

FACTS ABOUT
BRITISH RAILWAYS
IN WARTIME

1943

ONE SHILLING NET

WARTIME TRAFFICS

TRAINS FOR TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT

Ever since the mobilisation of the Fighting Forces for war, right up to the present moment, the railways have been moving troops and their equipment by special trains by day and by night. As our fighting services expand so the demands on rail transport become more and more exacting.

Within the space of eight days, after the evacuation from Dunkirk, 620 trains carrying 300,000 troops were run without prior knowledge of their arrival from seven ports in the South-east of England : 2,000 carriages drawn from each of the railways were formed into a pool, and the whole of the operating movements were directed almost entirely by telephone. At the busiest time 100 trains were worked to various parts of the country within 24 hours.

Despite heavy air raids and difficult weather, trains for troop movements have been smoothly carried through. Training, manœuvres and redistribution of rapidly growing armies swelled the number of trains required, which by the end of 1941 had more than doubled per month compared with pre-Dunkirk days.

The arrival of the American Expeditionary Forces with their equipment and supplies, first in Northern Ireland and later in Britain, added to these movements by rail, and by the summer of 1942 special trains for troops and supplies were running at the rate of 5,000 per month over and above the ordinary services and traffics.

The railways carried the first British Expeditionary Force to its ports of embarkation. It carried the men who went to Norway ; it carried men and equipment to the ports of embarkation for the Middle and Far East, and more

They go by rail





Women in uniform

recently still, the First Army on its way to North Africa. According to the Secretary of State for War this movement meant the transport of 185,000 men, 20,000 vehicles and 220,000 tons of stores involving the running of 440 special troop trains, 680 special freight trains, and 15,000 railway wagons by ordinary goods services from billets and depots to ports.

One hundred and sixty thousand special trains have been operated by the British railways for the movement of troops and equipment since the outbreak of war to February, 1943.

GUNS AND ARMOUR

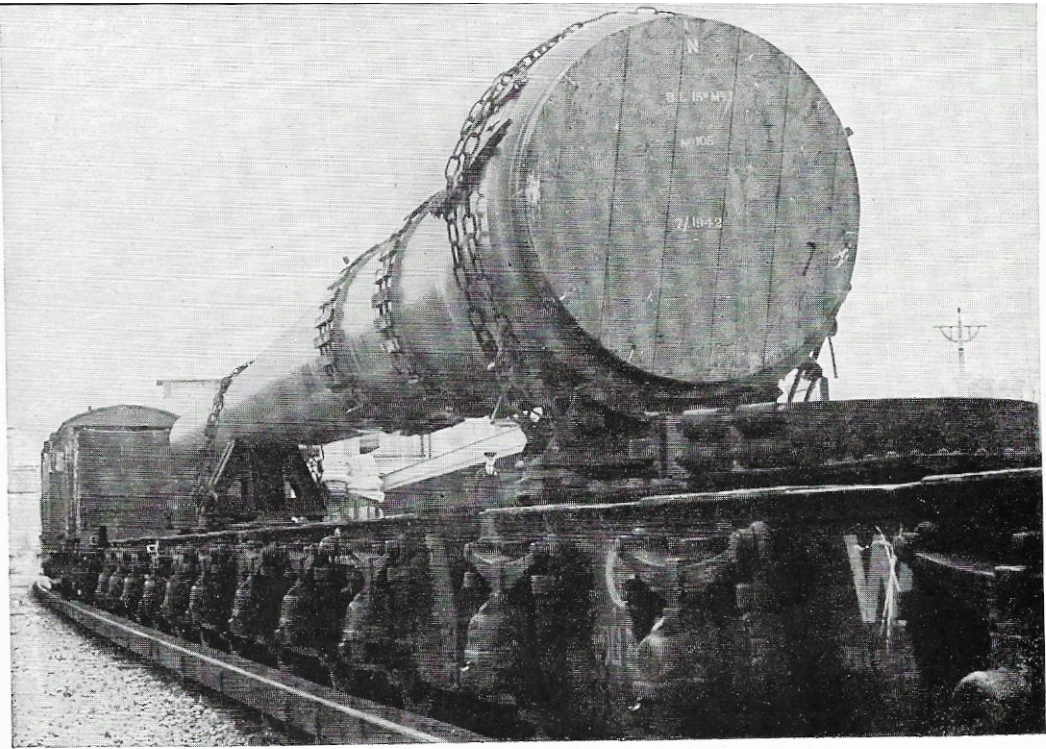
By far the largest part of the burden of

war production falls on the railways.

