



7. Fast freight. 4700 class 2-8-0 no 4705 approaches Banbury with a class C train carrying empty meat wagons from Smithfield to Birkenhead in 1955.

leaving Banbury at 06.30 served yards and sidings as far as Brill & Ludgershall. It was followed by a train departing at 08.35 which ran non-stop to Brill and then served every yard and siding from there to Greenford, arriving at Old Oak Common at 16.20. The Banbury men who worked it stayed the night in London. They returned with the balancing train leaving Old Oak Common at 10.00, making their way through Bicester and reaching Banbury at 18.16. Otherwise most working timetables show no more than about four coal and general goods trains a day between the marshalling yard at Banbury and London. However, the line was regularly traversed by at least four express freight trains between London and Wolverhampton and Birkenhead. The most significant cargoes included tea and individual fruit pies from Lyons's factory at Cadby Hall, Guinness from the Park Royal brewery, soap from Port Sunlight and meat from Birkenhead Docks. These were conveyed underground from Old Oak Common on the Metropolitan Line to a Great Western depot below Smithfield Market. A return working of empty meat wagons passed through Banbury in mid-afternoon for a time in the mid-1950s.