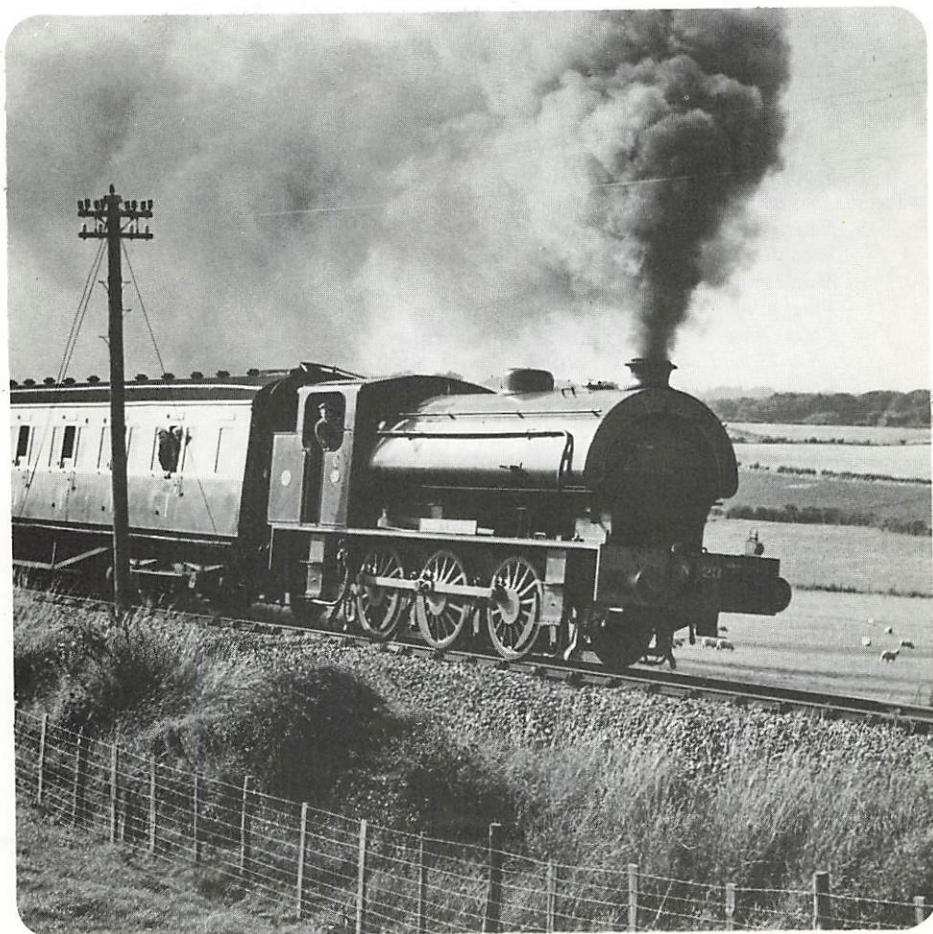


# The Tenterden Terrier



Number 24

Spring 1981



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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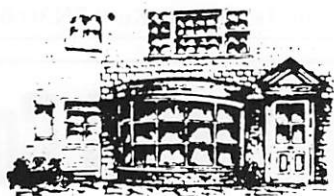
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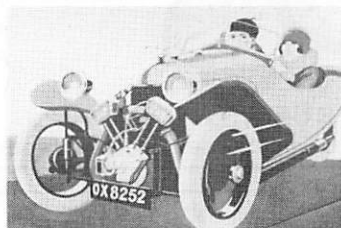
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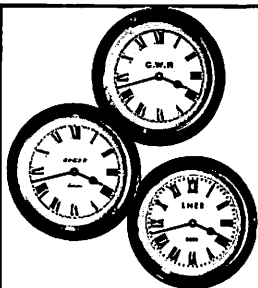
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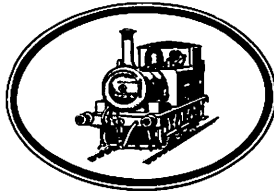
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# The Tenterden Terrier



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1981

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## FRONT COVER

*No. 23 approaching Cranbrook Road  
with a 7 coach train on 21st Sept 1980  
during the Tenterden Steam & Country Fair.  
[Brian Stephenson]*

## Editorial

### My Word is My Bond

The instant success of the bond issue has given immediate impetus to the plans for extending the Railway to Northiam. In the light of the economic situation and pressure on consumer incomes one might have anticipated greater difficulty in raising the not inconsiderable sum of £20,000 but in the event the uniqueness of the issue resulted in not only members, but stockbrokers and bond collectors all over the World scrambling to make purchases. The upshot is that money has had to be returned to unsuccessful applicants who sent in their forms after 24 January. In the knowledge that bond number 001 has already changed hands at auction for £130 and 007 (signed by Mr. Roger Moore) for £42.50, the lucky bond holders will be advised to deposit their certificates in the bank, rather than hang them over the fireplace. Furthermore, it now seems most unlikely that anyone will wish to jeopardise the value of their investment by cutting off those coupons!

\* \* \* \* \*

Included in this issue is the cumulative index for the last four years which is intended to be detached by those members who wish to bind their copies. We are indebted to Tom Burnham who undertook the gargantuan task of classifying the many hundreds of references.

# Lineside News

Compiled by Paul Sutton

*Readers will have been aware for some time of Area Group activities in various spheres but may not fully appreciate the valuable contribution they make to Railway funds as well as publicising the K.&E.S.R. in a wider area. Group reports in this issue show what can be achieved off the railway, whether it be in the form of proceeds from model railway exhibitions, acquiring redundant materials or organizing "events". To them all – our very grateful thanks.*

## Locomotives

There has been considerable progress at Rolvenden in recent months; the new members of staff referred to in the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* have certainly proved their worth and work has been not only confined to the locomotives, but to the general facilities. Thanks to Colin Edwards and his helpers, the shed floor has been considerably extended; Chris Lowery provided the lighting in these new areas as well as improving the lighting and power points generally in the locomotive shed.

The basic steelwork for the extension/machine shop is now in place and it is hoped that the work will be complete by early spring. This will increase the floor area by 800 square feet and

enable various machines to be used, which had formerly been in store. A machine shop is now more important than ever, as many of the locomotives that are coming due for overhaul will require a fair amount of machining work. The department lacks the attention of people with general building experience and this will be particularly needed when work commences on the long-awaited "Amenities Block" which will include toilets, a staff room, office and secure stores; this will be constructed on a mezzanine floor in half of the two end bays within the shed.

The coal stage, constructed by Paul Sayce and helpers last summer, is to be extended as soon as possible. This has already resulted in the coal being considerably cleaner than when coaling was done with our mechanical shovel, straight off the ground.

On the mechanical front, No. 22 successfully completed its stationary steam test on 17 January and is due to enter service on 4 April. In recent weeks cab windows have been fitted and plating has been completed in and around the bunker. A special mention for Fred Fisher,



*No. 24 heads the last train of the season, as it passes through Rolvenden on 1st January 1981.*  
[Paul Sutton]

who has spent many hours of conscientious work painting the locomotive in its new livery of black, later to be lined out in red. No. 24 will be withdrawn from service when No. 22 comes in; this Austerity has been the mainstay of motive power in the late season last year and has been the only locomotive with steam heating – essential for the Wealden Pullman and Santa trains. Rebuilding of No. 25 has progressed rapidly; the boiler has been re-tubed and is being prepared for a hydraulic insurance test. Cleaning continues in preparation for painting the inner frames and motion. The pistons and valve gear have all been fitted under the direction of Bob Forsyth and the “Northiam” nameplates have been cast from one of the originals kindly loaned by the National Railway Museum, York.

Work on Ford No. 40 has concentrated on the engine compartment. The new paxolin meter panel with the renovated meters has been fitted to replace the original wooden panel, which was life expired. In addition, the new paxolin resistor panel with renovated generator resistors has been fitted in conjunction with a new voltage regulator shelf. New window frames are being fabricated and safety glass will be fitted to the four fixed lights in the body sides. Internal repainting is being carried out as various areas in the main engine room become available.

### Carriage & Wagon

Work has of necessity concentrated on the R. U. Restaurant Car. Both water tanks have been removed from the roof, tested, relagged and replaced. All the kitchen plumbing has been overhauled and the missing gas fittings, including the cooker burners have been obtained, tested and replaced by Charlie Masterson. All internal panelwork has now been completed but the rest of the external paintwork will have to wait until the spring. The Headcorn end gangway has also been refitted.

The only wagon to receive attention recently has been the ex L.N.E.R. ballast hopper which has had the official check over in readiness for an intensive period of use between January and April. We have at last been able to acquire a Mark I brake end vehicle; in this case a 39 seater B.S.O. No. E 9269 built in 1956. It has latterly been used by the Engineers' department at Hitchen where it has carried the internal No. 041332 and is still in lined maroon livery. We have been reliably informed that this could be the last B.S.O. to come up for disposal for some time not containing blue asbestos. As yet no

movement details have been finalized, but it will be numbered 73. At the end of “Lineside News” there is a schedule of K.&E.S.R. coaching stock showing the current condition of all items.

The Tenterden Rolling Stock Group can now offer reproduction S.E.C.R. carriage prints, size 24½” x 10” in four colours, as illustrated in the Summer 1975 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*. The price, post paid is £1 or 85p if collected from the station. A six page stock book giving particulars of the 48 wagons and coaches on the line at present is available price 20p, plus S.A.E.

### Stations

Visitors to Tenterden will notice that the area is beginning to look considerably tidier, following the formation of a separate stations department. The white railings bordering Station Road have been repainted, the concrete lamp posts given a coat of Sandtex and work has started on painting the platform seats. A four-bar fence in the old K.&E.S.R. style is being erected between the station building and Station Road to replace the existing sheep wire, which was near to collapse. Repairs to the platform canopy are needed and a complete repaint, but unless the money is forthcoming from an outside source, this will have to be put off until at least 1982, as the Company is unable to provide the money this year. Regular jobs have included hedge cutting, lawn mowing and maintaining the picnic area. It is very pleasing to record that the Tenterden & District Horticultural Society has agreed to tend the gardens, which have been sadly neglected since Tom Waller moved away from the area two years ago. The Society has produced a “Master Plan” which should provide blooms throughout most of the running season and as a starter, two hundredweight of daffodil bulbs have been planted.

At Rolvenden, under the watchful eye of station agent, Bill Marshall, the scene is much improved since the Thameside Group assumed responsibility for maintenance. The canopy is complete and as weather permits, work continues on painting the fencing and station seats and wiring the lights. John Harman is to be congratulated on his expertise in carpentry.

Wittersham Road will be repainted this summer by the Weald Group who originally built it; the first three of the station oil lamps have been restored and were used regularly last autumn during the running of the Wealden Pullman trains.





*Concrete panels at Northiam, looking towards Wittersham Road, 4th January 1981.*

*[Paul Sutton]*

#### **Permanent Way**

Routine Winter maintenance has been carried out on the Rolvenden/Wittersham Road section with particular attention being paid to drainage, and depth of ballast at various places. A point has recently been installed at Wittersham Road which will lead to the future permanent way depot sidings. Whilst in the area the opportunity was taken to level, pack and realign the turnout at the bottom of the loop. A Matissa tamper combined with an aligner will be coming to the line sometime in April, by which time all outstanding work on drains, ballasting and re-sleeping should have been completed. Concrete sleepers purchased at the same time as those used in the wet cutting have now been moved to the other side of the level crossing gates at Wittersham Road and spaced out in preparation for relaying; a further supply is being purchased, using some of the bond issue money, to replace completely the existing wooden section between Wittersham Road and the start of the concrete panels just this side of the Hexden Channel Bridge.

#### **Clearance**

Tidying up has continued on the Tenterden/Rolvenden section. This was mostly

routine winter work but included the felling of two diseased elm trees at the top of the bank between Tenterden Station and the home signal. Kent as a county has suffered particularly badly from Dutch Elm disease and it is to be hoped that remedial treatment at present undergoing tests and also the new disease resistant type now being imported will restore our landscape in the years to come. Six mature willows also have to be removed from the Rolvenden side of Newmill Bridge as the centres of their trunks are rotting. The department has recently replaced its chain-saws by a brand new one supplied by the Company and a very good second-hand one out of funds supplied by the Maidstone Area Group. Attention will soon be transferred to the section beyond Wittersham Road. Thanks to Tim Stanger's efforts, groups of pupils from Wildernes School, Sevenoaks, who have previously worked on the railway, will be assisting the department at fortnightly intervals, commencing on 23 March. The alternate weeks will also be busy with groups of scouts providing extra help under the direction of Chris Kislingbury. Members of the Thameside group have been active at Bodiam clearing the undergrowth towards the headshunt, in preparation for their Steam at



Bodiam weekend on May 24 and 25. For some time now the department has been concerned at the loss of roosting and nesting sites of numerous species of small birds which live along the line owing to routine clearance. To alleviate this problem in future, as a matter of policy, specimens of hawthorn, blackthorn, etc., amongst the scrub will be encouraged to grow into proper trees, and also patches of dense ground cover which is clear of both track and fence lines will be allowed to remain. Two such areas have already been earmarked.