The materials to build the new war factories, the raw materials to make the munitions of war, the men and women who fashion them as well as the finished products, have all to be carried on the railways.

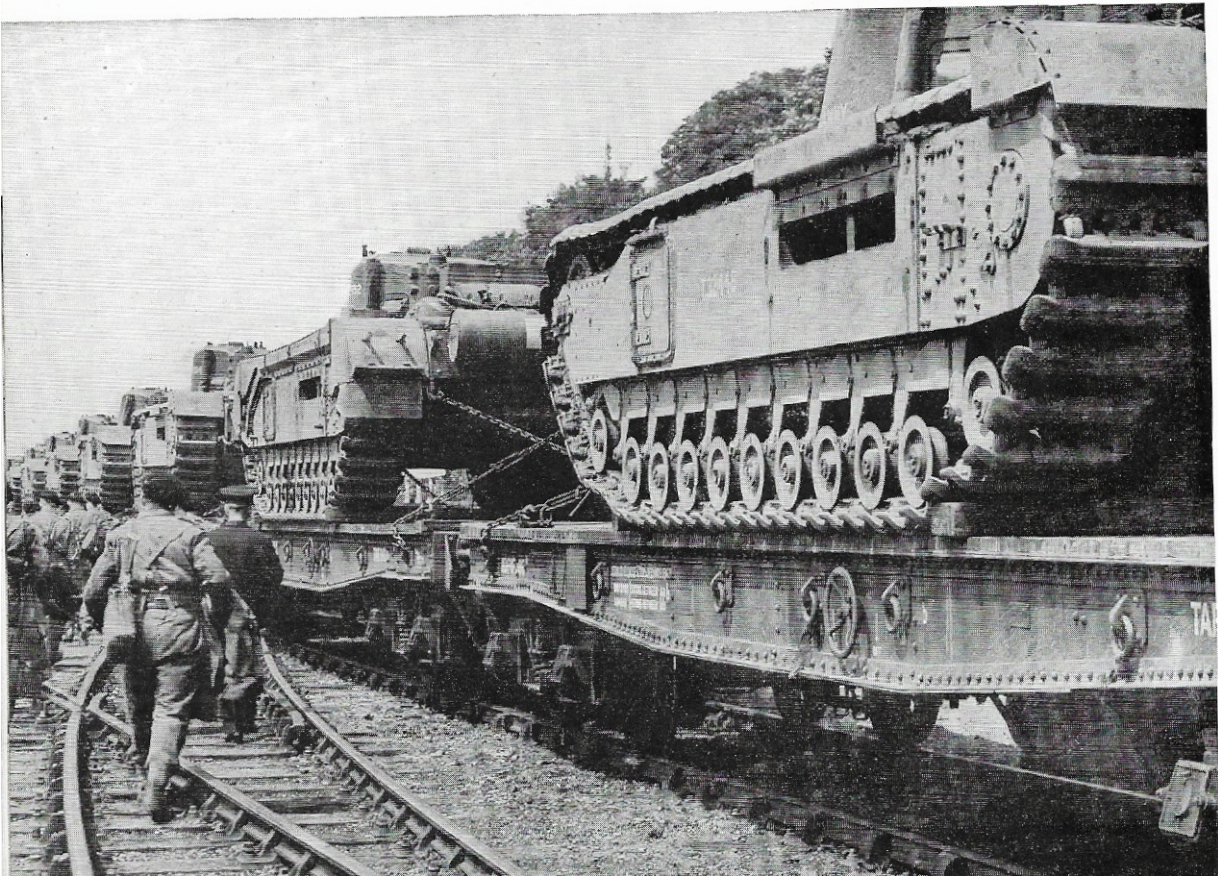
Loads ranging from the heaviest naval guns and tanks to the lightest rifles and pieces of equipment are rolling along the railways. Aircraft, petrol and fuels; ammunition, bombs, mines, shells and foodstuffs, the list is endless.

