# The Tenterden Terrier

Number 11

Winter 1976



Journal of the Tenterden Railway Company Limited Proprietor of the Kent & East Sussex Railway

### The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

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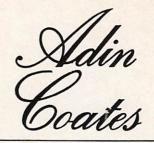
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### The Tenterden Terrier

Number 11 Winter 1976

### Contents

3 Editorial 4-6 Operating Notes A New Arrival 7 More About Bridges 8-10 11-13 Early Days 100 Years In Steam 14-15 Letters to the Editor 16 From our Ticket Collection 19 A Railway on a Budget 20-23 From the Railway Archives 24 The Kent & East Sussex in 27-28 Wartime

### **Editorial**

### A HUNDRED YEARS, TWICE

The 100th birthday of "Sutton" this year means that with "Bodiam", now in her 105th year, we have 2 centenarians in service on the Kent & East Sussex, a unique event in railway preservation circles. However, of more practical value to the Railway is the fact that the celebrations attracted more than 5000 visitors to the line over the weekend of 25th/26th September, by far the greatest number over any 2 day period since reopening. The success of the occasion, which resulted in a profit well into 4 figures, prompts the thought that special steam up's should become a regular feature of our services from now on, for the marginal profitability of private railway operation these days is such, that a proliferation of ideas is essential to ensure survival.

The Editor would like to take the opportunity of wishing all readers a Happy Christmas and to suggest that they support the Local Line by joining an "Xmas Luncheon Special" from Tenterden Town Station on either 11th or 18th December. Full details are contained elsewhere in this issue.

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### FRONT COVER

STEAM UP, SEPTEMBER 1976
After the cavalcade of locomotives at
Tenterden Town Station on Sunday, 26th
September, passenger services were run to
Newmill in the afternoon, with a locomotive
at either end of the train. In this photograph,
by Brian Stephenson, No. 19 pulls away
from Rolvenden with a tea-time train from
Newmill to Tenterden Town.

@1076

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

### **Operating Notes**

### Compiled by Mark Yonge

These notes were current at 30th September 1976

### Locomotives

Locomotives No.'s 19 (Norwegian) and 23 (Austerity) have provided the mainstay of motive power this season, backed up by No. 10 (Sutton). No. 26 (R.S.&H. Saddletank) failed its hydraulic test and this necessitated firebox repairs, including the replacement of 6 rivets. This work has now been completed and the locomotive re-entered service on 3rd October. Other work completed during the summer included the stripping out of axleboxes of No. 24 (Austerity) for inspection and repairs and motion repairs to No. 3 (Bodiam), No. 22 (Maunsell) has been withdrawn from service pending replacement of boiler stays this winter. No. 17 (Arthur) was back in service on 4th September, hauling a works train, following a successful hydraulic test. Engine problems have dogged No. 20 (G.W.R. Rail Car) and it has been out of operational service for most of the season. although continuing to work in loco hauled trains. Cylinder head repairs are now under way and it is hoped that these will be completed before the end of the year. No. 25 (Errol Lonsdale), in store on the Railway since 1970, has been sold by its private owner to the Mid Hants Railway. It will be moved to Alresford shortly and goes to its new owners with our best wishes. On 25th/26th September the whole of the operational locomotive fleet took part in a cavalcade arranged in connection with the centenary of No. 10 (Sutton), This included No. 3 (Bodiam), No. 10 (Sutton), No. 12 (Marcia) which was hauled dead by No. 17 (Arthur), No. 19 (Norwegian), No. 23 (Austerity), No. 24 (Austerity), No. 25 (Austerity) and No. 26 (R.S.&H. Saddle Tank).

Michael Hart

### Carriage and Wagon

A bogie side tipper has recently been purchased from McAlpine for £250, primarily for use in transporting soil in connection with bridge reconstruction work. The bearings on this and on our other 2 wagons have been overhauled and general repairs have been effected. Work continues on B.S.O. No. 54 and interior renovations, including re-upholstering, are now complete. Paint is being striped from the exterior and after repainting has been completed and new canvas fitted to the roof, it should be back in service before the end of the year. Mark Toynbee repainted the "Woolwich" coach, in readiness for the cavalcade in September. The department is in

need of ladders and staging and also woodwork tools and carriage prints. Anyone who can help with any of these items is invited to contact me at Tenterden

Paul Ramsden

### Permanent Way

The J.C.P. employees have completed the re-laying of track between Newmill Bridge and Wittersham Road, with metal sleepers recovered from the Bodiam to Junction Road section, Work has now started on installing the loop and sidings at Wittersham Road; one of the points has been taken from stock and the other from a siding at Northiam. The Company recently negotiated a contract with W.F. Smith & Co Ltd of Sheffield to supply 258, 36 foot panels of 75lb flat bottom rail, complete with concrete sleepers, to replace the majority of track between Wittersham Road and Northiam, This has been "swapped" for an equivalent length of existing, 911/1b rail, together with chairs, etc, from this section and from the Bodiam to Junction Road section and will ensure that the Company is not faced with the prohibitive cost of purchasing some 5000 wooden sleepers, to replace defective ones. At the time of writing, approximately one third of the panels had been delivered from the existing location at M.O.D., Kineton, and most of the bull headed rail lifted from the track bed. Laving track panels will be the next task to be tackled by the J.C.P. members after the work at Wittersham has been completed this autumn. The existing J.C.P. grant comes to an end on 5th November and the Company has negotiated a new agreement for the employment of 40 people until the end of 1977. It is hoped that the track restoration to Northiam will be completed by September 1977. The value of the Government grant is £74,500, including £6,500 for materials.

Other work completed on the permanent way includes the re-instatement of the number 2 carriage siding at Tenterden, which will alleviate storage problems and the re-alignment of several curves, due to the shallow ballast causing severe track movement. The Company is in need of an additional rail mounted crane and would be pleased to hear of any that may be for disposal.

Michael Hart, Brian Muston

### Clearance

The Department has cleared away many large trees in the vicinity of Newmill Bridge to allow access to the crane jib during the rebuilding programme. During the winter months, work will be concentrated on cutting back the trees and bushes

now encroaching the loading gauge on the operational section. From next March, the effort will be transferred to Wittersham Bank. The Department has a working party every Sunday from 11.00am to dusk and would welcome new members who are interested in this type of work.

John Miller

### Building

General repair and maintenance work has continued, culminating in the working week based on Tenterden station, when the main building was given a "face lift", including a roof repaint, repairs to window sills and rotten woodwork, together with sundry painting and cleaning and a new "saw tooth" canopy to the entrance. Many thanks to all the members who took part. Planning permission for the Wittersham Road scheme has been delayed due to protracted negotiations with the District and County Councils over the detailed design of the visibility splay, required at the entrance to the new car park. However, it is hoped that permission will be to hand by the time that these notes are published. The possibility of using inverted concrete sleepers, supported on longitudinal walls and topped with asphalt, is being considered for the platform.

Clifford Mason

### Plant Maintenance

The Job Creation Project has lead to a much higher utilisation of plant and, inevitably, problems in keeping equipment in working order. Some of the J.C.P. employees are working on plant maintenance and it is hoped that many of the items will be restored to A1 condition. A Whitlock excavator has recently been added to the fleet and has been in use clearing the base for the number 2 carriage siding at Tenterden. Other items acquired include a Weatherill shovel and diesel air compressor. The Smith crane has been in almost continual use this summer, handling bridge components and track panels.

**Boris Perkins** 

### Signals & Telecommunications

The Tenterden signalling system was commissioned on 17th July and has given very few teething troubles. The Department's next task is to fit a twin lever ground frame at Wittersham Road to control the "up" end of the run round loop, a temporary measure until the main signalling installation at Wittersham can be tackled. A ground frame will be installed between the loop points and catch points, about 100 feet from the end of the platform. It is hoped to acquire Deal Junction signal box for use at Wittersham Road.

**Nicholas Patching** 

### Commercial

Passenger figures topped the 30,000 mark early in September, representing a 10% increase over the same period last year. Of particular interest has been the demand for Wednesday services, which have carried a total of 7418 passengers, more than double last year's numbers. Our experimental "whole week" running was also successful, but we could have achieved higher numbers if it had been brought forward to the first week of August and the dates may be changed for 1977. We are also considering the possibility of running for a more extended period in August 1977 providing that sufficient members can be found to carry out the essential tasks necessary to maintain services on weekdays. The "Wine & Dine Specials" were heavily booked throughout the season and additional trains were run on 11th September and 2nd October to cope with demand. One of the major attractions of these trains has been the beautiful floral table decorations. Our grateful thanks go to the ladies of Tenterden and district, who kindly gave their time, flowers and skill every Saturday, The success of the Wine & Dines has prompted us to proceed with our most ambitious project yet - "Xmas Luncheon Specials" in December. References are made elsewhere to the success of the steam up weekend on 25th/26th September and our thanks go to Neil Rose who did much of the organisational work.

**Donald Wilson** 

### **News from Affiliated Groups**

Maidstone Extension. Locomotive No. 12 (Marcia) attended the Kent County Show on a low-loader in July, depicting the "Wine & Dine Special". Judging by the demand for leaflets, there should be a considerable increase in the demand for seats. In August, the group took a stand at a 2-day public opening of British Rail's Chart Leacon depot at Ashford. Apart from the publicity, valuable revenue was obtained from the sale of books, etc. The window display was at Canterbury during August and September and led to a request for a guard's green flag from the Marlow Theatre Company. Interesting items are planned for the group's monthly meetings at the Methodist Youth Centre, Maidstone, in 1977. New members are Jack Fox always welcome.

London. Now that the job creation employees have taken over most of the reconstruction work at Wittersham Road, the group has taken the opportunity to overhaul its bus fleet. The Lincolnshire coach has received an overhaul and repaint and a Stoke-On-Trent double decker has recently been acquired to take the place of the Southdown

vehicle, which was found to be in need of extensive repairs and has been sold to a bus preservation group.

Anthony Pritchett

Surrey. The group attended a steam working at Stour Paine Bushes, Dorset, at the end of September but from now on, until the end of the winter, the emphasis will be on model railway exhibitions rather than outdoor rallies. The group is in need of old paperback novels and model railway books and mags as these are readily saleable and also a tent, as the present one is almost life-expired. Ideally, this should have a 12 foot frontage and full width opening.

Richard Halton

Tunbridge Wells (T.W.A.G.). Several fund raising events have been attended this summer, the most notable being the Tunbridge Wells Carnival on 3rd July. Locomotive No. 12 (Marcia) was the star exhibit and attracted much useful publicity for the Railway. The concrete base for the station building at Wittersham Road has now been laid and the timber sections will be reinstated soon. As a result of further discussions with Building Manager, Clifford Mason, the building will not now have an additional pair of double doors or a partition inside. The only modifications will be a counter across one end, which will serve as an area for both sales material and tickets. An extra door will be

installed in the side wall to permit access to the area behind the counter. Robert Searle

Kent & East Sussex Locomotive Trust. The Trust's major purchase this year has been "Birdcage" coach, K.&E.S.R. No. 61, which has been in store on the line since 1970, from a private owner. The acquisition will ensure that one of the Railway's most treasured relics will remain on the line in perpetuity. A small amount of work will be necessary before the vehicle can re-enter service. including new roof canvas and interior and exterior painting. The Trust now has a substantial debt to repay, which was necessary to incur in order to finance the purchase and donations will be much appreciated so that this can be cleared and the Trust can then consider the acquisition of other **Boris Perkins** items.

Southern Mogul Preservation Society. No 1618 was successfully steamed over the weekend of 25th/26th September, having passed its hydraulic test the previous day. Work completed on the locomotive recently included the overhaul of pistons and valve gear and reboring of the piston valve chambers. During the winter months some of the boiler cladding will be renewed and minor improvements will be made to the cab fittings.

Rodney Packham



On 16th June, B.B.C. radio's long running programme "Down Your Way" came to Tenterden, when Commercial Manager, Donald Wilson, was interviewed by Brian Johnston on the history, locomotives and future plans for the Railway. The interview, which lasted for about 5 minutes and was broadcast nationwide on Friday, 18th July and repeated the following Tuesday, included records of trains leaving Tenterden Town station and concluded with the music "Elizabethan Serenade". (Left to right: Donald Wilson, John Baker, Brian Johnston.)

[Photo Kent Messenger]

### A New Arrival

Observant visitors to the Railway will have noticed the recent arrival of a coach body, lying near to the newly reinstated carriage siding at Tenterden.

The existence of the body was first noted last year in a farm near Kingsnorth, but it was not until this May that 5 company members. including myself, obtained permission from the farmer to view it. We were impressed by the condition of the vehicle, as although it had been lying on the farm for 55 years, many of the original fittings were intact, including the brake compartment, incorporating observatories with inset seats. The farmer, who had intended to burn the coach, was happy to donate it to the Railway and it was delivered to Tenterden on 28th August by lorry and unloaded by the Kent & East Sussex crane, "Cuthbert". Research has indicated that it is a 4 wheel, 3 compartment, brake 3rd, built for the London, Chatham & Dover Railway in April 1889. The underframe

was scrapped and the teak-panelled body sold in 1921 to the farmer, who confirms that it has been in his field since then, being hauled there by a steam traction engine. The vehicle is 26 feet long and its South Eastern & Chatham Railway number is 3059, although the L.C.&D.R. number has not yet been identified. Restoration can now be seriously contemplated. The main framework is in sound condition, but a problem will be obtaining a suitable underframe. We aim to have the coach in working order by 1979, in time for its 90th birthday and in the meantime, if any reader knows of another body in this part of Kent, similar to our own and which could be a possible source of fittings, the writer would be pleased to hear.