#### **Area Group News**

**Ashford.** The redundant track work from Batchelors Foods was moved to the railway during January and February. Materials recovered included two sets of points, and over 300 yards of chaired track. The Fifth annual model railway exhibition was held in Ashford on Saturday 28 February. The Group again will have a stand at the County Show in July, and will be represented at other local events through the summer. The Group urgently needs new members as numbers have declined in recent months in spite of the interesting programme of speakers and films at the meetings held on the third Wednesday of every month at the Centrepiece, Bank Street, Ashford, at 7.30 p.m. Eric Graves is still able to supply a few sets of vintage K.&E.S.R. photographs at £1.00 a set. Please contact him direct on Ashford 23687.

**Maidstone.** The group has recently donated £150 to the Clearance Department for the purchase of a good second hand chain-saw. Several members helped on the Santa Specials contributing to their increased success. On 15 January Jack Fox was interviewed on Radio Medway's Breakfast Show and as well as giving details of David Shepherd's visit to Maidstone, he talked generally about restoration of the K.&E.S.R. Further publicity included a window display at the Anglia Building Society in Maidstone. It has been decided that the Group will buy a P.M.V. which will form part of the Wealden Pullman set and be used partly by the Staff as well as storing non-consumable items. It will cost between £300-£400 and will be paid entirely from the proceeds of wastepaper collections. As a change in B.R. policy has meant that parcel services will be withdrawn in the near future, vast numbers of P.M.V.s will be made redundant and we should therefore be able to pick out one in good order. The 1981 programme started on 29 January and will continue on the last Thursday in every month at the Wesley Community Centre, Brewer Street.

The annual model railway exhibition will also be held there on Saturday, 28 March from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and it is hoped to have a Hornby Railway's "Zero 1" train control demonstration.

**Surrey.** The time is rapidly approaching for the Group's Annual Model Railway exhibition to be held on Saturday 14 March at Holy Trinity Halls, High Street, Guildford, from 9.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Admission 35p adults and 20p children or family ticket for £1.00. Last year over 2,500 people visited the exhibition which resulted in a profit of over £700 being passed to K.&E.S.R. funds. This year there will be a variety of layouts in several gauges, trade stands selling models, accessories, books, etc., as well as the usual refreshments, and the highlight will be an L.G.B. garden railway layout on the stage. We are most grateful for assistance with this from a local garden centre and the resident drama group. Also running for the second time is a colouring competition for children which is held in conjunction with the local newspaper, with all entries being displayed within the exhibition area which ensures that all budding artists and their parents are guaranteed to visit!

**Sussex.** This Group was formed in November 1980 and various activities are planned for the coming months, including meetings at Westham village hall and sales stands at the Heathfield Model Railway Club Exhibition in April and at the Festival of Transport at Hellingly in August. Members have undertaken the restoration of Northiam station as a project and as a fund raising exercise is planning a bus rally at the Railway during August. Further details about the Group's activities may be obtained from Tim Lawrence on Hailsham 845108.

**Thameside.** Members have been very busy during the closed season. George Wright and Colin Whitbread have rebuilt and overhauled the 6 rail flange greasers which were installed on the line by the group nearly two years ago. At Wittersham Road, John Harman from the Rolvenden wood yard and Bob Gilbert have made a start on the signal box roof while at Tenterden Charlie Masterson has been busy re-plumbing the Mark I R.U.

The Rolvenden Station project has almost been completed with only a small amount of paint work outstanding and the platform fence to be erected, which, however, cannot be done until the Rolvenden shed extension has been completed. The group has acquired and renovated a permanent way trolley for future

general use on the railway. A base formed of redundant sleepers has been built opposite the platform at Rolvenden so that when required the trolley can be lifted easily to and from the running line.

After the tremendous success of the Steam at Bodiam event last August, which raised well over £1,500, it has been decided to hold two similar events at Bodiam again this year. The first will be held over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend 24 and 25 May. It will be basically the same as last year with a few added attractions. No. 12 Marcia will again haul passengers in the District Railway coach from Bodiam platform along the head shunt towards Junction Road and back again. Sales and refreshment stands will be set up in the station forecourt, together with Paul Hatcher's 1/3 scale model traction engine. It is also hoped to have a 160 ft passenger carrying 5" gauge model of the old K.&E.S.R. 0-8-0 loco "Hecate". A new major attraction also planned will be a diesel railbus service between Bodiam and Dixer where a new permanent halt will be built with sleepers laid on a brick base and approximately one coach length. If all goes to plan, work on the site at Dixer will commence in February and will be completed over an 8 week period. The second Bodiam event will take place over the August bank holiday weekend; further details will appear in the next issue. The Group would be glad of any help with preparations for these events and during January and February will be clearing the track along the headshunt. If you can give assistance please contact George Wright on Erith (03224) 42757.

**Weald.** A cheque for £500 has been sent to Company Treasurer, David Felton, towards the cost of purchasing the R.U. Restaurant Car, leaving only £100 to "clear the debt". Part of the money was raised by the Sales Stand at The

Bluebell Vintage Sunday on 14 September 1980 where gross receipts exceeded £120; over £300 came from activities at the Steam and Country Fair and further sums from December's model railway exhibition in Tunbridge Wells. The committee has asked the carriage and wagon department to provide estimated costs for refitting the restaurant car which the Group hope it may also be able to pay for. A new "Group Project" is currently under consideration; ideas on this so far have included renovation of the A.C. Cars Railbus or taking on the responsibility of the care and maintenance of Wittersham Road Station. In any case, repainting of the booking office and surrounding area will be completed this summer. Group area meetings are held at the Chequers Inn, High Street, Tonbridge, at 8.00 p.m. on the second Tuesday in each month. The next model railway exhibition will be held at Bligh's Hotel, Sevenoaks, on Saturday 11th April from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

#### Museum

October 1981 will mark the 50th Anniversary of Colonel Stephen's death and it is intended to commemorate this important event in the Railway's history. If any reader has material that can be loaned to the museum, for inclusion in a special display this summer, would he or she please contact the Archivist.

Work has been going on in the museum throughout the winter; nameplates are now attractively mounted on the walls and a new show case has been built. Work will start shortly on an office display, with the intention of creating as far as possible the decor that existed at 23 Salford Terrace, Tonbridge, in the 1920's – the Indian Summer of the Stephens empire. Visitors to the museum totalled 8,000 in 1980, very similar to the previous year.



*Through the  
Pullman window.  
[Brian Stephenson]*

## Schedule of Coaching Stock, January 1981

| K.&E.S.R.<br>No. | Type                                  | Condition  |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 51               | Pullman<br>"Theodora"                 | Static use at Tenterden as refreshment coach. Will receive major overhaul and return to traffic when new catering building established at Tenterden. |
| 52               | Pullman<br>"Barbara"                  | In regular use on the "Wealden Pullman"  |
| 53               | Maunsell B.S.O.                       | In exclusive use on the "Wealden Pullman"  |
| 54               | Maunsell B.S.O.                       | In regular service. Will require heavy body repairs within next two years.   |
| 55               | Maunsell C.K.                         | Out of use awaiting heavy repairs.   |
| 56               | Maunsell C.K.                         | In regular service used as "spare" coach. Will require major overhaul within next two years.   |
| 57               | Maunsell F.K.                         | In use at Tenterden as S&T Dept. Mess and Sleeping Coach. Externally painted green. Awaiting restoration.  |
| 58               | Maunsell S.O.                         | In use at Tenterden as C&W Stores. Externally painted green. Awaiting restoration.   |
| 59               | Maunsell S.K.                         | In store at Northiam. Awaiting restoration.  |
| 60               | S.E.C.R. Birdcage<br>Brake            | Out of use and sheeted over awaiting heavy overhaul.   |
| 61               | S.E.C.R. Birdcage<br>Brake            | Undergoing heavy restoration.  |
| 62               | L.S.W.R. Comp.                        | In use at Tenterden as C&W Stores. Sheeted over awaiting restoration.  |
| 63               | B.R. Mk.I S.K.                        | In regular service.  |
| 64               | B.R. Mk.I T.S.O.                      | In regular service.  |
| 65               | B.R. Mk.I T.S.O.                      | In regular service.  |
| 66               | S.R. B.Y. Brake                       | In use as C&W Stores and sheeted over.   |
| 67               | N.L.R. Brake II<br>(Woolwich<br>Coach | Out of use awaiting heavy overhaul.  |
| 68               | S.E.C.R. Birdcage<br>Brake            | In use at Tenterden as C&W Stores and mess coach. Awaiting restoration.  |
| 69               | B.R. Mk.I R.U.                        | Undergoing restoration and refitting for use on the "Wealden Pullman".   |
| 70               | L.C.D.R.<br>Brake III                 | Undergoing heavy restoration.  |
| 71               | Pullman<br>"Cambria"                  | In use at Tenterden as C&W Stores. Awaiting restoration.   |
| 72               | Maunsell B.S.O.                       | In store at Northiam. Awaiting restoration.  |
| 73               | B.R. Mk.I B.S.O.                      | Shortly to arrive.   |

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# Pressing on to Northiam

John Miller outlines the problems that the Railway faces in extending the operating line over a further 2½ miles

In May 1980, the Board took the decision to press on with the extension of the Company's services from Wittersham Road to Northiam. In the first instance a professional report was commissioned on the state of the track and the various bridges and this concluded that about £40,000 at 1980 prices would be required to open to Northiam, taking into account upgrading of the track for the axle loading of 'Austerity' class locomotives and fairly major repairs to the Rother bridge.

The work will be tackled in six stages, of which the first three are planned for completion by late 1982, at a cost of £20,000. These are:-

1. Finishing off the Wittersham Road station site, including the provision of engineers sidings.
2. Upgrading the track between Wittersham Road and Hexden bridge.
3. Renovation of the Rother bridge itself.
4. Completion of the approaches to Hexden bridge and upgrading the track from there to the Rother bridge.
5. Upgrading the track between Rother bridge and Northian station.
6. Repairs to Northiam station and change in the layout of the site to meet the requirements of passenger services.

Finance for the first three stages has proved to be no problem. On 26 November 1980, the Company launched a £20,000 issue of 8% unsecured bearer bonds 1991/96, in multiples of £25 each. This was a unique event in that it is believed to be the first time that both a guarantee company and a registered charity has ever attempted to raise money by means of a fixed interest security. Furthermore, it is undoubtedly the first issue of bearer bonds by any limited company to U.K. residents since the War and in consequence the bonds have attracted a wide degree of interest and support, not only from members, but also from bond collectors all over the world. The issue was fully subscribed within eight weeks of the lists opening and the company has subsequently had to return money to those applicants who sent their forms in after 24 January. 273 of the successful applications came from company members for a total of 544 bonds and the remaining 256 from 153 members of the public. The uniqueness of the issue has ensured that the bonds will rapidly increase in value; already

bond No. 001 has changed hands at auction for £130 and bond 007 (signed by Mr Roger Moore) for £42.50. A further bond issue is contemplated in about two years time to finance the remaining three stages of the programme.

The Railway can therefore be well satisfied with its most successful fund raising operation ever and the fact that it has achieved yet another "first". Members will recall that just as the Rother Valley (Light) Railway Company was the very first to be granted an order under the 1896 Light Railway Act, so The Tenterden Railway Company was the first operating railway company to be registered as a charity in 1972.

