

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 2 (1988-1990)
Heft: 4

Artikel: Kerzers
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-855296>

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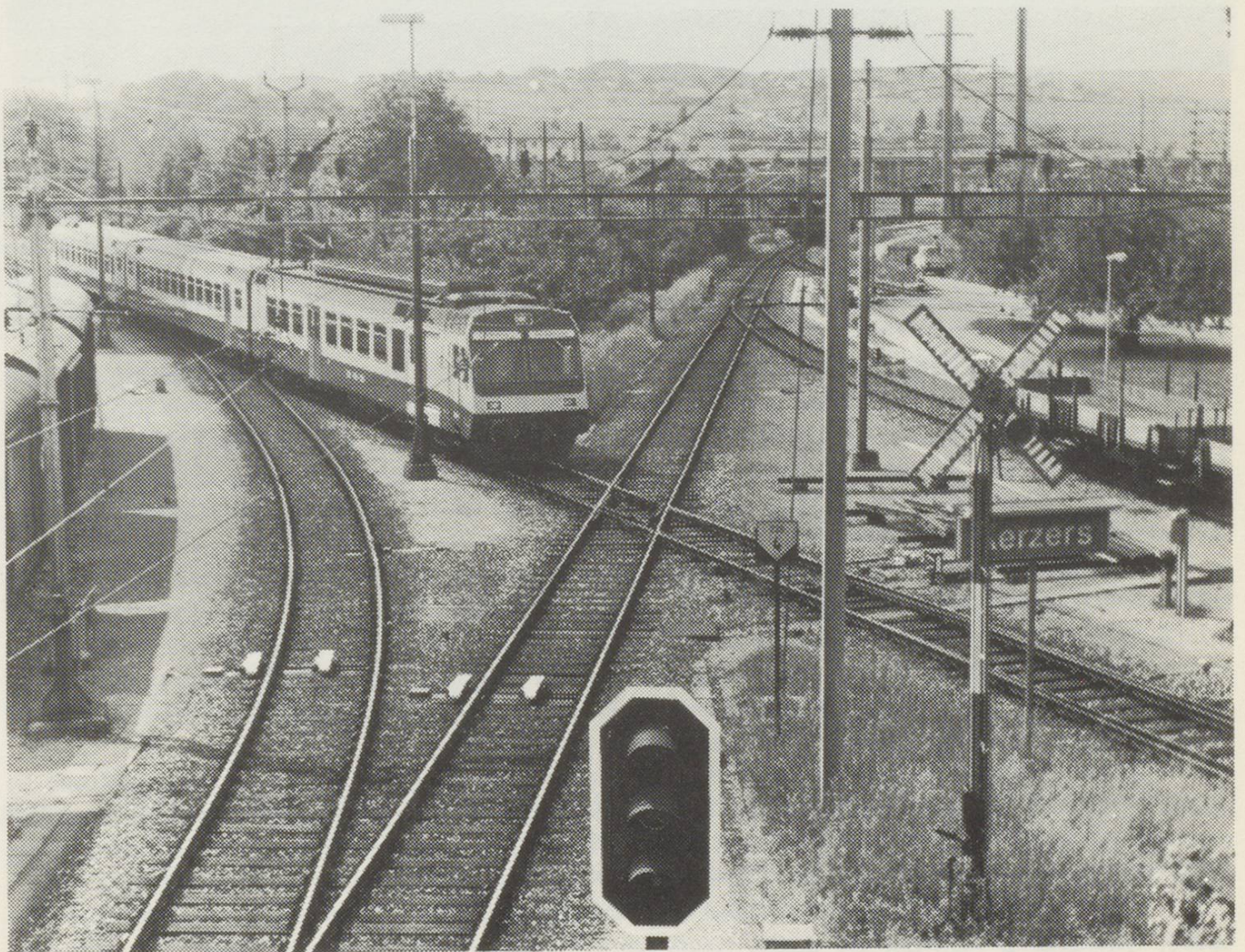
KERZERS

By C.E. Brack

Kerzers lies to the west of Bern in the Swiss Central Plain and stands on the edge of the rolling hills overlooking the flat Grosses Moos, an area of drained bogland linking the Lac de Morat and Lac de Neuchâtel in the west and the Bieler Sea in the north. The first railway through the area was from Murten to Lyss opened in 1876 by the Suisse Occidentale Railway and subsequently became part of the SBB. In 1901 the Bern-Neuenberg Bahn opened its line through Kerzers and this is now part of the B.L.S. Group. The Bern to Neuchâtel route was electrified in 1928 and the SBB line in 1944.

