGROUND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Issue No 115

Volume 10 No 7

July 1971



THE END OF STEAM

Barbican 14.01 Sunday 6 June 1971

Photo N.A.Davis

REVIEWS

BOOKLET

John Day & William Fenton; The Last Drop - The Steam Age on the Underground from 1863 to 1971; 24pp 10" x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " with 40 illustrations, 10 in colour; limp card covers; London, 1971; London Transport Executive; 50p.

This brochure was announced by London Transport as a new book on LT steam, which perhaps was a little unfair, as the potential customers may feel that they are getting less than they expected. In fact, it is an excellent potted history of the Underground's steam motive power from Fowler's Ghost to today's (or should it now be yesterday's?) panniers.

The text is brief and factual, without very much new information, although this can hardly be expected in a short work, in view of the amount that has been written on the subject in the last ten years or so. All classes of engine are mentioned, including the Wotton Tramway motive power and the tube engines, while the last page gives a complete chart of the stock, with classes, companies, builders and original and LT numbers duly listed; this also includes disposal details which is a useful feature.

The illustrations are excellent and well produced - the booklet being printed on art paper throughout - and brought together in such a handy form they provide an extremely useful pictorial history of Underground steam operation.

The price seems a little on the high side for a booklet of so few pages, but as the quality and value of the contents is also high, perhaps LT can be forgiven; cost is certainly unlikely to deter many purchasers.

GLC SEEKING TO EXTEND ITS BOUNDARIES

The Greater London Council is seeking to obtain a review of its boundaries, with a view to extending its authority over a larger area. One of the points made in the Council's submission is that the LTE has important Underground routes beyond the present boundaries, and that its bus routes also go outside the present GLC area.

THE END OF STEAM ON THE UNDERGROUND

R.J. Greenaway

After so many 'Last Steam Trains' of various kinds, throughout the country in the past decade, the full significance of London Transport's final abandonment of steam motive power takes time to appreciate. It was, of course, the end of steam on public, standard gauge railways in this country. There are, nevertheless, steam engines still operating on preserved lines and in industry, but as far as standard gauge railway systems are concerned, steam operation is now a thing of the past.

Steam hauled trains (outside depots) on London Transport had inevitably decreased in number as the locomotives were gradually withdrawn, but if one was lucky there were still opportunities, other than in the small hours, when they could be seen. The best known was the working from Neasden Depot to Croyley Tip Sidings, where miscellaneous rubbish, collected from all over the system, was deposited. This train still runs, but has been hauled by battery locomotives for about a year, apart from a steam hauled working for the benefit of the Press, on May 18th. The other excursions onto the main lines were based on Lillie Bridge Depot. Early in the morning, at about 08.00, any wagons to be transferred from B.R. to L.T. (or vice versa) would be collected from (or delivered to) Warwick Road Sidings on the East of the West London Line. This involved an L.T. pannier tank working from Lillie Bridge into Kensington (Olympia) station and crossing the B.R. tracks before getting into the sidings. This, therefore, provided an example of steam operation on B.R. tracks for nearly three years after the ban on steam! The third daytime run was the morning working to Acton Works and Northfields Depot. Used mainly for delivering new wheels and tyres to Acton, and removing scrap ones together with other scrap metal, this particular train ran about once or twice a week until February this year, although occasional workings continued to Ealing Common until May 27th. All three of the above trains ran on a "when required" basis, and rarely kept strictly to their correct timetable paths.

The last steam train operated before the special run was train 570 (00.15 ex Lillie Bridge to Neasden), hauled by L.90 on the morning of 4th June. In addition to its usual load of waste materials, the train included a diesel-electric crane for exhibition at the Neasden Open Day. The journey was marred, however, by the locomotive dropping its fusible plug at Harrow, and having to be assisted by battery locomotives.

One unusual working in connection with the Neasden Open Day was the transfer of Metropolitan electric locomotives 5 'John Hampden' and 12 'Sarah Siddons' from Acton. Both have been repainted in recent months at Ealing Common Depot, and just before mid-day on 4th June, they left Acton Works together en route for Rayners Lane. There, amongst mild amazement from passengers and great interest from several photographers, they reversed in the Westbound platform and set off for Harrow, Wembley Park and Neasden.