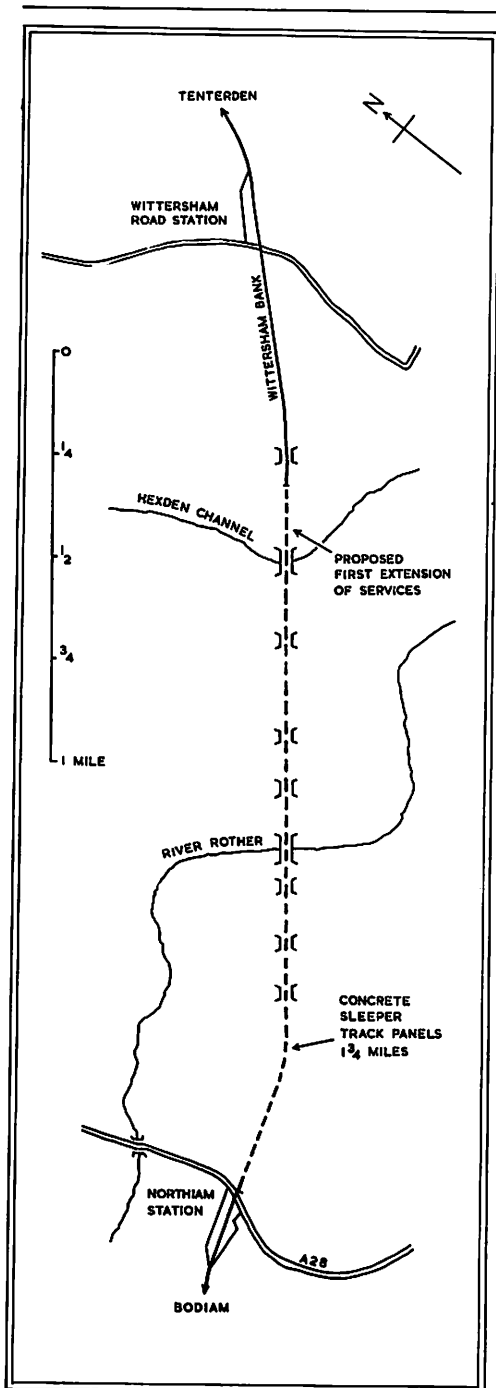
Although money is now in the bank, a great deal of hard work will be needed in 1981 if the ambitious expansion plans are to be completed in time; much will depend on how suitable recruits can be seconded to the labour force. A more detailed look at the work involved under each of the six stages will give a better idea of the task ahead:

## (1) Wittersham Road station

The earthworks behind the platform have to be completed and seeded with grass. The area between the north boundary fence and the slope behind the platform levelled, drainage put in, and a hardcore roadway laid from the car park to the lower end of the site where the engineers sidings will be constructed. The area for the sidings has to be levelled and drained. And a drain provided from the former Shrewsbury Abbey water-tower, installed in 1980. All this work is scheduled to be completed during the Spring of 1981. In particular, the pointwork giving access to the new engineers sidings has to be laid into the running line by the water-tower during the "closed" season (i.e. by the end of March). The hardcore roadway is to give access for contractors' lorries bringing in ballast, sleepers and other materials needed for the extension work.

## (2) Wittersham Road to Hexden bridge

This section, amounting to nearly a mile in length, includes Wittersham Bank which is second only to Tenterden bank in its gradients. Most of the section is on wooden sleepers, virtually all of which will have to be replaced. About 150 yards short of Hexden bridge, the track changes to the 75lb per yard concrete



sleeper track panels which continue all the way to Northiam crossing. There is one minor bridge to be repaired, and as on the entire route, the track requires ballast, accommodation crossings and fences need repairs and the lineside cleared of undergrowth. This work is scheduled for completion during 1981 so that in the 1982 season a railbus service can be introduced between Wittersham and Hexden bridge as the first extension of public services.

### (3) Rother Bridge

With a span of 66 feet, this is the largest engineering structure on the railway. It is planned that work will start on this during summer of 1981, concurrently with the work on section (2). The bridge has to be cleaned, de-rusted, treated and then primed. New stages will have to be welded-in to repair the metal work of the side members and the decking will have to be repaired and strengthened. The whole bridge will require painting, and some repairs will be necessary to the concrete abutments. Up to £10,000 has been allowed for this work. At one time it was thought that the bridge would have to be replaced as being beyond repair, but it is now thought that this remedial work will extend its life by 15 years when the bridge will have to be re-considered for replacement.

### (4) Hexden bridge to Rother bridge

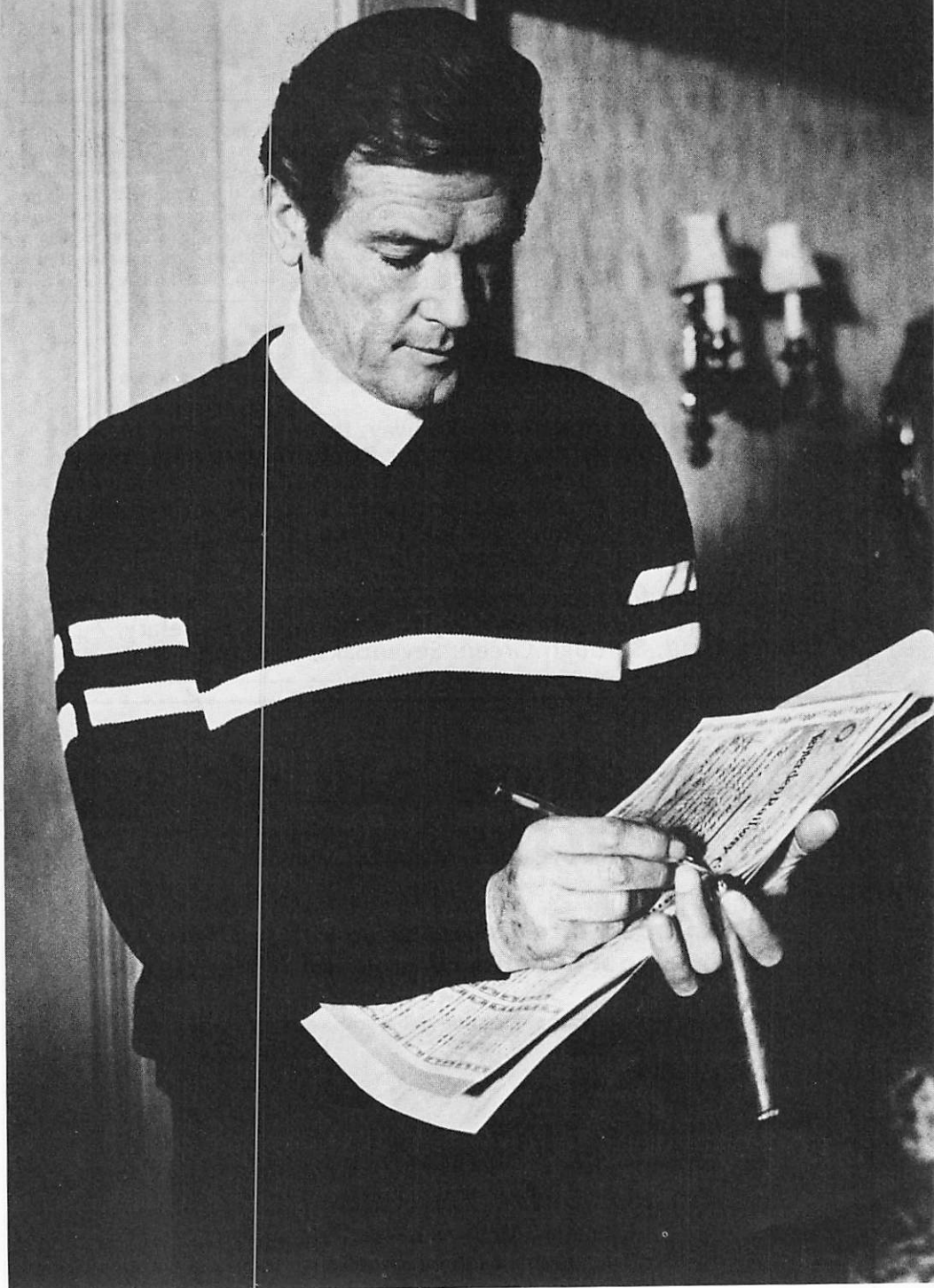
Hexden bridge was replaced in 1979, the height raised nearly 3 feet in order to be consistent with other local flood defences. There is still some minor work to complete at Hexden and the approaches on either side have to be brought up to correct levels. All the concrete sleeper track panels on this three quarter mile section will be dismantled, re-assembled and aligned; broken sleepers will be replaced and extra sleepers inserted to give more support under rail joints. Three minor bridges and various culverts and drains require some attention. It is hoped that work may start on this section during 1981 and be completed in 1982.

### (5) Rother bridge to Northiam station

This section is a little over a mile in length and consists of a long curve between two straights. There are a further three minor bridges and various culverts and drains needing attention. Included in the work on this section will be the installation of crossing gates over the A28 road at Northiam, probably the busiest road crossing on the railway.

### (6) Northiam station

A small working party will be set up to consider



*Bond 007 being signed by Roger Moore.*

*[Danjaq S.A.]*



the overall future development of the site. This station (and Bodiam) remain much as they were in "the old days" and while the present day commercial and operational requirements will have to be considered it is hoped that we may retain (and restore) the essential atmosphere of the "light railway" station. Certainly the station building and existing platform will have to be

repaired, and perhaps extended.

Finally, completion of work already in hand on the signalling system at Wittersham Road this summer will allow the movement of engineer's trains between passenger workings and in due course enable us to use the railbus for passenger services on the restored sections as we gradually push the limit of operation towards Northiam.

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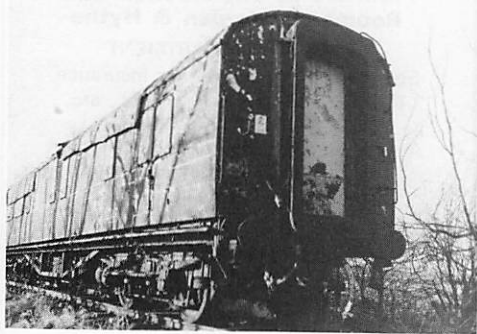
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# Night Special

In the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*, David Dine, John Liddel and Paul Ramsden told of their 200 mile journey north from Tenterden to Beighton station on 17th June 1980 to rescue pullman car "Cambria" for the Kent & East Sussex Railway. 48 hours later and with Cambria safely delivered to Rolvenden the trio set off again in search of further relics.



*Maunsell B.S.O. No. 72 stored near  
Hexden Bridge, 5th January 1981*

*[Paul Sutton]*



*"Cambria" at Rolvenden,  
2st September 1980.*

*[Brian Stephenson]*

The time the destination was Margate where there was a 1906 L.S.W.R. Box truck awaiting collection. When we arrived, the vehicle was from the siding nearest to the car park but a six foot fence was in between. The low loader was also there, but there was no sign of its driver. As the schedule was very tight we could not afford to look for lorry drivers sampling the delights of Margate, so the crane drove up to the fence and hoisted the van over and on to the low loader. The missing driver turned up just as we were preparing to go; the whole operation had taken just ten minutes!

Back on the road again and this time down to Dover Western Docks to load an ex-Southern Railway Maunsell Brake coach, last used as a workshop and previously as an Ambulance Car. We arrived at the Docks and were pleased to find that the tractor unit and its bogie were already there. The Shell Oil Co. had kindly allowed us to use one of the sidings in their yard to load the coach which, until a few days previously, had been on Dover Marine Pier for seven years! This time span, coupled with the fact that every time a south westerly gale was blowing the coach had a good salt water wash meant that the brake rigging had to be freed off and the vehicle unchained from the track; a broken spring was also changed. In spite of all the problems the B.S.O. was loaded within

three quarters of an hour. The Shell Co. staff who stayed to watch the operation were quite impressed when they were told that it was the second movement that day. Having loaded the coach we then rushed back (as much as mobile cranes are allowed to rush!) to Rolvenden. The box van was already there and in place ready for off-loading which only took a few minutes. We thought that we would be able to relax for a while, but it was not to be. A short while later a familiar noise confirmed itself to be Clifford Smith's truck rolling down the hill from Tenterden. Unloading the Maunsell vehicle proved to be an easier job than Cambria as both the body and bogies were shorter. By seven o'clock all vehicles were sitting in the shed and the various lorries were on their way home.

All three items of rolling stock will in time be restored to their former glory – some earlier than others; but had they not been saved now, tomorrow would have been too late.

*[concluded]*

*We would like to thank the following for their help and co-operation: Smith Bros. of Lavenham, Suffolk; Silwood Crane Hire, London; Lenham Storage Ltd., Lenham, Kent; and from British Rail: Beighton Engineers' Department; Station Managers at Margate and Dover Marine and the C&W Department at Dover Marine.*

**G.E.R. 12 wheel BRAKE III PULLMAN**

Built: 1920 by Claytons of Lincoln as Kitchen Car No. 119 and named CAMBRIA.

Modifications by Pullman Car Co. in 1934. Withdrawn from passenger service 1938. Condemned from B.R. departmental use 1979 as No. DE 960820.

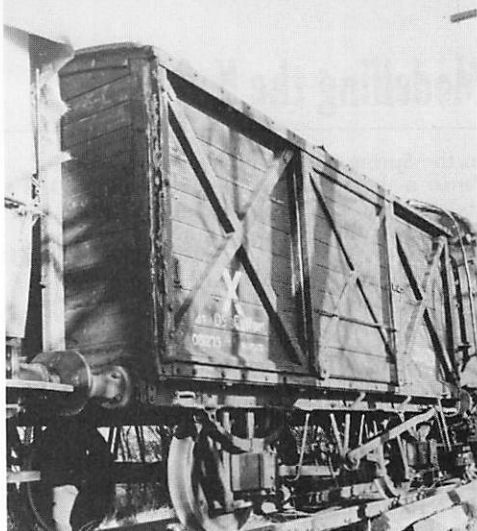
To K.&E.S.R.: 19.6.1980 as No. 71.

