



The Tenterden Terrier



Number 16

Summer 1978



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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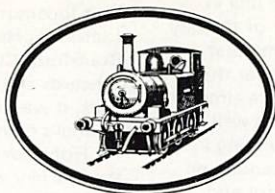
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The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

Editorial

FIVE YEARS ON

The Spring 1978 issue of "The Tenterden Terrier" concluded the first five years and fifteen issues of the publication; a time, perhaps, to pause for breath and sound out readers' views on past editorial policy and future content. The magazine is, of course, unashamedly specialist in nature and has a rather higher proportion of historical content than some comparable publications. However, some 99 per cent of readers never communicate with the Editor, making it difficult to judge the popularity of present policies. A simple questionnaire is being mailed with this issue inviting readers' comments and it is hoped that everybody will endeavour to co-operate by completing and returning the paper by 15th August. The survey is not confined to Company members and non-subscribers may obtain copies of the questionnaire from the bookstall. The results will be summarised and published in the November issue and it will be interesting to compare notes with our neighbours at Sheffield Park who have recently completed and published a similar survey.

FRONT COVER

DINNER IS SERVED

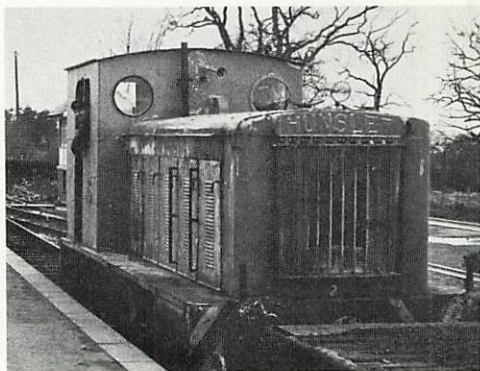
*Passengers arriving at Tenterden for Christmas dinner on 17th December 1977.
[Brian Stephenson]*

Mark Yonge's Notebook

Last time I set down to put pen to paper, it was mid-winter. At the time of writing the weather has hardly improved and when I visited the line in mid-May, overcoats were still the order of the day. Despite this, **Donald Wilson** informed me that passenger numbers had risen by 20% so far this year and that the wine & dine trains were almost completely sold out. School parties were well booked in advance for the mid-week running in June and July. The 'open days' at Rolvenden on 20th and 21st May were highly successful and attracted 1400 visitors. Probably we blame the weather too readily for our problems and success so far this year must in part be due to our improved publicity. I then spoke to **Tony Hocking** about his plans for the sales department. "Despite moving into the sale of model railway equipment when we can get it, we are aiming in the long term to become specialists in branch line and tramway books. What we don't particularly want to stock are the endless steam photographic annuals;" and souvenirs? "Yes, we certainly intend to continue with these and hats and T-shirts with the K.&E.S.R. logo because there is considerable demand for these items. I feel that these will not detract from our basic aim, which is to become a specialist bookshop". I took a short walk along the platform in the slack period before the lunch break to catch **Paul Ramsden** of the carriage & wagon department. How was work progressing on the pullman? "Quite frankly, this is slower than we would like. The problem is that the pullman is used every Saturday on wine & dine trains and is stored until late on Sunday morning in the loop at Tenterden. When it is returned to the sidings, nearly half of Sunday is gone". **John Liddell's** coach restoration project for mark 1 T.S.O. No. 65 is receiving help wherever possible from the department and re-upholstering will commence shortly. Paul also told me that Maunsell B.S.O. No. 53 will be turned round on 9th June. The coach will be hauled on to a low loader and turned so that the wine & dine set will have a brake compartment at each end of the train, and thus considerably enhance its appearance. I took a ride down to Rolvenden on the 2.00 pm train, where I found **Bob Forsythe** hard at work cleaning a set of coupling rods. I asked him about our two diesel shunters first, because I had a vested interest; I would be needing one for the weed spray train in four days time. "You should have no problem with No. 27 'Baglan'; we've spent over £300 repairing the cracked cylinder head, fitting a new exhaust water cooled manifold and a new thermostat and housing. If for some reason Baglan should fail, No. 28, our new Hunslet from Tunnel Cement Ltd. at Purfleet it working very satisfactorily, although we

would like to fit a vacuum brake when time permits."

This locomotive was moved on 21st January by Lumsdens Heavy Haulage, with the help of **David Brailsford, Clive Lowe, John Sinclair, Colin Edwards and John Liddell**. Following an early start, it was loaded on to our lorry with the help of Tunnel's own diesel and by 9.30 am was en route for Rolvenden. A minor hazard occurred during the journey when the securing chains broke and inevitably traffic delays were caused, particularly in the Dartford Tunnel. The ground had been prepared for its arrival at Rolvenden by **John Liddell and Colin Edwards** and with the assistance of our other diesel 'Baglan', the new locomotive was pulled off the low loader. The whole operation was successfully completed by 5.00 pm.



The new "Hunslet" diesel [Donald H. Wilson]

As for our steam locomotives, **Bob Forsythe** commented, "we are confident that No. 10 'Sutton' will be running by the beginning of July, by which time she will hopefully have passed a visual boiler test. As 'Sutton' returns to service, No. 23 'Holman F Stephens' must be withdrawn for a boiler inspection; that will be tough; it must stand twice the normal hydraulic pressure. We intend, at the same time to re-profile the tyres". And how about two of our favourite engines, No. 19 and No. 3 'Bodiam'? "Well, I'm afraid progress on No. 19 is slow and proceeds when time permits. No. 3 needs vital boiler repairs which will almost certainly necessitate removal and an early return to service looks unlikely. The good news is that Nos. 24 and 26 continue to perform well, with No. 26 providing the mainstay of Sunday services."

I found **Philip Rimmer** between Newmill Bridge and Wittersham inspecting the track. How were we progressing in readiness for the reopening of



"Waiting for the first train"

[Paul Sutton]

Wittersham Road Station? "Well, priority jobs are Newmill Bridge and particularly, Wittersham Road. The platform line has been finally aligned and packed in conjunction with the point work at each end of the loop. Because of this the through running line now lies below the level of the loop, but this will be remedied as time and money permit. Test trains were run into the loop on the 13th May and only minor track adjustments were necessary." I was interested in the generator operated Kango electric packing hammer. Philip told me that this was purchased from British Rail and it has certainly helped speed up the work, particularly in the formation of track at Pope's Cottage where speed restrictions have now been lifted.

The first person I noticed when I pulled into Wittersham Road car park was building department manager **Dave Stubbs** fitting and concreting in kerb stones each side of the gateway. "We've spent most of our time recently at Wittersham. We fitted storm drains round the station building and, more recently concreted in the base of the signal box for the signals department."

Wittersham Road was unrecognisable from the site of a few months before; at that time all that was visible were the beginnings of the platform and the station building amongst heaps of mud, sleepers, ballast and mechanical equipment. Now has emerged a most impressive light railway station, which must rank as being the most cosmopolitan in the country, with the following list of appendages: — signal box from Dover, station building from Borth, water tower from Shrewsbury, signals from Castle Bellingham in Ireland, lamp standards from Ashurst and Cowden, flagstones from Heathfield and Junction Road and station nameboard and railings from Cranbrook. Congratulations to **Paul Sutton**, Director in charge, **Mike James**, J.C.P. Manager, and to all concerned for a most devoted effort.

The following Thursday I returned to the Railway for the annual task of spraying the line for weed control. Thanks to some sophisticated equipment

from Selektokil of Maidstone who have made branch line spraying something of a speciality and some skilled driving by **Colin Edwards**, we completed the job in only one day. As well as the track spraying two people standing each side of the well wagon put a jet of Brushwood killer out on to the brambles and unwanted woody growth which meant that all the spraying was completed in one operation. I spotted **John Miller** and asked him for some notes on the clearance branch. "All our efforts have been concentrated on the operating section, particularly at the Wittersham and in readiness for the reopening, but we have also concentrated on finishing the willow removal on Morphew's curve, which has considerably improved the visibility and state of the line at the point."

Finally, an up to date report from the Signals and Telecommunications Department which has been submitted to me by **Nick Patching**. The signalling diagram for Wittersham Road Station is now almost ready for submission to the Department of the Environment. If accepted it will provide a means of switching out the Wittersham Cabin, in spite of the level crossing at the down end, thereby reducing the minimum number of signalmen required to run a service when the line is fully operational. Restoration of the Irish equipment for Wittersham is well under way although we are still waiting for the arrival of matching signal posts.

Over the Easter period the back of the signal box for Wittersham was assembled at Tenterden to check joints, an operation which required considerable care and reference to diagrams to ensure that the correct parts were used in each position. The front and sides will soon be ready for similar treatment.

Much of the work on the South Eastern lever frame has been completed, although cutting of the locking will have to wait for confirmation of the signalling diagram.

The building of the brickwork for Wittersham Cabin is in progress and thanks are due to **Mr. Colyer** for his excellent brick laying. The

brickwork above ground level is built using a Pluckley type which, when bonded in the usual railway style, gives a period appearance.

At Tenterden a simple circuit has been installed to illuminate stopboards by electric lamps, which is useful for Wine & Dine trains.

The telecommunications section has, in addition to

maintaining our internal telephone system, spent the winter on the arduous task of straightening telephone poles.

Once again, it needs stating that the number of signal men required continues to rise, particularly now as the line extends. Members interested in this department are invited to contact Nick Patching on Maidstone 55929.

News from Area Groups

Ashford. Owing the labour shortage in the Permanent Way department, which is also responsible for the upkeep of fences, the Ashford Group has undertaken to replace the section of fence immediately to the South of Tenterden Station. This should have been completed by the end of June and will prove to be a useful deterrent to sheep who like grazing on our railway.

Three outside events will have been attended by then; the Sellindge Steam Rally, the Essex Motoring Extravaganza at Brentwood on 18th June and finally the Ashford Extravaganza on the 24th and 25th June.

Eric Graves

Maidstone. The group's third annual model railway exhibition on the 18th March was once again highly successful and resulted in £350 being donated to the Maunsell appeal.

Permission has finally been obtained from the Department of the Environment for the old Mill Street Bus Station in Maidstone to be dismantled and a start will be made after the Whitsun holiday. We are grateful to a non-member who has allowed the group to store the timber frame and slates on a farm pending re-erection at Tenterden. This building will be a great asset as a much needed refreshment room and lavatory block.

Plans on the railway in the near future include the erection of the water tower at Wittersham which is currently being repainted by a member of the Maidstone Group.

The railway has undoubtedly benefitted from the publicity in the April edition of the 'Railway Magazine' and this may well have contributed to the total sell out of the Wine & Dine tickets for the 1978 season.

Window displays have been arranged in Chatham, Faversham and Maidstone, in order to stimulate public interest in the railway. Maidstone members are reminded that film and slide shows can be seen

at the group's monthly meetings at the Methodist Youth Centre in Brewer Street on the last Thursday in every month at 7.30 p.m.

Jack Fox

Medway. We welcome another group to our page; this covers the Medway towns, an area of high population and hopes to attract members from this hitherto rather neglected district. The group is chaired by Michael Todd (no relation) and his report is as follows:—

A lively committee has been formed and several future meetings have been arranged. The first meeting will be held at the White Horse Inn, High Street, Rainham, Kent on 25th September when Tony Hocking will give an illustrated talk on "the K.&E.S.R. preserved 1961-1978".

Further details of this and other Group Meetings and a copy of the newsletter, 'The Medway Express' will be sent on request. Please send a s.a.e. to Mike Todd, 136 Lonsdale Drive, Rainham, Kent. Telephone Medway 35173.

Surrey. The first half of 1978 has proved to be successful for the Group and a considerable sum has been donated to the U.S.A. appeal fund. This has been possible because of funds raised at a number of stands at exhibitions as well as the Group's own show in Guildford which was held in March and attracted nearly 2,000 visitors.

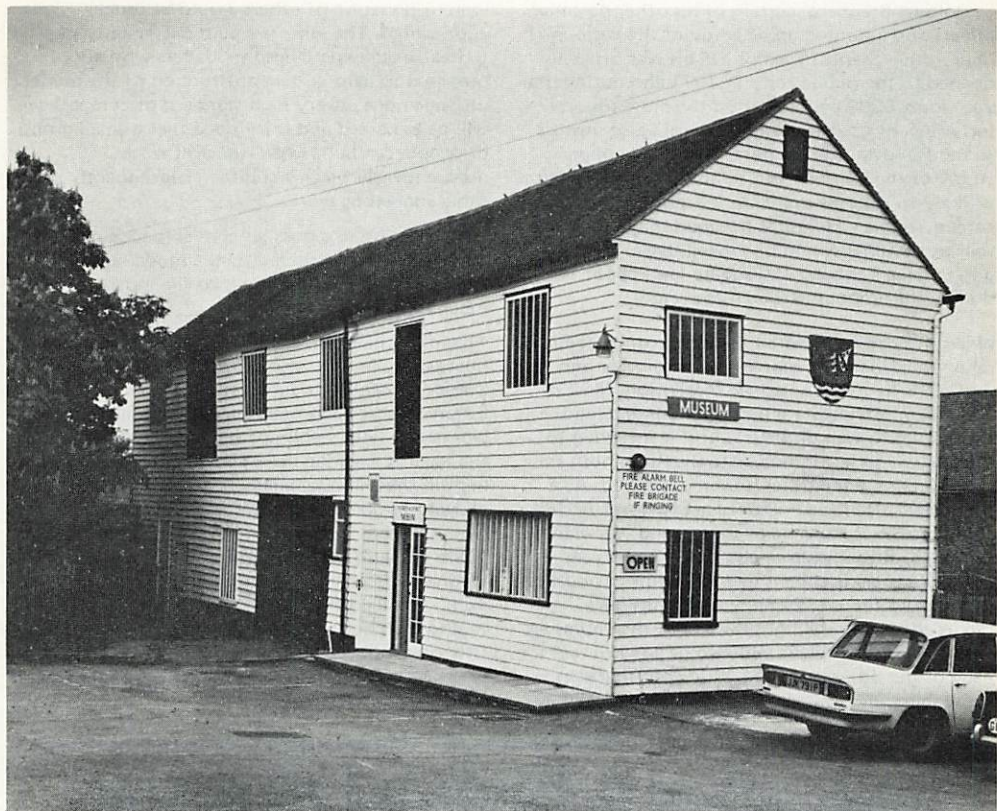
Future events include Traction Engine Rally, Knowle Hill, Maidenhead, 12/13th August, Vintage Vehicle Rally, Horsham, 28th August, Guildford Show, Stoke Park, 2nd and 3rd September and London Transport Gala Day, Syon Park 17th September.

Once again our thanks is extended to all those who man and organise outside events. If any members would like the Surrey Group to attend any events in South East England, please would they contact Richard Halton on Aldershot 312276.

Richard Halton

Preserving Our Heritage

Philip Shaw and John Miller describe future development plans for the railway section of the Tenterden & District Museum



The Tenterden Museum

[Paul Simpson Photography]

As readers of this magazine will doubtless be aware, many of those who run the Kent & East Sussex Railway today are as keenly aware of its past as of its present and its future. Indeed, there is every reason why this should be so, as the Railway has a historical background of variety and interest at least equal to any of the preserved lines operating today and its very success is dependent on a continuance of the current nostalgia for steam engines and other relics of a past industrial culture.

A railway museum at Tenterden was therefore an integral part of the plans for the preservation scheme, although not one that could be given high priority in the initial stages in view of the

very limited resources of the Company. In 1976, the opportunity arose to include a small railway section in the newly-established Tenterden museum in Station Road, situated within about 300 yards of the station itself. It was decided to call this the 'Colonel Stephens Railway Museum' and to accumulate a collection of relics relating not only to the Kent & East Sussex Railway, but also to the 14 or so other lines with which the late Lt-Colonel H.F. Stephens had an involvement. The space made available to use was inevitably small, as the museum premises themselves could not be opened in its entirety at that time, in particular the upper storey, pending completion of structural alterations in order to comply with fire regulations. The museum also houses a fine collection of relics relating to the town of Tenterden and the

surrounding district. A small collection of railway items was quickly established, including a magnificent collection of railway passes belonging to Colonel Stephens, certain of his other personal effects and a photographic study of the various lines in the 'Stephens' empire. This was officially opened to the public early in 1977 and during the year some 6000 people visited the museum, including, of course, many who were also visitors to the Railway. Fortunately, part of the upper storey of the premises, presently in use as a store, is likely to become available for display purposes sometime this year and it is hoped that the railway exhibits would be moved there. This will give an area of about 400 square feet, about double the amount available at present.

When this can be effected the opportunity will be taken to completely reorganise the display and in particular to give it an added dimension. Most of the present exhibits are flat in nature and lend themselves to wall displays, but it is intended to introduce a series of models to illustrate both the K.&E.S.R. and the other lines represented. As a first stage, attention will be given to constructing a static model of Rolvenden station and works in 00 gauge, as it existed in about 1930, the year before Colonel Stephens died. It is this period that exemplifies the line as many historians have recorded it — a rural light railway at the end of an era. Individual displays will also be constructed for each of the other lines, to include photographs, timetables, etc., but also at least one model of an

item of rolling stock or a building that is typical of that particular line. Many old timetables and documents are already in our possession, but the loan or donation of others would be much appreciated. The writers would particularly like to hear from experienced modellers who are prepared to help in the construction of the model of Rolvenden; a very high standard of competence will be expected and it is hoped that a small group of people can be formed who will work independently on this and then subsequently on other modelling work.

Alternatively, it is possible that someone may already have constructed such a model and if he would be prepared to lend it to the museum, much effort could be saved.

The museum is housed in a two storey weather-boarded building at the rear of the car park in Station Road. Built about 1850, it was originally a stonemason's and more recently a builder's workshop, with stabling at one end which housed the Kent & East Sussex Railway horse bus, now kept in the National Railway Museum, York. The museum is open daily from Easter until the end of October from 2pm to 5pm (Fridays and Saturdays 10am to 5pm). In the winter months it is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 2pm to 4pm. Admission is 20p (half price for children) and free to members of The Tenterden Railway Company Ltd. on production of a current membership certificate. Special terms are given to school parties by prior arrangement.

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 by-gones 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.

The exhibitions are housed in a 19th century weatherboarded industrial building of a fast disappearing local type, at the rear of the Station Road Car Park.

* OPEN DAILY — 2 pm to 5 pm FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS 10 am to 5 pm

Trial Trip

An epic tale in two parts by 'Ringing Rock'

PART ONE — 'THE OUTWARD JOURNEY'

Back in the early 1960's when the K.&E.S.R. Preservation Society was in its penurious infancy, we were always on the lookout for the opportunity to acquire any items of rolling stock, especially locomotives, which might become available. Even in those days, equipment from B.R. tended to be expensive and we had already discovered that locomotives could frequently be obtained much more economically from private industrial concerns who were gradually abandoning their rail connections, but were reluctant to scrap faithful old work horses for sentimental reasons, and were often delighted to present their retired steam power to a preservation society willing to provide a good home.

Against this background, I was most interested to hear of a delightful and very unusual Peckett 0-4-0 side tank locomotive which had recently become redundant at an industrial site near Manchester. I quickly sent off the standard begging letter stressing historic importance, promise of a good home, but extremely slender financial resources, and was rewarded by a reply from the owners, Messrs. Hardman and Holden of Miles Platting, offering to present the engine to us free of charge in return for payment of transport costs to Tenterden. I speedily accepted, and in due course "Marcia" arrived safely on a low loader, and was deposited in a siding at Tenterden. With her diminutive boiler, tall chimney, and tiny wheels, "Marcia" resembled nothing so much as a fugitive from an Emmet cartoon, and she inspired an immediate wave of affection from all who saw her.

Although she had not run for many months before her arrival, she was technically "stored serviceable", and speculation as to how she would perform in service reached a high point when it was discovered that her boiler certificate still had a week or two to run, after which expensive inspections and insurance premiums would become payable. Under pressure from many members anxious to see something actually moving, the decision was taken to make a quick run down the Line on one summer weekday evening.

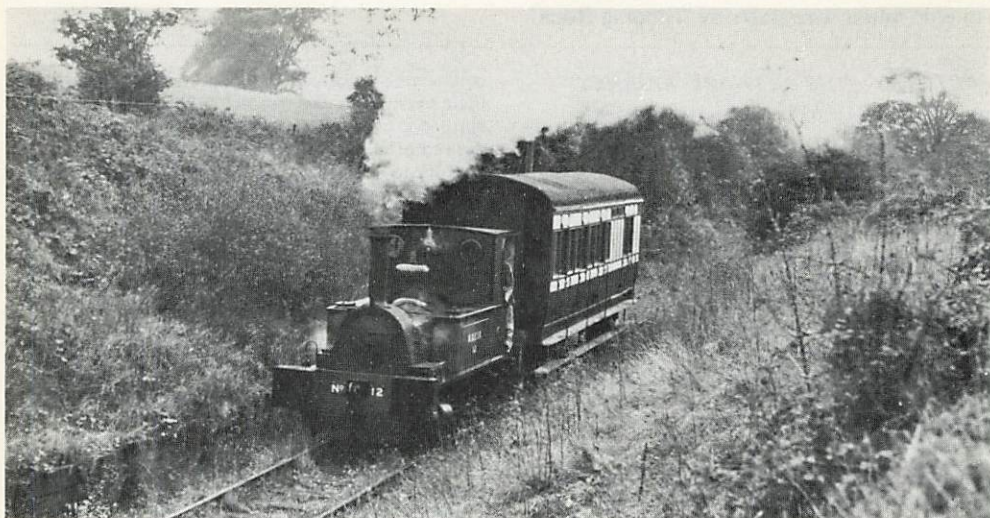
Thus it was that our embryo Locomotive Department enthusiastically lit up, and we waited with bated breath as the pressure slowly rose to its working level. Solemnly and ceremoniously, the regulator was opened — with the result that the engine emitted a loud hiss and remained immovably rooted to the spot. A hurried

conference produced the suggestion that perhaps a little persuasion was needed, and several speedily applied crowbars under the wheels quickly had the desired effect, as "Marcia" was soon running happily to and fro in the station platform to the delight of all present, not to mention the Kodak company, whose products went into expensive use to record the event for posterity.

Some fifteen members were present by now, and in order to accommodate them all, it was decided that one of our other engines (we only had two more at the time — both Sentinel 0-4-0's from the Standard Brick & Sand Co. at Redhill) should be attached to provide additional accommodation and to act as a brake van, and accordingly "Dom", the more rebuilt motor portion of a Jersey Eastern Railway Sentinel railcar, was soon bowling merrily along with "Marcia" on the way to Rolvenden. Progress thus far had been relatively uneventful, and the fateful decision was taken to proceed a little further down the Line towards Wittersham Road.

It was shortly after leaving Rolvenden that the first mishap occurred. Yours truly, acting as guard in "Dom", observed that the track in front of the train was totally obscured by an enormous thickness of undergrowth. Knowing that most of the wooden keys in the track were very rotten and many were missing altogether, I attempted to slow down the enthusiastic engine crew by applying the handbrake in "Dom". In this, I was entirely too successful, since the cavalcade came to an abrupt and grinding halt in the middle of some of the biggest and prickliest gorse bushes I have ever seen. Attempts to leave either engine with a view to inspecting the invisible track more closely were thwarted by the heavily armed plant growth all round, and attempts to restart "Marcia" resulted only in frantic and ineffectual slipping of her wheels on the crushed vegetation. Eventually, two members with thicker skins than the average (or perhaps they were a little more courageous!) ventured off the footplate with crowbars and handfuls of sand, and disregarding painful injuries inflicted by the outraged gorse bushes which seemed determined to defend their takeover of the permanent way to the very end, we finally succeeded in pulling away.

A little further down the line, we stopped to inspect the old bridge across the Newmill Channel, which was then in very poor condition, and on restarting, it became apparent that all was not well with our luckless motive power, as she



"Marcia" and the Woolwich coach on Tenterden Bank, October 1967

[Tim Stephens]

showed greater and greater reluctance to get under way again, and after another start and stop session while cautiously negotiating a section of track distorted by heat expansion near Wittersham Road, it was decided that we should return to Tenterden.

It was at this point that disaster struck! Attempts to persuade "Marcia" to go backwards proved entirely futile, and further experiment revealed that she would no longer go forwards either. Closer investigation resulted in the discovery that some chronic internal disturbance was causing the left hand cylinder to try to turn the wheels in one direction, while its opposite number was attempting to drive the right hand pair of wheels the other way, so that she would move six inches in either direction alternately, but not one iota further. Seriously concerned at this development, and conscious that the sun was rapidly sinking towards the horizon, I set off with another member down the track to Wittersham Road with the intention of seeking assistance. In due course we arrived at a singularly remote farmhouse, where we knocked on the door and asked to use the telephone. Our explanation that we had an engine stuck on the Railway was met with incredulous disbelief, and an initial refusal to open the door more than the few inches allowed by the safety chain. Eventually, a desperate plea that the farmer step outside and see for himself the pall of smoke visible over the trees from the immobilised engine finally convinced him, and I was granted access to the telephone.

My intention was to contact the late Charlie Kentsley, who was at that time the motive power superintendent at the Bluebell Railway, but who was already planning to move to Rolvenden to act in a similar capacity for the K.&E.S.R., and in the meantime was our acknowledged expert on knotty problems concerning steam engines. I will draw a veil over the difficulties which this apparently simple operation involved in those far off days of operator connected telephones. Suffice it to say that after waiting twenty minutes, the directory enquiries operator came back with the shattering information that she had gone right through to the Sheffield operator, and was assured that there was no "Park" exchange in the Sheffield area! Eventually, our little misunderstanding was sorted out, and we contacted Mr. Kentsley, who was, it transpired, just as unable to explain the curious behaviour of our motive power as we ourselves were.

By this time, it was rapidly growing dark, and it became apparent that we had no alternative but to abandon our train at its isolated location and return to Tenterden by road to discuss how we were to get our two stranded locomotives back home again. The farmer, who had by now entered into the spirit of things with enthusiasm, kindly drove David Couchman, the then editor of "The Farmers' Line" magazine and the only car owner present, back to Tenterden, from where he returned to Wittersham Road with his Morris Minor and conveyed all the stranded members (yes

— all eleven of them, four having already returned in the farmer's car) back to Tenterden. We finally crawled back into Tenterden after dark with the tyres of the hopelessly overloaded Morris actually rubbing the paint off the underside of the mudguards! It was quickly decided that a rescue operation should be mounted on the following Saturday, and after arranging to meet as early as possible on that day, our exhausted band of members set off for their respective homes

reflecting thoughtfully on the vagaries of light railways in general and steam engines in particular, and no doubt fell asleep that night to have nightmares of endless processions of engines stranding themselves in the middle of prickly gorse bushes at desolated locations on long disused branch lines all over South East England.

(to be continued)

A Finnish Connection



Ford railbuses being inspected at Tampere, 9th July 1925

[Author]

When the Kent & East Sussex Railway acquired its first pair of Ford railbuses in 1923, the news reached Finland* and in particular Martin Sandfröm, the Manager of a small line in the north of the country known as the Raahe Railway. This 1.524 metre (5 ft) gauge line, of some 32.2 kilometres (20.8 miles) in length, ran from Raahe to Lappi, which is a small station on the Oulu to Seinäjoki trunk line. At that time the rolling stock consisted of three steam locomotives and about 51 wagons. Locomotives numbers 1 and 2 were Baldwin built 2-4-2's and number 3 was a compound mogul built by the Finnish firm, Tampella. The Railway needed something economical for the lightly-loaded evening trains and as a direct result of the Kent & East Sussex experience, ordered two Ford model T chassis

from the U.S.A. A Finnish firm 'Autokoritehdas Oy' (Car Body Factory Ltd.) at Tampere made the bodies and 'Lokomo Oy', also of Tampere, the wheels and axles. The rail car unit was inspected at Tampere on 9th July 1925 and the railbuses arrived at Raahe on 3rd August 1925, loaded on an open goods wagon.

The bodies were made of steel sheets with plywood linings and strengtheners to keep them in shape and one car was given special insulation to cope with the special problems of the cold winters. Traffic was so light that one car was found to be sufficient. On the evening of 14th November 1925, the uninsulated car was proceeding from Raahe to Lappi when it was involved in an accident with an open goods wagon which had been blown along the line. The car carried three lights, arranged in triangular pattern, but in the interests of economy (Colonel Stephens would have approved!) only one was switched on. The

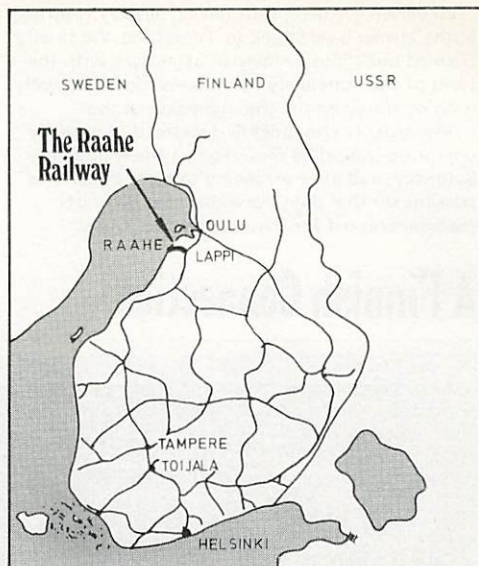
**possibly from reports submitted by Colonel Stephens to 'The Locomotive' magazine in 1923 and 1924 — Ed.*

inevitable happened and as a result the radiator was broken and the buffers damaged. The passengers had to dismount and proceed in a fierce gale to Raahé station, one mile distant!

The railway was at this time owned by the town, but as the finances were not good, it was decided to sell it to the Finnish State Railways. The State acquired the line with effect from 1st March 1926 and on 15th May 1926 the evening motor train was cancelled and substituted by a steam-hauled mixed train.

In the summer of 1926 the Finnish State Railways instigated a rail car service from Toijala to Toijala harbour; as they did not have any railcars of their own at that time, it is certain that Raahé ones were used, although they did not admit it! The service was, however, a brief one and a Board minute for 1927 records that they were then taken out of service. Their subsequent fate is not known, but it is interesting that Colonel Stephens' influence on railway operations was more far reaching than might have been expected.

Ilkka Hovi



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Book Review

The Colonel Stephens Railways, a pictorial survey by John Scott-Morgan, published by David & Charles at £4.95. 96 pages text and photographs.

What a pity that such an excellent subject has been marred by so many factual errors. Most inexcusable is the incorrect nomenclature of the principal character, who Mr. Morgan would lead us to believe was "Holman Frederick Stephens". As readers of "The Tenterden Terrier" will, of course, be aware he was christened "Holman Fred Stephens". In fact, this particular publisher seems to have had endless difficulty with the name, referring to "Frederick Holman Stephens" in publicity material for the same book and "Philip Shaw Stephens" (no less!) in an earlier publication called "The Country Railway". Other mistakes are too numerous to list in full, but as a starter, for "White Hart" hotel, Tenterden, read "White Lion"; Wolseley Sidley (Wolseley-Siddeley) Paddockwood (Paddock Wood), Akroyd Stewart (Akroyd Stuart). More serious is a reference to the Selsey Tramway as having "obtained a measure of legality when in 1915 a light railway order was issued by the Board of Trade." Students of the history of this line will know that this particular order was never operative and the Selsey line's "measure of legality" came in 1924 when a

certificate was issued under the Railway Construction Facilities Act. There are one or two statements in the book which are extremely dubious in their authenticity, such as . . . "from an early stage young Stephens had an interest in railways. One early account goes that an old lady who used to be friendly with the Stephens family could well remember young Stephens sitting on the floor of his nursery surrounded by track and primitive model rolling stock". (Memories of the early 1870's!)

The photographs are generally quite nicely laid out and there are some (including a number from our own archives) which have not been published before. Strange though, to use a picture of the Welsh Highland on the front cover, which is hardly typical of the Stephens' lines. There is much inconsistency with the captioning of the photographs, due to careless editing.

Despite all its inaccuracies, we suppose that this book will serve to bring a hint of the history of Colonel Stephens and his railways to a wider public — and whet appetites for the real story of this fascinating man, which has yet to be published.

P.D.S.

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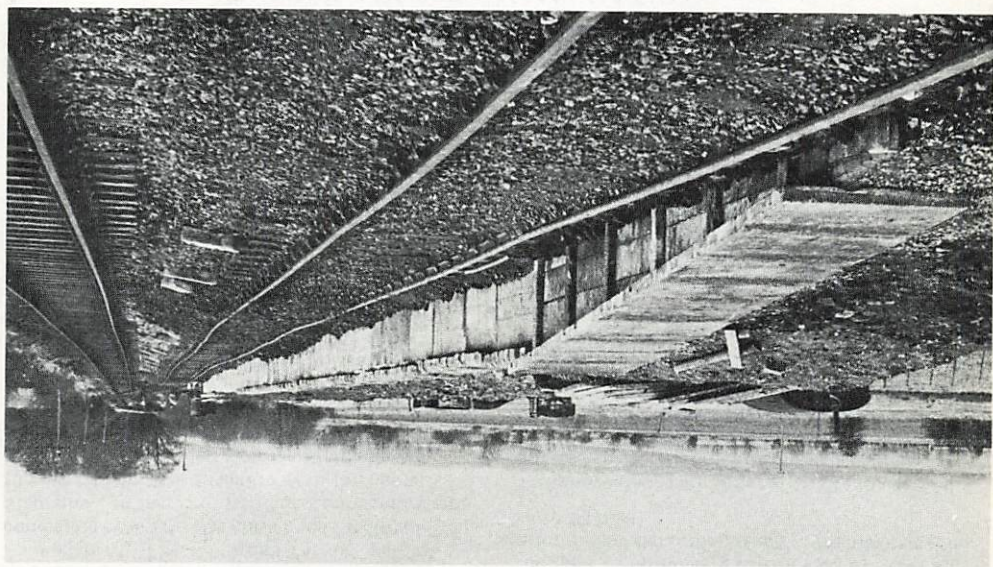
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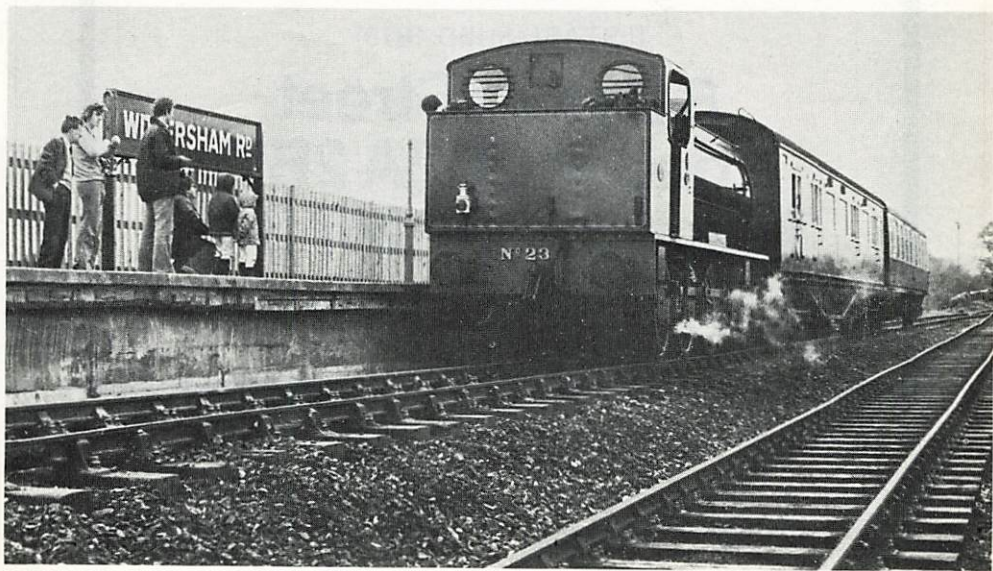
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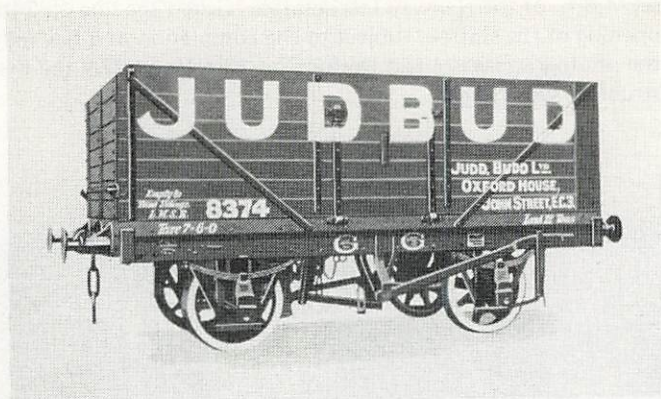


**WORK IN
PROGRESS**

Photographed by Donald H. Wilson

Despite the extremely wet weather in the early months of 1978, work has progressed steadily at the Wittersham Road site in preparation for the official reopening on 16th June 1978. Major C. F. Rose, M.B.E. of the Railway Inspectorate, visited the line on 24th May and authorised the opening of the station, subject to the completion of a few minor works. The train shown in the photograph was a test working on 13th May 1978, the first to call there since the reconstruction work began.





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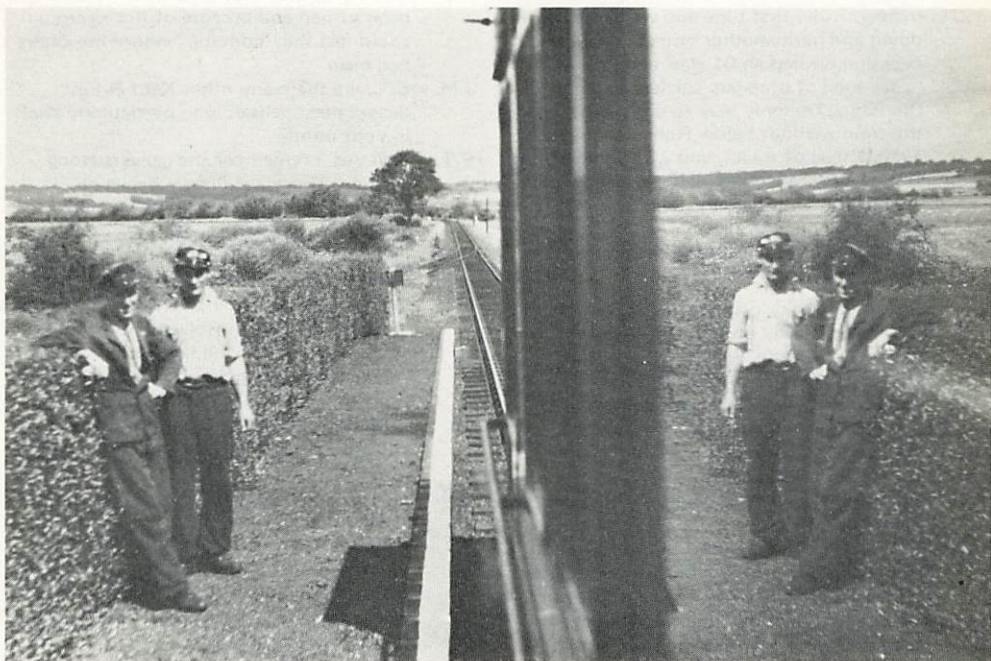
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Eric Thompson Remembers.....

Eric Thompson, who was employed on the K.&E.S.R. between 1942 and 1954, continues his reminiscences to John Miller



Eric Thompson (left) and Peter Vidler at Wittersham Road, circa 1949

J.M. Did you have contact with the Army when they had their rail-mounted guns on the railway?

E.T. Yes, we got on very well with the Army staff. The drivers were all sergeants and many had been civilian drivers with the main line companies. The rail guns were 9.5 in. and at first were parked on the dump sidings at Rolvenden. When they were fired they did make a noise! I always expected the buildings to collapse they were in such a ramshackle state.

Also, I was mystified by some timber packing cases which were stacked at Rolvenden. They were marked for the parts of an aircraft which I think had been brought in on the railway, but I don't know where it was destined for or even where it had been off-loaded.

J.M. What else do you remember of the war time?

E.T. Did you know that the Kent & East Sussex

had a battalion of the Home Guard? — just like Dad's Army! Cyril Packham was the battalion sergeant and Bert Sharp the corporal, and I must say seeing the men you worked with every day in Home Guard uniform took some getting used to! We used to parade on Tenterden Town platform with sticks until we were issued with rifles, and we practised firing just above Tenterden station. I remember the officer asking us one day, "What would you do if an enemy aircraft came over the station now and started firing at you?". We said, "Run for cover". He said, "No you wouldn't — you would stand and fire back!". Can you imagine that?

Then of course many of the components for P.L.U.T.O. were brought in on the railway. The pipeline passed under the track between High Halden and St Michaels Tunnel and there were depots for the components at Tenterden and Staplehurst.

J.M. Was it difficult getting the war-time loads up Tenterden Bank?

E.T. I say it was. Many a time the engine couldn't manage it the first time and we had to back down and have another run at it. On one occasion we had an O1 class engine and a heavy load of bren-gun carriers to get up the Bank. The only way to do it was to back the train well out below Rolvenden, get up a good head of steam, and with the gates at Rolvenden ready open, get up speed and charge at it with the whistle blowing to warn everything out of the way. At the Cranbrook Road crossing we just kept the whistle on and hoped for the best!

It was a bit risky because at that time there were many Army convoys on the roads in the area. With the "black-out" everything was poorly lit and so the Army vehicles liked to keep up with each other. You can imagine they were not too happy if we wanted to go through the middle of the convoy with a train!

J.M. Have you any other memories of the war period?

E.T. Well, there was the occasion near Bodiam when we saw a "doodle-bug" flying bomb overhead. We heard the engine of the bomb cut out and then saw it coming down towards us. We stopped the train and the driver and I crouched down behind the tender. The bomb exploded just ahead beside the line and when we carried on with the train we found red-hot metal scattered over the track.

J.M. But I thought tender engines (except the Army "Deans Goods") never went below Rolvenden?

E.T. Well, that was the rule, but during the war tender engines did stray all the way down to Robertsbridge.

J.M. You mentioned Bodiam — did you have experience of the flooding in that area?

E.T. Yes, I say I did. We used to probe in front of the engine with a dart to see if the track was still there! on a moonlit night you could see the water glistening and as we crept down the line, a wake was left behind the engine. We used to stuff sacks into the dampers to stop the water coming in.

I also remember the only occasion (I think) when the steam cranes from Battersea and Brighton were brought in, and that was when a "Terrier" was derailed just outside Wittersham Road.

Which reminds me that I remember the track being relaid between Robertsbridge and Tenterden. Sometime earlier the rail had been turned and because of the wear you could feel the "bonking" where the chairs had been.

J.M. Eric, are there any other Kent & East Sussex personalities who particularly stick in your mind?

E.T. Well yes, I remember the gangers along the line. There was Pizney Beech at Biddenden, and Jack Masters at Tenterden. Then at Wittersham Road there was Bill Padgham who lived in a sort of bungalow on stilts on the north side of the station. He had no running water so we had to take him a daily supply from Rolvenden in a milk churn. All trace of the bungalow has of course long since gone. At Northiam there was Dicky Hills, a wiry old chap who smoked a clay pipe. He used to hatch pheasants, and lived in one of the station cottages.

J.M. How did nationalisation of the railway in 1948 affect you?

E.T. Well, the conditions of service improved. We received more pay and felt more secure in our jobs. We were given proper uniforms where we had none before. In fact I thought it was great. The older staff didn't like it though — they would have preferred to see the railway as it always was. We saw some "new" engines — I remember "Terriers" 32678 and 32659* and O1 class 31065 very well. I realised that Rolvenden locomotive shed would eventually close and of course it became a sub-shed of Ashford. Some maintenance work was carried on at Rolvenden under British Railways, especially small work and we used to do the boiler wash-outs on Sundays.

J.M. Was there a change in the way the line was operated?

E.T. I believe Billy Austen kept on running things for a time, but soon after nationalisation, an official inspection was made of the line. Sir Eric Gore Brown travelled the line in a Pullman coach with Mr. Gill who had been a S.E.C.R. engineer. Jimmy Webb was the driver of the train and I was fireman. I remember Mr. Gill because he wore "plus-four" trousers. When we

**As Southern Railway Nos 2678 and 2659 they had first run on the K.&E.S.R. in 1941 and 1939 respectively.*

22nd December, 1953

Closing of Rolvenden Motive Power Depot

I am advised that the section of the line between Headcorn and Tenterden Town will be closed on and from the 4th January 1954 and in consequence the Motive Power Depot at Rolvenden will close from that date, which will then result in the staff being no longer required at this Depot.

This matter was discussed at a Meeting of Sub Committees "A" and "B" of Sectional Council No.2 held on the 2nd December and it was agreed to deal with the transfer of redundant staff at Rolvenden depot in accordance with the provisions of clause 21 of the Promotional, Transfer and Redundancy arrangements (Footplate staff) and clause 13 of the Promotional, Transfer and Redundancy arrangements Shed Staff.

Two sets of enginemmen will be required to perform work remaining on the Kent & East Sussex Line between Robertsbridge and Tenterden Town and of the three ex K & E Sussex drivers (Webb, Wood and Hazell) two will be required to transfer with work to St Leonards and the two concerned will be Webb and Wood, leaving Hazell to be absorbed on suitable shunting work at Ashford Motive Power Depot. There would be no objection to either Webb or Wood going to Ashford for the shunting duty and Hazell transferring with work to St Leonards and therefore each of the three drivers should state their preference and the issue will be resolved on a seniority basis.

Driver Burrows will be required to transfer to one of the extant driver vacancies as follows and he should indicate his preference in this connection.

Maidstone East, Brighton, Dover, Faversham, Eastleigh.

Fireman Blair will be required to transfer with work to St Leonards as will one of the two remaining firemen, P/Fireman Hoad and Thompson and these men should state their preference for firemen at St Leonards and the extant vacancies below.

Stewarts Lane	Hither Green	Bricklayers Arms
Faversham	Tonbridge	Ramsgate
Newhaven	Norwood Jct	Three Bridges
Nine Elms	Basingstoke	Eastleigh
Feltham	Guildford	Bournemouth
Exmouth Jct	Lyme Regis	Salisbury
Southampton Docks	Southampton Terminus	

The selections will be on a seniority basis in accordance with Promotional, Transfer and Redundancy arrangements (Footplate staff).

When allocation has been determined the Locomotive Inspector will be required to determine the qualifications of Drivers Webb, Wood and Hazell as necessary for driving on Main Lines between the points shown on the diagrammed working including the type of work he can certify them as able to perform.

Please let me have the necessary preferences in writing as soon as possible.

P/Fireman E. Thompson,
Rolvenden.

J. E. Lane

reached Rolvenden he walked along to the cab and told us off for going too fast. We thought we had better try and impress him, so we decided for the rest of the journey we would make no smoke!

British Railways also brought through a train fitted with "feelers" to check the loading gauge.[†] We also had problems with fuel. I remember that Betteshanger coal was good, but the Tilmanstone coal was terrible — we had to clean the fire frequently when burning that stuff. During the fuel crisis British Railways experimented with burning coke instead of coal, and talked about converting some of the locos for oil-burning. Fred Hazel who had been trained on the Longmoor Military Railway hated the idea of oil-burning engines.

J.M. Did you see William Austen after nationalisation?

E.T. A few times. Shortly after nationalisation I was asked to clear up the printing works at Rolvenden which had been out of use for some years. Afterwards, Nelson told me that the "old man" had been down and had asked to see me. Although I saw him again later, Billy Austen never did say what he had wanted me for.

† In fact the North Eastern 12 ton vans had always been out of gauge on the Rother Valley section and were routed via Headcorn.

J.M. It must have been a blow to you when the line finally closed?

E.T. Yes, it was.

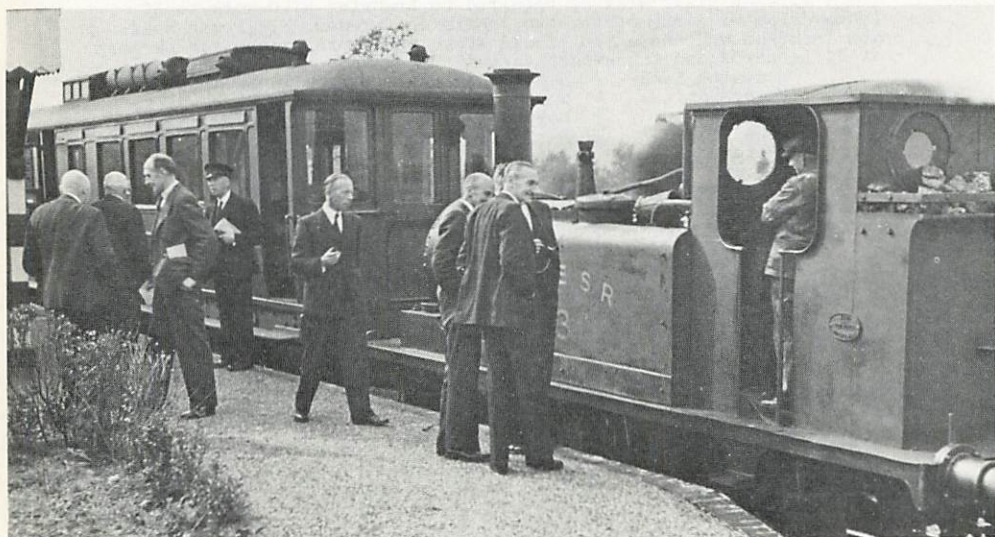
I received a letter from Mr. Lane, the shed-master at Ashford, telling me that the Rolvenden depot would close and asking me to state my preferences with regard to transfer to another shed. I had by that time moved house to Rolvenden and had just married. I was torn in what to do — I didn't want to move again so, reluctantly, I decided to leave rather than change.

I was at Rolvenden for the last passenger train but left shortly afterwards. Billy Austen took a last look at the line before it closed and met the early afternoon train at Headcorn on the last day of passenger services. I was driver of the train and chatted to him briefly on the platform, and that was the last time I saw him.

J.M. Have you visited the railway since it re-opened?

E.T. No, not really. John, I like to remember the Kent & East Sussex as it was. I received a marvellous training in railway work and I was very happy working on the line. I am sure the volunteers who operate the railway are doing a very good job, but it can never be quite the same again.

[Concluded]



British Railways official inspection train at Bodiam, 1948

[W. H. Austen Collection]

"A Peculiar Business"

A. Michael Davies relates the curious story of a locomotive which was ordered for the Selsey Tramway in 1912 and subsequently cancelled

Stephen Garrett's account of the four locomotives named HESPERUS in "The Tenterden Terrier" brought to mind the saga that preceded the purchase by the Selsey Tramway of their HESPERUS.

Early in 1912 the Selsey directors decided another engine was required to cope with the increasing summer traffic and asked Messrs Kerr Stuart of Stoke on Trent for a quotation. The 'Triana' or 'Claythorne' types were recommended, depending on the condition of the line, and here it seems odd that Colonel Stephens had not been asked to be more specific — though this is probably answered by later events.

The eventual quotation was for a 'Triana' class at £998 or £1098 with copper firebox and brass tubes. Deferred terms were agreed in view of company's none too healthy finances: £100 was to be paid within two weeks of delivery and then £200 p.a. with 6% interest.

The Selsey directors deliberated on the purchase for some weeks and in the meantime Colonel Stephens offered them a secondhand engine for £600, to be reduced later to £525 when the directors thought the price too high! It would appear that Stephens supplemented his income through such dealings in locomotives but in the event his commission on the final deal must have been quite small.

The principal personalities involved in the projected purchase were F Street, a Selsey director, H.G. Phillips, the Manager, and H.F. Stephens, the Engineer, and it was late in May when Kerr Stuart wrote to Street offering a 'Triana' with steel firebox to be delivered at Chichester on 15th July, the commencement date for the two-train summer services.

Street wrote to Phillips suggesting an immediate meeting of the directors to agree acceptance "rather than buy secondhand trash. Please do not fail me. Wire tomorrow before 4 pm. I understand Stephens has approved."

Stephens wired Phillips from Tonbridge the next day for particulars of the 'Triana' and advising against a steel firebox. Upon the directors meeting and learning of this they could not agree upon the purchase but asked Stephens if he could recommend anything else!

Street became bewildered at this stage as he had thought the purchase already agreed in view of the

urgency for delivery of a new locomotive. Accordingly he wired Phillips: "I have advised K.S. to go ahead reserving the right to cancel on Tuesday morning and in the meantime trust you will see Heron-Allen (the Chairman) and persuade him to agree. If we don't take the K.S. engine we shan't get another delivered in time."

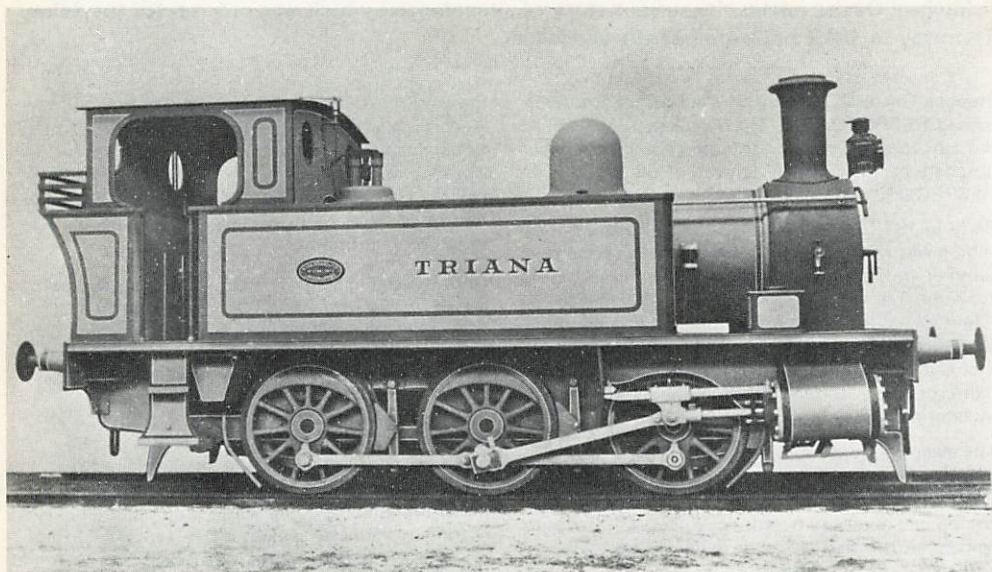
Upon receiving Street's instructions Kerr Stuart wrote to confirm delivery terms stating that as they had some copper in stock they would use this on the firebox. They urged Street to persuade the company to secure the order as soon as possible.

At this stage the Chairman intervened by stating that due to the Company's financial position further discussion must take place before the Board could sanction the purchase. In the meantime Stephens had wired Phillips to go ahead as long as the laden weight did not exceed 20 tons. To confuse matters further, however, he concluded his wire with "If you are in a corner a little Kent & East Sussex or Plymouth & Devonport Railway (sic) engine would no doubt serve your purpose."

Further telegrams followed between Phillips and Kerr Stuart concerning the weight of a 'Triana' class but, as the builders pointed out, all the relevant details were to be found in their catalogue. The directors now appear to have placed the ball in Stephens' court, stating that unless the engineer approved the weight and specifications it was not advisable to buy.

On 31st May Street wrote to Phillips saying that Stephens had agreed to buy the engine with copper firebox for £1098 but that he wanted the engine to have four coupled wheels only, not six. He added "I do not agree but of course we must be guided by our engineer." Kerr Stuart were now informed of Stephens' decision to buy but said they could no longer undertake to have the locomotive in Chichester by 15th July.

Further confusion then arose when Stephens, on reading the catalogue more carefully, realised that the engine would weigh 35 tons laden. He immediately wired Phillips refusing to take responsibility for it. The next few days were taken up with Street, Phillips and Stephens busily sending each other copies of what the others had said with Stephens writing repeatedly to all concerned that he had said he would not go above 20 tons and meant to stick to that!



Kerr Stuart "Triana" Class Locomotive No. 1196

[Hunslet Engine Co.]

Street, thoroughly exasperated by the whole affair, again wrote to Phillips inquiring why Stephens could not make up his mind. Equal exasperation must have been felt by Kerr Stuart for they now wrote a remarkable letter to Street: "Your locomotive, which will be forwarded on 15th July was bought from stock and cannot now be modified unless at an enhanced cost and extended date of delivery we did not object to the inclusion of Stephens' name in the verbal contract of the 4th because we assumed that he was aware of the particulars of the locomotive offered and the terms which have been discussed. As, however, he seems to have peculiar views we regret to have to refuse to accept him as party to a contract in any form whatever."

Street was obviously in a state of desperation and replied to Kerr Stuart with a refusal to take further responsibility. No sooner had he done this than he received a wire from Stephens saying he would take a locomotive of 23 tons laden subject to Kerr Stuart's representative seeing him. Kerr Stuart did in fact agree to such a meeting but "on condition that he explains his letters. Stephens really must not write to us in the dictatorial manner adopted by him, because we object to it, and as we have already pointed out, we cannot allow him, after his disagreeable attitude towards us, to become party to the contract completed before we were aware of his existence."

Stephens now repeated to Phillips that his maximum weight was 23 tons and that even this would require some bridge strengthening. He further considered Kerr Stuart's statements actionable in view of the damage they might do him with the directors and he would consult his solicitor as to the issue of a writ for damages. In his view Kerr Stuart had tried to avoid his inspecting the engine and it seemed odd that they required six weeks to deliver when the locomotive was in stock. He concluded with "... this is the most peculiar business in which I have been engaged during my twenty years experience and it is not likely to lead to a business like conclusion."

Phillips, at the Board's request, now asked Kerr Stuart to provide a copy of the letter from Stephens to which they took exception. This was done and duly discussed at the next Board meeting. The directors backed Stephens and it was unanimously agreed not to buy the engine without the approval of the Company's Engineer.

Kerr Stuart now wrote urging a speedy decision and reminding the directors that the price and terms, especially in view of the company's financial position, did not justify their proceeding with the contract unless the engine was accepted as offered. Such lack of tact was not well received by the Selsey and the Board decided to proceed no further. This provoked Kerr Stuart to render an

account for work already done and to threaten to sue for breach of contract. In the event this was the end of the affair and it may be presumed that Kerr Stuart found a customer for their locomotive elsewhere.

Bereft of their frustrated purchase the Selsey eventually obtained the Plymouth Devonport & South Western Junction HESPERUS for the satisfactorily low price of £250 but not until August. How the summer service was managed in the interim is not recorded but one can well imagine the sighs of relief that must have greeted the conclusion of such a particularly 'peculiar business'.

POSTSCRIPT

The Triana Class was made up of 23 0-6-0 sidetank locomotives built by Kerr Stuart between 1900 and 1926. They were advertised as being 'suitable for gauges of 2 ft. and upwards' but those actually built ranged from 3 ft. to 5 ft. 6 in.

The specimen ordered by the H.M.S.T. had originally been built for stock by Kerr Stuart in 1910 under Order No. 4795 "the gauge to be fixed at a later date". In May 1912 a new Order No. 5889 required completion of the locomotive to 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge for the H.M.S.T. and substituted a copper firebox and brass tubes for the steel varieties previously used. With the cancellation of the H.M.S.T. order the locomotive returned to stock until completed as Kerr Stuart 1196 of 1913 and despatched to the Uruguay Railway at Montevideo via Grimsby and Antwerp.

Had the H.M.S.T. contract been completed the locomotive would have been the only one of the Class to be ordered by an English railway company though two, Nos. 1348 and 1349 of 1916, were diverted from their intended purchaser, the Baranquilla Railway & Pier Company, to the Ministry of Munitions at Hereford. The rest of the class went for export, mainly to Spain and South America. We are grateful to the Hunslet Engine Company and the Industrial Railway Society for this information.

S.R.G.

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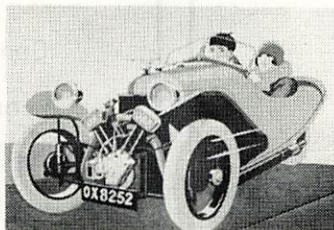
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Letters to the Editor

Signalling the restored Railway

Sir — What an extraordinary letter from Mr. Simon B. Green in your Spring (No. 15) edition! As he has been so adequately answered from the signalling point of view, there is little I can add except to say that I can't help wondering why he is a member when we have, for example, "Wine & Dine" trains, "Santa Specials" and The Buffer Stop Shop. For a light railway, these are surely felonious compared with the misdemeanour of a bracket signal.

However, let me be the last to spoil his enjoyment of trains. Although I have a feeling one can no longer obtain those engines which were motivated by the winding of a key, the electric train sets are quite safe in the hands of boys of most ages. An engine, two or three trucks and an oval of track around the hearth rug make a jolly good light railway.

Canterbury, Kent

Peter Clark

Sir — I applaud Simon Green's attempt to provoke thought and discussion about the future appearance and fabric of our railway, but feel that his letter leaves much unsaid.

Now that the railway has reached what is to be a period of consolidation, it seems that the time has come for us all to stop and think about the appearance that we wish it to take on in the years to come. Are we prepared to let the railway become a completely functional affair, or do we wish to retain some of the character and charm of a branch line light railway that we are still able to create with the materials at our disposal? Even before I put a full stop to this sentence, I can hear the "functionalists" shouting from afar that it is "impracticable", in their words, to run a railway without such or such a piece of equipment or gadget, such as the proposed electric point motor at Wittersham, and to some extent I sympathise. It will never be possible to recreate the K.&E.S.R. of the past, and a degree of modernity and mechanisation is absolutely necessary to make the most of our limited labour resources. However, between this uncontested level of modernity and the complete austerity (no pun intended) that some wish to create, there is a wide margin for decisions that depend, quite simply, on whether we, the working members, can be bothered or not to make the effort required to create something that conveys the atmosphere of a branch line earlier this century,

rather than that of "British Railways twenty years ago".

The functionalists, those who are unwilling to make this effort and can see no further challenge at Tenterden than to operate "a railway service", whatever its nature, will immediately answer that the average passenger knows little or nothing about railways and is happy if his train is drawn by a "steam loco". If this is so, why, then, does the railway's sales line mention centenarian terriers and Edwardian bird-cage coaches rather than saddle-tank locomotives of 1953 vintage, that can still be seen working in collieries, and coaches of a similar age that still run on B.R. in vast numbers? Why then does the splendid "Wealden Pullman" publicity paint an attractive portrait of the Pullman coach and not of the "Elizabethan" splendour of the Mk. I in which the unsuspecting diner may find himself? If this argument fails to cut ice, the functionalist will, alas, repeat once again that all-time favourite non-argument, that if Col. Stephens had had access to this, that, or the other modern gadget, he would have used it; let it be said in reply, that the prices of coal and scrap iron having reached the heights of the last twenty years, this admirably practical man would have sold his railway and purchased a fleet of buses. Is this what those apparently dedicated to the spirit of Col. Stephens want, or is it merely the best argument available to defend the modern and practical in one of the few places where these qualities are inherently undesirable? The truth is that while the average passenger, it is true, knows little about railways, he is sensitive to an impression and atmosphere of aged authenticity, such as is so excellently marketed by our nearest competitor.