Publicity for the commemorative run and open day was extensive. Most enthusiast magazines and several national newspapers carried announcements and articles, many together with photographs. This was backed up by two splendid posters, which were displayed at many, if not all, Underground stations during the preceding two weeks. Such publicity was bound to ensure maximum support, and indeed as many people turned up as London Transport could cope with. All tickets for access to the three City stations involved and the four special trains, were sold well before the day, and at one time during the Open Day, Neasden Depot gates had to be closed due to overcrowding.

It was unfortunate, after a week of near perfect weather, that June 6th should have been a dull and overcast, although mainly dry, day. But nevertheless, as mid-day approached, and crowds began to gather in the otherwise deserted City, an air of expectation developed, which increased until, at ten past one, the familiar sound of L.94 was heard approaching Farringdon, travelling light on its way to Moorgate. Ten minutes later, battery locomotive L.25, hauling the special engineer's train, followed onto the City Widened Lines accompanied by the clicks of hundreds of cameras - as L94 had been.

With everyone assembled, the Press in position on Barbican signalbox steps and the train waiting at Moorgate to start on this, its last journey, the reality of the occasion was felt. This was the last steam run. After the rumours of earlier withdrawal, London Transport was finally ending a 108-year era of Underground history. An announcement to the many hundreds at Barbican was made, to the effect that the train had left Moorgate, and through the new tunnel, sure enough, the beat of the engine could be heard. Eventually, L.94, with a fine commemorative headboard, rolled easily into Barbican station with its train, and simmered gently while frantic photographers battled for position. After eight minutes' pause, the whistle sounded, and the train, surrounded by steam, slipped slowly into the tunnel to the accompaniment of its exhaust.

The steam and smoke cleared; the atmosphere changed. Everyone was now intent on getting to Neasden as quickly as possible to see the train arrive. Following in the next special train was the closest the public would get to travelling by steam on the Underground. With the tunnels filled with lingering smoke, the train soon absorbed the characteristic smell of the preceding train, but this, too, was lost when the steam locomotive was eventually passed at Finchley Road.

The embankments, stations, and bridges along the Metropolitan main line to Neasden were crowded with people eager to make the most of their last opportunity to see, photograph and record an L.T. steam engine in action. On arrival at Neasden, the 2,000 passengers from the city found themselves mingling with several thousand others, all trying to crowd into the depot.

After only a short while, the commemorative run came to its inevitable end when L.94 and its train drew slowly onto Klondyke Sidings and took up its position in the semi-static display. Alongside was L.90, also in steam, together with a tube sleet locomotive, Metropolitan electric loco No 12 "Sarah Siddons" and a new battery loco, L.18.

The main static display, on exhibition in the acid cleaning shed, included examples of modern Underground