Philip Rimmer

Other members involved in the restoration project are Tom Lewis, Brian Muston, Paul Ramsden and Paul Formby.



Lifting the coach body on 28th August for delivery to Tenterden. [Photo Kentish Express]

### More About Bridges

Civil Engineering Department Manager, Malcolm Simmons, explains how the problem of bridge reconstruction is being tackled on the Railway

There are some 16 bridges and 62 culverts and pipes located along the line between Tenterden and Bodiam, varying from 4 inches in diameter to 66 feet in span. The majority of these are original and, in accord with the practice of Colonel Stephens, the simplest forms of construction were employed.

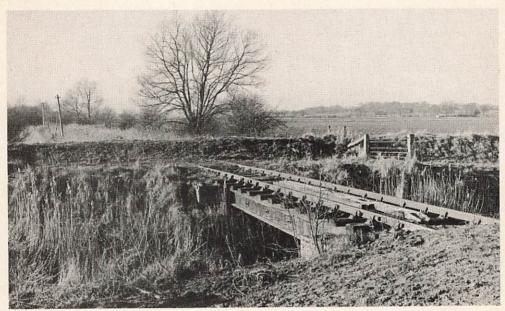
The condition of the bridges had been a major cause for concern for years and an impediment to the early re-opening of the line. In 1972. consulting engineers identified the four most critical structures as being those at Rolvenden Crossing, Newmill Channel, Hexden Channel and over the River Rother itself. It was the state of these bridges which led to the inclusion of clause 9 in the Light Railway Order, entitled "For the protection of Kent River Authority and Rother Internal Drainage Board" and was drafted to ensure that the structures would not be allowed to block watercourses. Each structure on the line was allocated a number in British Railways time and at a few sites a concrete flag post can still be seen bearing the bridge number. The sequence starts with No. 2327e at Tenterden and ends with No. 2366 at Bodiam, the small culverts and pipes often bearing a suffix letter added to the number of an adjacent larger structure

The first task to be tackled by the Tenterden Railway Company was bridge No. 2330, adjacent to the road crossing at Rolvenden, In 1970 the existing abutments and wing walls down to beam bearing level were broken out and the original beams stripped off. New universal beams were then placed on precast padstones and this was the state of affairs in 1972 when consultants were called in to inspect the bridge and supervise its completion. The principal findings were that whilst the new beams were adequate, the existing abutments were badly deteriorated. The solution adopted comprised the excavation of ground behind the existing abutments to a width of 3 feet and a depth of 2 feet below the existing founding level and the construction of new abutments. A reinforced concrete cill was cast to distribute the load from the bridge deck between the new and existing abutments, the work being successfully executed by the time the railway was reopened over this section in 1973.

The next bridge to undergo reconstruction was No. 2336 at Newmill Channel, a task which is still in progress at the time of writing. The original bridge consisted of 2 fabricated steel

railbearer beams carrying longitudinal timbers to which the sleepered track was fixed. Each railbearer comprised 2 rolled steel joists with steel plates rivetted to the top and bottom flanges, the beams being connected with tie bolts. The bridge had a skew of approximately 45° and a clear skew span of 34 feet. The mass concrete abutments carrying the superstructure were in extremely poor condition and had become undermined by the flow of water in the channel. Prior to the closure of the line, an attempt had been made to stabilize the structure with a timber strut, bearing on to a fibre pile driven into the channel bank. In addition to its structural defects. Newmill Bridge was affected by the flood prevention works being undertaken by the Kent River Authority and any remedial works required their approval. In the event, it was agreed that the skew span should be increased to 40 feet and that the soffit level of the bridge raised as much as possible so that gaps in the flood banks could be eliminated. The cost of carrying out the requisite work by normal commercial methods was quite beyond the resources of the Railway, but fortunately several opportunities presented themselves which lead to considerable savings. The first of these was the assistance of Kent County Council in making available second-hand bridging. which had originally spanned the River Medway at Aylesford. The Aylesford Bridge was of the Callender Hamilton type and comprised 30 feet and 40 feet side spans and an 80 foot main span. It had been erected after the war with components assembled from various sources and owing principally to the deterioration of the timber supporting piles, it had been necessary to replace it with a new Bailey type structure. The Council very generously donated a proportion of the old bridge as a contribution to the restoration of the railway and agreed to sell the remaining components to the Company.

The second form of assistance arose from the Southern Water Authority (successors to the Kent River Authority) who were empowered to contribute to the improvement of Newmill and Hexden Bridges in order that their flood prevention schemes might be completed. It was agreed that this contribution would be most effectively provided by concentrating on the provision of labour and materials at Newmill, as this was the most critical to the extension of the line. Thus, the Southern Water Authority undertook to provide and drive steel piles to form



▲ Hexden Channel Bridge, 1974. Note earth barrier across the track for flood prevention purposes. [Tim Stephens]



The Rother Bridge, 1974. [Tim Stephens]

the abutments of the new Newmill Bridge. The existing bridge was closed to all traffic in the autumn of 1975 and demolition of the superstructure and abutments then took place, with the assistance of the Army, who used explosives to break up the northern abutment. Having cleared the site, the Southern Water Authority was able to drive the piles to form 2 coffer dams. The third form of assistance came from the Junior Leaders Regiment of the Royal Engineers who agreed to concrete the pile caps as a training exercise. The abutment design relies upon the skin friction generated on the surface of the piles together with a low bearing pressure

acting upon reinforced concrete pile caps to support the superstructure. The concreting was completed in the spring. The new bridge, which will have double sided trusses and double cross bearers, has been designed to take an axle loading of 20 tons and at the time of writing the components are being refurbished and assembled at Rolvenden, rather like a giant "meccano" set, by the Job Creation Programme employees. By the time this article appears, the superstructure should have been launched across Newmill Channel, opening the way for trains to run through to Wittersham Road next season.

This leaves 2 major structures to be tackled before trains can again run through to Northiam.

Hexden Channel Bridge, No. 2347, is of similar construction to the old Newmill Bridge, consisting of 2 railbearer beams connected with tie bolts. The bridge is square and has a clear span of 25 feet 3 inches between mass concrete abutments. The top flanges of the railbearer beams are badly corroded as are the bearing plates and bottom flanges. Furthermore, the abutments above ground are of poor quality concrete and cracking has taken place at bearing level. On either side of the bridge, the Southern Water Authority has cleaned out the channel and regraded the slopes and, as at Newmill, flood banks have been built. The Water Authority's requirements are that, whilst the existing span is satisfactory, the soffit

level of the bridge must be raised to eliminate gaps in the flood banks. It is expected that there will be sufficient components of Callender Hamilton bridging left over from Newmill to form the basis of a second superstructure for Hexden Channel. Since a 30 foot span will suffice, it is possible, unlike at Newmill, for the bridge to be a single truss structure. As at Newmill, the track will be ballasted across the superstructure, the ballast being carried by the original deck troughing sections, which span longitudinally between the cross bearers. Whilst increasing the dead load of the superstructure, this enables rail bearer timbers to be dispensed with and spreads the load more uniformly on to the cross bearers. It is planned to extend the abutments in the same way as at bridge 2330 at Rolvenden, by excavating behind the existing, constructing new ones and capping both with a reinforced concrete cill beam to distribute the load between the new and existing abutments.