In the chairman's speech to the A.G.M. two years ago, Stephen Bennett expressed a desire to see ours become an outstanding example of that species, the preserved railway; if this admirable ambition is to stand any chance of fulfilment, it seems to me that the railway must make an effort along the above lines, lacking as it does the breathtaking scenery or express locomotives, for example, that may lend considerable attraction to some of our competitors.

Allow me to close by stating the obvious in the belief that it has been overlooked yet again. The preserved railway is, by definition, whimsical and impractical through and through, and it is precisely these qualities, which are so notably absent in contemporary life, that our passengers expect to find and take delight in when they visit

our railway; those who seek to rationalise and modernise therefore misunderstand it completely. If the coaches we ask our passengers to ride in are those which they may use on B.R. to ride through considerably more attractive and varied countryside than ours and at less expense, then it is up to use to provide the maximum possible interest in our locomotives, stations, signalling installations and all the other paraphernalia that went to make up a branch line earlier this century.

Langton, Kent

T. Lewis

Railway Philately

Sir — I was delighted to see the further contribution by Dr. Paul Waters on the subject of "The philately of Colonel Stephens' railways" (No. 15 Edition) and am wondering if such articles could be a regular feature in "The Tenterden Terrier" — in addition to, of course, and not in place of the fascinating essays on tickets by Robin Doust. Perhaps some of

Dr. Waters' fellow members of the Railway Philatelic Group could be persuaded to write on aspects in which they are particularly expert? Whilst I appreciate that these matters have little bearing on the running of our Railway at present, when at some time in the future there are stations at Wittersham Road and Bodiam, maybe it would be advantageous to operate a railway letter service? After recouping the costs of producing the first stamps and covers, there might follow some income for the Company. The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway made its first issue of railway letter stamps only last May. Incidentally, if any readers would like information regarding railway philately in general and/or the Railway Philatelic Group in particular, will they please write to me, the Hon. Secretary, at 15 Mount Pleasant Lane, Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts AL2 3UX.

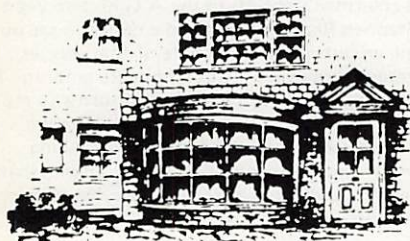
Arthur Brookhouse

(Further contributions are welcome on this subject, providing that they relate to "Colonel Stephens' railways" — Ed).

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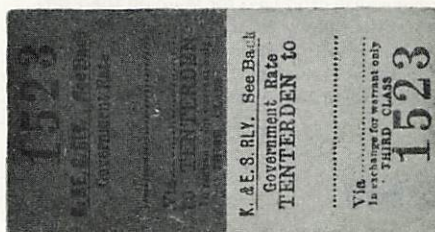
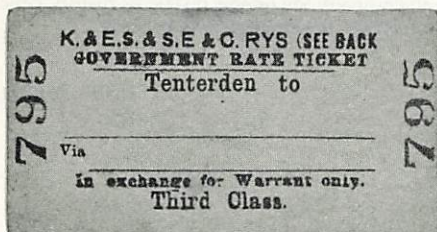
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From Our Ticket Collection

Government Rate



Following the recent ticket articles, I was most interested to receive, via the Editor, correspondence from a fellow member and ticket collector, Mr. N. C. Langridge of Littlehampton, who raises several queries concerning tickets featured in the "From Our Ticket Collection" series, and passes on much interesting information not previously known to me gleaned from his own ticket collection. I hope to refer to some of the points raised in future articles, and am most grateful to Mr. Langridge for his observations. It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that my own knowledge of the tickets and fare collection methods used on the K.&E.S.R. is entirely derived from many years' study of my own and other people's collections, and any further information from other members concerning the subject would be very welcome — especially from anyone who may have worked in Colonel Stephens' offices at Tonbridge, or in any of the Railway's booking offices before or just after Nationalisation.

One of the interesting points raised by Mr. Langridge concerns the special "Government Rate" tickets of the type illustrated in this issue. These tickets were held by all stations, and were issued to various privileged persons engaged on government business. Members of the armed forces used them when travelling on duty, and first class examples existed for the use of officers. Certain other categories of public servant may also have received them, and they were only issued in exchange for an official warrant, which was presented at the booking office. These tickets were normally for through journeys onto the main line railways, and they raise the interesting question of K.&E.S.R. practice with regards to the printing of such "through" tickets, particularly those of the "blank card" type as illustrated, in which the destination was entered by hand. Mr. Langridge comments that although most K.&E.S.R. "through" tickets were printed by the S.E.&C.R. or Southern

Railway (usually with both K.&E.S.R. and S.E.&C.R. or S.R. initials in the heading) Government Rate and Staff Privilege through blank tickets were printed by the K.&E.S.R. printers. However, this was not a universal practice, since at least one example is known both to Mr. Langridge and myself of an S.E.&C.R. printed Government Rate blank single from Tenterden Town. This is ticket No. 795 in our illustration (Mr. Langridge has No. 793 from the same series) and the style of typography and use of the joint K.&E.S.R.&S.E.&C.R. Rys heading mark it as a main line railway printing. For comparison, the corresponding return ticket, although closely following the standard S.E.&C.R. layout including the vertical arrangement of the ticket (normal K.&E.S.R. returns were printed horizontally) is undoubtedly a K.&E.S.R. printing — the use of the K.&E.S.R. initials alone and the style of the numerals are a clear give-away. The single is pale buff coloured, and the return has the upper, return, half in red, whilst the outward half is pale buff. Just why some of these tickets were printed by the main line company and others by the K.&E.S.R. is shrouded in mystery. The S.E.&C.R. printing is the odd man out, as it is the only such example known to me, whilst I have several examples of the K.&E.S.R. productions from different stations, and I would be most interested if any reader can shed any light on this point.

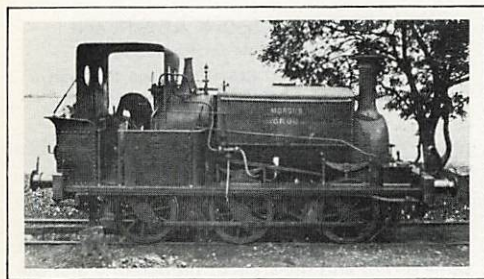
Incidentally, Mr. Langridge does raise another query on which further information would be very welcome. It has been suggested by some authorities that tickets for all Colonel Stephens' lines were printed at the famous printing works which existed for many years at Rolvenden. This establishment certainly printed timetables and publicity materials for many of the railways, but doubt has been expressed as to whether tickets were produced there, and it has been suggested

that there may have been a ticket printing capacity at the Tonbridge offices in Salford Terrace. On the other hand, some tickets, especially the paper ones produced for issue on the Ford and Shefflex railcars, bear Williamson or Edmonson imprints. Did the K.&E.S.R. print any tickets at Rolvenden, or were all tickets produced by outside printers? Was there a ticket

printing machine at Tonbridge? I would be most interested to hear from anyone who can shed any light on these minor mysteries and thus help to complete the jig-saw puzzle of history which the K.E.&S.R. tickets have now become.

Robin Doust

Morous



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I have heard it said that H. F. Stephens was a very early pioneer in the development of the diesel engine for railway purposes in this country. Is there any evidence to support this; surely all the locomotives used on his lines were steam — apart from the petrol railcars and tractors?

Wittersham, Kent

Martin Phillips

The story has an element of truth in it; in March 1895, Stephens wrote to the Board of Trade setting out his proposals for the Rye & Camber Tramway. He states . . . "The power will be an oil motor on a passenger bogie car with a load of not more than one ton per wheel or two tons per axle, with a wheel base of 20 feet. . . . There will be one motor on the line and speed limited to 10 miles per hour or 4 miles through points. . . . The Company are anxious to use temporarily a small steam engine whilst the rail motor is being constructed or should the oil car not prove a success, then to work the line by steam."

A further reference is contained in "The Locomotive" magazine of 15th September 1922.

In a short news item on a railcar which had been delivered to the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway, it stated:— "The first Drewry railcar was constructed to the instructions of Lieut-Col H.F. Stephens, Engineer & General Manager. . . . As long ago as 1890 (he) arranged an old Priestman oil engine to drive a tramcar bogie, so that he can claim to be the pioneer of the internal combustion engine for traction purposes, and of the motor car too, as there were certainly none on the road until after this date."

It is certain that the vehicle never got beyond the design stage as Stephens referred to the matter verbally to Charles F. Klapper, the railway historian, in the 1920's. As the Rye & Camber line was not constructed until 1895, it is assumed that the earlier experiments were purely speculative, possibly conceived when Stephens was serving his apprenticeship at the Neasden works of the Metropolitan Railway.

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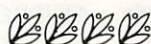
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