What sets Kerzers apart from the usual layout of intersecting routes is that the two lines cross each other on the level, an arrangement fairly uncommon in Europe although widespread in the U.S.A. The flat nature of the plain crossed by the BN on its way from Neuchâtel and the restrictions of a small valley leading to Gummenen together with the location of the existing station no doubt influencing matters.

It is immediately apparent that the SBB facilities are somewhat more extensive than its BN counterpart. The BN station comprises two loops and some sidings serving a large silo together with the connection in a north (Lyss) to east (Bern) direction. This is paralleled by a loop serving a large loading bank. Passenger facilities comprise a couple of small waiting shelters.



GBS RBDe4/4 arriving from Bern.

Photo: C. Brack



SBB Station looking north toward Lyss.

Photo: C. Brack

The SBB station on the other hand has the usual station building, Kiosk and Goods shed combination, together with a weigh bridge, a very photogenic signal box and various industrial sidings; one to the north of the station and others to the south of the diamond crossing serving an SBB works which appears to build and/or repair electrical components for the catenary.

Although the SBB establishment is larger and appears to undertake shunting at both stations, it would be fair to say that the BN route is the more important with the express services the "LUTETIA/LEMANO" (Paris/Bern/Paris), and the daily TGV Eurocity Express "Champs Elysees". There are also hourly semi-fasts working usually beyond Neuchâtel to Le Locle or Chaux de Fonds together with an hourly all stations service. Although E.m.u.'s are common, on many of the semi-fast trains are locomotive hauled, and the LUTETIA on the 19th May 1988 comprised an SBB Re4/4I No. 10040 and three SBB UIC coaches. The 12.20 Le Locle - Bern semi-fast train that I caught was a four coach SBB Push/Pull set hauled by an SBB RBe4/4 No. 1426. All the SBB line trains seen were four car Push/Pull sets powered by Re4/4I's. Again there is basically an hourly service on the Lyss-Murten-Payerne-Lausanne route through Kerzers with the addition of 3 semi-fasts at four hourly intervals each way.

Before embarking on my visit to Switzerland this year I wrote to various lines to see if I could purchase copies of the Working Timetables and the BLS group were good enough to supply them for all their lines. The BN table shows services on connecting lines including those on the SBB line through Kerzers.

I have attempted to extract the regular Guterzug and Dienstzug services from the table, however a number of paths have been allocated for a train to take, for example on the SBB route there are seven provisional paths in each direction in addition to a

couple of regular freight times in the Lyss direction. The scheduled trains are given in the attached list, however the number of provisional paths on the BN are approximately double this and as there does not appear to be any fixed through Neuchâtel - Bern services some of the provisional paths must be utilised each day.

As previously mentioned the SBB appear to do all the station work and while I was there an SBB tractor type TelII No. 151 was kept busy shunting the SBB works, and then exchanging one van for two which comprised the total load off a BN freight from the Bern direction hauled by BN locomotive type Re4/4 No. 180. Several wagons from the SBB works were left in the centre road awaiting collection by a freight train and other wagons were moved into a small loop siding near the factory at the north end of the yard.

Another peculiarity of the SBB station is that trains pass on the right hand side and the platforms are signposted accordingly. The plain architecture of the station building is more than offset by the signalbox, and a footbridge across the station throat adjacent to the diamond crossing makes a good vantage point for observing operations and taking photographs. Next time you are in Switzerland put Kerzers on your visiting list!

ARRIVALS					DEPARTURES				
Time	Train	Route	Type	From	Time	Train	Route	Type	From
0404 WD	91852	BN	Güter	Bern	0404 WD	91852	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel
0444 WD	90552P	SBB	Güter	Lyss	0448 WD	90552P	SBB	Güter	Murten
0512 SO	U81851	BN	Güter	Ins	0519 SO	U81852	BN	Güter	Ins
0518 SO	23961	BN	Dienst	Neuchâtel	0526 MR	23962	BN	Dienst	Inc
0518 MF	26960	BN	Dienst	Bern Hol	0800 MF	08557	SBB	Güter	Lyss
0538 MF	61850	BN	Güter	Bern Bpz	0800 MF	61860	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel
0544 SU	26966	BN	Dienst	Bern Hol	1244 MF	61872	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel
0653 SU	26968	BN	Dienst	Bern Hol	1600 MF	80587	SBB	Güter	Lyss
0745 MF	61859	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel	1844 MF	61888	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel
1210 MF	61871	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel	2144 MF	26995	BN	Dienst	Bern
1619 MF	80588	SBB	Güter	Lyss					
1804 MF	26985	BN	Dienst	Ins					
2144 MF	26995	BN	Güter	Neuchâtel					

Times valid to May 1989.