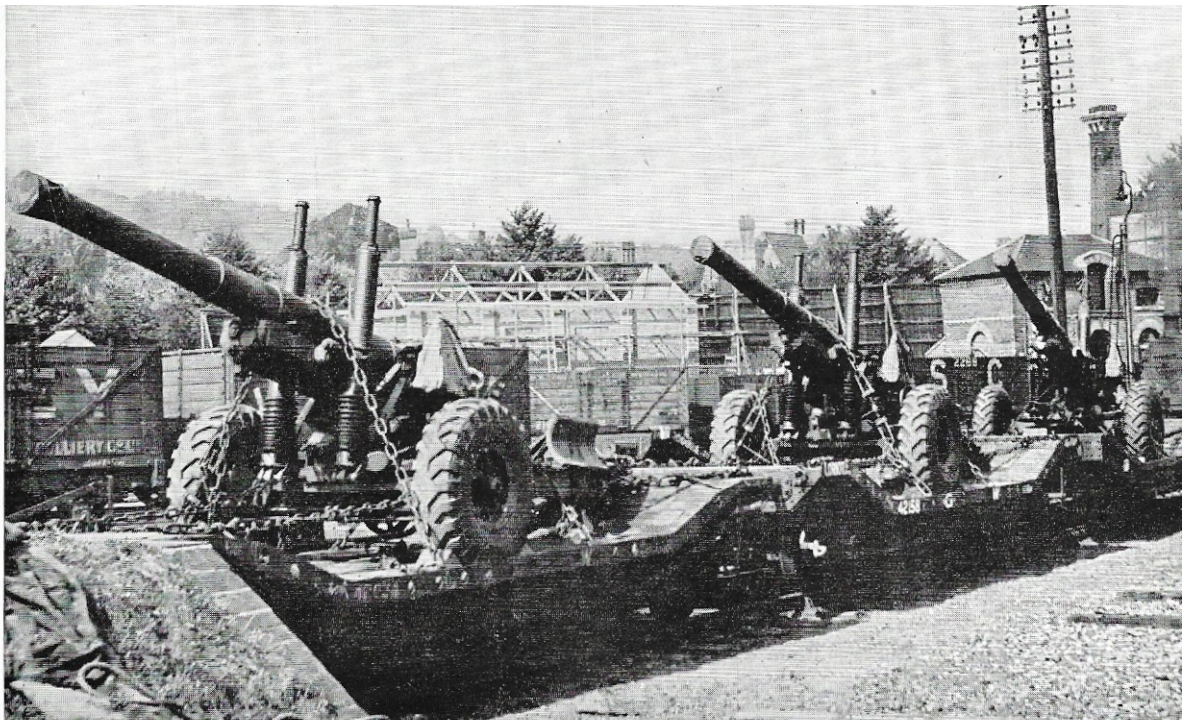
Heavy consignments are continually being carried to British shipyards, helping them to achieve new records in building and repairing merchantmen and warships.



