

## Anthony Davies - A short Bio.

Steam Locomotive Performance on some Cross Country lines in Wessex

The Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway (S&D)  
Midland & South Western Junction Railway (M&SWJ)  
Didcot, Newbury & Southampton Railway (DN&S)  
Salisbury & Dorset Junction Railway (S&DJ)

### SYNOPSIS

Initially, I have to confess to an inclination to “see how they go” whenever I am in a railway train, be it steam- or diesel-hauled! Also, I have little engineering knowledge – apart from appreciating all that is involved (especially in the world of scale model engineering). So, my real railway *forte* has always been the timing of trains.

My early schooldays, in the late 1940s/early 1950s in Sussex, Hampshire and then Kent, played a part. Days of everyday steam on the railways. As life went on, interests broadened – and then the chance of a first job, 1954. That first job required some travel, mainly up and down the East Coast main line to North East England, and occasionally a trip on the Midland route. Somehow, along the way, the Somerset & Dorset played its magic!

Maybe that had first come about from a 1948 car journey, from Plymouth to Mayfield in Sussex. From 1955 onwards, those particular S&D interests increased, and in 1960 were enhanced by the arrival of several Class 9F 2-10-0. From North East England, *well*, there were the summer Friday night “holiday” trains in those days! So, to a relative youngster, that was an easy way of reaching Bournemouth – and then to spend a Saturday wandering up and down “the Dorset”. Finishing up with a Sunday visit to parental home in Kent. Those near-parallel lines, the M&SWJ and DN&S, also had their intriguing ways, and share of attention.

Then came 1966/7. Other preoccupations – after 1970, say, a young family – and “keeping a job” took up most of my time, until the late ‘nineties at least. From 1970 to the millennium year – how the railway scene changed. By then I was retired, and in a new home, still in North East England. A familiar story. So now, and with the aid of friends, there was time to gather my thoughts. One of those friends passed on some S&D performance writings of the late R.E.Charlewood, another introduced me to part of his own railway career, which had mainly been on the GWR. Although we do delve into some S&D Locomotive history relevant to the Midland Railway, any historical mention of the S&D extension from Evercreech to Bath has been left to other writers. After all, that GWR friend spoke of the history surrounding an obscure connection between the S&D and the GWR – in an area (near Bruton) already fairly well-known to myself – and that alone has been “quite enough”!

So, on top of my own experiences in travelling up and down “the Dorset” in those steam days prior to 1966, there was a wealth of History to “add meat to my own tales”. There were the intrigues between the GWR Broad Gauge people and the S&D narrow gauge people for rights of way. What might have happened if the Broad Gauge had spread further into Southern England? So many little details – all with a relevance to the operation of trains. Then, by reference to other published runs, analysis of some of my own S&D steam runs. Finally, from 1980 onwards, the doings of S&D 2-8-0 in northern England (mainly on the Carnforth to Hellfield line) and then also on certain preservation lines in Somerset and in the North East ..... While still keeping an eye “on the history” – and finishing up with some coincidental stories from my own memories of schooldays, and parental home, in Kent!

**Current Position.**

The text (approx.54,000 words) is currently in Microsoft WORD format, A4 page size and mostly single-spaced. Since the period covered runs from 1955 to 1966, a coding system has been incorporated in the text so as to aid cross-reference.

There are a couple of tables (in Appendix) and Bibliography, References. There are no photographs – I did take a few of my own, but these are mostly “off the platform end” – in any case, the Somerset & Dorset alone has plenty of picture albums! However, the text gives references to relevant published photographs.

The Somerset & Dorset section is currently (from Spring 2014) being serialised in *Pines Express*, the Bulletin of the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust.