

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 12

Spring 1977



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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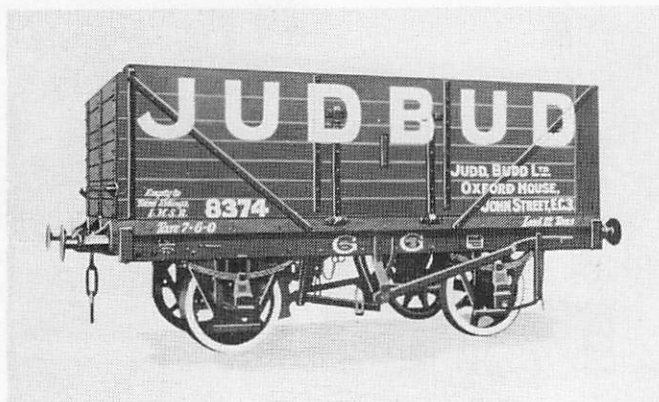
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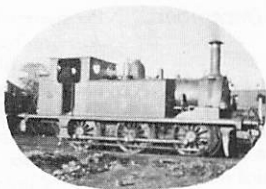
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The Tenterden Terrier



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The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

FRONT COVER

WAITING IN THE SUNSHINE

*Class A1X 32670 (ex-K.&E.S.R. No. 3 "Bodiam") and ex-L.&S.W.R. corridor brake third coach pauses at Tenterden Town station before proceeding to Robertsbridge on 27th September 1952.
[Photo F.W. Goudie]*

Editorial

'WAITING IN THE SUNSHINE'

Our front cover photograph exemplifies the Kent & East Sussex Railway as it was in the immediate post war period; an Indian Summer when one-coach trains paused for passengers who never came. It was the end of an era and within 15 months of this picture being taken, the line had closed. What, then, is it that motivates enthusiasts, 25 years later, who choose to operate it for no financial reward? A nostalgia for its history, founder and one time rustic charm, perhaps? Or is it the satisfaction of pursuing a hobby with a real objective and achieving skills in the varied tasks that are necessary to keep the trains running? Some may appreciate the opportunity to give enjoyment to the thousands of passengers who now travel each year, just for the ride; whilst a few (perhaps more than a few) might admit, if pressed, that they, like all good Englishmen, just enjoy "playing trains" on a grand scale. Are there any other suggestions?

The cumulative index of contents included with this issue, will appear every 4 years. The Editor would like to thank John Miller for the painstaking work involved in extracting and listing the many hundreds of references.

Operating Notes

Compiled by Mark Yonge

These notes were current at 31st December 1976 or later

Locomotives

Christmas passenger trains were operated by No. 19 (Norwegian) and No. 10 (Sutton) whilst No. 26 (R.S.&H.) was kept in service until the end of the season to operate the heavy works trains necessary in connection with the Newmill bridge installation. Work has started on the preparation of all service locomotives for their annual boiler inspections and will take up much of the departmental time during the winter months. The rebuilding of No. 16 (B.T.H. diesel) has been started by Adrian Landi, the control equipment has been removed and rewiring is in progress. In addition, a start has been made on replacing steel work on one of the driving cabs, which has seriously corroded. No. 12 (Marcia) is now back in service following the completion of firebox repairs. Nos 14 (Charwelton) and 15 (Hastings) have been sold, at valuation, by the Kent & East Sussex Locomotive Trust to member, Richard Edmondson, who has undertaken to restore them to working order at his own expense within a period of 5 years and to enter into an agreement with the Tenterden Railway Company to keep them on the line for many years. Services in 1977 will be operated with the following locomotives: Nos 3 (Bodiam), 10 (Sutton), 17 (Arthur), 19 (Norwegian), 23 (Austerity), 24 (Austerity), 26 (R.S.&H.) and the Railcar.

Michael Hart

Carriage and Wagon

During October the roofs of B.S.O. No. 54 and C.K. No. 56 were fitted with new canvas. Prior to this all roof air vents and rain strips were removed and the old canvas stripped off. Repainting of B.S.O. No. 54 has been held up by the wet weather, but it is hoped to have the coach completed in time for the commencement of services in March. Apart from painting there is also a small amount of work to be completed on the vacuum brake and steam heat systems. Birdcage No. 61 will be re-roofed during January, thereby enabling work on the interior to continue uninterrupted by leaks. Work will also continue on the interior of C.K. No. 56 during the winter months. A start has been made on renovating the 7 station seats at Tenterden and so far 2 have been completed. Finally, we are anxious to obtain a number of carriage prints for display in the compartments of the birdcage coaches and anyone who can help is invited to contact me at Tenterden.

Paul Ramsden

Permanent Way

Job Creation Programme. Now that the relaying of the main line from Newmill Bridge to Wittersham has been completed, J.C.P. work is being concentrated on the construction of Wittersham Road station. This includes the installation of a run round loop and sidings and involves laying 4 sets of points and erecting a platform. Although services will run through to Wittersham in March, it is unlikely that passenger facilities will be available there until the official opening in June. As mentioned elsewhere in this journal, the installation of the Newmill Bridge spans was completed on 1st December. Remaining work on the bridge includes the fixing of cross members on which steel troughing will be laid to take ballast for laying the track and completion of the approach embankment on the Wittersham side. The approach on the Rolvenden side was completed in June.

Maintenance. Work completed in recent weeks includes spot re-sleeping and the changing of point sleepers. Ballasting work has started at Tenterden using second-hand (Washed) B.R. ballast. A source of hardcore or clay fill is urgently needed to build up the level of the yard at Wittersham Road for a proposed permanent way depot.

Anthony Devitt, Brian Muston

Clearance

The Group has now completed clearance work from the home signal to Tenterden station. The work took 8 Sundays and on one day attracted a record 19 volunteers. Cut trees are being treated with brushwood killer to prevent the stumps sprouting. Visibility from Tenterden has now been dramatically improved and the sight of trains climbing the bank from afar off is a very attractive feature for the visitors to the line. During January and February, clearance of rotting willows took place on the Rolvenden side of Newmill Channel and in a few areas between Newmill and Wittersham Road. Plans are in hand to clear Wittersham Bank commencing in March and this will probably occupy the gang for the whole of the summer months. Weed killing of the line will take place during the week commencing 23rd May.

John Miller

Building

Following the receipt of detailed planning permission, the Department has co-operated with the Tunbridge Wells group in the construction of Wittersham Road station building. 1977's biggest task will be the construction of the new platform

in time for the Jubilee re-opening of the station to passengers in June. Due to the non-availability of any spoil on the site, the platform will be a suspended structure of pre-cast concrete planks (probably inverted concrete sleepers) supported on two longitudinal concrete block walls and surfaced with asphalt. A new vehicular access and car park will also be provided, together with the necessary fencing. At Tenterden, the wall between the booking hall and Line Manager's office has been demolished, to provide a greatly increased sales area in time for the new season.

Clifford Mason

Signals & Telecommunications

The first task to be undertaken before passenger trains can be run to Wittersham Road is the installation of a ground frame at the "up" end of the station. This will be locked by the train staff, thus ensuring that the route is properly set and bolted for the passage of trains. A handpoint will be provided at the Northiam end for run-round movements. The groundframe and handpoint will be replaced when the signalling is commissioned. A suitable signal box from Deal Junction, between Kearsney and Dover Priory stations, has been purchased for use at Wittersham Road and appears to be in excellent condition, although it has stood empty for a number of years. The signalling to be installed will provide for the passing of trains and will allow access to the planned permanent way sidings, even if the cabin is switched out. Subject to their suitability, lower quadrant running signals from the C.I.E. may be used. As soon as the signalling at Wittersham is completed, it will be possible to abolish the "One engine in steam" principle on this section and change to electric token working between Tenterden and Wittersham, Rolvenden being worked as an intermediate siding. This will have great advantages when 2 successive trains require to run through the section in the same direction.

Nicholas Patching.

Commercial

As indicated elsewhere in this journal, the Railway has had its most successful season so far, with 39,741 passengers (79,482 passenger journeys) carried, representing a 17 per cent increase over 1975.

This year, the timetable has been revised and departures will generally be on the hour instead of the half hour. An additional morning train will operate on summer Wednesdays and the period of daily running is being increased from one to two weeks — 1 to 14 August.

Although B.R. are discontinuing their through

"Awayday" tickets to us and our neighbours, we are continuing to participate in the BTA's "Ticket to Ride" scheme and the Transport Trust's "Travel Back" project. A new venture is our participation in the "Go Places" promotion organised by McVitie Cakes. Our name will appear on 15 million packs of Cadbury's Chocolate House cakes, with a special feature panel appearing on ½ million of them! The promotion will have advertising support on local commercial radio as well as in-store displays in local towns. With the extension of the line to Wittersham Road, we hope that many of our former visitors will return and we look forward to welcoming many new passengers, especially parties.

To overcome congestion, the Bookshop at Tenterden is being enlarged and a wider range of goods will be on sale.

I would like to welcome Tony Hocking, co-founder of the original preservation scheme, as Sales Department Manager and hope that members will continue to support the shop and give practical assistance in staffing it — this is vital if our ambitious target for sales is to be achieved.

Donald Wilson

General Acknowledgements

Alan Newble has retired as Sales Department Manager and out thanks go to him for all the hard work he has done in the last 10 years. Our thanks also to Pat Whitehouse for providing a copy of some early cine film of the line and to Gerland Ltd., the international floorcovering manufacturers, for providing rubber tiles for the signal box floor.

News From Affiliated Groups

Maidstone Extension. The window display featured the "Santa Specials" in Maidstone during December. There was no film show in December, but an interesting and varied programme has been arranged for 1977 and all are welcome to attend the Group's meetings at the Methodist Youth Centre, Brewer Street, Maidstone, on the last Thursday in each month. Preparations are well under way for the Model Railway Exhibition which will be held at the same address on 26th March 1977 from 10.00am. This was a huge success last year and all those interested in railways are strongly recommended to attend.

Jack Fox

Surrey. 1976 was a record year for the Surrey Group and a total of £1,000 was raised for the Railway. This target was achieved with the help of both members and non-members of the Company and our thanks is extended to all who helped to

put on exhibition and rally stands throughout the past year, including those who gave up their time to serve behind the sales counter. 12th March 1977 sees our annual Model Railway Exhibition at the Holy Trinity Halls, Guildford. As usual, there will be layouts and trade stands which will be of interest to every enthusiast. The exhibition opens at 9.30am and closes at 6.00pm. Bookings for the 1977 season so far confirmed are: Chelmsford (4th & 5th March), Brighton (18th, 19th & 20th March), Greenwich (19th & 20th March), Grayshott, Nr. Hindhead (23rd April).

Richard Halton

Tunbridge Wells (T.W.A.G.). Neil Rose opened the current season of members meetings in September with a talk on the Hastings line, illustrated with numerous diagrams and scarce photographs. In October there was an evening of members' slides and the December meeting, held jointly with the Tunbridge Wells Model Railway Club, included a general railway quiz, followed by a photographic competition. The main event during November was the Group's model railway exhibition at Tunbridge Wells, which realised a total profit of £204. Layouts were provided by the Tunbridge Wells Model Railway Club, the East Sussex Gauge O

Group, Marshall Vine and the Tunbridge Wells Model Shop. Refreshments were provided by Erica Williamson and Mrs. Strongitharm and films by John Liddell. The Group also held a sponsored walk in December in aid of funds, along the trackbed of the Groombridge to Forest Row line. The course, a distance of 14 miles, was completed by all but one of the walkers.

Robert Searle

Kent & East Sussex Locomotive Trust. At the Annual General Meeting of the Trust in November, members voted to sell locomotives "Hastings" and "Charwelton" to member, Richard Edmondson, at valuation, who has undertaken to restore them to working order within 5 years, at his own expense. It had become increasingly apparent that neither the Trust nor The Tenterden Railway Company would ever be able to justify allocating existing resources to carry out the very expensive repairs necessary to put these locomotives in working order and in this way Trust members will have the satisfaction of seeing them restored to working order in the not too distant future. In addition, the Trust will be able to extinguish its existing debts.

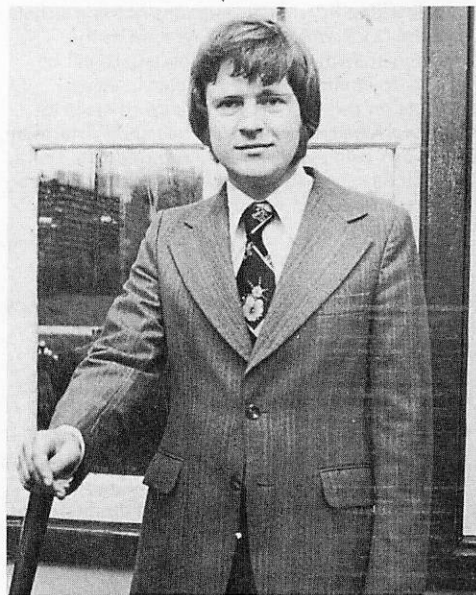
Boris Perkins

Michael Hart

At the end of December, Michael Hart relinquished the posts of Mechanical Department Manager and Job Creation Project Manager, to take up full-time employment with the Peterborough Corporation as General Manager of the Nene Valley Railway. Mike Hart came to the Kent & East Sussex in 1967 and quickly demonstrated his abilities on the mechanical side. He was appointed Mechanical Department Manager in 1971 and when the Tenterden Railway Company qualified for a grant under the Job Creation Programme in 1976, he joined the Railway full-time as Project Manager. It is under his supervision that the extension of the line to Wittersham Road, including the rebuilding of Newmill bridge, has been successfully carried out whilst at the same time ensuring that the locomotive fleet has been maintained in running order. Whilst we are sad to lose such an able and dedicated colleague, we wish

him well in his challenging new job at Peterborough.

P.D.S.



Passenger Statistics - 1976

The number of passengers carried on the Railway in 1976 showed an overall increase of 17 per cent over the previous year and there was only one more operating day. This is a highly satisfactory result in view of the torrid temperatures that undoubtedly adversely affected numbers over some weekends during high summer. Summer Wednesdays were exceptionally popular and the number of passengers coming on those days was up by 52 per cent. The monthly passenger totals are shown in the table below and indicate a reasonable level of business achieved in every month, with the exception of November, which once again proved

to be very poor. 61 per cent of passengers were classified as adults compared to 63 per cent in 1975. This seems to be a rather high ratio of adults to children in view of the large number of school parties accommodated during the year and it would be interesting to know if other preserved railways are operating on approximately the same ratio. "Santa Specials" showed a 7 per cent increase on 1975, but the number of "Awaydays" remained disappointingly low. However, the biggest growth area in 1976 was "Wine & Dine Specials", where the number of diners increased by no less than 310 per cent.

	1975				1976			
	Adult	Child	Total	Operating Days	Adult	Child	Total	Operating Days
March	1,881	881	2,762	10	693	281	974	4
April	1,340	745	2,085	8	3,119	1,710	4,829	9
May	3,423	1,592	5,015	12	2,998	1,518	4,516	11
June	2,639	2,167	4,806	13	2,227	3,349	5,576	14
July	2,733	2,177	4,910	13	2,755	2,131	4,886	13
August	4,882	2,537	7,419	16	5,832	3,039	8,871	19
September	1,521	609	2,130	8	2,913	1,379	4,292	9
October	807	485	1,292	8	1,213	465	1,678	9
November	372	151	523	5	120	41	161	4
December	117	52	169	5	248	89	337	7
	19,715	11,396	31,111		22,118	14,002	36,120	
Santa Specials			2,424				2,584	
Awaydays			324				217	
"Wine & Dine			200				820	
			34,059	98			39,741	99

When visiting the Railway, come and see:—

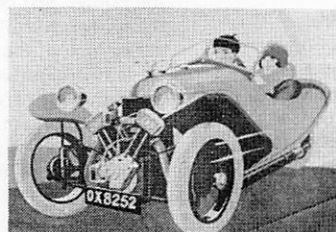
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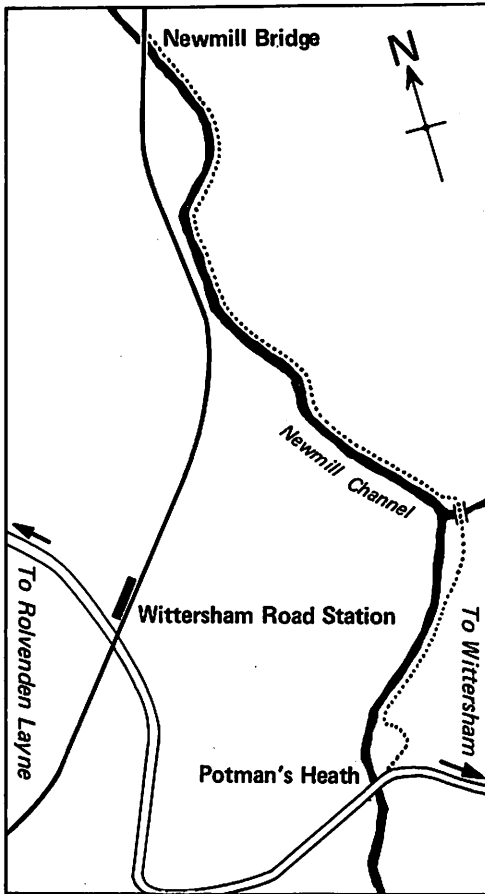


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The Big Lift

The Newmill Channel is once again bridged and by the time this article is published, trains should be running over it. However, as Project Director, Simon Green explains, even the best laid plans can go astray . . .

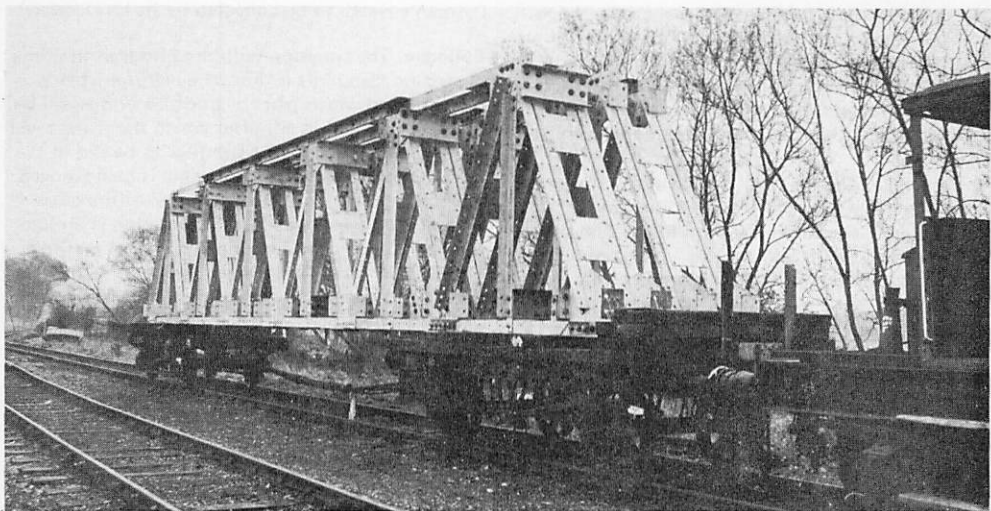


Prologue. The newly formed J.C.P. Bridge Engineering Gang led by Engineering Foreman David Jones (now Project Manager) and Chargehand Glyn Davies (now Deputy Manager & Engineering Foreman) took delivery of the components of the Newmill Bridge in August. The next two months saw the construction, use and dismantling of a drilling, cutting and welding assembly line for doubling up the cross girders and an overhead gantry for assembling the main trusses. By the end of November, the complete trusses were assembled and loaded on to our ex-Anglo-American Asphalt wagons (coincidentally based for the majority of their lives

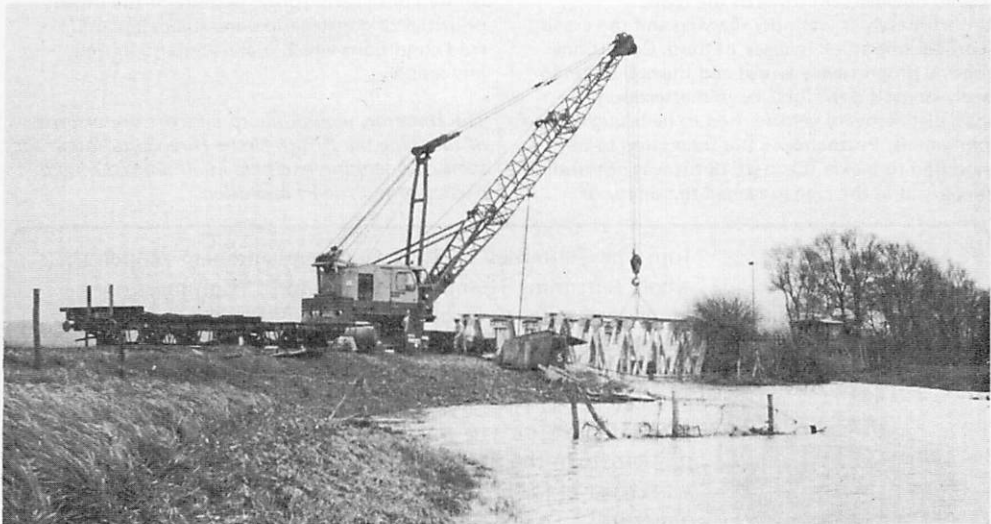
at Aylesford, just half a mile from the original site of the bridge superstructure) ready for delivery to the site. Meanwhile, Mike Hart, Project Manager until the end of 1976, had negotiated a very fair rental agreement with the British Crane Hire Corporation for the use of a 40 ton Andes C41B crawler crane, capable of lifting the trusses, each of which weighed over ten tons. By Saturday 27 November, all was ready and the weather perfect; the water level in the Newmill Channel was at its lowest level for months.

Day 1; Sunday 28 November. The morning dawned slightly grey with a light drizzle as the low loader carrying the crane negotiated the outer suburbs of London. From time to time phone calls came in to Tenterden Station from the police authorities along the route of the exceptional load. All seemed well as the crane arrived 30 minutes early, although the drizzle had now turned to a steady rain. The first snag encountered was that the crane was found to be 13' 10" wide and as it had to negotiate 1½ miles of river bank with 14' wide gates in places in order to reach the site, our bridge gang had to remove several gate posts.

Day 2; Monday 29 November. This was to be the big day; it was planned to have the bridge in place in the early afternoon and a special train composed of locomotive No. 19 and one coach departed from Rolvenden at 10.50 am, carrying Southern Television, the Press, engineers from Balfour Beatty and the British Crane Hire Corporation and our Project Adviser from the Manpower Services Commission, to see the "big lift". However, spirits were dampened not only by the heavy rain that had by now set in, but also warnings of 85 mile per hour winds and the threat of structural damage to the bridge. Just before 11 am the train arrived at the bridge, with the wind gusting to force 8, but as yet no sign of the crane. Shortly after noon the crane finally arrived at the foot of the ramp leading up to the northern bridge abutment, having struggled along the river bank in increasingly muddy conditions. As it was clear that further delay was inevitable, it was decided to return the Press to Rolvenden for lunch, with a planned return at 1.45 pm. By this time the wind had dropped, but the rain was torrential and the crane was completely bogged down despite a sleeper roadway and advice to the driver from about 50 "experts". The TV crews took up position on the south bank to film the crane climbing the ramp,



The Bridge at Rolvenden, awaiting transportation to the Newmill site [Photo: Donald Wilson]



The upstream truss is lowered on to the abutments

[Photo: Author]

which it attempted to do 4 times, all unsuccessfully. By this time the main concern was to get the crane above flood level and at 3 pm, with its Rolls Royce engine just above water, it was decided to abandon attempts for the day.

Day 3; Tuesday 30 November. Even more rain had fallen overnight and when light dawned, it was found that the crane was standing in 2 feet of

water and that there were prospects of the river banks overflowing or breaking if the level should rise another foot. Despite a heavy day's work, no real progress was made and rather disconsolate team returned home to ponder the wisdom of Colonel Stephens in placing bridges in the middle of marshes, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from anywhere — not to mention the 45° skew angle and problems with geological faults.

Day 4; Wednesday 1 December. A sharp overnight frost had hardened the ground. Winches were hired to steady the crane and by noon it had reached its first operating position. With 3 hours of intensive work, both trusses were craned into position, despite the fact that the actual abutments were still submerged.

As the track along the river bank was still under several feet of water, the crane had to remain another night. Southern TV showed the film shot on Monday in their "Day by Day" programme and kindly emphasised the positive aspects of the day's work.

Day 5; Thursday 2 December. As the crane was still trapped by floods, the opportunity was taken to use it for various small jobs, in particular to adjust the location of the trusses on the abutments.

Day 6; Friday 3 December. The water level had dropped and another hard frost had hardened the river bank sufficiently to persuade British Crane Hire Corporation to commence the removal of the crane. The crane left the site early in the day and moved downstream towards the road.

Unfortunately it was now thawing and the crane soon became stuck in a sea of mud. Conditions became progressively worse and the crane was so badly bogged down that by mid-afternoon specialist recovery vehicles had to be brought in to extricate it. Furthermore the tracks had to be modified to tackle the mud, but it was not until 8 January that the crane reached the safety of

Potman's Heath to be collected by its low loader.

Epilogue. The situation with the bridge at the time of writing (January) is that base plates are being fabricated to which pairs of bridge bearings will be fitted (8 bearings in all) after which the trusses will be jacked up to allow the bearings to be slid in place. Our own rail mounted crane is being moved to the site to help in the installation of the cross girders. However, its radius of operation is limited causing the use of rather unconventional methods. The first 20 feet of bridge will be fitted with cross girders. A sleeper crib will be built on these girders and a 20 foot track panel placed in position temporarily. The crane will move forward on to the bridge by 20 feet and install the next series of girders and after a final move forward will put cross girders on to the last 20 feet. Next it will position the troughing (in which the ballast lies) on the last section. It will move back 20 feet, the track panel and crib will be removed, troughing installed and so on. Finally ballast will be laid and permanent track installed. The bridge will not be painted until early spring because of the urgent priorities of construction and the damp and/or cold conditions which make winter painting impossible.

The Directors would like to take the opportunity of thanking the British Crane Hire Corporation for their co-operation and help at all times during this particularly difficult operation.



*Holman F. Stephens
Engineer and Managing Director
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The subscription for 1977 is £3 (£1.50 if you are under 18) reduced by one half if you join after 1st July.

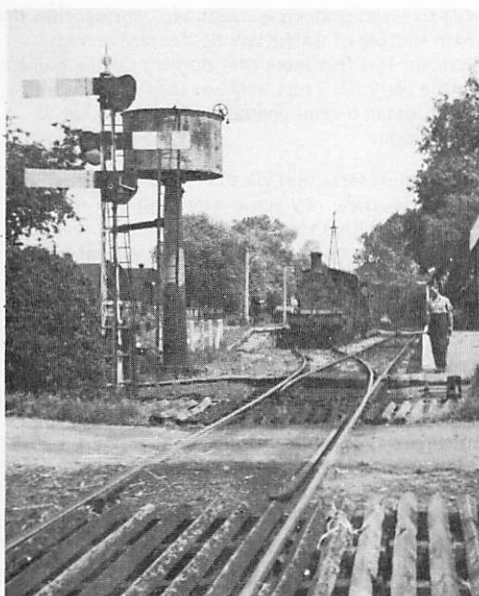
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A Relic from the Potteries



The water column in situ at Shrewsbury Abbey Station



Water column at Tenterden Town Station, 1953

[Photo: J.J. Davis]

The Tenterden Railway Company has recently had the opportunity to purchase the water column that stood, until 1963, on the platform of Shrewsbury Abbey station of the erstwhile Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. The cost, including transport, is estimated at £400 and responsibility for financing the project has been undertaken by the Maidstone Area Group (Maidstone Extension) of the Company.

Little is known of the history of the column, except that it is believed to have been installed by Colonel Stephens at the time of the reconstruction of the line in 1911. A similar column was erected at Kinnerley Junction on the same line and it also closely resembles the one that used to be situated near to the end of the loop platform at Tenterden Town station. The design does not seem to resemble that of any columns seen on the major pre-grouping companies and it seems likely that Colonel Stephens purchased a 'job lot' cheaply from a manufacturer or dealer for use on his lines.

If the appeal is successful and the column comes to the Kent & East Sussex it will probably be erected for use at either Northiam or Bodiam and thus continue the Stephens' tradition of moving equipment around from one line to another.

P.D.S.

Bodiam by 1980?

Company Chairman, Stephen Bennett, outlines possible developments on the Railway over the next 3 years

During the last weeks of 1976, the replacement Newmill bridge was put into position by our Job Creation Programme personnel. Since then, the bridge has been made fit to take rail traffic and the work completed on the track between the bridge and Wittersham Road. At Wittersham Road, a loop has been laid to enable locomotives to run round at this latest temporary terminus for passenger services. If all goes to plan, the new station platform and building at Wittersham Road will be completed by the end of May, in time for the official re-opening of the station during the Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday Weekend in early June.

We have the assistance of the Job Creation Programme personnel until at least the end of September this year. The future of this nationwide scheme is uncertain after this date, but we intend to take full advantage of it for the 7 months that it is definitely available to use. The grant from the J.C.P. now allows us to employ up to 40 people whereas until earlier this year the number has been around 20.

Our general shortage of capital to purchase materials means that we are to some extent dependent on the portion of the J.C.P. grant designated for this purpose, although fortunately, we have an abundance of labour intensive work on the section of the Railway between Wittersham Road and Northiam. Over the many years of the Railway's disuse, the vegetation has encroached towards the track and become so dense in many places so as to completely obscure the view of the countryside from the train. A thorough clearance operation, which will take about 4 months to complete, is now in progress. In parallel with the clearance, work on the track has also begun westwards from Wittersham Road. The section of track between Wittersham Road and Hexden Bridge is being re-laid to operational standards and includes the replacement of the wooden sleepers, partially with the concrete pots that were acquired last year from British Rail. The trackbed between Hexden Bridge and Northiam, naked since the track was lifted during late 1976, will be re-furbished prior to re-laying. These various trackworks will be completed at approximately the end of May. After this, the permanent way effort will be concentrated on re-laying between Hexden Bridge and Northiam, using the pre-fabricated 75lb track panels that we exchanged for the old rail. These panels arrived over a period

of several months during 1976 and have since been stored in stacks at Tenterden and Bodiam. A tracklaying vehicle, made up from spare parts already in our possession, is being constructed for this purpose.

We hope that the Hexden bridge will be completed during 1977, using the remaining parts of the Callender-Hamilton bridge provided by the Kent County Council last year. The Rother bridge is to be the subject of a feasibility study and it may not be necessary to completely replace the structure. Pending completion of work on these bridges, it may be possible to extend passenger services from Wittersham to an intermediate point between there and Northiam, in 1978.

No plans have been made yet for the restoration of the section between Northiam and Bodiam. If the J.C.P. ceases this September, we will probably see a slowing down in the pace of restoration beyond Northiam. Fortunately, there are no major engineering works between Northiam and Bodiam and this means that the task of restoring the track with voluntary labour will not be too onerous. In the circumstances it is just possible that we may be able to reach Bodiam in 1980. We consider that the main sources of traffic will be Tenterden and Bodiam. It is fortunate that Bodiam Castle, owned by the National Trust, receives tens of thousands of visitors in a year, giving us a ready market to build upon.

The level of fares that we shall need to charge for the full journey may act as a deterrent to some passengers with a result that the majority will only travel over part of the line, joining trains at either Tenterden or Bodiam. As a result the Wittersham Road to Northiam section will be relatively "dead ground", but just how much, will become more evident as the line is extended. We shall have to weigh up the economics and practicalities of running one train formation over the whole line against running two trains, each working for the most part at one end of the line. The extension of the Railway to Wittersham and beyond will exacerbate our shortage of rolling stock and it will be necessary to acquire further coaches to make up an additional set.

The next three years will be very important ones in the development of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, but "Bodiam by 1980" is not an impossible target for us all to set out to achieve.

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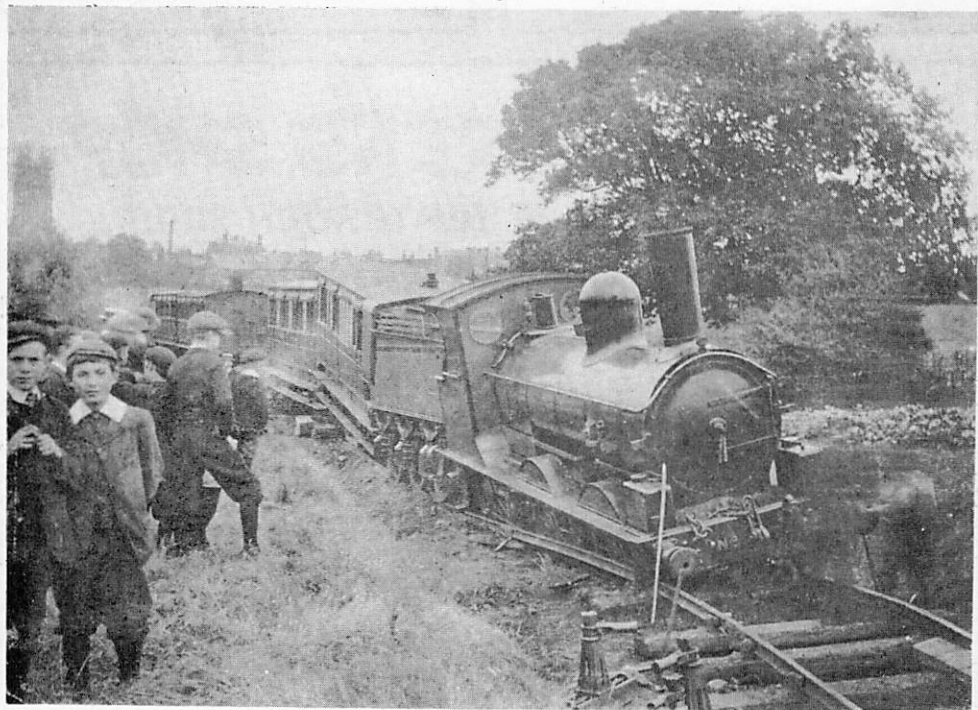
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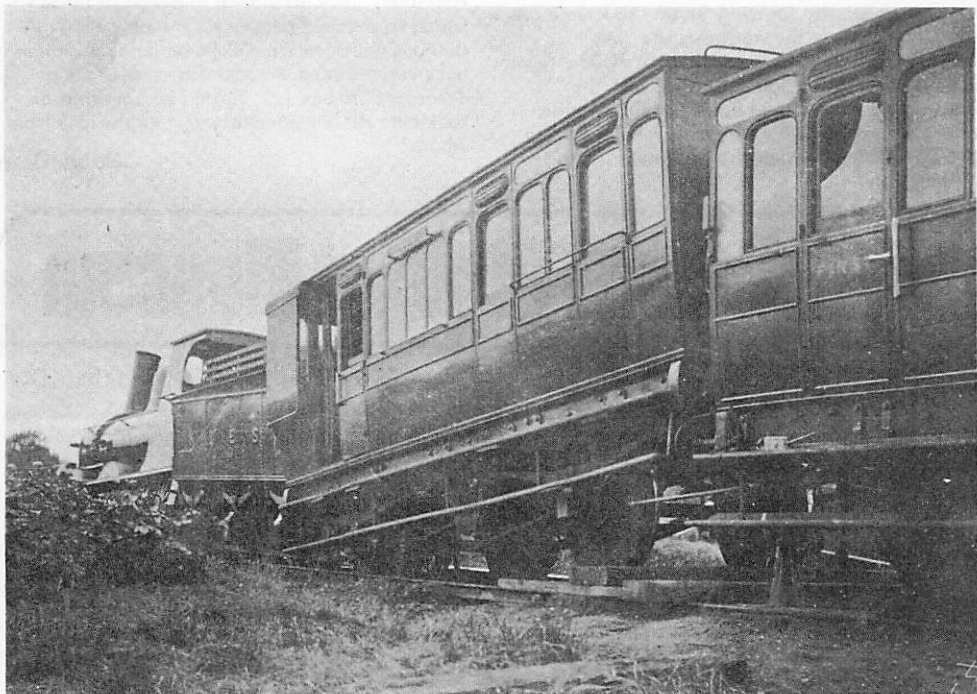
OFF THE RAILS

Archive photographs from the W.H. Austen collection



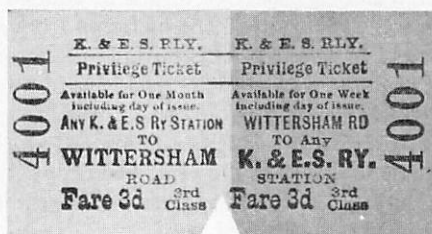
Derailments on the Kent & East Sussex seem to have been almost commonplace in the early days of the old Company and several stories of unhappy events have been recalled in the pages of this journal. Undoubtedly the most spectacular was witnessed at "The wreck of the Hesperus" in February 1916, when locomotive No. 8 and carriages overturned in flooded track at Padgham Curve and Colonel Stephens was conveyed to the scene by pump trolley. However, around the same time, No. 7 "Rother" and its train of ex-G.E.R. four-wheelers came off the rails whilst proceeding down Tenterden Bank, an event which apparently caused much interest amongst the local schoolboy populace. As can be seen from the photographs, the rails seem to have completely parted under the weight of the train, probably indicating the sudden appearance of an undetected earth slip. The date of the accident has not been recorded, although the fact that the tower of St Mildred's church, in the background is in scaffolding, may provide a clue and the style of dress of the observers indicates around 1914. The blurred figures of 2 railway employees who came to the rescue can just be detected on the right of the left hand photograph and it seems likely that "Rother" and the carriages suffered little damage and were rerailed with the use of the jacks in the foreground.

As for the passengers, if there were any, they must be assumed to have escaped with no more than minor injuries and caused little embarrassment to the management, for the Company's records are silent on this unfortunate episode in the Railway's history.



From Our Ticket Collection

A Railwayman's privilege



The railwayman's job is not one generally renowned for the value of its "perks", but one concession which has been enjoyed from time immemorial is that of travelling free or at a reduced rate on the Company's services. Kent & East Sussex employees were no exception to the rule and the subject of my ticket article this time is a privilege ticket which permitted the holder, in exchange for his hard earned 3d piece, to travel from Wittersham Road to any other station and back again. Such tickets would have been exclusively for railway employees and in order to avoid the necessity for every station to keep a full stock of tickets at the staff rate, the "any K.&E.S.R. station" device was adopted. The ticket is a standard Edmonson card type, with the outward portion printed in bright blue and the return in plain white. An unusual feature for the K.&E.S.R. is that the printer is Williamson of

Ashton-Under-Lyne and I find myself speculating as to why the Company should have arranged for the printing to be done by an outside firm, when it had a fully equipped printing works at Rolvenden. Perhaps the resident printer, Jimmy Norton, was ill at the time, or possibly the ticket was produced during the period after the premises were damaged by explosives during the Second World War. Indeed, the damage was such that much of the type was shaken into the foundations through the floorboards and can still be dug up today by the energetic enthusiast. In any event, it is quite unusual to find card tickets for internal journeys on the K.&E.S.R. printed anywhere than at the Railway's own printing works. Another interesting feature on the back of the ticket is the archaic spelling of the word "shewn", which was curiously sometimes adopted by railway companies on their tickets and also appeared on enamel plates at S.E.&C.R. stations, which stated that "season tickets must be shewn".

Although privilege tickets are still issued by British Rail today, they are similar in design to those issued to ordinary passengers and bear a specific destination. However, tickets remarkably similar to our own specimen, are still issued by London Transport "to any L.T. station within limits on back hereof" — I wonder who stole the idea from whom?

Robin Doust

Tenterden & District Museum

The townscape of Tenterden is explained with photographs and maps, and the story of the town as a limb of the Cinque Ports and former Borough is illustrated with historic items and domestic and agricultural bygonees given or lent by the Corporation and local people.

COLONEL STEPHENS RAILWAY MUSEUM

A separate exhibition of material relating to the light railways of the late Lieut-Colonel H.F. Stephens, arranged by the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd.

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Letters to the Editor

Sidings at Bodiam

Sir — Mr. Miller's letter (Tenterden Terrier, Winter 1976) seems to confirm that the long siding at Bodiam has always been there within living memory. A former employee has told me that during the latter years of B.R. the empties were worked to Northiam to allow running round. Possibly the old Company adopted this measure in former years.

Bexhill-On-Sea, Sussex

P.N. Carey

Rye & Camber Tramway

Sir — In your interesting interview with Percy Sheppard of the Rye & Camber Tram (Tenterden Terrier, Summer 1976) you mention my father, "Jokey" Rhodes. You may care to know that his correct forenames were Albert Edward and when not called by his nickname he was always spoken of as Albert.

I also think that Mr. Sheppard gives the wrong impression when he says that working on the Tram was "very leisurely". Certainly during the period before the First World War my father had to work hard and long hours. He began work at 6.30 am by riding over the whole line, including the extension to Camber Sands, to check that the track was in good order. He also took his turn on the late trams on Saturdays and ALWAYS worked one weekend in two — and without extra pay!

Rye, East Sussex

Blanche Rhodes

Memories of Salford Terrace

Sir — Mr. Casserley's letter (Tenterden Terrier, Winter 1976) has solved one East Kent Railway mystery and I wonder whether any member could explain an East Kent sight that has always puzzled me. One Sunday in July 1949 I was in Dover and the sight of E.K.R. No. 2 shunting down by the harbour still in East Kent "livery", for want of a better term for a grimy black, encouraged me to set off by bus for Shepherdswell. No sooner had I reached the road crossing near Shepherdswell station, than I heard the sound of an approaching train. From the direction of the station appeared 01 0-6-0 1379 running tender first and pushing a standard four-wheel baggage van and a corridor carriage. The train disappeared into Golgotha tunnel and for some minutes after, I could hear it whistling as it made its way up the line. I still wonder quite what a passenger train of any sort was doing on the East Kent on a Sunday afternoon in 1949.

Stotfold, Herts

J.G. Sharland

A New Arrival

Sir — With regard to the L.C.&D.R. coach body at Tenterden, I have unearthed some further details. It was built in April 1889 as a second brake, No. 49 and then transferred to third brake, No. 105 in 1894 (each class, 1st, 2nd and 3rd, was numbered in an individual series). The coach had Westinghouse brakes and electric lighting was fitted in 1904. It received its S.E.C.R. number 3059 in February 1901. At some date it was altered from long-buffered to close-coupled. Finally, I think it was withdrawn after 1918 and not in the 1908-1914 period, but have no precise knowledge.

Lingfield, Surrey

David Gould

Sir — I was most interested to see the body of the ex-L.C.&D.R. coach at Tenterden, it is clearly a relic of considerable historical interest. It still retains the original guard's duckets; these were removed from surviving coaches by the Southern Railway and replaced by steel sheeting, to reduce the overall width from 9 feet to 8 feet. This can be seen on the 6-wheeled brake third on the Bluebell Railway, which was built in 1894 and lasted, since 1935 as Mess and Tool van 873S, until 1961, thus becoming the last Chatham coach on British Railways. The only other preserved L.C.&D.R. coach I know of is the 4-wheeled, first, number 9 of 1880, which was sold to the Royal Arsenal Railway, Woolwich, in 1915 and is now at Quainton Road, where it has been restored to its original teak livery.

Sidcup, Kent

T.G. Burnham

A Railway on a Budget

Sir — I was very interested in the article on the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway (Tenterden Terrier, Winter 1976). May I add the following details which may be of interest. The closure in 1965 was in fact only complete for the Southern portion; the Northern portion reverted to its function as a china clay line and this function now supports the whole line from Barnstaple. The china clay goes to the Midlands or Cornwall for export to the U.S.A. and consists of one or two trains a day. Hence, one of Colonel Stephens' light railways is even today fulfilling a very useful function in the railway and economic life of the Country.

Cavesham, Berks

Stephen Wise

From Headcorn to Maidstone

Part 1: Nineteenth Century Schemes (1856-1900)

This article continues a series on proposed railways which, if built, would have considerably extended the network of the Kent & East Sussex Railway. The Maidstone Extension, or more properly the Headcorn & Maidstone Junction Light Railway, of 1904/6 is the best known. Yet this was the last of several schemes extending over a period of some sixty years to give Maidstone a further railway outlet to the south. Part 1 describes the intricacies of the nineteenth century plans, whilst Colonel Stephens' railway of 1904 will be the subject of Part 2, to follow.

Maidstone, the county town of Kent, had been connected to the railway network in 1844 with the opening of the South Eastern Railway's (SER) branch from Paddock Wood. The S.E.R.'s North Kent Line was extended southward from Strood to make an end-on connection with the Paddock Wood branch in 1856. Headcorn station on the S.E.R.'s main-line to Dover had been opened in 1842. Even with these lines the railway route from Maidstone to the Channel, particularly the ports of Dover and Folkestone, was circuitous and a basic reason for promoting a second route south, besides serving local interests, was to improve this link. It should be remembered that the London, Chatham & Dover Railway's (L.C.D.R.) line to Ashford was not opened until 1884 and then only freight was forwarded to the S.E.R., passengers having to walk between the stations of the rival companies. Even after the closure of the L.C.D.R.'s Ashford station in 1899 this was always regarded as a secondary line.

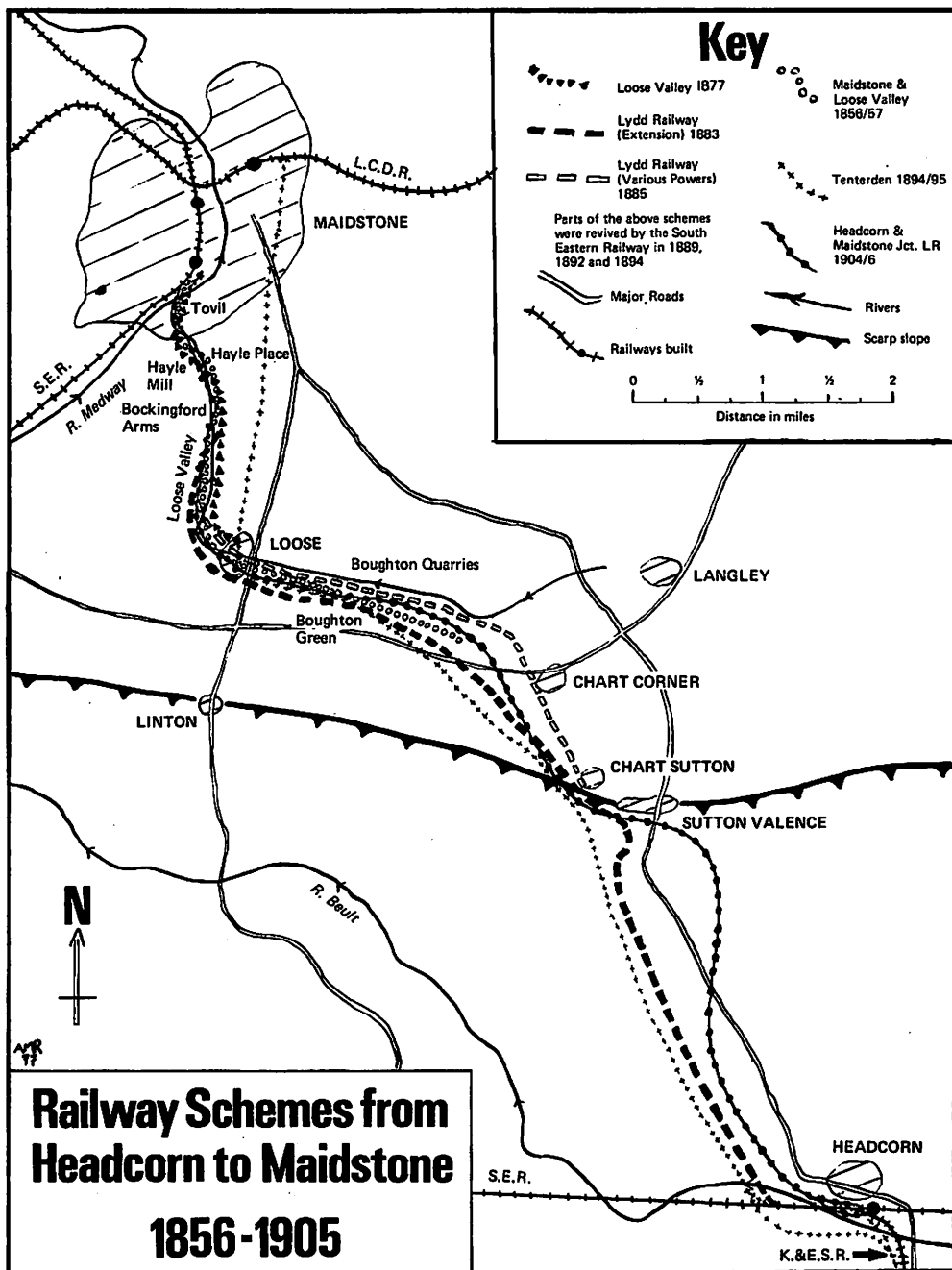
The country south of Maidstone is not conducive to railway construction. The land rises gradually to the Greensand Ridge where the scarp slope drops steeply to the clay vale of the Weald wherein Headcorn is situated, some nine miles south-east of Maidstone. The villages of Chart Sutton and Sutton Valence are found on the scarp. The S.E.R. had already taken the one gap in the ridge where the River Medway has cut through. The key to the ridge, and figuring in most of the proposed schemes, is the Loose Valley. This steep-sided, narrow and picturesque valley runs south from the Medway at Tovil 1½ miles to the village of Loose, there swinging east for a further mile to Boughton Quarries. During the nineteenth century the valley was a centre of paper making and corn grinding. Hayle Mill, founded in 1805 and still in existence today making high quality, hand-made, paper, figures largely in this history.

The earliest plan, and of which least is known, was the Maidstone and Loose Valley Railway promoted in 1856/57. This was purely a local line to serve the mills between Tovil and Loose; at the time there were six paper and four corn mills operating. Starting from the S.E.R.'s Paddock Wood branch near Tovil it was to follow the valley to Loose village, through Boughton Green before terminating in the middle of nowhere near Chart Corner (TQ788508); the ruling gradient of 1-in-70 ran continuously for three of the four miles. Not surprisingly, this scheme never got off the ground.

In 1876 plans for a railway through the valley were revived and hereafter the schemes become increasingly complex to follow. The 1876 plan was for a railway as far as Loose village itself; it was somewhat more successful than its predecessor for in August 1877 an Act of Parliament was passed incorporating the Loose Valley Railway Company (L.V.R.) and authorising the construction of a railway 2 miles 5 furlongs long. The line was to commence with a separate terminus station between the Medway and the S.E.R.'s Maidstone station, and to terminate in a field beside the Chequers Inn, Loose. The ruling gradient of 1-in-54 prevailed almost throughout its entire length. A spur connected onto S.E.R. rails with running powers to the S.E.R. station. The L.V.R. had a capital of £36,000 and four years in which to complete the works.

In 1880 the L.V.R. applied to Parliament to extend the compulsory purchase period for property by a further year but this was still insufficient. Two years later the undertaking passed to the S.E.R. which, in its 1882 Act, revived the L.V.R. powers and obtained a further extension of time to purchase land and construct the line.

The scene shifts southwards. In 1881 the Lydd Railway Company was incorporated to build a line, ten miles in length, from Appledore to Lydd and Dungeness where there were plans for a major seaport. Although vast amounts of shingle were dug out — much being used by the S.E.R. for ballasting — no port was built, only extensive gravel pits which are being worked, and still provide rail traffic, to this day. Construction of the line progressed rapidly over the easy terrain and it opened in December 1881. The following year the Lydd Railway Extension Act 1882 sanctioned further works: a branch to New Romney (built), a pier at Dungeness (not built) and a line from



Appledore through Tenterden and Biddenden to Headcorn. In a further Extension Act of 1883 the Lydd Company was authorised to extend northwards from Headcorn to the Bockingford Arms Inn in the Loose Valley, midway between Loose and Tovil; the remainder of the route to Tovil had been authorised by the S.E.R. (L.V.R.) Act, 1882. The Company saw assured future prosperity in a through line from North Kent and Maidstone to the proposed Channel port.

Further capital borrowings of £120,000, with loans of £40,000, were required to construct this Headcorn-Loose railway. The proposed route commenced by a junction with the S.E.R. main-line about one mile east of Headcorn station and headed north-west, level and reasonably straight, as far as Sutton Valence. At the foot of the scarp the line curved sharply westward and struck diagonally up the slope through Chart Sutton and Chart Hill at a gradient of 1-in-50. With a summit near Brishing Court the line passed to the north of Boughton Green, and at a similar gradient of 1-in-50 dropped down to the south of Loose, behind Ivy Mill to join the authorised route of the L.V.R. at Bockingford Arms.

The route, or more probably the steep gradients, was considered unsatisfactory. By the Lydd Railway (Various Powers) Act 1885 part of the line authorised two years earlier was abandoned and a new route substituted. The revised line commenced in the Loose Valley to the north of the village, followed the valley through Boughton Quarries, and, keeping north of the previous alignment, passed Chart Corner before rejoining the original line at Chart Sutton. A feature of this deviation was a tunnel of 1,353 yards under the ridge, thereby reducing the ruling gradient to 1-in-80. A further tunnel of 157 yards was proposed near Wood Lawn, Loose. Extra capital borrowing of £100,000 was required, a large part being to meet the additional costs of the tunnels. To add to the complexities of the story, the powers of the L.V.R. were transferred from the S.E.R. to the Lydd Company to enable the latter to construct the route throughout from Maidstone to Dungeness. The S.E.R. was to work the railway.

Despite their powers, which were obtained with little opposition from local inhabitants — only the Filmer Estates between Sutton Valence and Headcorn required special clauses in the Act — the Lydd Company did not proceed with the extensions. Doubtless this was largely due to the expense of tunnelling. Meanwhile, the S.E.R. was pressed to construct the portion of line across the Medway to Tovil in order to accommodate the

extensive goods traffic from the mills about. The goods station, at the foot of Old Farleigh Hill, was opened in 1886/87.

The clock unwinds to 1888 when the S.E.R. renewed interest in the line between Tovil and Headcorn; with the opening of the L.C.D.R. to Ashford it saw a need to improve its network south-eastwards to the Channel ports. The Lydd Company was not in a position to construct a line; if one was to be built then it was up to the S.E.R. The S.E.R. sought to renew the powers of the 1883 and 1885 Acts, by now expired, for the section between Bockingford Arms and Headcorn. However, because the goods station at Tovil had been built in the centre-line of the original L.V.R. route, a new course had to be found to avoid it. Thus, the S.E.R. sought Parliamentary powers for a "Deviation Railway from the north side of Tovil siding to Bockingford Arms" — a total distance of some five furlongs. It was confronted with two opponents to its Bill, the "Guardians of the Poor of the Maidstone Union" (the highways authority) and Herbert Green, owner of Hayle Mill.

The archives of Barcham Green & Company Ltd., Hayle Mill, still contain papers relating to this opposition and provide a valuable insight into the manoeuvring that went on. Herbert Green owned Hayle Mill (paper), Upper and Lower Crisbrook Mills, (corn), millponds and workmen's cottages in the neck of the Loose Valley, a short distance from Tovil. He was particularly concerned over road access to his properties which was already troublesome with steep gradients at Straw Mill Hill, Cave Hill and the quaintly named Tea Saucer Hill. His complaint was that the proposed line would cross the road either side of Hayle Mill, as well as crossing and possibly blocking two millponds. The road crossing between Upper Crisbrook and Hayle Mill was to be by level crossing, while that to the south of Hayle Mill was by road bridge over the railway. In order to raise the road sixteen feet to clear the rails at this latter point the highway was to be embanked on either side; unfortunately this would take the road surface four feet above the Mill's goods entrance, thus completely blocking it. Not least, Herbert Green was concerned that blacks and smoke from the engines would spoil the paper.

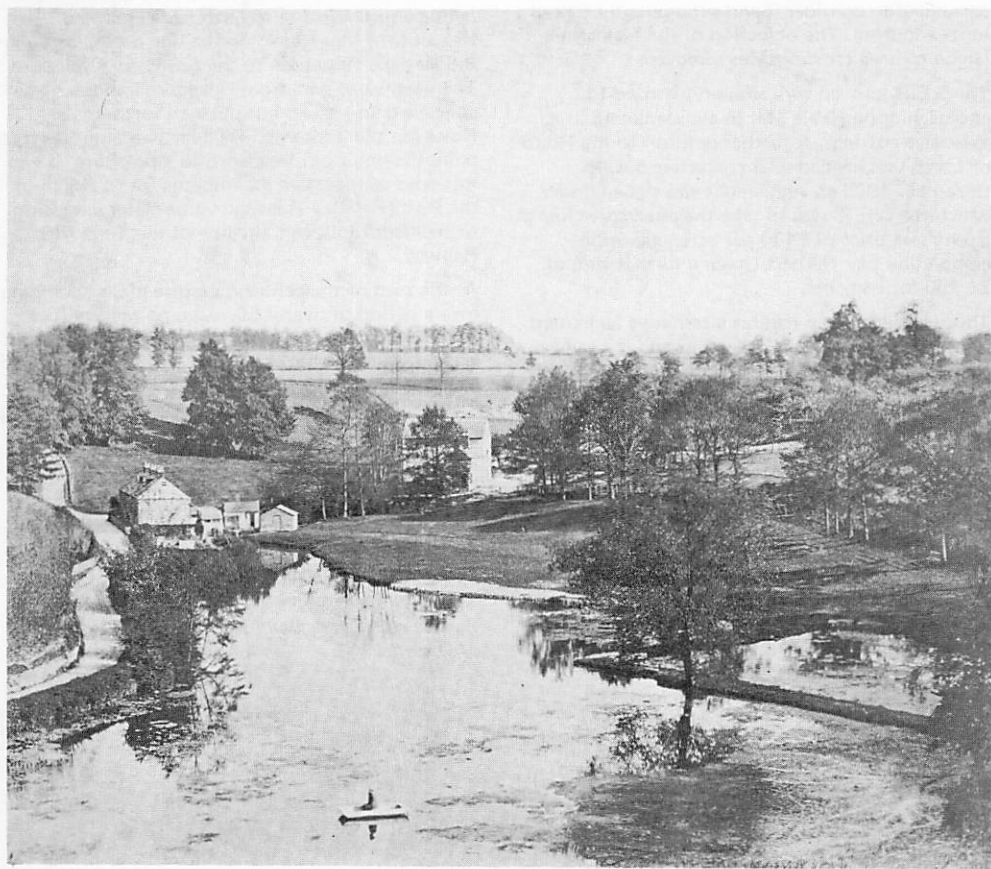
Herbert Green called on a Civil Engineer, William Clark, to report on the effects of the scheme. Clark reported that there was little doubt that the line would be approved but he also suggested several alternative alignments that would less hinder his client's property. The most important of these was a new route along the west side of the valley from Straw Mill Hill to Bockingford Arms, avoiding the

millponds and road altogether. An advantage was that the required land was owned almost entirely by one owner, Mr. Marsham of Hayle Place, who was amenable to the idea; Herbert Green was affected as some of his property would still be needed.