**L.S.W.R. 10 ton BOX VAN**

Built: Eastleigh 1906 No. 2780, S.R. No. 42679, Dia. No. 1410.

1946 transferred to departmental use as No. DS 395 carrying electrical supplies between Slade Green and Eastleigh. November 1960 condemned to internal use as C&W Stores at Margate and given internal No. 081273. Finally condemned early 1980.

To K.&E.S.R.: 19.6.1980 as No. 129.



*L.S.W.R. box van, stored near Hexden Bridge, 5th January 1981. [Paul Sutton]*

**S.R. MAUNSELL B.S.O. COACH**

Built: Eastleigh June 1933 as S.R. No. 4438. Converted 1959 to Ambulance Car No.

7920. Condemned and withdrawn from departmental use 1980 as No. CDB 975279.

To K.&E.S.R.: 19.6.1980 as No. 72.

# Tenterden & District Museum

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# Modelling the K.&E.S.R.

In the Spring 1974 edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* a short article outlined the model kits and ready to run items available of K.&E.S.R. locos and rolling stock. In the intervening 7 years the position has improved somewhat and this article gives the up to date situation in "00" or 4 mm scale.

Firstly there are no ready to run locomotives on the market to cover the period from the railway's opening to the present day, however, some interesting whitmetal kits are available. It is probably best to describe them in chronological order of appearance on the full size railway. Keyser still produce their Terrier kit which makes up into a nice little model, although some alterations would be required to smokeboxes, splashers, bunkers, etc., to make more accurate versions of Bodiam and Sutton. During the later years of its independent life, the Railway hired various locos from the Southern, among these was No. 3340 an Ex L.S.W.R. 0-6-0 tender loco (a sister engine No. 30576 was also on the line in early B.R. days). D.J.H. Models produced some 4 years ago an accurate kit of this, including alternative chimneys, safety valves and domes. Another engine hired from the S.R. before the war was the ex S.E.C.R. 0-6-0T "P" class and this is available as a Wills Finecast kit. Readers of the Model Railway press will have noticed recently that Jidenco are shortly to offer a limited edition kit in etched brass of the 01 class 0-6-0. To complete the six coupled tender engine scene the G.W.R. Dean Goods class which appeared during the war in W.D. guise is available as a Keyser kit.

We now move on a few years; Airfix produced a plastic non-motorised version of an Austerity 0-6-0ST and these can still be found on rare occasions "at a price". Bristol Models produce a brass chassis to go with this, either in kit form or more recently already made up. White metal kits of these engines have appeared latterly from N.B. Models and Centre Models – the former from experience would seem to be a more detailed kit. Before leaving steam, it should be mentioned that some years ago Hornby-Acho of France produced a good little model of the U.S.A. class 0-6-0T although it was H.O. or 3.5 mm to the foot and therefore slightly underscale. Like the Airfix Austerity these can occasionally be found in the For Sale columns of the model trade press. Finally, Jidenco has recently produced an etched brass kit of the S.E.C.R. 0-4-4T H Class which resided at Robertsbridge for a while in the mid-sixties

before moving on to Ashford and thence to Sheffield Park.

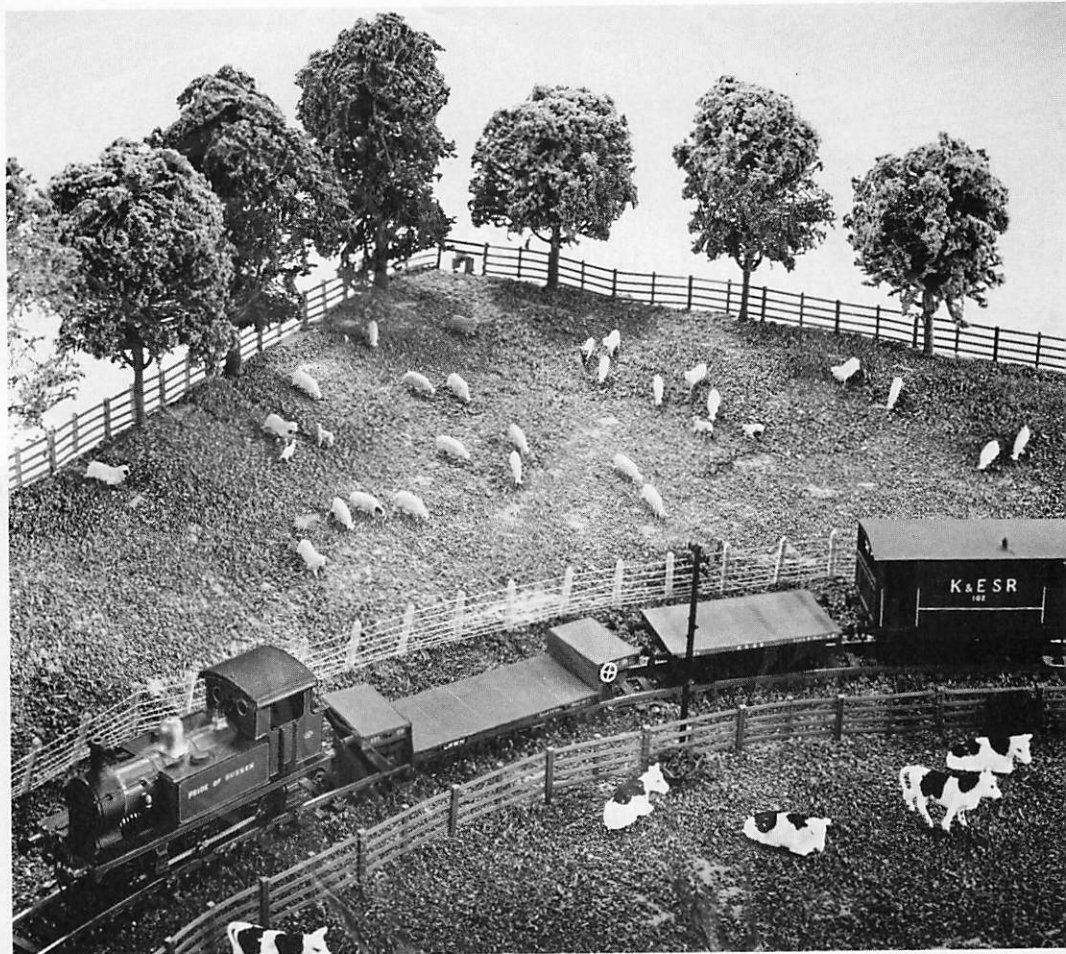
Although no one has had the courage to market the old Ford and Sheffield Railbuses, the two self propelled passenger vehicles on the line today are well represented; the G.W.R. railcar being covered by kits from Keyser's and M.T.K. and a recently announced ready to run model by Lima. Our A.C. Cars railbus can be faithfully reproduced in miniature by a kit from Anbrico which was introduced towards the end of last year.

The availability of coaches is reasonable considering the variety that has been on the line since opening. Roxey Mouldings produce a selection of L.S.W.R. vehicles which may be adapted to represent the coaches acquired from the Southern during the 1930s and 1940s and also the carriage preserved on the line today. S.E.C.R. Birdcage brakes should still be available from Mallard Models although they do not have the same compartment layouts as the three on the line today.

Our collection of Maunsell corridor coaches falls into 4 categories and B.S.L. can offer a corridor composite and a corridor first from their range of kits. Pullman coaches are more difficult as the ready to run versions on the market today would require some alteration before they could masquerade as "Barbara" and "Theodora". A very skilled modeller I know reckons that a good likeness of "Cambria" could be made from the shell of a Graham Farish Pullman brake – which was made with "matchboard" sides.

B.R. Mark I coaches can be bought as kits from M.T.K. or ready to run as an S.K. from Mainline, and an R.U. restaurant car from Lima; the latter should be introducing a T.S.O. in the near future. Both Lima and Mainline offer a brake end vehicle but this is a B.S.K. and our recently acquired 39 seater is a B.S.O. Both Keyser and M.T.K. offer a BY kit.

The Kent & East Sussex never had much freight stock of its own and what there was deteriorated after a few years, so most of the railway items seen on the railway would have been vehicles from the main line Companies, models of which are easily found in kit form and ready to run. Goods vehicles currently on the line are catered for fairly well. Mainline produce the 4 wheel N.E. Brake Van whilst Jidenco have an etched brass kit of the S.E. 6w Brake. Mainline produce a delightful model of our Shell Motorspirit tanker – only the number needs altering. The



*"Pride of Sussex" heads a works train on the Northiam extension . (a Wills Finecast locomotive kit and scratch built wagons)*  
*[Paul Simpson Photography]*

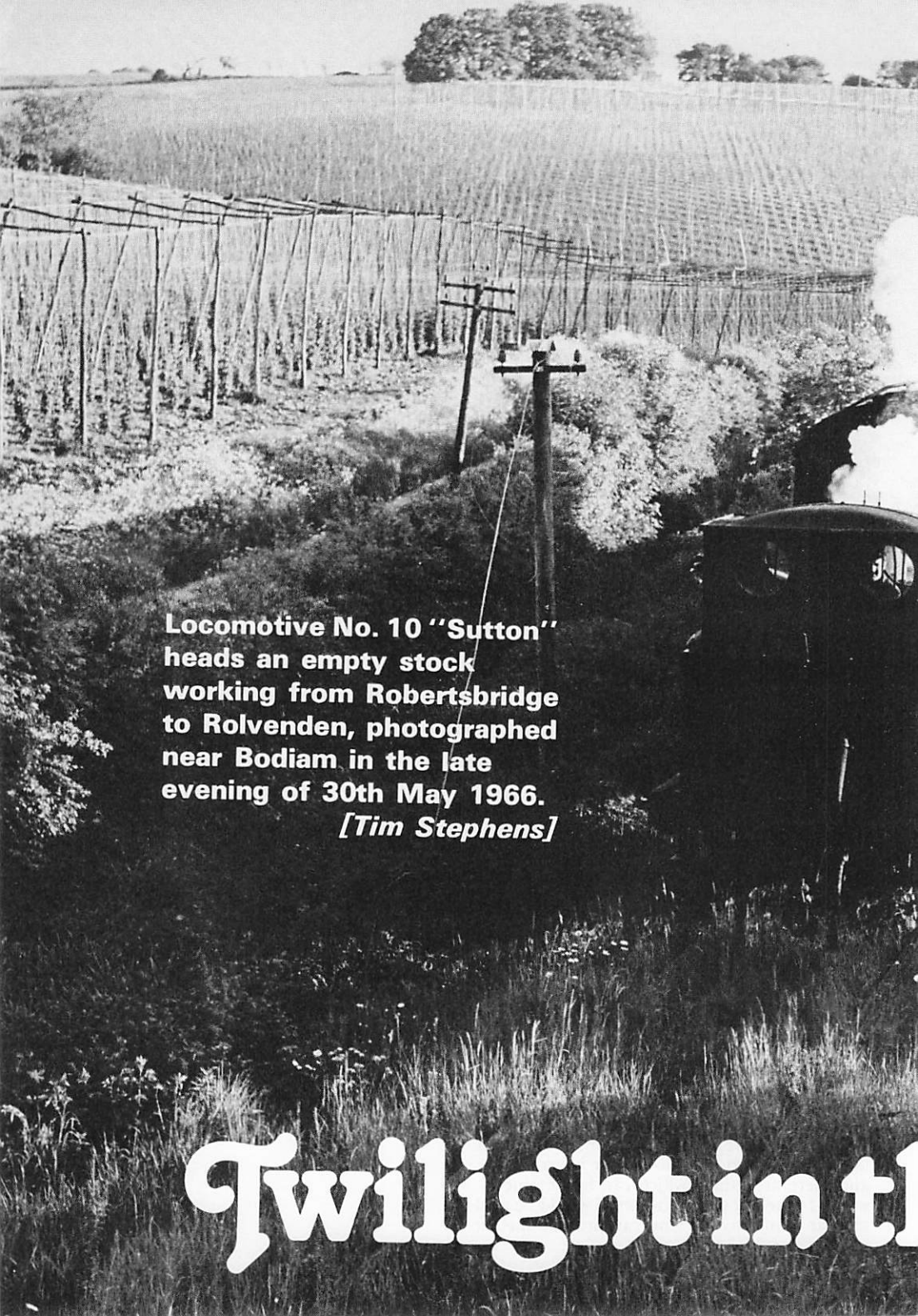
Barry Railway Iron Mink is available from Ratio as a plastic kit and from A.B.S. in white metal, who also offer a L.S.W.R. gunpowder van. Ratio also make a 12T G.W.R. van which with the doors altered could pass for our No. 105.

This sums up the present position; some of the items referred to may no longer be available and there are others which can be obtained which I have not yet discovered. I would be glad to hear from anyone who can provide further information.