The River Rother Bridge, the largest structure on the line, is a through type bridge with rivetted plate girders on each side of the track carrying rivetted plate cross girders. The sleepered track is carried on 2 railbearers, each consisting of 2 rolled steel joists. The overall length of the main girders is 72 feet 6 inches and the clear skew span is 65 feet 10 inches, the skew angle being approximately 12°. The superstructure is supported on mass concrete abutments.

Generally, the steelwork in the superstructure is in poor condition, corrosion being particularly bad on the exposed top flanges of the cross girders and on the web stiffeners of the main girders. The top flanges of the main girders are visibly distorted in plan and elevation. The exposed faces of the concrete abutments indicate that the concrete is of poor quality, with a considerable amount of honeycombing visible on the faces. Cracks are also visible in the abutments under the bearing points of the main girders. Although it would be possible to renovate the existing bridge, it may well be cheaper to replace the superstructure with a second-hand one from elsewhere. Plans for the future Rother Bridge still have to be finalised, but it is hoped that the existing abutments can be utilised following remedial works, since the present span and soffit level is acceptable to the Southern Water Authority.

Following the enormous success of our "Wine & Dine Specials" this year we have decided to run

### XMAS LUNCHEON SPECIALS

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### SUPPORT THE LOCAL LINE

### **Early Days**

Founder member, Robin Doust, reminisces on the trials and tribulations of railway preservation



Oiling the points at Tenterden Town Station, early 1960's. The author is on the extreme left.

Much has been written about the early days of the old railway company, but little has appeared about the early days of the preservation scheme for the K.&E.S.R., although much that happened in those days deserves detailed recording.

For instance, I recall with feeling my first ride on the railway after its closure, together with the co-founder of the original Preservation Society, Tony Hocking. On a scorching hot summer day only about a month after the official closure of the Line in June 1961, we were making a very unofficial inspection of the rather doubtful

collection of assets which were then all that was left of the Railway, when we came across a long disused and very rusty S.E.&C.R. pattern platelayers' trolley in a ditch at Rolvenden, and were unable to resist the temptation to go for a ride on it. We rolled along quite merrily down the slight gradient towards Wittersham Road, along track already sporting long grass, yellow in the summer sun, and shedding clouds of seed at our passage. However, coming back was another matter, and we arrived back at Rolvenden later in the afternoon pouring with sweat and footsore after a long, hard push — I'm sure Tony was

slimmer after that occasion than ever again since! That was also the day when I opened the railway telephone box at Rolvenden, and picked up the earpiece of the ancient wooden cased Ericsson telephone to examine it, to be shocked into speechlessness when a voice actually answered from Robertsbridge, demanding to know who the hell was playing with it — those were the days before the copper wire thieves got to work, and it may have been the last time the through link was ever used, since, by the time of our next visit a few days later, the line was dead.

That telephone played a further part in the early days of the Society's work on the Line, as the wire from Tenterden to Rolvenden was the first section to be replaced, and I well remember being caught in a thunderous hailstorm at Rolvenden and going to call for a lift to Tenterden. I opened the door of the box, and as I reached for the key switch, there was a tremendous crash of thunder, all the 'phone bells rang furiously, and a shower of sparks leaped from the fuse box \_ towards my fingers — it gave me quite a shock! (Sorry), and I sweated out the hailstorm under the nearby station hedge instead.

A little later in the Line's history, during one of the periodic crises which cropped up from time to time, when it looked as though we would have to complete the purchase of the property at short notice, we planned to have ready for sale as much redundant material as possible in an effort to offset as much of the purchase price as we could. In fact, the crisis passed, but while it lasted, we decided to lift about 300 yards of redundant track which was still in situ beyond the end of the headshunt on the Headcorn extension at Tenterden. Each 60 foot rail weighed over 34 ton, and we adopted the expedient of tipping one rail out of the chairs and laboriously lifting it by hand onto a permanent way trolley (our only rolling stock at the time). Each rail was pushed away in turn to be stored in the yard at Tenterden. This track was, of course, very overgrown, having been disused since 1954, and the rails were completely concealed by grass. Thus it was that an energetic group of volunteers came gaily trundling back towards Headcorn at a considerable lick, completely forgetting that during their absence unloading the previous rail, one of the pair in the next section towards Tenterden had been tipped out of the chairs by the rest of the gang. The frantic waves of warning from those on the ground observing the unchecked return of the trolley were returned by equally happy

waves from the cheerful trolley crew, whose forgetfulness was forcibly brought home when their trolley ran off the end of the track at high speed. The immediately following events appeared to those on the ground to occur in slow motion, as the violently derailed vehicle distributed a shower of human bodies in graceful trajectories in all directions down the embankment, which was quite high at that point. We waited, with bated breath, as the last member vanished from view into the thick and bristly undergrowth, and then hurried to count the injuries. Incredibly, everyone survived intact, with the exception of Alan Castle. who appeared to have landed on his head with his tongue between his teeth, and thus presented a rather gory sight which fortunately turned out to be a lot less serious than it looked. Thus we learned various elementary safety regulations in the early days, although even so, one member (who is fortunately still with us) actually managed to saw off the branch on which he was sitting during a tree cutting session not long afterwards.



"Gervase"

By and large, however, the Society's early days were characterised by a tremendous amount of hard, continuous graft, whether on the track, duplicating thousands of pages of "The Farmers' Line" or repairing the early stock arrivals. Our first locomotives were, of course, the subject of great attention, even if the reaction of the "Kent Messenger" reporter on meeting "Gervase" was, firstly, "Is that IT!", and secondly, "Is it a diesel?". Actually, "Gervase" was the first engine to run on the Line under Society control, and the scene on the occasion when she (or should it be he?) was first lit up, was a memorable one. I don't believe anyone in the then Locomotive Dept. had ever personally steamed anything larger than a

traction engine, and "Gervase's" Sentinel design, with the vertical boiler actually in the cab, was new to everyone. The boiler is designed to work at 280 lbs/sq. inch, and there must have been at least half a dozen bods on the footplate when the pressure gauge reached a magic figure. They were all so busy looking out for minor steam leaks, water levels, and injectors that they all quite forgot that "Gervase's" safety valve is actually inside the cab, and furthermore is of the "pop" type which gives no warning of impending operation. Thus it was that a tremendous bang, followed by the instant disappearance of the whole back end of the engine in a roaring mass of steam resulted in athletic feats by the footplate crew which I have never seen equalled since, as a shower of steaming bodies came flying through the air in one concerted leap of panic. I'm sure they all thought the boiler had blown up - although, to be fair, no-one would admit it, and they did get back on board once the valve had shut again. Nevertheless, it is the only time I have ever seen Derek Dunlavey involuntarily part company with his famous home made fag, and it was guite ten minutes before his hands stopped shaking sufficiently to light another!

