



The Tenterden Terrier



Number 44

Winter 1987



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)

Registered charity 262481

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Bodiam Castle

A National Trust Property



The Castle is open every day from April till October, but weekdays only November to March, between 10.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. or sundown if earlier. Closed over Christmas. Built in 1385 as a defence against the French, ruined in the Civil War, it still has a magical effect on every visitor. Inside one tower an audio-visual display describes life in a castle 600 years ago, and in another, on video, a warrior is being dressed in a magnificent suit of armour. There is a café in the car park. *About 500 yards from the K. & E.S.R. station.*
Telephone Staplecross (058083) 436.

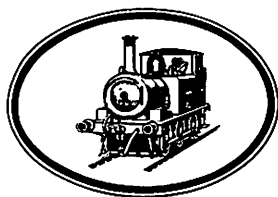
Great Dixter



This 500 year old manor hall is open every afternoon (except ordinary Mondays) from 1 April to 11 October, also weekends October 17/18 and 24/25 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (last admission 5 p.m.). The gardens, well known for the wide variety of plants is open earlier at 11 a.m. on May 24/25, Sundays in July & August, also August 31st. Some of the unusual plants have won awards at the Royal Horticultural Society shows in London. *1½ miles from the K. & E.S.R. station at Northiam; follow the signposts in the village for a very pleasant visit.*
Telephone Northiam (07974) 3160



The Tenterden Terrier



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Editorial

My word is my bond

The Bond issue seems to have caught the public's imagination just at the right time. Of course, we cannot compete with the B.P. issue for glamour, but our certificates are much prettier and bondholders can always come in for a chat and meet the management! Those with £1000 and £500 bonds can show their passes at the barrier and proceed with effortless ease on to the trains—how nice to avoid the tiresome queues at the ticket office. Hopefully, many of the bonds will find their way on to sitting room walls, with a framing service available to boot—it would be such a pity to spoil the certificate by cutting off the coupon to claim the interest!

FRONT COVER. We're Off! T.V.S. weatherman, Ron Lobeck launches the bond issue with Richard Darbyshire, purchaser of the first £1,000 unit, on 29th September 1987
(Alan Jones)

FRONTISPIECE. 'P' Class freight. The 12.20pm Rolvenden to Tenterden Town goods storms up Tenterden bank with the daily goods on 5th July 1987 (Brian Stephenson)

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Lineside News

Compiled by Neil Rose

It is important to remember that despite track upgrading and other improvements, the K E S R remains a light railway. Our largest Class 2 locomotives, the Austerities and USAs, compare with the smaller machines on many other standard gauge preserved lines where, we are told, big engines generate most interest. Paradoxically, the opposite seems to hold true at Tenterden where our Class 1 locomotives always seem to turn heads when running. Perhaps it is because they exemplify the old Colonel Stephens railway, or remind visitors of tank engines portrayed in childhood reading books, or because their diminutive size somehow makes them more on a human scale. Moreover, they always seem to have to work hard for their living, dwarfed by the carriages they are hauling. In past years we have enjoyed watching the Railway's two Terriers as they pound their way up Tenterden bank; this year there has been no finer sight than 1556 and No 14 Charwelton lifting a heavy train the final few hundred yards into the station. As regular station pilot, 1556 has gained many admirers as visitors have taken the opportunity of studying the finely restored little locomotive at close quarters. It will be interesting when No 10 Sutton is back in service to compare at first hand the products of Ashford and Brighton works.

Any appreciation of our small steam engines is not to deny their bigger work fellows, the three Austerities—soon to be increased to four with Linda's entry into K E S R service for the first time—and the USA. The Austerities may be considered uninteresting in some circles but, as other lines will testify, they are invaluable machines. They are simple, rugged, powerful yet very economic machines, ideally suited for hauling four or five coaches. Our Austerities have formed the backbone of our steam operations and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Visitors coming to Tenterden expecting to see a SR tender engine, a "Black Five", or whatever, will be disappointed. Perhaps we need to emphasise our origins a little more in our marketing?

Finally, having ridden in an assortment of tired, down-at-heel Mk 1 coaches elsewhere this year, it is pleasant to record the efforts made by Paul Ramsden and his C & W Dept staff to turn out a fleet of presentable vehicles. They may not be the most interesting stock to work on but they are indispensable for daily operating use. The standing brown and cream livery still looks smart, albeit increasingly common elsewhere, and the prospect of a set in BR-style "blood and custard" will undoubtedly provoke a few comments for and against. It is welcome news that the coming year will see work concentrated

on several SR Maunsell coaches in order to restore them to working order.

Boardroom

The Directors lost a loyal colleague and friend on the death of George Wright in July. An obituary appears elsewhere in this issue.