Finally, most of our Area Groups organise Model Railway Exhibitions and I would urge all model enthusiasts to support them whenever possible as this helps the Railway's funds as well as providing an opportunity to see some first class layouts.

**Paul Sutton**



A black and white photograph of a steam locomotive, identified as Locomotive No. 10 "Sutton", pulling an empty stock train. The train is moving through a rural landscape at twilight. The locomotive is on the right side of the frame, emitting a large plume of white steam. The train consists of several empty stock cars. The landscape features a grassy field in the foreground, a line of trees and bushes in the middle ground, and a hillside in the background. A utility pole with cross-arms is visible in the middle ground. The overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting the late evening.

**Locomotive No. 10 "Sutton"**  
heads an empty stock  
working from Robertsbridge  
to Rolvenden, photographed  
near Bodiam in the late  
evening of 30th May 1966.

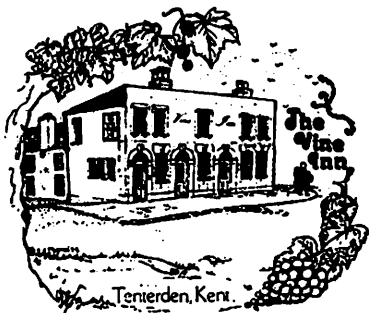
*[Tim Stephens]*

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# Colonel Stephens in the North Downs

## Part 2: The Southern Heights

The first part of this article described the proposals for an Orpington, Cudham and Tatsfield Light Railway, a standard gauge branch,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, from the main line at Orpington. Although the promoters obtained a Light Railway Order in 1902 no work was done on construction and by 1905 the project had been forgotten. Twenty years later another light railway was proposed in the same area by the same engineer – H. F. Stephens. The differences between the old and new railway schemes show the extent of the technical and social changes between the late Victorian and postwar eras.

Housing development had begun even without the stimulus of a railway. In the Biggin Hill area this was mainly in the form of shacks on large plots of land, which were especially popular after the war, while on the Surrey side larger and more expensive properties were the rule. Motor bus services had started just before the war and were provided mainly by the London General company and their East Surrey associates, although some independent operators also served the area in the 1920's. However, this development was slight compared with that in other areas around London, as in Middlesex where the Underground group's new and newly-electrified railways had turned country villages into suburbs within a few years. The newly-formed Southern Railway was busily electrifying its extensive suburban network (reaching Orpington in July 1925) and it appeared that the faster, more frequent services made possible by electric traction would have the same effect south of the river. In short, it seemed that Sir Edmund Beckett's jibe (in connection with the Hayes & Farnborough Bill of 1895) that "whenever Mr. Forbes wants to make a railway people will be born in London to go and use it" had become a reality.

No doubt this is what H. M. Bates, Sir Charles Igglesden, S. R. Jaggard, J. MacVeagh and Lt. Col. H. F. Stephens hoped when on 30 November 1925 they applied for a Light Railway Order for a  $15\frac{1}{2}$  mile line between Orpington and Sanderstead, a distance of less than  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles in a straight line. This proposed line, the Southern Heights Light Railway, was very different from the rural backwaters we usually associate with Col. Stephens. It would have had no level crossings with public roads and was designed to be worked by ordinary Southern Railway stock – electric trains for passengers and steam engines

for goods. The ruling gradient of 1 in 50 was quite acceptable for electric traction – the Southern's Wimbledon-Sutton line built for electric trains in 1929-30 had a maximum gradient of 1 in 44.

Of the promoters, Sir Charles Igglesden (1861-1949), a resident of Ashford, Kent, was an author and for many years editor of the 'Kentish Express'. Sargeant Robert Jaggard was a local landowner with an interest in some 750 acres at Leaves Green and Downe. Jeremiah MacVeagh (1870-1932), an Ulsterman, was M.P. for South Down and a director of various railways with which Stephens was connected, such as the North Devon & Cornwall Junction and the East Kent (he resigned from the East Kent board with Stephens in 1926 to make room for nominees of the S.R.). Lieut. Col. Holman F. Stephens (1868-1931) had become an authority on the engineering and operation of railways at minimum cost and was on friendly terms with the S.R. and its General Manager, Sir Herbert Walker.

The proposed line left the S.R. down slow line just south of Orpington station and dropped at 1 in 50 to pass under the main line on an 11 chain curve. A spur (Railway No. 2, 33 chains long) joined the up side of the S.R. line. The first station was a halt at Green Street Green for Farnborough (1m 7c); like all other non-passing stations this would have had temporary buildings to facilitate subsequent widening.

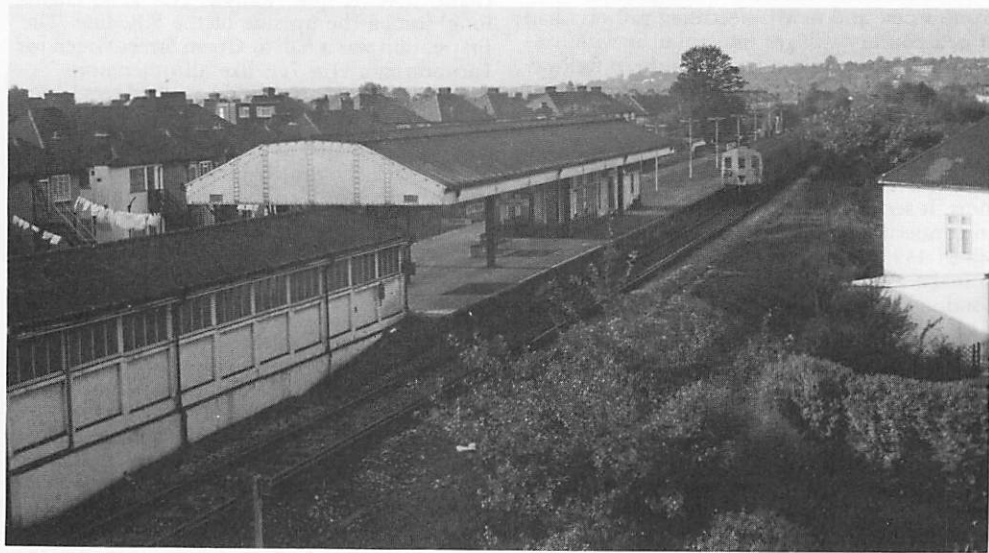
The line undulated to the next halt, Downe and Keston (3m 5c) and then climbing started in earnest with over two miles continuous 1 in 50 to Cudham and Biggin Hill (5m 14c). A siding was to be provided for the Biggin Hill R.A.F. station. Westerham Hill (6m 11c) was to be the first passing station and the line reached its summit of 740 feet (much higher than any point on the Southern Electric then or since) near the Kent-Surrey border just before Tatsfield (8m 9c) – also a passing place. About a mile further on there would have been a 440 yard unlined tunnel through chalk, almost immediately followed by an 88 yard viaduct 60 feet high over a sand pit. From 10 miles the line was to fall at 1 in 50 to Chelsham for Warlingham (11m 44c, with a siding but no loop) and was then relatively level to Hamsey Green (12m 56c), the final passing station. From Hamsey Green there was again a 1 in 50 fall past Mitchley Wood (14m 12c) to the junction with the Oxted line of

the S.R. (at 15m 32c) which was immediately south of the Purley Downs Road bridge, about half a mile south of Sanderstead station. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles were at the ruling gradient of 1 in 50 and the sharpest curve, apart from the junction at Orpington, was of 15 chains. Fourteen bridges would have been built over roads and fourteen under, all of concrete; there were to be no level crossings with public roads. Apart from the tunnel and viaduct major engineering works included an embankment 50 feet high at Limestone Bottom (7m 75c) and others 54 feet and 36 feet high at 9m 50c and 9m 70c.

The Ministry of Transport inspectors commented that "the works generally are of a much heavier character than one expects to find on a Light Railway. It is evidently to be regarded as a Branch Railway, intended for electrical operation by the Southern Railway. In the event of electrical operation the degree of equipment is likely to be higher than with steam in respect of fencing, platform accommodation, etc. The estimate of the cost of construction is under the mark, considering the works contemplated, especially bridging and, I think, tunnelling." There was in fact some variation in the estimated cost. This was originally given as £511,148 excluding electrification but by March 1928 this figure had increased to £604,000.

The Southern were interested in the project from an early stage and the solicitor reported the application to the Board at their meeting on 17 December 1925. On 24 February 1926 the General Manager, Sir Herbert Walker, recommended that the S.R. should agree to work the S.H.L.R. when it was built and to guarantee the interest on debentures up to 5% on £300,000; this was agreed subject to powers for construction being granted and the S.R. being represented on the S.H.L.R. board. The following week it was agreed that if necessary the S.R. should pay for the fixed electrical equipment (about £140,000) and take payment in Preference shares.

Objections to the application for a L.R.O. were received from several local councils and landowners and from the London General and East Surrey bus companies – the latter, on the grounds of competition, being withdrawn later. A public enquiry was therefore held in the Village Hall at Orpington on Wednesday and Thursday 3 and 4 March 1926 before Mr. A. D. Erskine and Mr. T. L. Peterson for the Ministry of Transport. Col. H. N. Bidder, counsel for the promoters, opening the proceedings, "directed attention to the configuration of the country where the railway was proposed. It was high ground and the development of the railway



*Merton South station, opened in July 1929. With its island platform, passimeter booking office and provision for a parade of shops at street level (never built) it is similar to the design proposed for passing stations on the S.H.L.R.*

system so far had been along the lower ground, so that the large piece of country of about 20 square miles, within 15 miles of London, remained untouched." He pointed out also that in consequence of the housing pressure in London it was difficult to find any suitable place to live and a piece of country such as that had vast possibilities of development from the residential point of view. As to the nature of the line, he thought it was very appropriate, in view of certain difficulties of construction, that it should be a light railway which allowed certain economics in construction, owing for instance to the fact that there would be a Parliamentary limitation of speed to 25 mph (the eventual L.R.O. did not specify a maximum speed but empowered the Ministry of Transport to fix one). The lack of rail facilities was a distinct hindrance to the agricultural interests of the plateau, though a scheme of that sort, involving over half a million pounds, could not be started merely for improving the agricultural trade of the district. If the railway was made it would give direct access to London by a system of trains which would inevitably develop the district as a residential suburb – a development which, he maintained, it was very much in the public interest should take place. A district like that had got to grow and increase and he thought they would be satisfied that, if that railway were constructed and properly run, it would develop and grow rapidly as a suburb or dormitory for London. With regard to the opponents of the scheme, Col. Bidder said that the impression in his own mind was "that while there was a great deal of noise about them there was really not very much stuffing." He had never known a case where so much financial support had been forthcoming at the enquiry, as three quarters of the £600,000 required had been promised.

The first witness was Col. Stephens as engineer and promoter, who claimed that "it is difficult to talk about engineering matters on this line because there aren't any. It is a perfectly simple line. It is not an easy line to lay out because it is rather rough country, but as laid out there are no engineering matters worth talking about." The greatest problems were due to the fact that "Orpington is rather an awkward place to get out of" and the ruling gradient of 1 in 50 was "quite an ordinary gradient for a light railway". Mr. F. G. Thomas (counsel for Coulsdon & Purley U.D.C. and Godstone R.D.C.) in his examination raised the question of the Orpington, Cudham and Tatsfield Light Railway:

Mr. Thomas: If this enquiry had been held yesterday it would have been a very interesting anniversary for you.

Witness: I have not seen the papers for many years.

Mr. Thomas: I have here a report taken from the "Bromley and District Times", of the 3rd March, 1899.

Witness: The Order was not made until 1902.

Mr. Thomas: The enquiry was held by the Light Railway Commissioners, I think in this very hall, 26 years ago yesterday.

Mr. Erskine: I remember it.

Mr. Thomas said that on that occasion evidence was called on behalf of the South Eastern Railway that they were prepared to make an agreement with the promoters, and it was on that assurance that the Commissioners recommended the railway.

Witness said he could not say; he was simply the engineer in connection with the original scheme, but he believed the agreement in question never was made. Mr. J. Abady (counsel for Bromley R.D.C.) also referred to the abortive attempt of 26 years before, the "dead hand" of which was still felt in the district.

Sir Herbert Walker, General Manager of the Southern Railway, was the next witness in favour of the line. He said that he was prepared to advise the S.R. to work the line and he thought they would be willing to guarantee the interest on the debentures. The S.R. would find the capital for electrification and take part of it in shares. He believed the district had "great possibilities for rapid development as a dormitory for London and otherwise" and said that "he did not consider it necessary to get out estimates of the probable traffic earnings of the line, but was satisfied, relying on his Company's experience as regards development on other new lines in the vicinity of London, that the railway would in a very few years be self-supporting." The S.R. would electrify the first part of their Oxted line to Sanderstead and would provide a circular service from Charing Cross.