From a personal point of view, I found this period a fascinating one, since although the job of secretary was pretty arduous, it had its satisfying moments, such as receiving from the owners of a delightful little industrial locomotive, in reply to a

carefully worded letter stressing historical importance, interest, and an almost complete lack of money, a letter donating the engine free of charge. Scrounging, in the early days, became something of a fine art, and the amount of equipment acquired in those days for almost nothing was remarkable, as were the achievements of our volunteers at that time, who, working with little more than their own enthusiasm, restored to working order several locomotives which had not steamed for years, and the previous owners of which, I'm sure, never expected to see run again. The sight of "Gervase" in steam and resplendent in smart blue livery and polished brass nameplates at the first A.G.M. on which we were allowed to operate in the environs of Tenterden will long stick in my memory - even if she did have to be ignominiously pushed back into the station by hand after running out of steam on the steep section just below the level crossing.

One day, perhaps, all these memories — many more of which come to mind as I sit penning these words in far off Bulawayo — will be made into a book. In the meatime, I hope those who remember the early days will enjoy the recollection, and those who weren't there — well, why not come along now and help run the Line. If you don't get blown up or run over (and no-one has yet), you, too, will gradually build up a collection of memories, and perhaps one day look back on them with the same satisfaction in future years.

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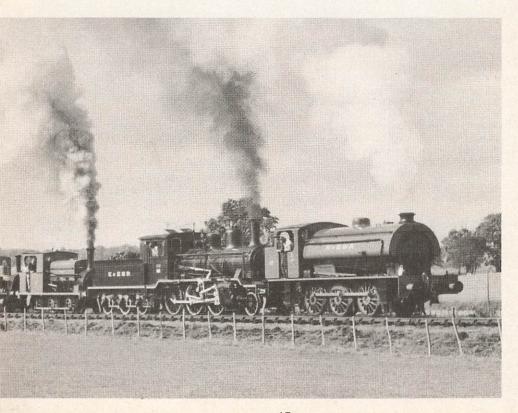
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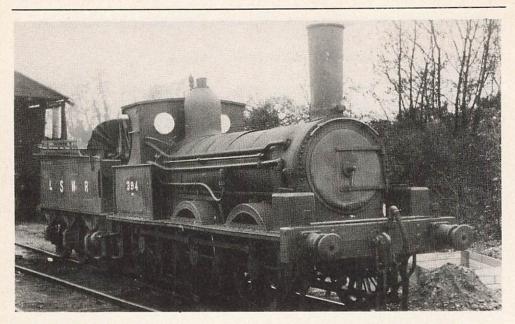


### Photographed by Brian Stephenson

At 1.30pm on 25th September, a coupled cavalcade of 9 steam locomotives, together with the "Woolwich" coach and a Southern Railway brake van, left Rolvenden for Tenterden. At Cranbrook Road, the locomotives were uncoupled and then proceeded individually up Tenterden Bank to the station. The cavalcade, which was arranged as the highlight to the centenary celebrations for "Terrier" locomotive No. 10 "Sutton" and repeated at 10.30am on the following day, when this photograph was taken, was preceded by a ceremony with civic dignatories of the London Borough of Sutton, the owners of the locomotive, in attendance. Also present were the Town Mayor of Tenterden and Stephen Bennett, Chairman of the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd. 5000 visitors came to the Railway over the weekend, by far the greatest number achieved over any 2 day period since reopening.



### Letters to the Editor



### Memories of Salford Terrace

Sir - Mr. Klapper's article on Colonel Stephens (Tenterden Terrier, Summer 1976) I found very interesting. The reference to the "Ilfracombe Goods" (presumably) I found especially intriguing and amusing as, although there is no indication of the date of the incident, it seems more than likely that it occurred around the time of my first visit to the East Kent Railway on 14th May 1927, when I did indeed refurbish the engine in the manner indicated, as shown on the enclosed photograph, I had no idea that the great man himself was around at the same time. Berhamsted, Herts. H.C. Casserley

### Liveries & Names

Sir - Unlike Mr. Lewis (Tenterden Terrier. Summer 1976) I support the standardisation of locomotive and coach liveries as I feel it gives a varied collection some uniformity, However, I agree with him that one of the smaller locomotives (whatever its internal condition) should be on display in the original blue livery. I also feel that the names of locomotives give the K.&E.S.R. a "light railway flavour" and I hope that names will soon be given to all of them. I suggest that one (for example No. 23) should be named "Wittersham" as this is the only station on the preserved section of the line that did not give its name to an engine on the old K.&E.S.R. If

it were to be so named, what better occasion for the ceremony than the reopening to Wittersham Road. Finally a plea for more information on the present condition and future prospects for engines not in service; "Charwelton" "Westminster", "Wainwright" and "No. 24". Ilford, Essex P. Woodbridge

Locomotive No. 23 will be named "Holman F. Stephens" during 1977 - Ed.

### **Bodiam Station**

Sir - Stephen Garrett in his very readable history of the K.&E.S.R., states that the track layout at Bodiam was identical to that at Northiam.

In conversation, I have been told that this was not so. The account that I have heard indicates that there was a long siding facing Tenterden and not a passing loop at Bodiam, Wagons were apparently worked in and out of the siding in the conventional way by trains going in the Northiam direction, but when trains were proceeding to Robertsbridge, wagons were attached to the engine by a length of rope and the points were changed when the engine was across, sending the wagon into the siding, I have not worked out how wagons were attached from the siding when the train was going to Robertsbridge! I would be interested to know if any reader can verify the true lavout. Rye, Sussex

John Miller

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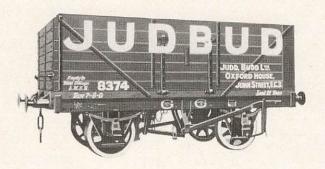
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### From Our Ticket Collection

### **Rother Valley Specials**



When the Kent & East Sussex lost its passenger service in 1954, most people thought that the line had seen its last passenger train. In fact however, quite a number of trains did carry passengers over various parts of the line which remained open to goods traffic. Until 1958, hop-pickers' Specials continued to run at least as far as Bodiam during the season, and trains of quite impressive length were to be seen with a "Terrier" at each end carrying eager crowds of Londoners for their annual jaunt to the countryside — a scene now, alas, long vanished thanks to the introduction of mechanical picking methods.