An alignment was properly surveyed and submitted to the S.E.R. This in itself was an extremely unusual occurrence for it was rare for a petitioner to submit an alternative proposal. The plan was put forward on the grounds that it would pass wholly through agricultural land without interfering with any public road in the valley; it would avoid heavy claims for compensation from Mr. Green and nearby residential property; it would avoid a level

crossing and interfering with the public road and that the S.E.R. would save building a skew footbridge, level crossing lodge and signals. The costs of both lines would be very much the same, as would the gradients.

The S.E.R. did not wish to change its Bill at this late stage and expressed no interest. Meanwhile, the Board of Trade objected to the level crossing by Upper Crisbrook Mill and to meet this the S.E.R. substituted a bridge, first carrying the railway over, then under, the road when it was realised the former would put the road twelve feet below water level. Thinking that the level crossing was Herbert Green's sole objection, the S.E.R. asked him to withdraw his petition but this he



Loose Valley looking south from Hayle Mill, 1889. Tea Saucer Hill on left beyond cottages. The S.E.R.'s 1889 railway would have crossed millpond in foreground; Herbert Green's route kept to the right.
[Photo: Barcham Green & Co. Ltd.]

refused and the case was heard before a Committee of the House of Commons in May 1889.

Herbert Green's counsel pressed ahead with their opposition to the increasingly switchback nature of the road and the damage to his property. The S.E.R. argued that the scheme was similar to the L.V.R. proposals and that no opposition had been made earlier. A letter from Herbert Green's father, John Barcham Green 1, was produced in which he had written in 1882 that he had been "completely unable to ascertain whether there were to be level crossings in the valley; they would be most objectionable". The S.E.R.'s Engineer, Francis Brady, handled his case badly when the alternative alignment was introduced, the Committee Chairman listened sympathetically. The S.E.R. was persuaded to consider it and subsequently agreed to its adoption. The objection of the Maidstone Union to level crossings was removed.

The S.E.R. proved very slippery. It tried to encroach upon Hayle Mill to avoid making extensive cuttings. A further petition to the House of Lords was needed to sort matters out. In December 1889 an Agreement was signed under which the S.E.R. was to take the alternative line at a purchase price of £170 per acre, and upon completion pay Herbert Green a further sum of £1,250 for damages.

Thus Herbert Green had his alternative alignment written into an Act of Parliament and if a railway came to the Loose Valley he would not be greatly inconvenienced. By the same Act, the Lydd Railway's powers obtained in 1883 and 1885 were revived and transferred to the S.E.R., and that part of the L.V.R. not already constructed abandoned. The S.E.R. now had powers to complete a Maidstone to Headcorn railway throughout, within a three-year time limit.

Three years later, in 1892, the S.E.R. was back to seek a further extension of time, for construction had not yet started. Herbert Green once again prepared to fight. The S.E.R. was convinced the line would soon be started; so sure was the company that it accepted a clause in its Bill, suggested by Herbert Green's Parliamentary Agents, to the effect that the extension of time would apply to all property over the proposed route except that belonging to Herbert Green. This property had to be the subject of a purchase agreement within the time limit set by the 1889 Act, which expired on August 12, 1892.

The Act was duly passed but still no purchase of Herbert Green's property took place within the specified period; so the powers lapsed. The S.E.R.

— then at a low financial ebb — was probably discouraged by the cost of tunnelling on a line that was not really necessary. Herbert Green must have celebrated the "Glorious Twelfth", now that no railway could be built over his land. It had been an expensive victory for him; he received no compensation and his legal costs for the 1889 scheme alone amounted to £870.

The S.E.R. obtained a further revival of powers in 1894, avoiding Herbert Green's land. These lapsed again and were not further renewed. It is probable that the 1894 extension of time would not have been sought had it not been for a rival scheme. This was the Tenterden Railway which proposed building a line from near the L.C.D.R.'s Maidstone station, following the higher land to Loose, there taking a similar route to Sutton Valence and Headcorn. From Headcorn the line passed through Biddenden, Tenterden to the S.E.R. at Appledore. The northward part from Headcorn appears hastily conceived and it was not pursued further. However, the Tenterden Railway was authorised to build the line from Headcorn to Appledore. It was this scheme that gave the impetus for the birth of the Rother Valley Railway, whose later extension to Headcorn followed the line of the Tenterden Railway.

At the turn of the century, despite plans extending over a period of nearly 50 years, no railway had been built connecting Maidstone with Headcorn. It was not the last that the Loose Valley had heard of Railway proposals.

Neil Rose

(to be continued)

Sources:

*Public Record Office, London.
Kent County Archives, County Hall, Maidstone.
Barcham Green & Company Limited, Hayle Mill,
Maidstone.*

The 4 Hecates

"I speak not to that railing Hecate, but unto thee . . ."

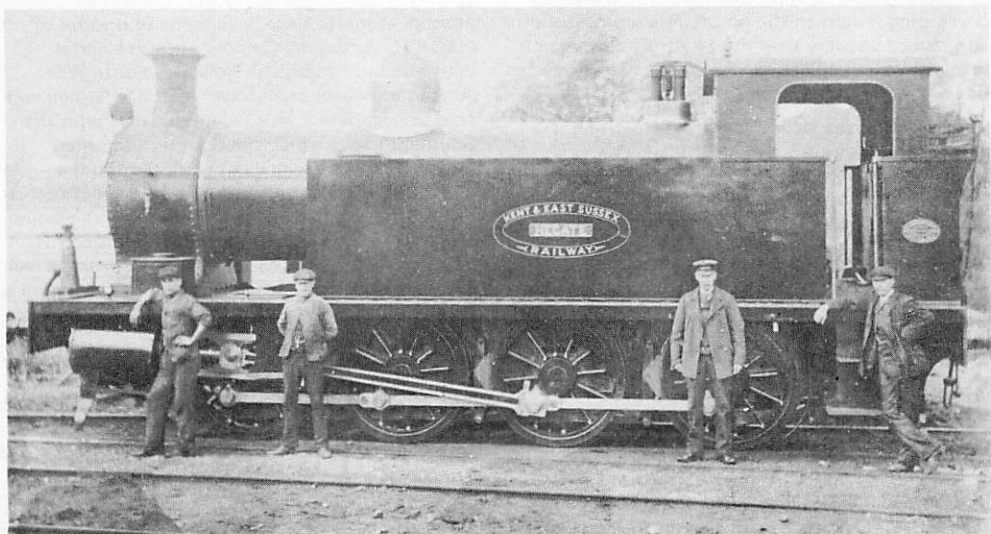
(Henry VI Part 1, III, 2)

It is not clear how far Colonel Stephens had a hand in naming the locomotives that ran on the railways under his management. The fact that the same names appeared on several of these lines would suggest that the Colonel exercised some degree of influence. Names tended either to be drawn from locations served by the railways concerned or from classical mythology. For obvious reasons it was the classical names which were repeated from line to line rather than remote towns and villages through the transfer of locomotives led to such unlikely sights as NORTHAM on the Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway or WALTON PARK on the East Kent.

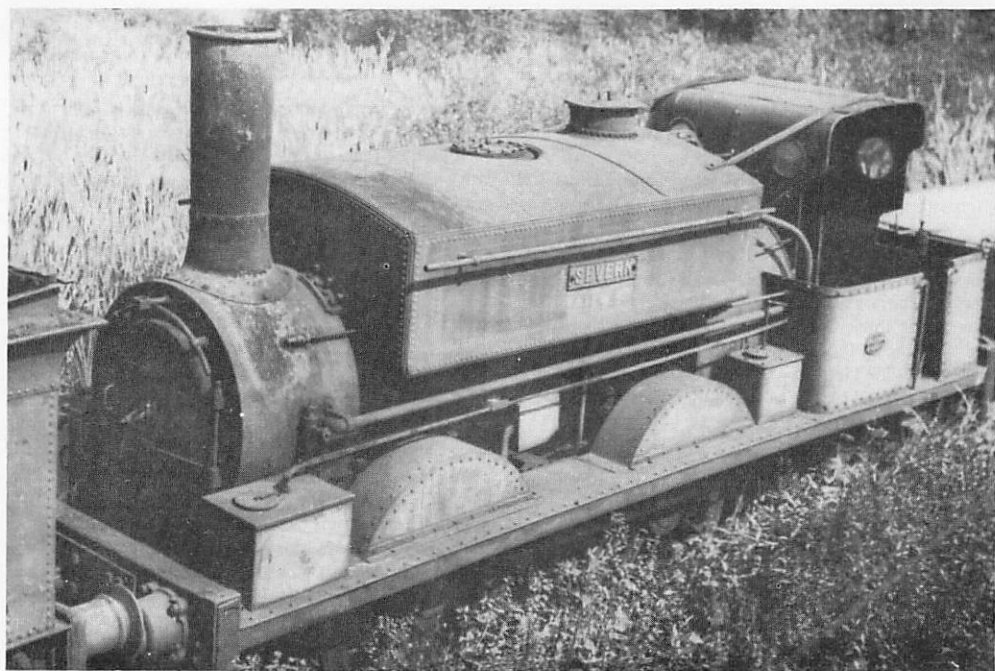
The Colonel's personal preference may not have been the sole motive for the repetition of names. It may possibly have been that several sets of nameplates were cast from the same mould as a means of cutting costs though there is no hard evidence to support this beyond the strong similarity in appearance of certain nameplates. A more frequent cause of the repetition of names was the Colonel's economical practice of transferring nameplates from locomotives awaiting disposal to their successors. This was particularly so on the Weston Clevedon & Portishead which managed to make the three towns of its title serve as names for a total of eight locomotives.