Other witnesses called by the promoters were the Assistant General Manager of the S.R., Mr. G.S. Szlumper, the Electrical Engineer, Mr. H. Jones – who confirmed that their standard system of electrification with a third rail at 600V dc would be used – and Mr. Carl Lockheed of the contractors Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons, who said his firm would be willing to undertake the construction of the line for the amount of the estimate and to take some of this in shares

(Stephens expected them to take £20,000). A number of landowners and farmers also spoke in favour. A representative of the Ministry of Labour gave figures for unemployment in the district – then as now a serious problem – and Squadron Leader Buckeridge from the Biggin Hill R.A.F. station said that “the Air Minister’s view is that the proximity of a railway to the air station would be considered very valuable.”

The only promoter other than Col. Stephens to appear was Mr. Jaggard. He said in his opinion the line was absolutely essential if the district was to be developed. He was prepared to support the undertaking financially but would not say to what extent.

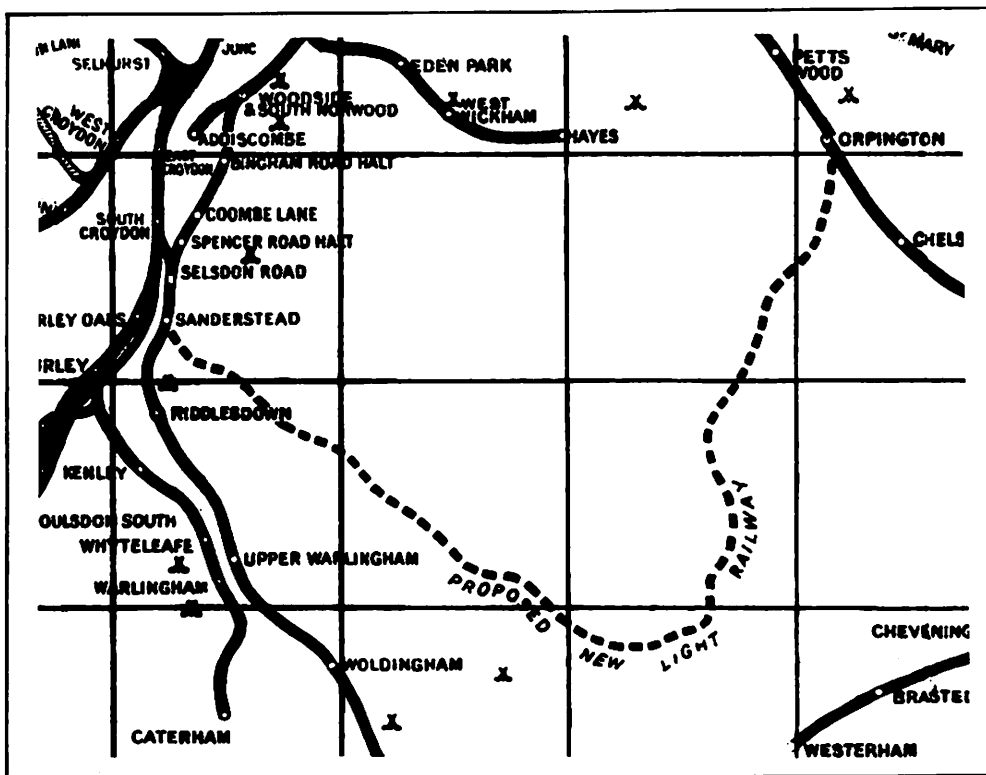
Mr. Thomas: Are you prepared to find £100?  
Witness: I would prefer not to go into that.

Sir Henry Lennard, the Chairman of Bromley R.D.C., opened the case against the line by

saying that they felt the project was of such magnitude that it ought to be submitted to Parliament instead of coming before the Light Railway Commissioners. The Council felt very strongly that no Order should be made until the money was absolutely secured and there remained no fear of the line coming derelict. His knowledge of the district did not lead him to share the optimism of the promoters as to the revenue that would be forthcoming. He could not hold out any prospect for the ordinary shareholders and would think it would be at least 20 years before a dividend on the ordinary capital would be paid.

Col. Bidder pressed the witness very closely as to whether his Council would not welcome a satisfactory railway across the district.

Sir Henry said they would not oppose it. Counsel pressed the point and said he was asking whether the Council would not welcome



*The S.H.I.R. marked on Southern Railway official map in the summer timetable of 1929. Electric lines were shown in red, steam lines in black – even those without a passenger service.*

it, which was a different thing from not opposing.

Witness: That I am not prepared to say.

The other objection raised by the Councils was that the L.R.O. might interfere with their town planning proposals, although the railway promoters argued that these were only schemes on paper and it was unfair to burden them with making provision for bridges over roads that might never be built. Mr. Thomas, for the Surrey councils, observed that on the most favourable working agreement the S.H.L.R. would have to earn £8,000 per mile to produce the necessary revenue (this would in fact have left the ordinary shareholders with a 3.6% dividend) and that this was unlikely. If the S.R. were prepared to go so far in support of the line why were they not prepared to find the capital? He submitted that no evidence had been called that the line was really needed. Objections were also made by the owners of the Aperfield Court estate and by Lord Avebury, whose private burial ground was within 100 yards of the planned line.

Reviewing the enquiry, the Ministry of Transport were generally in favour of the application, provided there was a reasonable chance of the money being raised and the line built. One comment was that "the line will, in fact form an integral part of the Southern Railway, and it might have been better if the Southern Railway Company had themselves accepted full responsibility for its promotion and for financing it." The promoters continued their discussions with the Ministry, with the local authorities and landowners and over the working agreement with the S.R. Stephens was under pressure to make the line more like a S.R. suburban line, finally (on 21 December 1927) writing "the Promoters applied for a Light Railway Order, and they are unable to accept the burden, which might be put upon them, of constructing the railway as a Heavy Railway, with the means at their disposal." Nevertheless, an agreement was eventually drafted and was approved by the S.R. shareholders at their meeting on 21 February 28. The main points were:

The S.H.L.R. were to acquire land and construct the line and the S.R. would work and maintain it for 75% of the gross receipts. The S.R. would equip the line for electric working and be paid by the S.H.L.R. in cash or shares.

The S.R. would guarantee interest of 5% on £330,000 of S.H.L.R. debentures.

If the S.R. had to pay £10,000 a year or more under the guarantee they would have the right to appoint two (later increased to three) directors to the S.H.L.R. board.

If the S.R. wished to take over the S.H.L.R., the S.H.L.R. would support it.

In April 1928, Sir Herbert Walker, Col. Stephens and a number of S.R. senior officers inspected the route and approved the sites chosen for stations. Later that year, on 29 December, the L.R.O. was granted and soon afterwards an article describing the line appeared in 'The Times'. 'Our Correspondent' in Tonbridge (could this have been the Colonel himself?) said "the line will touch the highest points in Kent and Surrey . . . Various estates in this district are being rapidly developed and at present are entirely unserved by the railway. . . The opposition entered at the Ministry of Transport inquiry by the local authorities and landowners has been withdrawn or settled on agreed terms. . . No less than 631,000 cubic yards of chalk will have to be excavated; 20,000 cubic yards of concrete will be used for the foundations of bridges, &c.; 1,000 tons of steelwork will be utilized. . . The length of the contract will be from 18 months to 21 months. . . The engineer and promotor of the scheme is Col. H. F. Stephens, who has been associated with light railways all over the country. He has constructed 146 miles at a cost of £842,000."

The L.R.O. allowed a share capital of £400,000 with powers to borrow a further £400,000. As we have seen, the S.R. had agreed to guarantee the interest of £330,000 of debentures and this would have made it relatively easy to find takers; Stephens had counted on issuing them at 95%. The ordinary shares of what would at best be a long-term investment were a different matter, however. The promoters would have been able to take only a modest proportion of them themselves and proposed to issue them at 60% of their nominal value.

Against this gloomy financial background planning continued. A. A. Jackson describes a meeting in May 1929 between Col. Stephens and senior officers of the S.R. at which the layout of the connection at Orpington, including a berthing siding on the down side, was agreed. The S.R. Assistant Engineer (New Works) was to begin tipping spoil to widen the embankment and it was agreed to build the S.H.L.R. bridge under the main line to double track width, perhaps as an alternative to the spur to the up fast line. Col. Stephens refused a



suggestion by the S.R. that the formation of the whole line should be built to double track width (at an additional cost of £50,000) but agreed to consider this from Orpington to Green Street Green and possibly also from Sanderstead to Chelsham. The S.R. also required the realignment of certain curves and ballasting and fencing to their usual standards for electric lines.

It seems that no construction on the S.H.L.R. was ever carried out. Although there is a persistent local rumour that some work was done on a cutting near Farnborough, as the embankment of the main line south of Orpington is thickly wooded, evidence of any tipping is not easily seen.

It was reported in October 1930 that the S.H.L.R. was about to apply for an extension of time Order and plans were submitted in 1931 for a deviation for about 1½ miles just west of Tatsfield. This would have avoided the tunnel at the expense of a rather higher viaduct – 75 feet instead of 60 feet. The promoters were evidently still finding it difficult to raise unsecured ordinary capital – according to C. F. Klapper, the railway historian, Col. Stephens hoped to raise £400,000 in the United States and intended to go there to complete the deal. A further severe blow to the project came in July 1931 when the S.R. board decided that as the S.H.L.R. powers had lapsed “and having regard to the altered position in view of the new Board to be set up under the London Passenger Transport Bill to control all transport within the London Traffic Area, the promoters should be informed that the Company was not prepared to support any application for a revival of those powers.” By then the chief driving force behind the project was removed as Col. Stephens became seriously ill at the beginning of 1931 and died in October of that year. Indeed the worry associated with the scheme have been a contributory factor to his death. However, an attempt was made to continue without him and in June 1932 Sir Herbert Walker informed his board that the S.H.L.R. board “having been reconstituted (with Mr. M. M. Parkes as Chairman), he had again been approached as to whether, in the event of the line being constructed, the Southern Co. would support the Light Railway Co. by the provision of rolling stock, the supply of reasonable passenger and goods services, and the furnishing of staff for the stations, on the understanding that the Light Railway Co. will not ask for any guarantee of interest on the

Debenture stock. If so, the promoters state that they have every reason to believe that the necessary capital for the purchase of the land and the construction of the line will be forthcoming.” The proposals were generally approved but nothing further was heard from the new promoters, who were faced not only with the usual lack of finance but also with opposition from the Ministry of Transport on the grounds that the S.H.L.R. would complicate the Passenger Pooling Scheme introduced by the London Passenger Transport Act of 1933. It is ironic that one of the last references to the S.H.L.R. was by the Bromley R.D.C. who, after strongly opposing it in 1926, used the fact of its expected construction as an argument in support of an (unsuccessful) application for Urban District status in 1933.

Electric trains did eventually reach Sanderstead, on 30 September 1935. Although the S.H.L.R. was by this time effectively dead, the S.R. decided to tidy up a loose end in their suburban network by reopening the Woodside to Selsdon line (closed to local traffic since 1915) and running an electric service from the Mid Kent line to Sanderstead. This service has never been a success. Since 1967 it has run only in the morning and evening peaks and is now under threat of closure.

Fifty years on, it is easy to dismiss the S.H.L.R. as a speculative venture which never had a real chance of success – the *Folie de Grandeur* of a dedicated entrepreneur who refused to accept the inevitable demise of the light railway era. Nevertheless, if the line had been built, would the sight of electric trains grinding through the hilly suburbia between Farnborough and Hamsey Green have been any more remarkable than other projects of the thirties, for instance the Northern Line to Edgware or the Southern Railway to Tolworth and Chessington? One might have regretted so many beautiful downland valleys given over to the speculative builder; as it is, some have been left in peace – except when a late traveller hears a ghostly 3-SUB rattling back to Charing Cross and thinks on what might have been.

Tom Burnham

Sources: Public Record Office Ministry of Transport files MT 6 3190, MT 6 3213, MT 54 650, MT 58 488; S.R. Board Minutes; Bromley District Times, 29 January and 6 March 1926; The Times, 5 March 1926 and 11 January 1929; The Tenlerden Terrier, Summer 1976; A. A. Jackson, 'London's Local Railways', 1978.

