

Chaos at Euston station by Ray Pearce.

I have been on two journeys to London and beyond recently. One in October and one just before Christmas. The October was WGSOBASAS which stands for Waterloo Grammar School Old Boys Association, Southern area section. I



attended Waterloo Grammar school, near Liverpool from 1946 to 1951 and have been a regular contributor to the Old Boy's magazine. We have an annual lunch in October at the Civil Service Club in central London. This year I took the 10:00 train from Birmingham International station to Euston arriving at 11:15 am. It was a lovely journey with a light breakfast of scrambled eggs on toast and a pot of tea. Once in London on to Northern line on the underground to Charing Cross station where I surface on to the Strand near to Nelson's Column. A left turn down Northumberland Avenue, turn right at the Nigerian High Commission and into the Civil Service Club. 15 Old Boys were present including a contingent down from Liverpool. They stayed overnight there to go to the Fulham v Everton match the next day. The lunch was excellent then lots of reminiscences about school life.

I left the club at 3:30 pm and made my way back to Euston for the 4:19 to Birmingham. CANCELLED. I was advised to get the Edinburgh train which was leaving just after 5:00 pm. This train was shown on the departure board but no platform number. When this did appear there was a mad rush as two lots of travellers boarded the one train. I managed to get a seat in the First class section but no food or drink available. There may have been some further down the train but having stood on the Euston concourse for over 30 minutes I was not moving. Then my phone rings in my pocket, it was Angie who kindly does me a Sunday lunch every Sunday, what time are you home she asks. About 7:00 says I, then I'll send you round a lamb chops meal at 7:30. Thus ended a happy but tiring day.



The second trip was to Eastbourne to see my stepson. As before all went well. I took the 3:06 pm back from Eastbourne to London Victoria and arrived back at Euston at 5:00 to find my train, the 5:19pm cancelled due to lack of staff. The following train was also cancelled so we were all advised to catch the Glasgow train due to depart just before 6:00 pm. Now three into one does not go. I had a first class ticket, found a seat when a youngish lady tells me the seat I occupy is her reserved seat to Glasgow. Sorry Miss says I and stand up. Immediately another lady offers me her seat, saying she can sit on the floor. The train was very crowded so I sat down. The lady on the floor did get a seat at Milton Keynes. At Rugby a new train manager got a grip of the situation. She makes an

announcement saying she will be checking all tickets in the next few minutes and if anyone is in a First Class carriage without a first class ticket will they move at once or be prepared to pay the excess fare. About 5 people moved at once. A railway official then came along the train giving out bottles of Wenlock still water. I really was tired when I got home at 8:00 pm. The people on the train going to Glasgow would now be arriving after midnight by which time I was tucked up in my bed and fast asleep.

Ray Pearce 3.1.2023