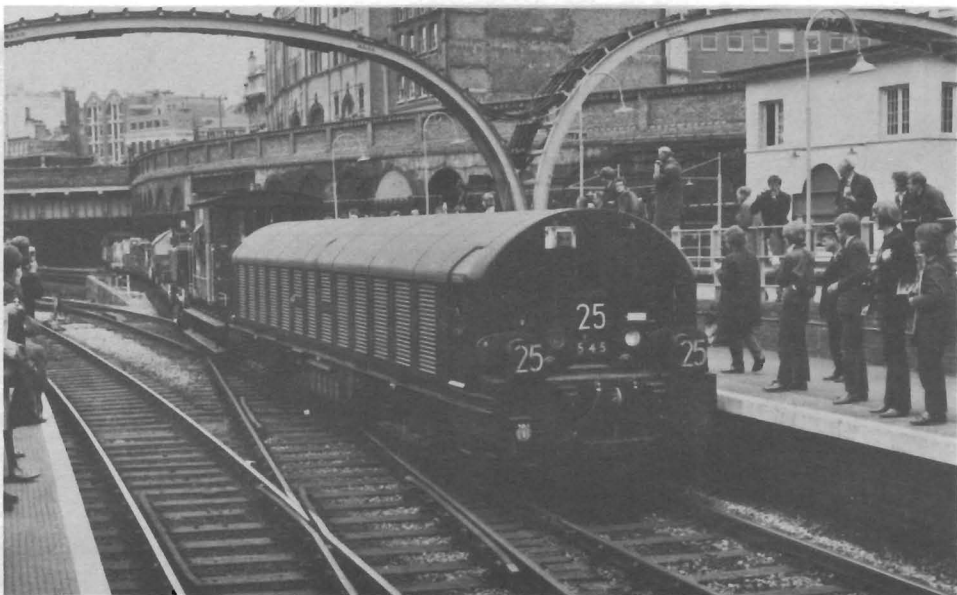
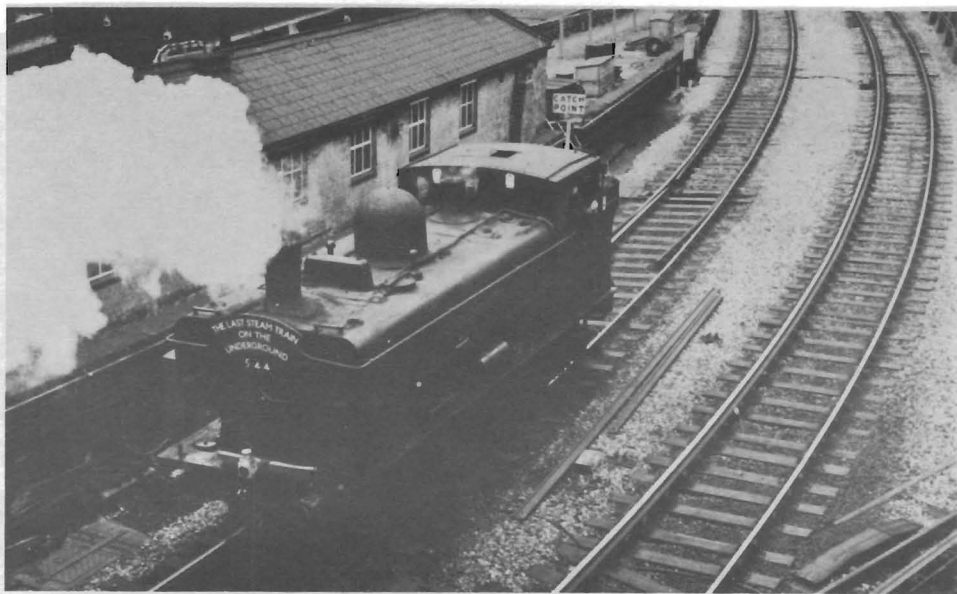
rolling stock, together with a selection of service vehicles, to which visitors could gain access. The passenger stock consisting of 8-car A Stock and 1967 Tube Stock trains, also the latest C69 Stock train to leave Ruislip Depot. A greater interest, was, however, taken in the service vehicles. These included a hopper wagon, surface gauge car G.662, a ballast tamping machine, another tube sleet loco and a second 1969 battery locomotive. But perhaps most interest, apart from that concentrated on the steam locos, was shown towards the two remaining exhibits:- Met loco No 5 "John Hampden", and diesel-hydraulic locomotive DL.81 - on view to the public for the first time. It is only to be regretted that the diesel was not exhibited outside, so that a direct comparison could have been made with the steam loco it replaces.

With so many visitors at Neasden, it was difficult to see how L.T. would clear the depot in the half-hour they had set themselves after 17.30. In fact, it was done by the simple expedient of removing the main attractions, i.e. L.90 and L.94, and was achieved quite smoothly. The two locomotives were coupled bunker to bunker and with both whistling almost continuously, they barked the length of Klondyke Sidings to enter the steam shed for the last time.

Thanks are undoubtedly due to London Transport for arranging to commemorate the end of steam operation in this way, and for giving a welcome opportunity for the public to view some of their more unusual and rarely-seen rolling stock. It was certainly appreciated, and made a memorable occasion of a notable event.

Photo Captions

1. L.94 running light east of Farringdon.
2. L.25 hauling engineers' special onto City Widened Lines at Farringdon en route to Moorgate.
3. Last Steam Train at Barbican.
4. L.94 at head of train in Barbican. R.M.Robbins on footplate in white overalls.
5. Coming to rest in Barbican.
6. Just pulling away again.
7. Static Display, Klondyke Sidings, Neasden Depot.
8. Closeup of No 12, shown as Brake Block Test Loco.