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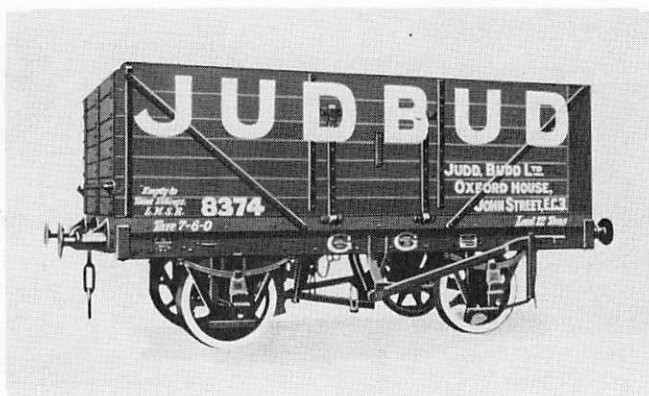
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# Membership in 1980-A Year of Achievement

1980 has been quite a good year as far as membership figures are concerned, but there is certainly no room for complacency. Changes have also taken place, resulting in comparisons with other years becoming rather confusing. The table below sets out the position at 31 December 1980, showing for the first time, the recently introduced family membership.

|        | New Full<br>&<br>Assoc.<br>Members |  | Renewals | Family<br>Members | Grand<br>Total |
|--------|------------------------------------|--|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| 31 Dec |                                    |  |          |                   |                |
| 1977   | 342                                |  | 1198     | —                 | 1540           |
| 1978   | 358                                |  | 1284     | —                 | 1642           |
| 1979   | 277                                |  | 1326     | —                 | 1603           |
| 1980   | 346                                |  | 1376     | 342               | 2064           |

The figure of 346 New, Full and Associate Members was no less than 25% up on 1979, but even this impressive achievement is better than appears at first sight. This is because many of the younger members, who would have formerly joined as associates, now opt for family membership.

Getting new members is one thing, keeping them is another. 1980 was a reasonably good year with 86% of our existing membership renewing, as opposed to 83% in 1978 and 81% in 1979.

We tried a few innovations during the year; our print shop at Northiam produced a membership leaflet, and about 50% of our membership applications now come from that source. Secondly, we tried "instant membership" at the Bodiam event in August, and then in September at the Steam and Country Fair. These two week-ends alone

produced 104 new members (53 Full and Associate, and 51 Family). However, our best potential source of new members is the friends and acquaintances of existing ones, so please try to get at least one new member in 1981.

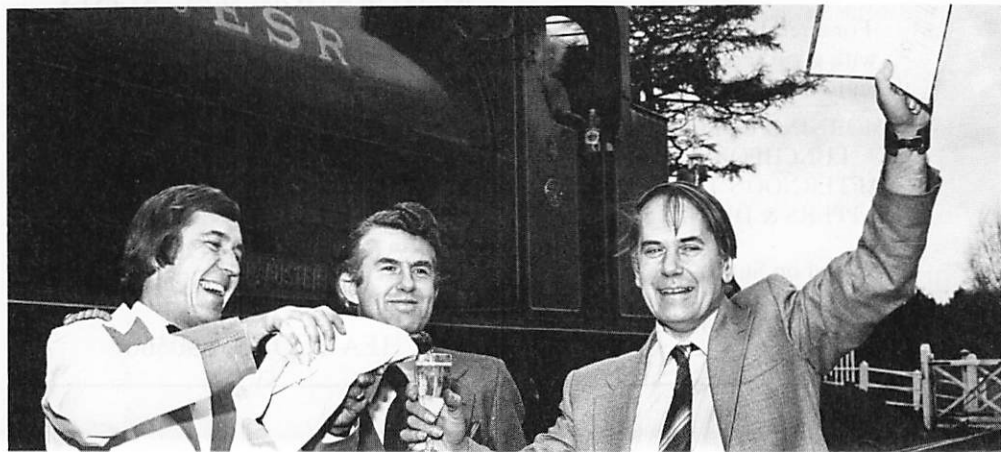
The railway's very existence will always depend on the active member or "Volunteer", and with the extension beyond Wittersham Road, approaches have been made to groups of young people who could help us. The response has been encouraging from a number of Rotaract Clubs, Venture Scouts, Scout groups, and schools, and promises of help from still more. No-one has said "No" so far, and those that have already been, seem to want to come again. The reports getting back are that we are a friendly lot!

Still aimed at increasing our volunteer labour force, the Volunteer Information and Job Centre was recently opened in the wooden building opposite Tenterden Station. A great deal remains to be done in developing the centre which is at present manned on Sundays only, but it is hoped that it will continue to be a useful place for information.

Finally, in 1980 we passed a little landmark, in that we topped 2,000 members. We couldn't let this go by without a little celebration. The presentation to John Bray, in the form of a hand-bound booklet entitling him to free travel for life, took place on 6 December and was well covered by local press and Radio Medway. I would like to think that 2,500 members by the end of 1981 was a modest target. With every member's help a 3,000 membership in 12 months time could be a reality.

**Tim Stanger**

*Our 2000th member John Bray (right) celebrates with Doug Lindsay (left) and Tim Stanger.  
[Kent & Sussex Courier]*



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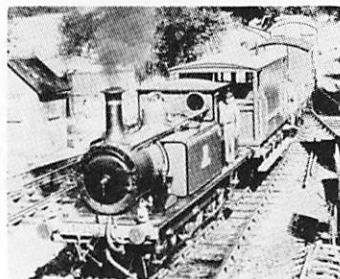
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# Main-line Connections

Neil Rose has researched the history of Headcorn and Robertsbridge, the terminal stations of the K.&E.S.R., until the line closed to passengers in 1954.

Robertsbridge and Headcorn were the ends of the line so far as the Kent & East Sussex Railway was concerned but they also provided its links into the larger railway network. Through these stations passed goods wagons to and from the rest of the country and passengers transferred from the hustle of the main line to the rustic pace of the light railway. To the K.&E.S.R. these were "Junction" stations and so appeared in its timetables: the South Eastern & Chatham Railway – later the Southern – was more disdainful, hardly acknowledging the presence of its neighbour.

Although the K.&E.S.R. came to Robertsbridge in 1900, five years before Headcorn was reached, the latter station was the first arrival on the railway scene. Headcorn was on the South Eastern Railway's route to Dover and had opened on 31 August 1842 when the line was extended eastwards from Tonbridge. It was to

remain the temporary terminus until Ashford was reached three months later. Headcorn, in the heart of the rich water-meadows along the river Beult, was once a cloth town but by the mid nineteenth century based its prosperity firmly on agriculture. The S.E.R. provided one of their typical single-storied weatherboarded station buildings and a brick goods shed, both on the down-side nearest to the local community. The up-side was open to the fields, as it remains today. In common with many other S.E.R. stations the platforms were staggered, the up-platform being at the London end and opposite the goods yard: this arrangement was thought to save land, facilitate access from one platform to the other and to enable sidings opposite the platforms to be connected by a transverse road and wagon turnplates.

Robertsbridge was also a terminal station when



(17B) Headcorn Station. SER

*Headcorn Station, probably photographed in the mid-1880s. The railway is virtually dead-straight for the  $26\frac{1}{2}$  miles between Tonbridge and Ashford. Note the signal-box on the end of the up-platform and the large goods-shed, probably rebuilt in the early 1900s. The milepost on the down platform shows a distance of 56 miles to Charing Cross via Redhill.*

*[Lens of Sutton]*

it opened on 1 September 1851. The S.E.R.'s Hastings branch was not extended southwards to Battle and Hastings until early 1852. The town of Robertsbridge, on the main London-Hastings road, grew as an appendage to a Cistercian abbey founded in the twelfth century; it was largely an agricultural community and hops were widely grown. The area was – and still is – noted for its cricket bat willows. As at Headcorn the station had staggered platforms but this feature gradually disappeared over the years as extensions were added to both platforms. A feature of the Hastings branch was its well designed station buildings, originating from the drawing board of William Tress, of Finsbury Square, London. The station building at Robertsbridge was no exception. It was built on the down-side in red and grey brick and Caen sandstone, and was of Italianate design. An open arcaded porch led to a single storey passenger block with eaves extending out over the platform: this latter feature protected waiting passengers and obviated the need for a canopy which has disfigured so many stations. The station yard, also on the down-side, had a small brick goods shed dating almost from the station's opening. At the south end of the down-platform there was a level-crossing with a gate keeper's lodge and immediately beyond, on the up-side, a siding was provided in 1852 to serve Mr. Smith's timber yard; a further siding off subsequently served the adjacent timber yard of Mr. Stenning.

The two stations served their local communities for the next fifty or so years to the end of the century with little visible change. The goods yards would have been bustling as livestock, coal and general merchandise was collected and delivered. Headcorn's tranquility would have been disturbed by the occasional Continental boat trains thundering through: it was such a train, conveying Charles Dickens, that came to grief at a river bridge between Headcorn and Staplehurst in 1865. 1868 saw the opening of the new main-line through Sevenoaks which shortened the journey to London by some ten miles – Headcorn was now 45½ miles from Charing Cross, Robertsbridge 49½ miles. During the 1880s new block signalling was installed at Headcorn, and Robertsbridge was similarly provided for in 1893. The 23-lever signal box at Robertsbridge, and associated signalling equipment, was supplied by Messrs. Saxby & Farmer at the very modest cost of £465-13s-3d (less 5% discount!). A footbridge was provided at Robertsbridge in 1894 as platform

extensions had made crossing from one to the other especially awkward.

The appearance of the Rother Valley Railway (soon to be renamed the K.&E.S.R.) in 1900 brought few changes to the track layout at Robertsbridge. Trains used a bay behind the down platform which had previously existed as a siding in the goods yard, the new branch railway running into the headshunt of the yard. Thus the R.V.R. had to use the main line company's tracks to gain access to the bay platform and it is possible that the small ground-frame signal cabin (B.R. days known as Robertsbridge "A") was opened by the light railway at this time to prevent conflicting movements between trains of the two companies. A trailing connection from the down-line provided access to the S.E.C.R.'s metals. Railway Clearing House junction diagrams of the time indicate the boundary between the two companies as being three chains on the light railway side of this connection into the main line. Two sidings led off a loop situated on the curve leading the light railway away from Robertsbridge station.

In 1905 the S.E.C.R. made a number of track and signalling alterations at Robertsbridge. These were intended to do away with the need to move wagons using a tow-rope – a problem the S.E.C.R. was tackling across its system. The down siding (yard headshunt) was extended northwards with a new crossover and slip into the main-lines; the up-siding, which had previously been squeezed in between the level crossing and the up-platform, was moved to the north end of the station. A new 11-lever shunting cabin was provided to control movements over these new connections. The S.E.C.R. had also received numerous complaints about delays at the level crossing. The gates were hand operated and signalmen often delayed opening them for road traffic or only opened one. Additionally, because the water supply was good, both passenger and goods trains habitually took on water which, because of the positioning of the water-cranes, required engines to stand foul of the crossing on the down-line. Up goods trains, shunted onto the down-line to clear the way for following fast trains, also blocked the crossing when taking on water. To obviate these complaints the S.E.C.R. installed new water columns in 1905 and fitted a gate-wheel so that the signalmen could operate the gates from the cabin.

At Headcorn in 1905 the K.&E.S.R. was

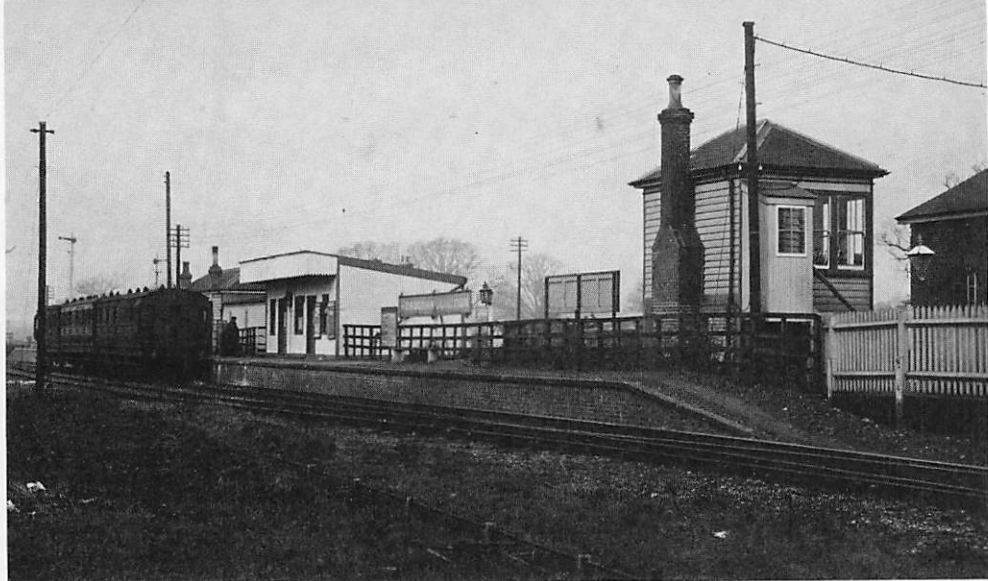




*Robertsbridge about 1920 showing the goods-yard and bay platform used by K.&E.S.R. trains. The K.&E.S.R. starting signal is in the foreground. Note the very tall down main-line signal in the background.*  
*[Tenterden Railway Co.]*

*Robertsbridge in 1931. The goods yard is full and three four-wheeled coaches stand in the K.&E.S.R. platform. Gas lighting has replaced the earlier oil lamps.*  
*[Locomotive & General]*





*Headcorn showing 1905 K.&E.S.R. platform and main-line signal-box.*

accommodated at a separate platform constructed immediately behind the existing main-line up-platform. A waiting shelter was provided for the convenience of passengers. Photographic evidence (*The Tenterden Terrier*, Summer 1974) suggests that this shelter had previously been erected at Tenterden (Town) station pending construction of the present station building. Physical connection between the two railways was maintained through sidings on the up-side. A small lever-frame was provided on the K.&E.S.R. side to control train movements to and from Frittenden Road and into the sidings.