The mid-year budget review was carried out later than usual this year but building on the success of our marketing activities a further increase in the Permanent Way and Civil Engineering budget was authorised, taking planned expenditure for this Department to an all-time record of £44,000—ample evidence of this investment can be seen throughout the line. In anticipation of further heavy winter work programme on the track, and in preparation for relaying to Northiam, the Board accepted the generous offer of a member to purchase two former BR Class 14 diesel locomotives: these will be capable of running at line speeds and should eliminate the need for steam locomotives to be used on works train.

Locomotives

Three Austerities, Nos 23 (alias 191), 24 and 25, have been the mainstays of steam motive power on passenger trains this summer. The first two especially have built up substantial mileages and have been relatively trouble-free performers: inevitably minor mechanical problems have arisen from time-to-time as must be expected with all machinery.

The repainting of ex-SECR 'P' class into its 1935 Southern livery of black with green lining out and yellow numbering and lettering was completed in early July: with its highly polished dome this is now a very attractive small locomotive and a credit to all those involved in its restoration. It took a trip to the sea at end-June (by low loader!) when it attended the Gravesham Edwardian Fair at Gravesend: a note of its official re-entry into service appears later. It has tackled a few two coach trains on Tenterden Bank but more usually has double-headed in company with No 14 Charwelton. 1556 has also filled a valuable role as Tenterden station pilot on summer Sundays, having first come up from Rolvenden hauling the mid-day goods train: it has proved popular with visitors as it potted around the station. No 14 has proved itself to be a versatile and reliable engine throughout the season.



No 10 'Sutton' in Isle of Wight livery, awaiting outshopping on 5th September 1987

(Brian Stephenson)

So far as other steam locomotives are concerned, the news from Rolvenden is as follows –

No 3: Unfortunately, there is no fresh progress to report.

No 10: Fully repainted in Southern livery and looks absolutely splendid as it rests under cover in Rolvenden shed. Repairs to the Westinghouse pump have been completed and it just remains to be tested out. It is due for its yearly boiler examination in the near future. Work currently centres on re-metalling of the slipper blocks and re-ringing of the pistons. Some bad scoring on one piston rod has been removed by R.S. Bean Ltd. There is a strong possibility that No 10 will be back in service before the year's end.

No 19: Work on all axleboxes progresses well. All three wheel sets have been dressed with their boxes and springs prior to refitting in the frames. Work on stripping and painting the frames has been undertaken by a small team rarely exceeding two people—more help is badly needed. The restoration work needed on the boiler has been placed in the hands of an outside contractor.

No 21: Wainwright rarely gets a mention in

these notes and members might be forgiven in thinking this locomotive had finally disappeared into the undergrowth as a rotting hulk. Recently Derek Dunlavy has rescued all the small parts previously stored in the garden of the bungalow at Rolvenden and placed them safely within the confines of the Yard. The cab and tanks have been stored elsewhere in order to make space available for forthcoming Yard improvements.

No 22: Maunsell's retubing has been completed and hydraulic and steam tests were satisfactorily carried out in mid October.

No 26: Much effort has been expended on Linda in recent months. The lower part of the locomotive has been painted and the tank and cab refitted. There remains much non-ferrous pipework to install as well as numerous cab fittings. Once complete the engine will be finally painted, in Brunswick green, lined out and varnished. Entry into service is not far away and it is hoped to have a naming ceremony prior to the 1988 operating season.

No 27: Rolvenden now rests at Tenterden as a static exhibit for the general public. Graham Pattison, together with a few helpers, has given it an eye-catching maroon livery.

On the diesel locomotive front No 40, the BTH Bo – Bo, has had its springs refitted. These are arranged as matched pairs on the bogie wheel sets and particular attention will be paid to them to ensure that they remain correctly adjusted. As the commissioning programme progresses, each wheel will be weighed periodically to make sure the correct weight is being carried. Bringing their BR expertise to the fore, Boris Perkins and Clive Lowe have taken on the task of driver training as and when works trains are run requiring the use of this engine.

The Ruston 0-4-0 diesel electric which arrived at Easter has been allocated KESR No 41 although it still sports its attractive Rowntree Mackintosh livery and number (No 1). This locomotive was built in 1958 with Ruston's works number 423661; it weighs in at approximately 30 tons and is 158 hp. After a thorough mechanical inspection and remedial work to several defects, it entered traffic on 4 August.

The damaged set of driving wheels from the Hunslet DM 0-6-0 No 42 have been sent to an outside contractor for repairs. The Vulcan shunter (No 45) has continued in use as Rolvenden pilot, being confined to the Yard area. Overhaul of No 47, one of the Drewry shunters, has progressed well with the completion of painting the fuel tank, engine and left hand side of the frames. The air tanks on Nos 41 and 47 have been hydraulically tested and inspected for insurance purposes.