Abbreviations used:

WD = Workdays, Monday to Saturday.

MF = Monday to Friday.

SO = Saturdays only.

SU = Sundays only.

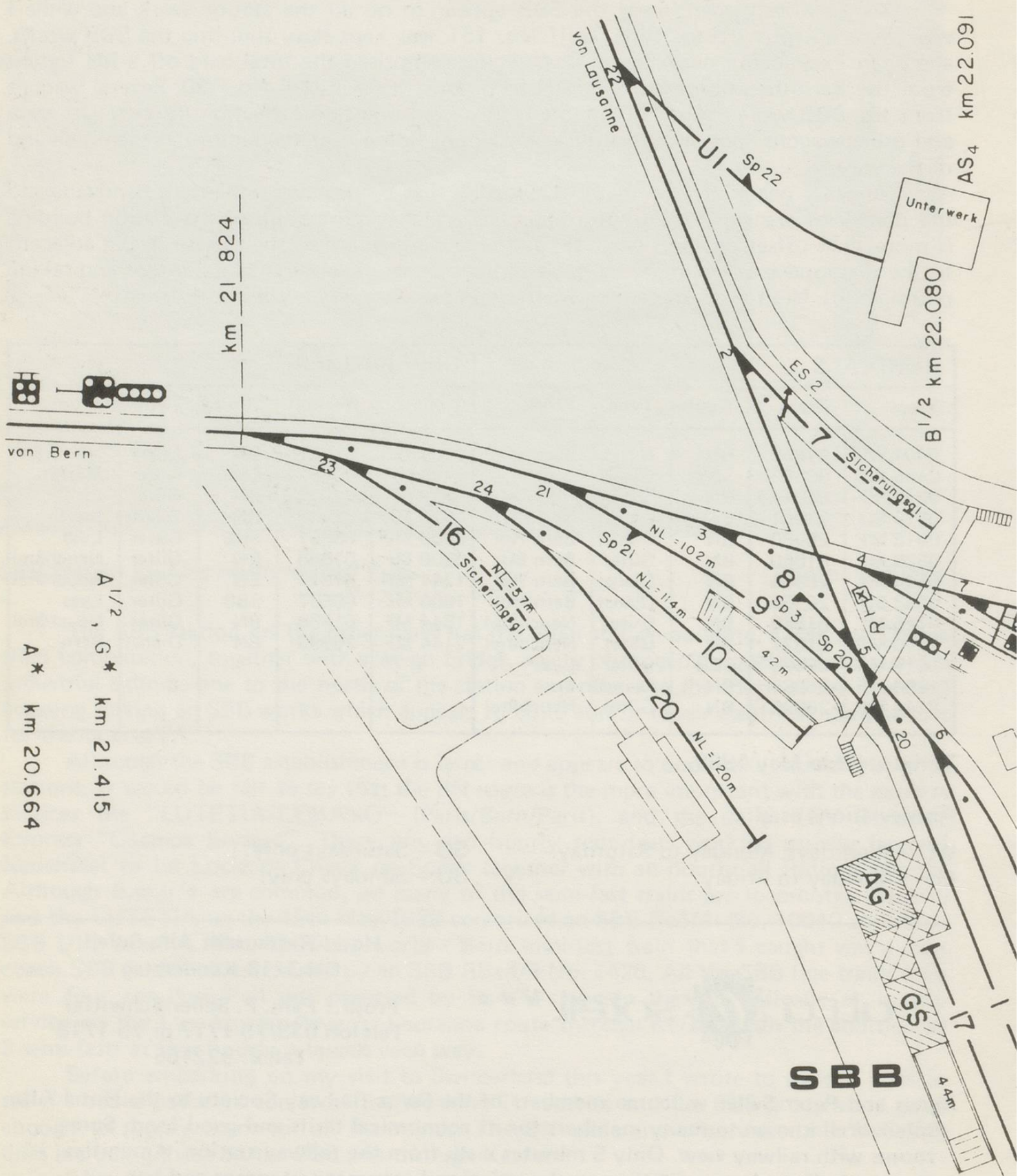