The 1920s saw further changes at Headcorn. Shortly after the Grouping, the Southern Railway wanted to provide an extra passing place for boat trains and Headcorn was the chosen location. Four tracks were provided through the station, two through and two platform roads, which meant rebuilding the whole of the up-side further to the east, opposite the down-side platform. This work necessitated the provision of a new platform for the K.&E.S.R. The date of this rebuilding is usually shown as 1924 but plans of the works, including those of a new signal box located to the west of the new up-platform, suggest a date of 1930 or shortly thereafter. The K.&E.S.R.'s layout was altered substantially. The platform face now curved away from the main-line to the south-east and two further tracks were provided outside that serving the platform. The middle-road was used for running round, the outside track often being used for berthing purposes. The outside track, and a connection thereto

from the middle road, into the S.R.'s up siding. The S.R. signal box controlled access to the up-siding while the relocated K.&E.S.R. signal box regulated train movements along the branch line and into the sidings remaining at the east end of the light railway station; the physical connection onto main-line metals through these sidings had been severed. Once again the K.&E.S.R. shelter was rebuilt on the new platform.

In K.&E.S.R. days Headcorn station was manned by a signalman/porter but in latter days the branch line signal box would be worked by the train guard. However, it is believed that K.&E.S.R. tickets were issued to intending passengers from the main line booking office throughout the line's independence. K.&E.S.R. locomotives rarely ventured on to the main-line tracks. Wagons moving off the K.&E.S.R. would either be left on the branch running line and a S.R./B.R. shunting locomotive collect them or the K.&E.S.R. engine would run round its train in the platform, via the middle road, and shunt the vehicles into the up-siding where they would be collected.

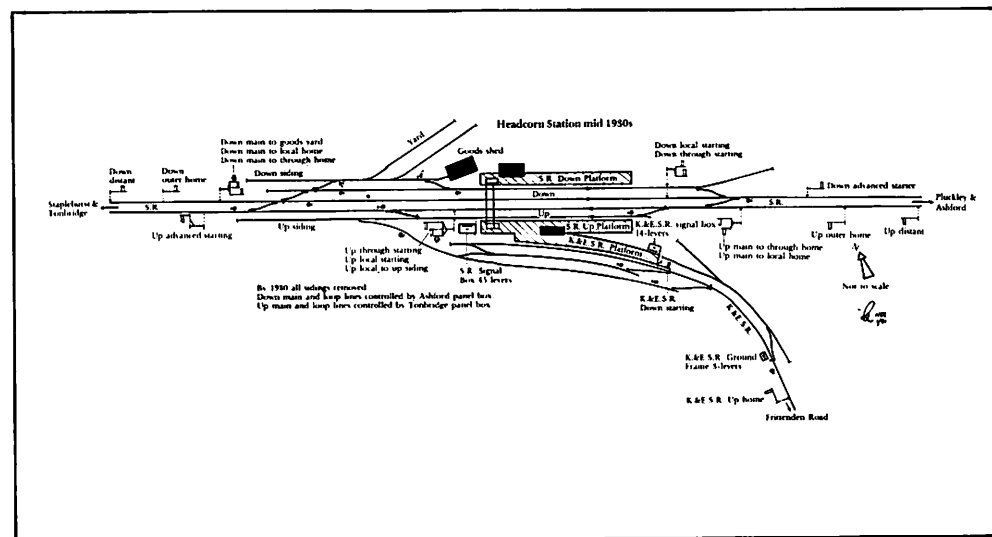
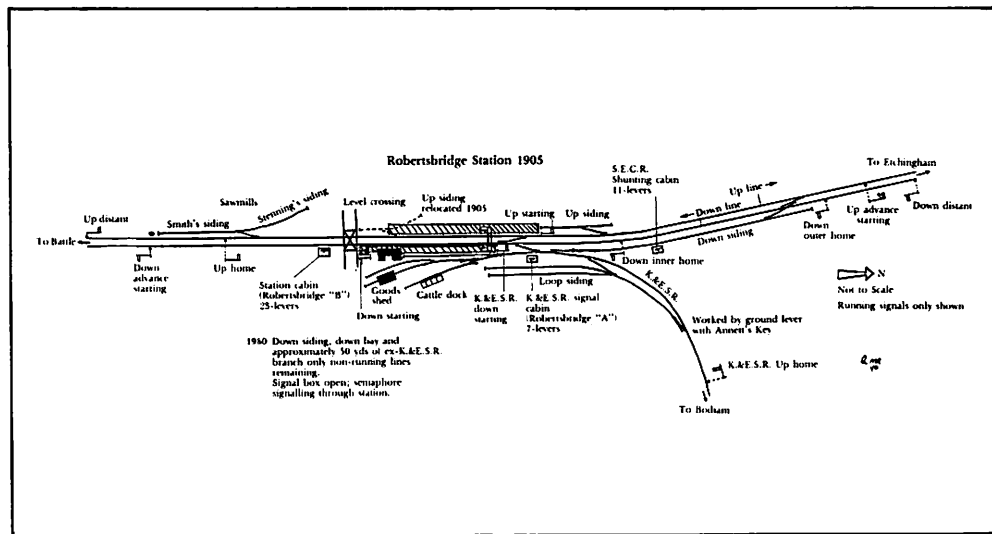
At Robertsbridge, K.&E.S.R. engines were allowed more freedom. Trains generally used the down bay platform and engines ran round on the branch line loop outside the station. Occasionally trains used the main-line down platform. During the early 1930s a through coach was run from Tenterden to Charing Cross, returning during the evening: the K.&E.S.R. locomotive would shunt the coach onto the rear of the up main-line train in the

morning and pick up the rear coach off the down train at night.

"Hoppers' Specials", which ran to Bodiam and Northiam until 1958, would be worked into the down platform when returning to Robertsbridge; the main-line engine would then set-back on to the train and work it up to London, often by most devious routes. K.&E.S.R. engines regularly shunted Robertsbridge goods yard and sidings in

company with S.R./B.R. engines, and made occasional forays across the level crossing to work in the timber yard sidings.

Robertsbridge had no K.&E.S.R. staff and in the absence of any agreement on the use of main line booking office facilities, passengers commencing their journeys at the station were obliged to purchase their tickets on the branch train. There are legendary stories of the guard working his way down the moving train on the



running boards fully exposed to the elements, with ticket rack in hand and advancing precariously by means of the special grab handles fixed to the sides of the carriages. Except perhaps in the early years the branch signal cabin was usually unstaffed, presumably being operated by the train crew in conjunction with the main-line signalman. In B.R. days Robertsbridge "A" box was regularly manned.

1954 saw the closure and lifting of the Headcorn-Tenterden section. The main-line goods yard lingered on until April 1962 when it, too, was closed. Headcorn signal box was abolished in the same month and since then the up-lines through the station have been controlled by Tonbridge panel box while the down-lines are worked by Ashford. Today there is little evidence of the old K.&E.S.R. station; amongst the thorn bushes the course of the old platform road can be traced, but everything else has gone. On the main-line side the S.E.R. station building of 1842 remains, apparently in good condition!

Robertsbridge has fared somewhat better. The line to Tenterden closed to freight traffic in June

1961 and the B.R. goods yard two years later, although traffic to the private siding at Hodson's flour mill, Northbridge Street, continued until the end of 1969. The station yard was used until 1966 for the storage of vehicles acquired by newly formed preservation society. Today the line into the down bay platform survives as an Engineer's siding as does the long down siding: a very rusty, overgrown length of track disappears tantalisingly around the curve of the old K.&E.S.R. towards Northbridge Street but in fact ends after only a few yards, the track beyond having been lifted as far as Junction Road around 1972. The station buildings and goods shed survive intact, as does the 1893 signal box beside the level crossing (formerly Robertsbridge "B"). The crossing gates were replaced by lifting barriers in January 1974. The signalmen's responsibilities in Robertsbridge box have, if anything increased in recent years for they now monitor the CCTV level crossing at Riverhall, control access to the Mountfield gypsum sidings, as well as signalling trains through the now single-tracked Mountfield tunnel, all some two miles to the south.

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# Letters to the Editor

## Serving the customer in style

Sir – Your article in *The Tenterden Terrier* on the Pullman career of George Hubbard and his association with the Hastings Line and its cars, prompts me to write to you. I also am a retired Pullman Car attendant and spent many years on the Hastings Line in the 1930's and became well acquainted with "Barbara", "Theodora" and their "sisters", and find it fascinating that your railway has preserved these two cars.

Your readers may be interested to hear that the Pullman Car Company valued its regular customers to a very high degree, especially so when they were eminent businessmen or personalities. I well remember one such important city broker who, between 1932 and 1934, regularly caught the 8.25 am Up train from Hastings and the 3.20 pm Down from Charing Cross; his influence was such with Pullman that car "Barbara" HAD to be on his train each day. Occasionally of course this wasn't possible and he would always appear unhappy on those days. I eventually plucked up courage to enquire why he insisted on "Barbara", and quite casually he replied "Oh, it's my wife's name you know"!

Another memory I have which may interest your members, especially now the railway has acquired the ex-G.E.R. brake/parlour car "Cambria", is of the latter 1930's when, on Sundays, I was sometimes drafted over to the L.N.E.R. to work the "Eastern Belle" excursion trains. Often this car, with its large brake/luggage area, was in the train formation, and on occasions, when the "right" conductor was rostered, and our accordian playing attendant was on board, we would allow the passengers to dance to the accordian music in the brake area after serving afternoon tea. For this we obtained a "consideration" of 6d per head, which was a useful extra for us in those days. No doubt, had we have been found out, instant dismissal would have followed!! But luck remained on our side until the war when of course these trains were discontinued.

May I finish by wishing you luck with your railway and hopefully in the near future I will be able to visit Tenterden and re-acquaint myself with "Barbara", "Theodora" and "Cambria".  
London, N1 Harry Reeves

would have been by reversal at Metropolitan Junction just south of Waterloo East on to the L.C.D.R., thence via Snow Hill to Farringdon and so on to the Circle Line to Baker Street. Where did the change-over from steam to electric traction occur?

Another way could have been by reversal on to the East London, and thence via the Whitechapel curve to the Circle Line at Liverpool Street. In any case, one wonders what the reverse working was that brought the Pullmans to Charing Cross, and who the customers were.

In the late 1940's one could catch the 11.15 train from Charing Cross to Headcorn, change on to the K.&E.S.R. for Tenterden, where there was time for a pint and a sandwich before the afternoon train for Robertsbridge.

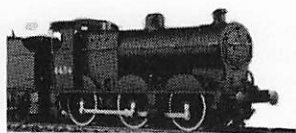
Consumption of the pint meant that one had to use a curious empty compartment at the end of an old L.S.W.R. coach containing nothing but a large hole in the floor, the management having removed the usual receptacle. The state of the track in those pre-B.R. days was deplorable, and the whole operation could be described as hit or miss. After arrival at Robertsbridge there was a wait of about half an hour before the arrival of a fast train from Hastings with a Pullman car, where one could sit in a coupe and be served with tea and toasted muffins under the pink silk-shaded lights, perhaps by Mr. Hubbard himself. A wonderful day's outing, alas, now totally unrepeatable.  
London, W1 Tom Chalmers

## The District Line Carriage

Sir – It would be interesting to know whether it has been established why the District Line carriage should have been at Dymchurch. There were always plenty of S.E.&C.R. bodies available much closer at Ashford. Could it perhaps have worked on the nearby Lydd Camp Railway? Little is known of the stock on this line. It is not impossible that it has sat on the ground since 1905; I saw it there in 1940 – did anyone record it earlier? Incidentally, the District did keep three 4w. carriages for many years after the great sale, but this is not one of them.  
Great Hinton, Wilts R.W. Kidner

Sir – Mr. Hubbard's article in the Winter issue set me wondering how the Pullman cars were routed from Charing Cross S.E.R. on to the Metropolitan main line to Aylesbury. One way

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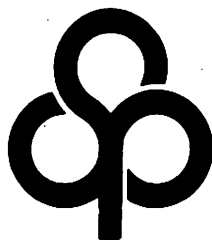
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