

It is May 1944, weeks before D-Day. The munitions depot at Monkton Farleigh mines is busy day and night shipping out vital supplies to ports on the South Coast where the invasion fleet is being assembled. Troop trains are also running constantly to these ports. A limited passenger service is running including various branch line services. In addition refurbished US locomotives are being moved to Southampton docks.

Obviously, the track layout differs considerably from that in service then, but I hope that I have provided a reasonable simulation. One of the main differences is that the link from Didcot directly to the south coast via Newbury has long gone, so all trains for the Southampton area are routed via Reading. Thingley Yard substitutes for the branch into Monkton Farleigh mine, which was the largest ammunition depot in Southern England. Ammunition trains for Weymouth are hauled out by a pilot which detaches at Chippenham and then returns to the yard.

Empty freight for Thingley which enters via Bathampton will detach their engines at Chippenham to run to Swindon Loco Depot and will then be hauled into the yard by a pilot. This pilot from the yard will need to be authorised to pass signal 29 at Chippenham in order to effect the join. Locos will run into the yard from Swindon, and also empties from other directions which may emerge from Cocklebury. To facilitate movements, a one-way system is in operation around Thingley so there will be no up trains entering from Melksham. Trains from Westbury reverse at Bathampton. If a train of empty wagons (4V**) is waiting on the up line at Chippenham for a loco to haul it into the depot be careful not to let any loaded ammunition trains (6V**) enter before the shunter (0P**) enters.

Local services to and from Cirencester and Highworth are simulated using freight lines. The Cirencester - Reading services stop at every station so best not to let them get in front of an express. Some of these run well into the evening as staggered business hours were in operation to avoid too much traffic in the conventional rush hours. Watch out for up mail trains using the down line to access Swindon PCL. Ammunition trains for the Southampton area use the ML from Didcot as they have priority.

Some troop trains entering from Chipping Sodbury change engines at Didcot. Troop trains and ammunition trains take priority over standard passenger and freight services, which may lead to delays. Occasional wrong way working may facilitate timings, but should be chosen with care. The Parcels option should be chosen at the start and ARS should be switched off. Routes should not be set too far ahead.

Watch out for 'Alive' a special train used by General Eisenhower.

This TT has not been tested on the SwinDid loader version as that doesn't work very well on my antiquated XP system.

Enjoy!

Hotwellian April 2014