Big guns are moved

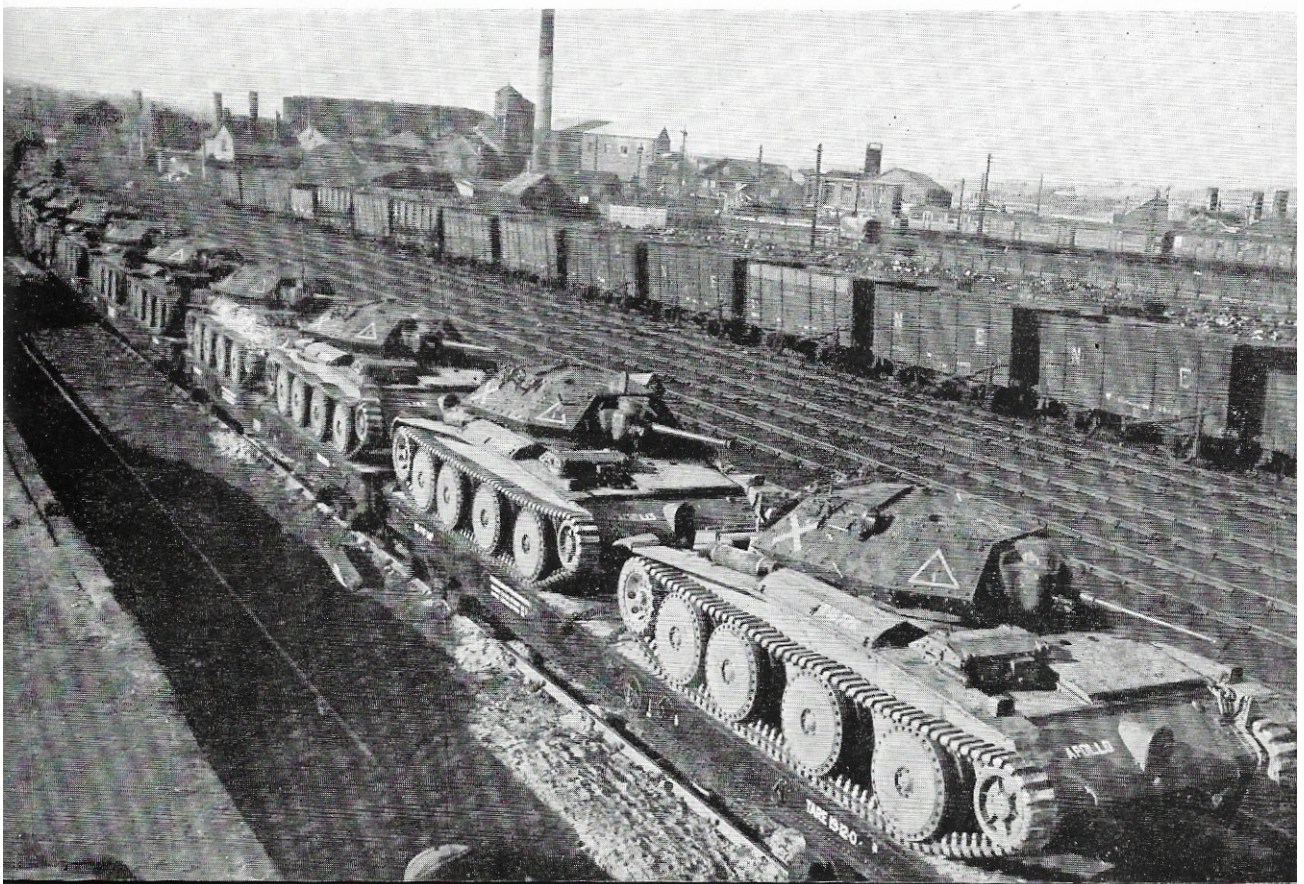
Tanks for attack





Weapons of every kind

Tanks for Russia



Vast tonnages of high explosives have been handled through the railways' freight services, and thanks to the precautions taken and the methods employed, thousands upon thousands of tons of dangerous goods have been safely conveyed.

In addition to railway equipment sent abroad at the beginning of the war, one hundred and forty-three powerful British railway freight locomotives, specially equipped for service overseas, with tenders and the necessary spare parts have been despatched. 1,600 steel-framed 12-ton wagons were built and sent overseas in double-quick time. By working night and day shifts, the 1,800 parts required to complete each wagon were fitted together at the railway assembling works so that a new wagon was turned out every 37 minutes.

WAR FACTORIES

Railways have assisted in the construction of the new factories. Bricks and building supplies were conveyed as fast as they could be absorbed. Sidings were laid into fields, signal boxes built, new factory stations erected and services arranged both inside and outside the factory areas. Some of the factories are served by main lines, others, some miles from the nearest towns, are linked by specially built spur lines. The breaking-up of industry into dispersed units for strategic reasons means that instead of carrying materials, goods, and workers in bulk into large centres, the railways have had to cater for smaller consignments to many additional destinations. Often the raw materials required by the factories are heavy while the products are light. This means that the wagons which bring the raw materials to the factories are not suitable to distribute

the finished product, so that the demand on transport is a double one.

Seven thousand additional trains are being run every week to convey workers to and from Government factories. At one factory alone nearly a quarter of a million train journeys are made by workers in over 400 trains every week. At another factory 200,000 people travel by over 350 trains.

Millions of people also work at privately-owned factories on war work. These are carried by the railways' ordinary train services, augmented as necessary. During 1942, 400 million passenger journeys were made by the holders of Workmen's Tickets, an increase over 1941 of 75 millions.

Special train services for war factories are arranged with local Consultative Committees set up by the Regional Transport Committees. The Consultative Committees consist of representatives of the factory managements, of the workers and of transport organisations. Times are furnished to the railway officers of the shifts which are being worked, and the trains run are to meet variations in the factory working arrangements. Train services are often provided seven days a week, the Sunday services being as frequent as those on weekdays.

