

(c/o Area Civil Engineer,  
Eastleigh)

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10 Oct 1983

Dear David,

With reference to your letter of 26 September; as requested, I give below a few memories of the Eastleigh District as it was when I entered the drawing office at the start of my railway service in February 1924.

There were seven of us in the drawing office, Mr. G. Knight being Chief Draughtsman. Mr. P. St. J. Bistof was District Engineer, Mr. D. Taylor was Assistant D. E., Mr. J. P. Clark was Chief Clerk. There were a number of clerks in the correspondence office, accounts office, and "prime cost" office, which was at Sutton Lane Building depot. All male, except five shorthand typists. Mr. G. Gilham was Chief Permanent Way Inspector.

Drawing Office work included working out improvements in curve alignment after measuring versines, then setting out such alignments on the ground; preparing plans and estimates for painting, minor alterations, and other work, to station offices and other buildings; levelling and preparing plans for improvement of drainage; keeping records of permanent way renewals and alterations to mileage of track; correcting station plans after minor alterations; recording on Ordnance maps, and other plans, cables, gas mains, water mains, etc., reported as being laid or positioned.

The Eastleigh District boundaries up to the end of 1932 were as follows: on the Portsmouth side of Fareham West junction, with Brighton District; on the Alton side of Knowle junction, the Alton side of Winchester junction, at the 48 $\frac{1}{4}$  mile post, west of Basingstoke, all with London West District; Shawford junction side of Winchester & Lesil, Weyhill side of Redport junction, behind the junction with the G.W.R. west of Salisbury, in Dorchester, P.R. Station, all with the Great Western Railway; at the 110 mile post west of Gillingham with Exeter District; on the Bailey Gate side of Wimborne junction, also the Bailey Gate side of Broadstone junction, both with the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway, whose permanent way was maintained by Exeter District.

There were 13 permanent way inspectors on the Eastleigh District, at Winchester, Eastleigh, Fareham, Romney, Andover junction, Salisbury, Teisburg, Southampton West, Ringwood, Wimborne, Christchurch, Poole and Wareham. Only four, Eastleigh, Fareham, Salisbury and Southampton, had sub-inspectors. There was a "tool lad" in each office, who usually went out in the gang when he reached the age of 21, although some obtained posts in the District office.

Gangs on the main lines generally consisted of five men, ganger, sub-ganger, three undermen; on other lines, four men, ganger and three undermen. On double lines these gangs usually looked after a length of two miles.

On single lines the lengths were of course longer. There were larger gangs at stations with large yards, such as Eastleigh, Southampton Terminus, Salisbury. A few years later many pairs of four man gangs were amalgamated into one gang of seven men. There were two relaying gangs at Eastleigh.

I am not sure of the total number of men employed in the Eastleigh Civil Engineering District, but think it was somewhere in the region of 1,000.

I trust that these notes will be of some assistance, no doubt Ted Mullin and other older members can add to them, from their own recollections or their contacts with older members of the staff.

Yours sincerely

Arthur