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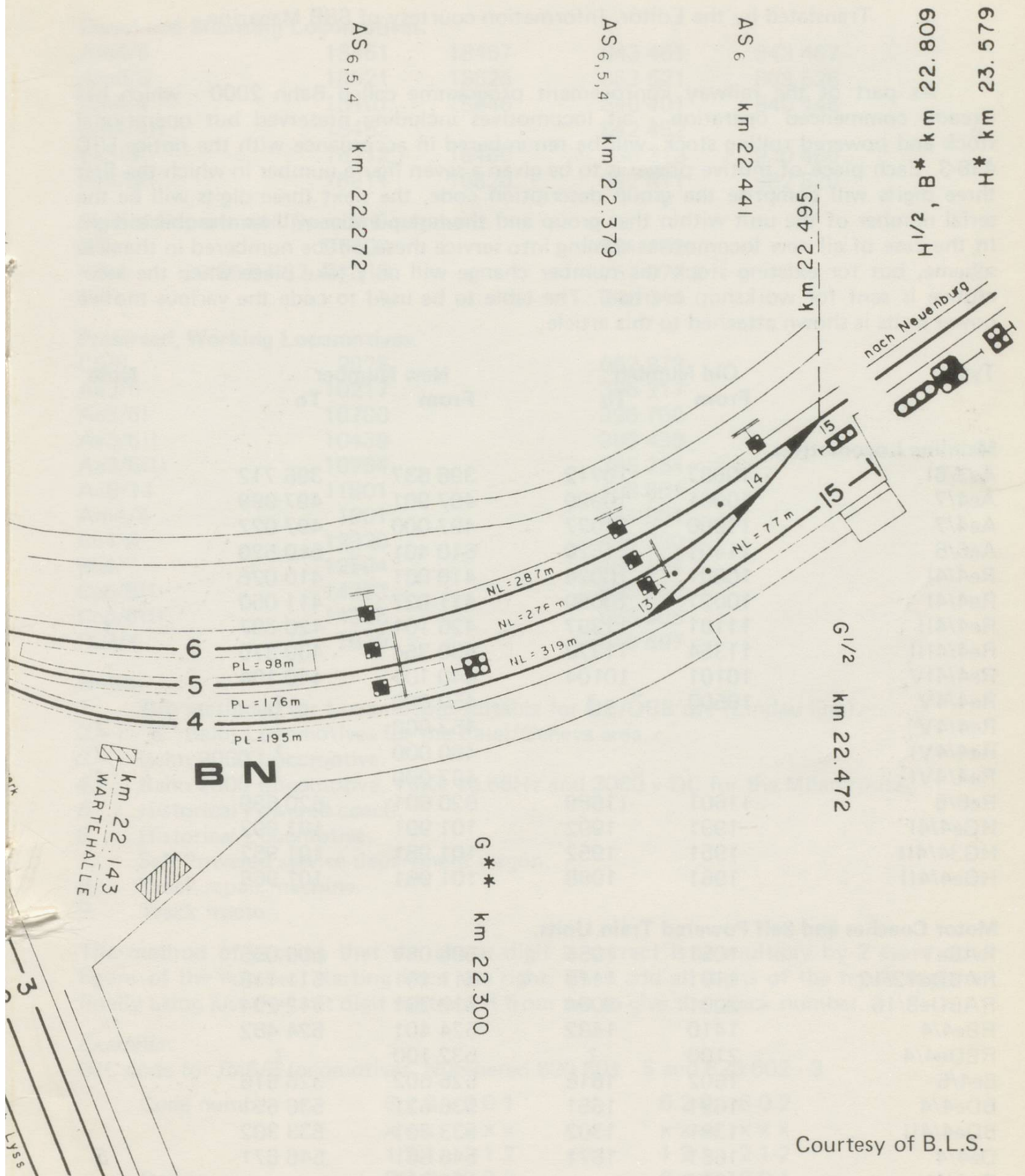
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Courtesy of B.L.S.