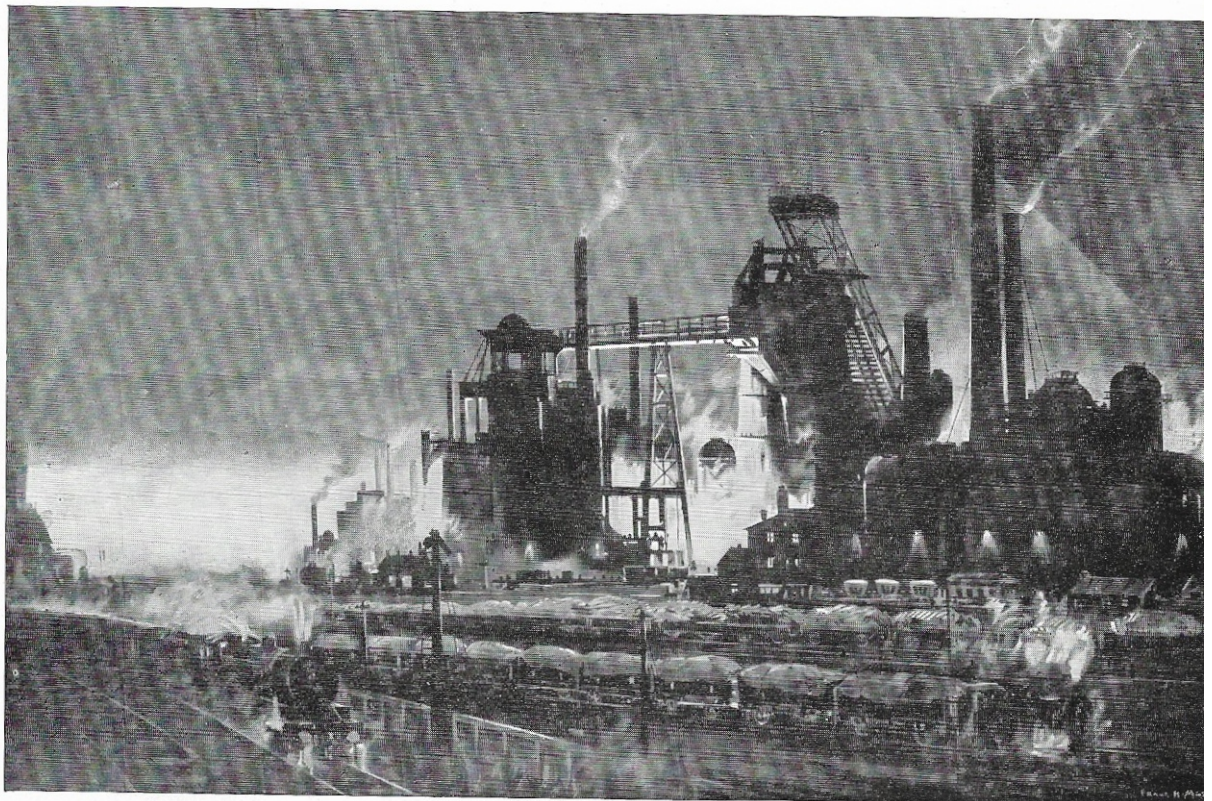
FOOD AND FUEL

The zoning of supplies, district by district, to make each area of the country as self-supporting as possible, has meant the re-arrangement of hundreds of freight services. The increase of home-grown foodstuffs, with millions of acres of land under cultivation, is resulting in increasing demands for railway transport. Fertilisers, seed potatoes, sugar beet, tractors



New stations for war workers

"Times" photograph



War factories depend on the railways

and farming equipment, as well as land workers, have been catered for, frequently by special trains.

Cross-country movements and needlessly long hauls of freight traffics have been considerably reduced. The Ministry of Food zoning schemes provide that in each "sector" wholesalers and depots distributing groceries draw supplies of bulk commodities such as butter, margarine, and sugar from the nearest port or primary source of supply.

Big demands have been made upon the railways for the movement of food supplies for the Fighting Forces. The requirements of large camps, and factory canteens, as well as civilian needs, have been met, and every assistance has been given to implement the food and clothing distribution plans of various Government Departments. Railway liaison officers work at the Ministry of Food regulating traffic movements to avoid congestion