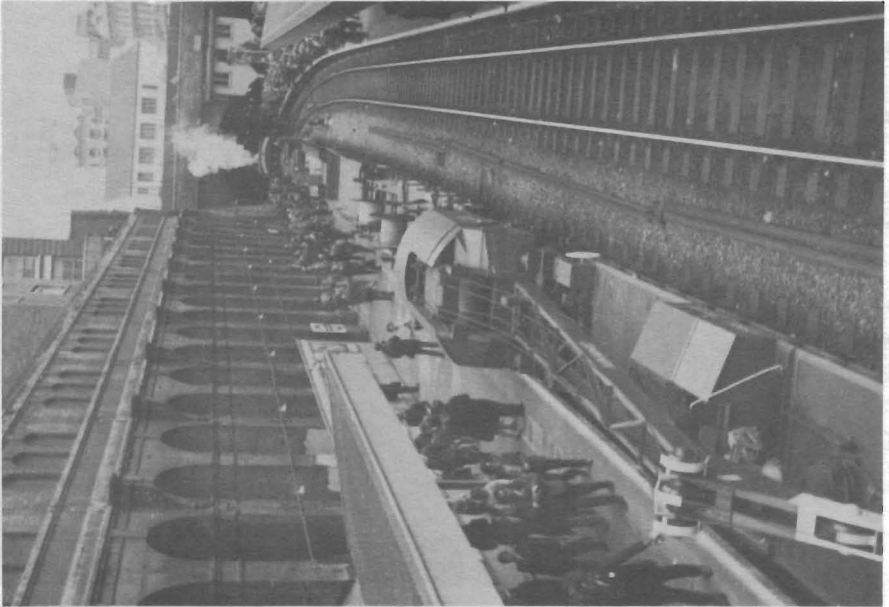
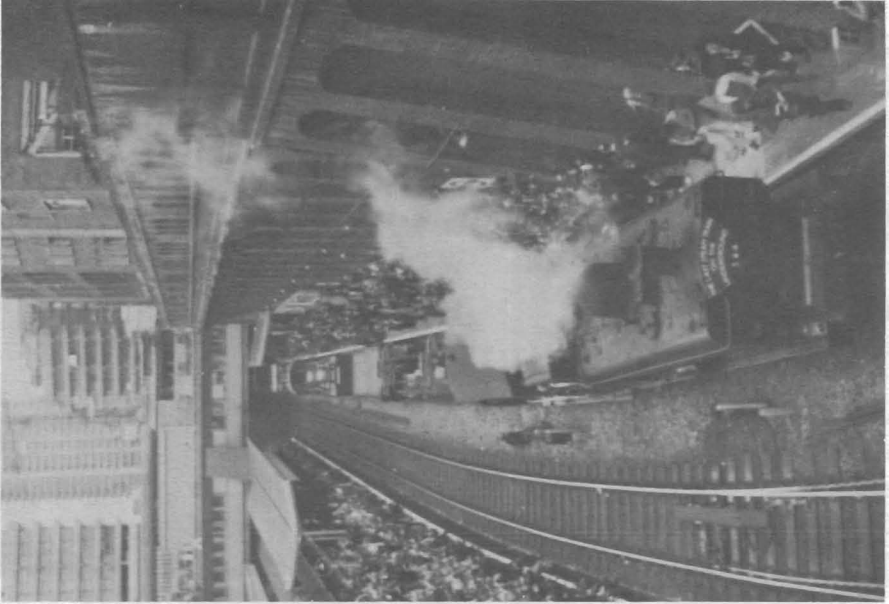




The last steam train on the Underground, 1968



The last steam train on the Underground, 1968





Credits for Photographs

Nos 1, 2, 3, 4 & 7 - R.J.Greenaway.

Nos 5, 6 & 8 - N.A.Davis.

BRILL BRANCH JOTTINGS

C.H.Gooch

With the centenary and current general interest in the Brill Branch, a few operating procedures of the line in the 1920's may be of interest.

The branch was unusual in many ways, not least in that mixed trains were operated, a proceeding common on the Met with only the Chesham Branch, although I believe it was not a common practice on the latter. Goods wagons not fitted with the vacuum brake or through piping could be conveyed in passenger trains, marshalled between the loco and the passenger coach, i.e. there was no through brake on any part of the train. The Chesham Branch procedure called for goods vehicles to be marshalled behind the passenger stock with a guards van bringing up the rear. The loading was not allowed above thirteen vehicles, excluding the engine, and of these no more than ten were allowed to be goods wagons. This means that the maximum branch loading would not have been more than eleven vehicles, since only one coach was generally in use on the line. It is, I think, most unlikely if the maximum loading was ever taken since all photographs show no more than about two wagons in the train. Speed was not allowed to exceed 25 m.p.h. on mixed or passenger trains, this to be reduced to 8 m.p.h. at all crossings except Wotton Lodge, where 4 m.p.h. was the rule.