Other trains, however, were also seen from time to time, since this was the heyday of the Railway Enthusiast Special during a period which can be regarded as the swan song of the British railway scene in the period just before the death of steam and the final implementation of the Beeching axe which swept away so much that was traditional in the transport life of the country.

One of these Specials resulted in the issue of the ticket which forms the subject of this article. In 1958, the Locomotive Club of Great Britain hired a train to traverse a particularly unusual route. Beginning at Paddington, and hauled by one of the last E1 4-4-0's of the erstwhile S.E.&C.R., No. 31019, which looked strangely out of place under the vaulted cast iron magnificence of the G.W.R. terminus, the train ran via Kensington to Herne Hill, where it stalled rather ignominiously on a bank, and had to be banked from the rear by an electric multiple unit. Once on the Southern, it ran via Oxted and Tonbridge to Robertsbridge for a "Terrier" hauled return trip to Tenterden. and then on to the Bexhill West branch before returning to Victoria via Hastings and Newhaven. Appropriately enough, the train bore "The Rother Valley Limited" headboards, and this name also appeared on the specially printed commemorative tickets, which were buff coloured Edmonson cards, printed, oddly enough, by the Western Region, and bearing British Transport Commission conditions of issue on the back.

The ticket has several unique features. It is believed to be the last time the "Rother Valley" name was used on tickets by B.R., it is probably the only time the Western Region ever printed tickets for a train over the K.&E.S.R., and it must surely be the only ticket there has ever been for a train running direct from Paddington to Tenterden Town, Although the event took place some 18 years ago now, I can clearly remember some of the highlights, such as the excitement of discovering that the station clock hanging in Bodiam station was still lettered "K.E.S.R.", and of falling flat on my face while scaling the half demolished platform at Rolvenden in search of photographs while the train stopped for water! Later in the day, we suffered an unscheduled stop at the platform of a London suburban station, and great hilarity resulted from frenzied announcements by the station announcer that "This train is not for passengers" - which left us wondering what species of animal he thought we were! At the same station, there was some degree of chaos resulting from the fact that the train included Maunsell centre corridor stock of the type which is still running on the K.&E.S.R. today. These coaches had intermediate access doors, but it was possible to erect portable tables across the inside of the doors, and many of these had been put to use by enthusiasts to accommodate cameras and tape recorders. Thus it was that those foolhardy folks who alighted at our unexpected signal stop to take some bonus pictures, were taken by surprise when the train restarted unexpectedly. and tried to leap on board through the nearest door, only to find the doorway blocked by a heavily laden table. I suspect that quite a few passengers ended their trip a little early as a result.

The whole trip was one which served to whet my appetite for travel on the K.&E.S.R. and did much to set the scene for the later foundation of the Preservation Society when British Railways finally abandoned the Railway in 1961, so this particular ticket holds a rather special place in my collection, although it is, of course, an interesting specimen in its own right.

Robin Doust

### A Railway on a Budget

Humphrey Brandram-Jones relates his experiences as a young civil engineer employed on the construction of the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway



The construction of Hele Bridge. Colonel Stephens is on the right, immediately in front of the lorry. The lorry is an F.W.D., of War Department origin, probably purchased by Stephens from the War Disposals Board at the Slough sales after the Great War. Sunbeam motorcycle and sidecar in the foreground.

[W.H. Austen collection]

In 1923, I graduated from the Crystal Palace School of Engineering and began to look for a job where I could put to some advantage my newly acquired knowledge. I had emerged with the somewhat doubtful privilege of "student of the year", as jobs for young engineers were hard to come by at that time and the standard of mathematics taught by the college was not as high as that demanded by some employers.

I was therefore delighted when a Colonel Stephens applied to the college for someone to act as an "improver" on a light railway scheme with which he was involved in North Devon and I was the recommended candidate. The severely practical curriculum of the college, with grounding in many aspects of engineering, was the ideal training for Stephens' requirements and following a brief interview at the R.A.C. club in London, I was offered the job, which I accepted.

Stephens insisted that I should start work immediately and I was told to report to the

headquarters of the Resident Engineer, Captain J.H.T. Griffiths, at 9 Bridge Street, Hatherleigh, taking with me a bed and a bicycle. I arrived on or about 23rd December amidst appalling, snowy weather, to find that Griffiths and his 2 junior engineers had just departed for the festive season, leaving me alone in the house, which was unfurnished and did not have even a semblance of mod cons, such as mains water or electricity. It was the most dismal Christmas that I can ever remember.

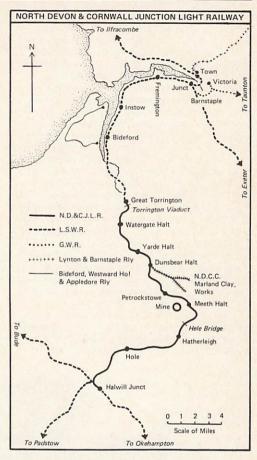
The North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway was planned as a standard gauge line, running in a roughly North, South direction, from Great Torrington to Halwill Junction, a distance of some 20 miles. Although promoted as an independent concern, it was always intended that the railway would be worked by the London & South Western Company. The northern portion, some 5½ miles in length, followed the route of a 3 foot gauge china clay railway and, in fact, replaced

it. The southern end was a completely new railway. The scheme was conceived partly to alleviate a chronic unemployment problem in the area and many of the labourers on the job were managers of commercial companies, chartered accountants and professional people of all types. As an "improver", my duties were to set out the centre lines and limits of earthworks, design and make drawings for small engineering structures such as cattle creeps and culverts and to measure up for the monthly certificates of payment to the contractor.

Captain Griffiths was an erudite and dedicated engineer, with a strong leaning towards the astronomical side of the work. He had been a lecturer in geodetic surveying at the University of Achimota in Ghana and I remember that on all drawings calling for "north points" we had to make proper astronomical observations with the help of a nautical almanac. By the time that I left the job, I was fully competent to make these fixes and have often wished since, when working in various parts of Africa, where ordnance maps are few and far between, that I had kept up the knowledge that I had acquired at that time.

Colonel Stephens visited the line several times whilst I was there. He usually arrived by road at our Hatherleigh offices in a chauffeur-driven lorry, which possessed a spare set of flanged wheels which could be readily attached to the vehicle.\* By this means, he managed to visit all parts of the line where steel had been laid, in a very short time. Much of the Railway was quite remote from even the most primitive lanes and the alternative was to walk or ride the route, which was continuously submerged in a sea of mud.