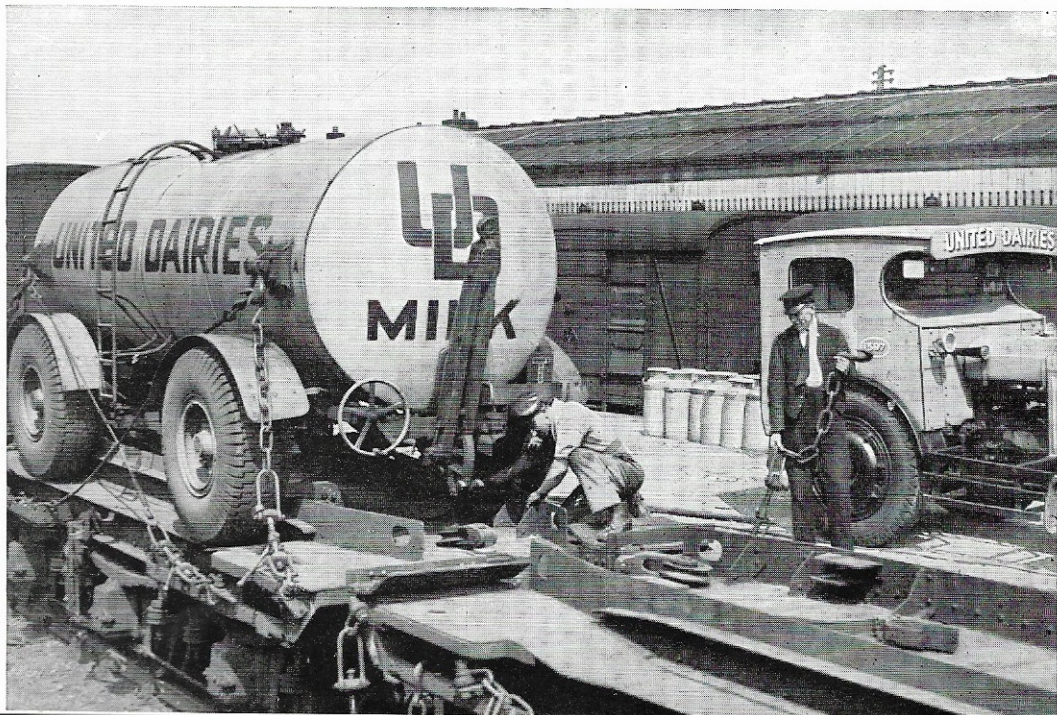
and the undue detention of wagons and vans.

COAL

Heavy tonnages of coal are being carried from the collieries. Large quantities of coal formerly moved by coastwise vessels from North-east Coast ports are being carried by rail. Between 75 per cent. and 80 per cent. of the output of saleable coal totalling 4,000,000 tons weekly is carried by the railways.

To assist the movement of coal, complete trainloads known as "block" trains are run from the collieries. The collieries greatly assist by labelling coal wagons in proper order so that loaded wagons can be detached from the trains at various stations en route, with a minimum of shunting. To make the running of block coal trains possible over long distances it has been necessary to suspend a number of passenger trains.

Movement of food supplies



GOVERNMENT CONTROL

When the Government, on September 1st, 1939, took control of the Main Line Railways, London Transport and other railways, by the issue of an Order under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939, on behalf of the Minister of Transport, the activities of the railways were immediately transferred from peacetime to wartime conditions.

The Railway Executive Committee appointed by the Minister to be his agents for the purpose of giving directions under the Order has been in regular session.

Shortly after the formation of the Ministry of War Transport in 1941 the two positions of Chairman of the Railway Executive Committee and Controller of Railways at the Ministry were amalgamated. This brought the Railway Executive Committee and the Ministry of War Transport closer together, as the Controller of Railways being the Chairman of the Railway Executive Committee is able to interpret the Minister's policy through the Railway Executive Committee, and to place before the Minister and his officers the views and advice of the Railway Managements. As a further step to facilitate and strengthen consultations between the Railway Executive Committee and the Ministry of War Transport, the Controller of Railways holds frequent conferences at the Ministry attended by members of the Railway Executive Committee and the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary and their officers concerned.

The railways taken control of were :—

1. Southern Railway.
2. Great Western Railway.
3. London Midland & Scottish Railway.
4. London & North Eastern Railway.
5. London Passenger Transport Board.
6. Any Joint Committee of any two or more of the above.
7. East Kent Light Railway.
8. Kent and East Sussex Light Railway.
9. King's Lynn Docks and Railway.
10. Mersey Railway.
11. Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway.