In the case of the name HECATE the Colonel might have further justified the frequent use that he made of it by the fact that in Greek mythology the original Hecate was herself possessed of three bodies. Fanciful as this suggestion is, it probably contains a grain of truth in that the Colonel seems to have had an extensive knowledge of the Greek myths. Whether it goes any way towards explaining the considerable variety amongst the locomotives which bore this name is another matter.

Appropriately for the daughter of a Titan the name HECATE was first bestowed upon the largest tank locomotive to be owned by any of the Colonel's railways. This was a heavy eight-coupled machine purchased by Kent & East Sussex Railway from Hawthorn Leslie in 1904, maker's number 2857 and K.&E.S.R. number 4. Weighing 46½ tons in working order with a wheelbase of only 15 feet, flangeless driving wheels and a tractive effort of 16,385 lb HECATE could well have been designed for the steep gradients and sharp curves that the extension of the K.&E.S.R. to Maidstone would have entailed. There is, however, no actual record of the Directors' reasons for ordering HECATE. Certainly it seems extraordinarily optimistic on their part to have bought a locomotive specifically for a section of line for which the Light Railway Commissioners had yet to give their approval. More



K.&E.S.R. No. 4 "Hecate" at Rolvenden



*S.&M.R. No 2 with name "Hecate" beginning to reappear beneath "Severn" nameplates
[Photo: H.C. Casserley]*

probably HECATE was purchased with a view to developing freight traffic on the Headcorn Section and indeed possibly over the South Eastern main line with its suitability for the future Maidstone line as a secondary motive.

Whatever the reasons for acquiring HECATE it is certain that they were never fulfilled. The Maidstone Extension remained unbuilt and the Headcorn Section steadfastly refused to develop more than a modest freight traffic quite within the capacity of the smaller locomotives owned by the K.&E.S.R. Since HECATE's weight prevented it from venturing below Rolvenden it saw little useful service apart from occasional appearances hauling livestock traffic for Biddenden Fair and a period from 1916 to 1918 during which HECATE was hired to the East Kent. HECATE might have stayed longer on the East Kent had not heavy repairs become necessary in 1919 as a result of which it was returned to Rolvenden to be stored.

The Colonel seems to have had a particular regard for HECATE and even used Hawthorn Leslie's official photograph as a postcard for

acknowledging correspondence. Certainly no attempt seems to have been made to dispose of HECATE during the Colonel's lifetime and it continued to languish at Rolvenden until W.H. Austen took over as Receiver in 1931. Austen was able to negotiate a very favourable deal with the Southern under which the Southern acquired HECATE and three ancient carriages and the K.&E.S.R. acquired an ex-L.S.W.R. Beyer Peacock saddletank No. 0335 together with an extra boiler and other spares in addition to two ex-L.S.W.R. bogie carriages. HECATE served the Southern well once the necessary repairs had been effected and as No. 949 it survived until 1950 mostly shunting at Nine Elms.

The second locomotive to receive the name HECATE had little else in common with its Kent & East Sussex counterpart. This locomotive was Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway No. 2 and although purchased from the Griff Colliery Company in 1911 as a 0-4-2ST it is reliably supposed to have started life in the 1840s as a Bury Curtis & Kennedy 0-4-0 tender locomotive on the

Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway. Even the curious ex-Furness Railway 2-2-2 tanks on the Weston Clevedon & Portishead could not challenge this relic for antiquity.

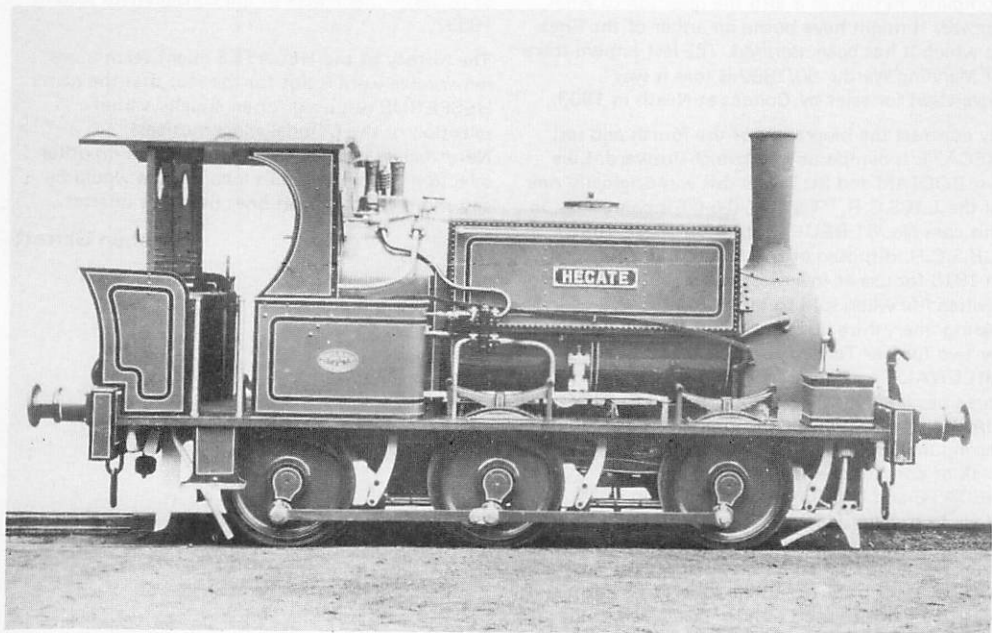
This particular HECATE was in fact only briefly so named as in 1916 or possibly 1915 it was fitted with brass plates reading SEVERN. Quite what the reason for this change of identity may have been is hard to say but it led to a strange sight in the locomotive's final years. Peeling paintwork led to the gradual reappearance of the painted name HECATE flanking the later SEVERN. This sight lasted longer than the management would have wished as offers were received for No. 2 from the scrap firms of Wards and Cohens in 1930 but neither offer could be accepted as the G.W.R. refused to allow No. 2 on to their tracks. The boiler was eventually sold to a firm in Wednesbury in 1933 but the rest of the locomotive was not cut up until 1937 by which date the value of scrap had sufficiently increased to interest a local firm in cutting No. 2 up.

The third HECATE remains something of a mystery although its early career is amply documented. In 1862 Manning Wardle built a 0-6-0ST, their No. 50, which served at Waterloo Main Colliery until 1872 then passed to the

contractor for the Devon & Cornwall Railway before joining the L.S.W.R. as their No. 392 in 1879. The L.S.W.R. used LADY PORTSMOUTH, as her previous owner had named her, for a variety of shunting and branch line duties until withdrawn to be scrapped at the end of 1913. Before scrapping could begin an offer for the locomotive was received from the Bute Works Supply Co. and accepted.

According to Manning Wardle's records this locomotive was employed at some time in the succeeding years on both the Weston Clevedon & Portishead and the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire before ending up in the service of the Royal Engineers at Tidworth with the name HECATE. The only event that can be accurately date during this period is an extensive rebuild that took place at Manning Wardle's works in 1916.

Were all this evidence that existed to connect this locomotive with Colonel Stephens or his railways its presence on his lines might well be doubted. However, amongst the records that survive from the Colonel's headquarters at Tonbridge is a photograph of the locomotive as rebuilt by Manning Wardle and bearing HECATE nameplates. Whether HECATE was in the Colonel's employment before or after the rebuilding is a



The mystery "Hecate" as rebuilt in 1916

[Photo: A.M. Davies Collection]



S.&M.R. No. 7 "Hecate" at Kinnerley

complete mystery as is also the question of what number it might have borne on either of the lines to which it has been ascribed. The last known trace of Manning Wardle 50/1862 is that it was advertised for sales by Cohens at Neath in 1933.

By contrast the biography of the fourth and last HECATE is comparatively straightforward. Like our BODIAM and SUTTON this was originally one of the L.B.S.C.R. "Terrier" 0-6-0T locomotives, in this case No. 81 BEULAH built in 1880. The L.B.S.C.R. disposed of BEULAH to the Admiralty in 1918 for use at Inverness but it returned to civilian life when sold to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire in 1921. It was later joined here by two further Terriers, originally No. 38 MILLWALL and No. 83 EARLSWOOD and the three became Nos. 7, 8 and 9, HECATE, DIDO and DAPHNE respectively. All three served usefully during the 1920s but they were scarcely in the peak of condition when acquired and both HECATE and DIDO were withdrawn in 1930. Plans to transfer HECATE's boiler to DIDO were not proceeded with but HECATE's wheels and axles were despatched to the Kent & East Sussex in part payment of outstanding debts at £3 a ton and these were understood to have been used in the resurrection of BODIAM. HECATE was finally dismantled in 1932 and its boiler accompanied that

of its earlier namesake in the consignment sold in 1933.

The history of the HECATES might seem more remarkable were it not for the fact that the name HESPERUS was used for an equally varied selection of the Colonel's locomotives! Nevertheless it could be submitted that no other selection of the Colonel's locomotives would be any more typical of his lines than this quartet.

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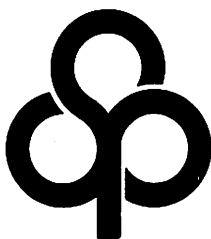
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