The line was constructed on "shoestring" finance and considerable use was made of local materials. For example, sleepers were cut from oak trees, bought standing and milled on site with portable. steam-driven sawbenches, although I do remember being sent to Newport to approve and stamp some 5000 creosoted fir sleepers that had been imported from the Baltic. Boundary fence posts were of larch, also obtained locally and I recall 2 instances which show how tightly money, in particular payments to the contractor, were controlled. Part of my work was to inspect fence posts to see that they complied with the specification agreed with the contractor, which was 10 inches circumference at the top and 12 inches at ground level. I naturally assumed that this should be done when they were delivered on site and did so, until Colonel Stephens, on one of his periodic inspections, said that the posts should be inspected only after they had been driven into the ground and threaded with wire through the drilled holes. At this stage, the



contractor was told that he might leave in (and fofeit payment) or replace any which did not hold up to the specification. Naturally, he chose the former course and in this way many serviceable posts were never paid for, until the timber contractor realised what was happening. A similar practice was applied in the case of sleepers.

Another of my responsibilities was the supervision of the steelwork for the construction of a viaduct over the River Torridge at the northern end of the line, to replace a flimsy, wooden viaduct which had carried the china clay railway. One of the piers of the new viaduct was undermined by winter flooding in 1924 and instead of demolishing and starting again, which should have been done, it was righted by winching and then underpinned to an annular foundation ring blasted out of the granite forming the river bed. This was not the only

mishap experienced during the construction of the viaduct: some of the steelwork was bent whilst being unloaded from wagons at Halwill and rather than replacing what must have been a seriously weakened structure, an army of local blacksmiths was recruited to drill out the rivets and then straighten and reassemble it. The girders were transported from Halwill to Torrington by road. using a hired traction engine and many of the bends in the narrow lanes had to be specially excavated to get them round. Even so, a great deal of damage was caused to the highway and I have often wondered why the girders were not delivered direct to the Torrington railhead, it would certainly have avoided many of our problems. Apart from myself, 2 other improvers were employed on the line. Transport from headquarters to the place where we happened to be working was quite a problem as it often involved distances of 12 miles or more. We had the use of a large horse to take us round the site, but it was a real penance to ride the beast, particularly after a long day's measuring up. A trap would have been a boon and it was therefore with some relief that we heard one was to be auctioned at the George Inn. Hatherleigh, and that the maximum sum the auctioneer anticipated it reaching was a modest £5. My colleague, Stanley Bunnell, duly wrote to Colonel Stephens at Tonbridge, requesting

authority to bid for it. Stephens cannot have been devoid of a sense of humour, even if he was indifferent to our discomfort, for in a day or two he replied:

My Dear Bunnell,

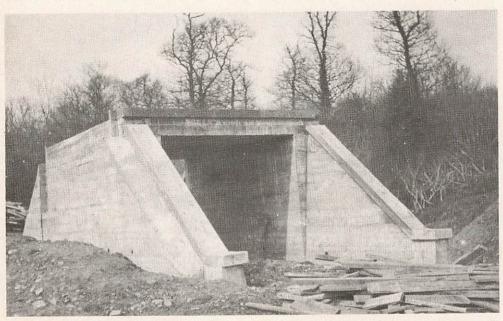
Transport facilities

With reference to your request, I regret the purchase of a trap is quite out of the question, as would be that of a sedan chair.

Yours faithfully

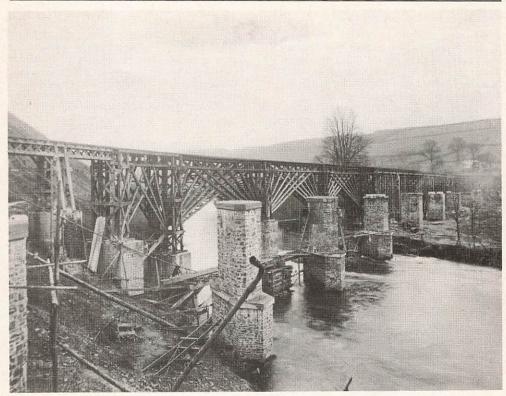
Captain Griffiths enjoyed the use of the only other form of transport provided, a 680 c.c. J.A.P. engined Sunbeam motor cycle and sidecar and occasionally during one of Griffiths' "Lost weekends", Bunnell and I used to borrow this, after first casting off the sidecar, for a trip to London where I remember each of us had a powerful attraction.

The conditions under which those engaged on the line worked, would be considered intolerable today. Many of the labourers slept out, under roughly constructed shelters in quarries near to where they were working, due to the difficult road access and there was undoubtedly a great deal of suffering. One particularly unpleasant task alloted



Cattle creep under construction.

[W.H. Austen collection]



The new Torrington Viaduct under construction. Note the old, wooden china clay railway viaduct in the background.

[W.H. Austen collection]

to me was the fixing up of a "pulsometer" steam pump — just a hollow casting with 2 compartments and valves about 2 feet 6 inches long — to drain a quarry a few hundred yards from Halwill Junction to recover a body. The contractor's pay clerk had drowned himself when he found that he was some £100 short in his "float" and was unable to account for the discrepancy. At the inquest, it turned out that the missing sum was simply due to the practice of "subbing" a proportion of each man's weekly wages, something the head accounting office did not recognise and did not take into account when notifying the pay clerk of the cash that he should have had in hand.

I left Stephens' employment early in 1925, several months before the completion of the line, which was, I believe, on schedule. By then the London & South Western Railway had been merged into the Southern Railway and the latter concern automatically assumed responsibility for working

the North Devon & Cornwall Junction line. Looking back on those days, now over half a century ago, many of the unorthodox methods and practices that we adopted in order to make the project a reality within the constraints of a severely limited financial budget, would be entirely unacceptable today. Nevertheless, this small railway served the needs of the local community well for nearly 40 years, until in 1965 it became just another "unremunerative branch line", ripe for deletion from the Western Region of British Rail.

<sup>\*</sup>It is not known if this is the lorry featured in the Hele Bridge photo — Ed.

### From the Railway Archives

### Trouble at Boston Lodge, 1926

Colonel Stephens was appointed Civil Engineer and Locomotive Superintendant to the ailing Festiniog and Welsh Highland railways in 1923, becoming Chairman and Managing Director in 1925. Thereafter, the management of the 2 railways was supervised from Tonbridge, with Stephens or his assistant, W.H. Austen, paying periodical visits to North Wales. The letter,

reproduced below, was written by Stephens to Austen whilst the latter was at Portmadoc and illustrates the degree of cynicism with which the Colonel viewed the staff and methods of these famous narrow gauge railways, as he surveyed the scene from the comfort of his hotel rooms in Dover, on a stormy day in June 1926.



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### Dear W.H.A.,

I think you have done very well. I'm sorry re weather. The people on the F.R. are quite different to our people, as you have found out by now. I found it out long ago. They can't help it, it's their nature. We have got to put up with it whilst we have the job.

Re trucks — what strikes me is the sudden drop. They could not have finished all the "slightly damaged" in one certain week!! Tell them to pick a few light repairs to bring the numbers up. There is some game on probably, a scheme, between them to stop shortening hands as work draws to a close. Re weeds and grass. Can you get this mown to rail level and after it is dry, or partly so, set fire to.