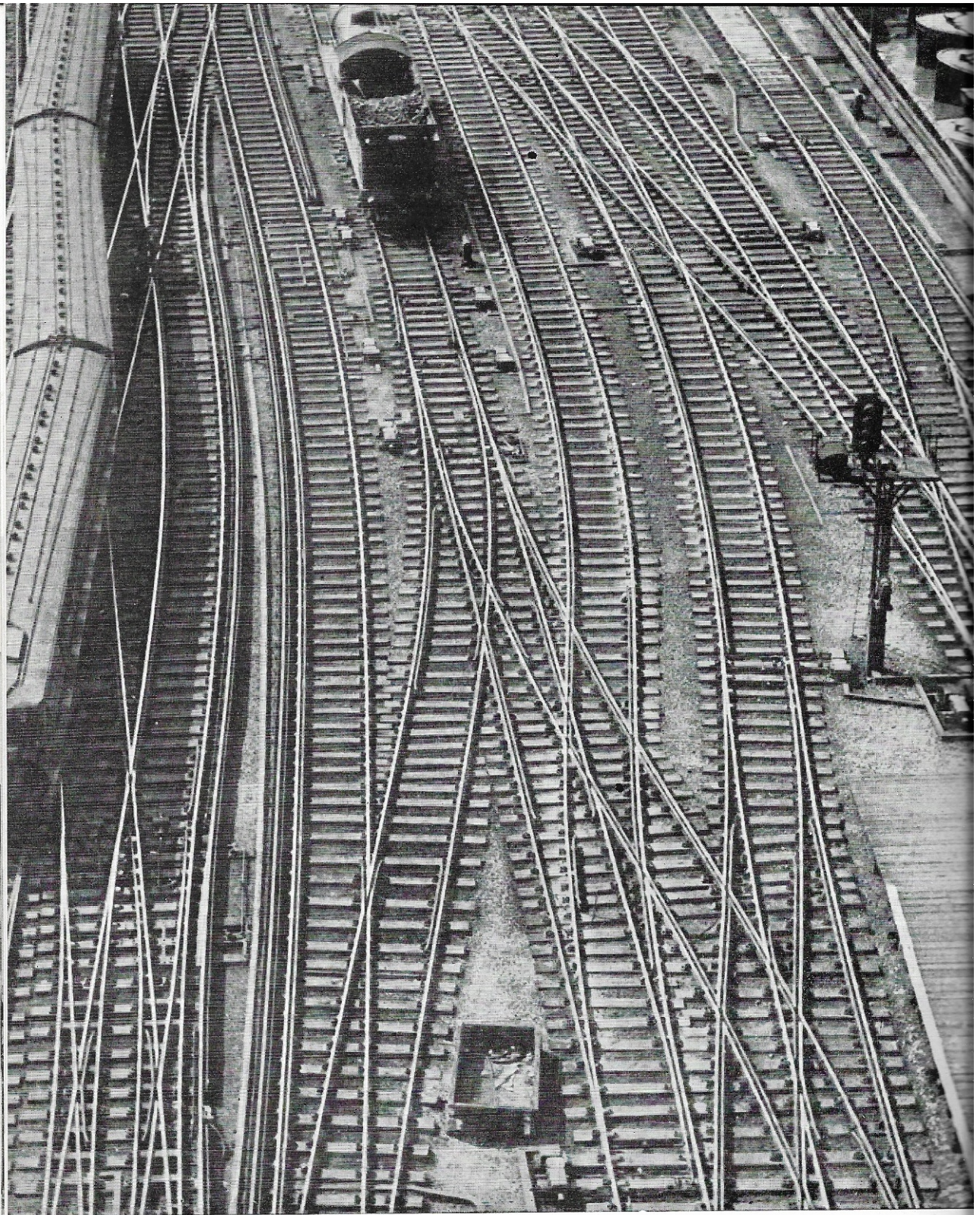
The Railway Executive Committee consists of :—

- Sir Alan G. Anderson, G.B.E. (Chairman).
- Sir James Milne, K.C.V.O., C.S.I.
- Sir William V. Wood.
- Mr. C. H. Newton.
- Mr. E. J. Missenden, O.B.E.
- The Rt. Hon. Lord Ashfield, P.C.
- Mr. G. Cole Deacon (Secretary).

Any direction in writing signed by any two members of the Committee or any member and Secretary of the Committee to be valid exercise of the authority given to the Committee.

The Control Order continues in force until it is revoked or amended by writing under the hand of the Minister of War Transport or of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary or any Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of War Transport.

The Railway Executive Committee is assisted by Committees of railway officers and other advisers.



Lines behind the lines