There was apparently some concern at the braking power of the trains on the line, since the engine drivers were required to have their trains under such control that the guards van brake alone could hold the train on the inclines on the Quanton straight, parallel to Quanton Road itself, at what was known as Blue Bottle, and between Brill and Wotton. The engine brake was to be held as a reserve for emergency only.

One wonders how much notice was taken of these instructions under day to day circumstances.

There was a system of whistle codes to be given by drivers to signalmen throughout the Met, and those affecting the branch were as follows (they all applied to Quainton Road):-

<u>To or From</u>	<u>Whistle Code</u>
Branch and Down Sidings	1 pause, 2 short
Branch and Up Line	3 pause, 2 short
Branch and Up Sidings	3 pause, 3 short

These were the only ones except normal whistle use, such as on the approach to level crossings, etc. At the first crossing out of Quainton Road, in fact only just up the road from the station, the fireman had to open and close the gates. All gates except those at Wotton Lodge were normally across the railway. If the weather was foggy or snowing hard the Station Master at Quainton Road was responsible for having a detonator placed $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on the Brill side of the gates just down the road from the station, at least a quarter of an hour before any up train was due. This was the only gate given protection of this kind - presumably it was difficult to locate one's precise whereabouts in such weather whilst running in a straight line alongside the road with few, if any, landmarks on the trackside.

The guard on the branch was also responsible for the transit of cash on the line; generally it was conveyed by cash train, but the security of the stations at Westcott and Wood Siding was not felt sufficient (!) and any money taken during the day was conveyed by the last train. The Wood Siding cash went to Brill and the Westcott cash to Wotton.

It is interesting to note that Brill had a specific wagon allocation in the early twenties; this was in the form of two vacuum braked cattle wagons, Nos 16 and 17. Brill, also Wotton, could at this time handle not only cattle, but horses, passenger train parcels, carriages (that is horse drawn road carriages), and furniture van traffic, as well as other livestock and general freight.

One wonders how often a furniture van or carriage truck was needed at Brill. Waddesdon, Westcott and Wood Siding handled only passenger, general goods and parcels traffic.

The rule book, with all its regulations designed for a busy railway could hardly have been meant for the Brill Branch, where all the staff had probably been doing the same job for years, and who all knew each other personally, and where loco coal was swapped for eggs, where a non-local passenger caused raised eyebrows.

The atmosphere on the line must have been more relaxed, and the way of life so different from today's mad rush.

NEWS FLASHES

1036 Pimlico station, on the Victoria Line extension is being built to a very tight schedule. Because it was not part of the original scheme, and will not be completed when the extension is opened, work at platform level is having to be pushed ahead so that trains can pass through while construction work continues on the rest of the station.

1037 The GIC Green Paper "The Future of London Transport" was the subject of a Discussion Meeting at the Institution of Civil Engineers earlier this year.

1038 The Department of the Environment is to make a 75% Grant towards the cost of the Liverpool under-city loop extension of the Mersey Railway; the grant will amount to £7.8m.

1039 It is expected that powers will be sought in the next Parliamentary session for an underground railway in Manchester, to link Piccadilly and Victoria stations. This will be 2.75m long, of which 2.18 will be in tunnel.

1040 A contract has been let to John Cochrane and Sons Limited for the first stage of the modernisation of South Kensington station. The contract is worth £560,000, and includes the making of an escalator shaft and a ventilation tunnel.

1041 The first sod of the extension to the Piccadilly Line was cut on 28-4-1971 by Desmond Plummer, Leader of the Greater London Council. The ceremony took place near the site of the proposed Hatton Cross station, and Mr. Plummer drove a tracked excavator to do the cutting.

1042 The Greater London Council Policy and Resources Committee Chairman has instructed officers of the Council to advise him whether there would be any merit in looking at the reopening of closed lines and stations to provide a service between Old Street and Homerton. This was announced in response to a question suggesting the incorporation of these stations in the proposed Wimbledon Line of the Underground.