The crossing where the engine came off at Dinas probably has loose V bolts, a lot of them have. Griffiths does not seem to look after them and have them screwed up. Can you look at this and get it done. I want all the old signal quadrants (the things used in place of levers) collected and sent to Boston Lodge for scrap, also broken chairs.

I have told Williams\* to put all the shirkers in Boston Lodge on 4 days a week short time starting Monday = 32 hours a week each. The wages bill must be reduced

Yours faithfully

H. Stephens

P.S. Bad weather here, a big gale yesterday.

Alan G.W. Garraway, the present General Manager of the Festiniog Railway, writes, from Portmadoc — "Having lived and worked up here now for over 20 years, I can well understand the Colonel's problems in trying to administer and operate this railway, run by Welsh people, from 300 miles

away. The Welsh, not unlike the Manx and the Scots, and, I think, country people in many other remoter parts, do have a greater resistance towards change and interference by outside people. We always refer to it as the Cymric|attitude!"

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### The Kent & East Sussex in Wartime

Colonel Kenneth Cantlie C.Eng. F.I.Mech.E. F.P.Way I. in conversation with Mark Yonge



Kenneth Cantlie, 18 December 1944.

Kenneth Cantlie, who was in charge of defence on certain strategic railway locations during the last war, including those on the Kent & East Sussex, recalls some of his experiences of those days.

- M.Y. Prior to the outbreak of war in 1939, what was your main railway background?
- K.C. I had some experience on various South American railways but my main task was as technical adviser to the Ministry of Railways in China between 1929 and 1937.
- M.Y. I believe you designed locomotives for the Chinese railways. As far as you know, are these still in existence today?
- K.C. In 1927 I designed a 4-8-4 express passenger locomotive and 50 of these were built by the Vulcan Foundry. When I visited China 3 years ago over half of these were still in active use.
- M.Y. When were you based in South East England and what were your responsibilities?
- K.C. I took over the task in 1940 and was responsible for coastal defence from several railways which were of secondary importance to the main lines. These were the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch, The East Kent Railway, the Elham Valley line and the Kent & East Sussex Railway. I was, in

- addition, chief liaison officer to the Southern Railway. I was based at the First Transportation Headquarters, Great Chart.
- M.Y. Why were these lines chosen?
- K.C. Originally they were not and guns were placed at specific locations near the coast but these were considered to be too near and not very manoeverable. The one at Hythe, for example, was based on the main line and not very practical because of the existing heavy traffic to and from the South Coast. Brigadier Mally, in charge of all aspects of defence, insisted upon its removal to Rolvenden as soon as the secondary lines had been chosen as being more suitable.
- M.Y. Were these lines sufficient?
- In general, yes. The idea was to operate on K.C. lines that were, in general, inland but which followed parallel to the coast as much as possible. There was one vulnerable spot in our armour between Dungeness and Rye and I very nearly arranged for an extension to the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway between Dungeness and Rve. This would have meant singling the section of double track between New Romney and Dungeness and using the lifted track to complete the course of the line. The building of this new line would have utilised the old track bed of the Rve & Camber Tramway on the final approach to Rye.
- M.Y. Were any problems experienced in the organisation of the occupation of the Kent & East Sussex?
- K.C. There were no problems except weight restrictions and to overcome these, we moved our materials in from the Headcorn end. The General Manager, Mr. Austen, was very helpful and advised us of the weaknesses of several bridges. Unfortunately his advice was frequently ignored and heavy trains passed over these bridges from the Robertsbridge direction and I received several irate letters from their Tonbridge office.
- M.Y. Can you tell me something about the guns that were used?
- K.C. There were two 9.2 super heavy batteries based at Rolvenden and Wittersham and a 12 inch Howitzer based at Robertsbridge. The Robertsbridge gun did not remain there long and was soon moved to Glynde where it was painted white and based in a chalk pit.

We had several problems to overcome with the remaining guns and while we were calibrating the one at Rolvenden and testing it, it was fired and in the process lifted the roof off the locomotive shed and completely demolished a platelayers' hut nearby. When we came to trying the guns out on the line the first problem we encountered was a total derailment every time a shell was exploded. We then devised a system where a pit was dug beside the battery and weights, with cables to the vehicle, buried in it to render stability. Fortunately the gun remained rail mounted but this system took many hours to complete and it was clear that we would have to devise a more rapid one. Ultimately we overcame the problem by jacking the battery clear of the rails and shoring the sides of the armour with heavy timbers and we were able to be prepared in 20 minutes.



9.2 Howitzer rail-mounted gun, believed to be located between Northiam and Bodiam.

- M.Y. Could you comment on our photograph of a rail-mounted gun, as we are not completely certain of its origin?
- K.C. I am almost certain that this is a K.&E.S.R. photograph. The gun is definitely a 9.2 Howitzer and the wheels have been jacked clear of the track. In addition chains can be seen suspended from the bodywork which were normally clamped to the railhead. The track is in

poor condition but probably the best clue to its location is the typical metal sleepers which are clearly visible in the photograph. Furthermore I arranged for the stock to be fitted with a French Westinghouse Air Brake ready for work in France should the need arise and this is just visible at the end of the unit. I guess the location to be somewhere between Northiam and Bodiam.

- M.Y. Could you tell me something about the locomotives?
- K.C. Originally I tried to commandeer all the powerful diesel engines in existence but at that time there were only about six and so I had to use steam. On the K.&E.S.R. these were 0-6-0 Dean Goods and I fitted two of these with G.W.R. Pannier Tanks to improve condensing. This was done to reduce as much as possible the problem of steam being released into the air and being subsequently spotted by enemy aircraft. We could have used G.W.R. Pannier Tanks alone but as it was necessary to steam the locomotives almost all the time, these would have had insufficient coal capacity.
- M.Y. How did you find the relationship between the troops and the regular staff?
- K.C. This was not a problem for two reasons. Firstly, the threat of invasion produced a national comradeship of which the railway was no exception. Secondly, many of the soldiers had received railway training and their skills were respected by the regularly employed staff.
- M.Y. How confident were you about repelling the invasion had it happened?
- K.C. Initially, with the tedious gun fixing and the unco-ordinated exercises I was not too happy, but after detailed training, rapid battery emplacement and contingency plans I was confident that we could have given strong resistance to enemy attack.
- M.Y. Did your responsibilities continue until the end of the war?
- K.C. No. In 1942 I was recalled to the War Office.
- M.Y. We hope you will visit us again soon, in rather different circumstances!
- K.C. I did see you in the early days of your preservation movement but much seems to have taken place since then and I should be very pleased to pay you another visit.

Colonel Cantlie now lives in South London. Photographs of the locomotives he designed for use in China can be seen in the National Railway Museum, York.

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