1043 It has also been suggested (again) that the whole of the North London Line should be incorporated in the Underground system. The GLC are still considering the future pattern of rail facilities in London, and this proposal is one of those being borne in mind.

1044 The GLC has approved the following appointments and salaries, taking effect 1-6-1971 - the day after the retirement of Anthony Bull as Vice-Chairman of the LTE: £

Ralph Bennett - Deputy Chairman and	
Managing Director, Buses	13,500
R.M. Robbins - Managing Director, Railways	11,500
K.G. Shave	10,000
H.J.H.C. Hildreth	9,400

1045 There has been a considerable correspondence in the Romford area press recently in favour of an Underground service from Collier Row to the City. The area of Collier Row is heavily populated, miles from a rail line, and suffers badly from poor bus services - despite an express service from Romford station at peak hours.

1046 Diesel loco DL 82 arrived at Acton on the evening of Tuesday 25-5-1971 from Lillie Bridge, where it had been delivered from the makers.

1047 A tube guard, Brian Richard Pears, age 23, was convicted at the Central Criminal Court on Wednesday 9-6-1971 of attempted murder. He had attacked a girl in his train on the Northern Line when she was travelling to work late at night between Edgware and Warren Street, and had pushed her out of the guard's door while the train was travelling at speed between Golders Green and Hampstead. Fortunately, she attracted the attention of the driver of the following train, which stopped and picked her up.

1048 The number of smoking cars on the Underground is being reduced to two per train as soon as the signs can be put on the windows of the cars being converted.

SOCIETY NOTICES

PERSONAL The Chairman of the Society, P. R. Davies, was elected Chairman of The Channel Tunnel Association on 19th June 1971, taking the place of the late Cllr Lt Col H.E.Branton Brightley.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION Members who would like the Society to celebrate the anniversary in a suitable manner are asked to write to the Chairman at 62 Billet Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1XA at once, expressing their choice between a Reception and Buffet, or a Dinner - stating the maximum price per ticket acceptable.

CORRECTION June issue, Underground, p.92; review of "Improving London's Rail Transport", last para. first word; substitute "altogether" for "although".

ENCLOSURE WITH THE JOURNAL The Press Conference which heralds the publication of London Transport's Annual Reports was this year supplemented by a minor publicity campaign under the heading "Moving London into the Seventies". A double royal (40" x 25") letterpress poster, detailing major points from the 1970 Report, was produced, and a leaflet containing much the same information was distributed. We are able to send copies of this leaflet to all members with the Journal this month, thanks to London Transport, and as a further service to members, we can supply copies of the Report itself at 50p. Please send orders, accompanied by remittance, to R.J. Greenaway, 203, Gunnersbury Park, Popes Lane, Ealing, London, W.5.

END OF STEAM POSTERS Copies of these posters are available through the Society, by courtesy of London Transport; as we are an educational body, a ⁵⁰reduced price applies. Members wanting copies should send ~~10p~~ 50p to J.M.Crowhurst, 3 Bush Grove, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 2DX.

THE TIMETABLE

19.00 for 19.15 Friday 9th July at Hammersmith Town Hall; A Photographic Evening, at which the entries in the recent Competition will be shown, and the winners announced. The Judge is Mr. G.M. Kichenside, Editor of Railway World, who hopes to be present, provided other commitments do not stop him from coming.

Saturday 21st August Tour of East London Line and Visit to New Cross Depot, London Transport. Names to S.E.Jones, 113 Wandle Road, Morden, Surrey, accompanied by a 1st class s.a.e.



The Scene at Neasden Depot Open Day, 6th June 1971

Photo - - - R.J.Greenaway

THE TAIL LAMP

Shortly before the demise of steam on the Underground, at about 03.00 one morning, the City of London Police summoned the London Fire Brigade on seeing smoke rising from behind the temporary hoardings at Cannon Street station, which is in the process of being reconstructed. Needless to say, the Brigade turned out in force for such a vulnerable fire hazard - only to find on arrival at the scene of the "conflagration" that L.94 was simmering peacefully in the station! So that was why steam was abolished!

Lithoed by Celtic Mailways, 93/94, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2. and
 Published by The London Underground Railway Society, 62, Billet Lane,
 Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1XA. Copyright.