Fowler DH 0-4-0 No 43 will shortly leave the Railway. Back in 1984 it awaited disposal but lack of diesel availability meant that it was put back into service. It has continued to run well and has seen regular service on PW Department workings. However it has been sold recently for service away from the KESR: undoubtedly it will be missed by many working members who appreciated its small but robust qualities. The good news is that three new arrivals (including the two class 14 engines mentioned earlier) are expected to take its place. An article featuring the new acquisitions and the rest of the KESR diesel locomotive fleet will appear in the next issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*.

Also, there is news about No 20, the G W R railcar which has suffered too many years of sad neglect. This twin diesel engined railcar has not been in service since 1980 when it was withdrawn suffering badly from body

corrosion. Andrew Webb is currently looking for helpers in a long term restoration project. Initially it is proposed to undertake some mechanical work on the engines, as well as underbody steam cleaning, at Rolvenden. C & W Dept Manager Paul Ramsden has offered to fully survey the vehicle and when space is available the railcar will be moved into the carriage shed at Tenterden. There it will be worked upon as a separate project but since shed space is at a premium, the time it can spend in there will be limited. Andrew Webb would like to hear from any member willing to assist with this project and would particularly welcome anyone with the following skills –

- Carpentry
- Sheet metal work
- Pipe fitting
- Diesel engine and railcar equipment maintenance
- Electrical wiring

There will be plenty of miscellaneous woodworking and painting jobs to be done as well, so do make contact via the office at Tenterden. It will be pleasing to report in future issues that work on the railcar is proceeding, culminating in its eventual return to service; it is the ideal vehicle for off-peak services.

Dave Green has earned the grateful thanks of the Mechanical Department for completely sorting out the lighting and wiring in Rolvenden shed. Some very good second hand machine tools have been acquired for use in the machine shop: a horizontal borer and horizontal mill are now surplus to requirements and if anyone is interested in them they should contact Lawrence Donaldson at Rolvenden. Finally, that perennial plea! – clean rags are in desperately short supply and if anyone has any sacks or bags full of materials, they can be put to very good use.

Carriage and Wagon

News from the shed at Tenterden again centres mainly on the Railway's Mk 1 coaching stock.

K E S R No 86, Composite coach (CK) E7927, which had arrived from the Mid-Hants Railway in April, re-entered service on 28 June after receiving an overhaul and repaint in standard brown and cream livery. The bodywork was found to be in fair condition, requiring the usual tasks of filling and sanding down to

achieve a good surface. One door was re-skinned and all the others were adjusted to cure sticking problems. The interior was found to be in a very good condition and virtually complete with the exception of one third class compartment where a "stretcher" window had been leaking badly, causing damage to the seating and decay of the lower bodyside panelling. The window was permanently secured and sealed, the damaged panels being renewed. Replacement seating in good quality BR 'Trojan' has been fitted and several interior panels were sanded down and revarnished. Lavatory plumbing was given an overhaul, one flush tank being renewed: since entering service, a leak has developed in one of the roof tanks, necessitating a lavatory being locked out of use until repairs could be effected after the main operating season.

No 86's place in the shed was filled immediately by TO No 85, for a similar overhaul and repaint, having spent the last year since arrival in BR blue and grey. Generally, the bodywork was in good condition requiring just one small area of platework to be renewed at a corner where a lavatory steam heater pipe had corroded, allowing steam and water to spray onto the inside of the bodysheeting: the steam pipe was renewed and a new section of sheeting welded in. Three of the doors were in poor condition and were reskinned, two requiring more extensive rebuilding with new pillars and cross framing as they fell in half when stripped down. A new section of filler pipe to the roof tank was installed. Virtually no work was needed on the interior as the seating and panelling is in very good condition and should last for many years before requiring attention. The coach has been painted in BR style scarlet and cream ("blood and custard"), although lettered KESR and carries "Third" on the doors. It returned to service on 30 August.

A further CK coach arrived from Alresford on 1 July, thus increasing the K E S R's fleet of BR Mk 1s to nine vehicles. Formerly E7961, it is now K E S R No 87 and entered the carriage shed for attention during the August Bank Holiday weekend. This new coach is in good order internally but externally the bodywork is in poor shape on one side.

On the subject of liveries it has been decided that the Mk 1 stock will be formed into two four-coach sets, each including a CK providing first class accommodation. The main set, which

includes the disabled persons' coach, No 75 Petros, will remain in K E S R brown and cream colours. The second set will be painted in scarlet and cream, also lettered K E S R. The newly arrived CK will be turned out in scarlet as will one of the TOs, in all probability No 64, and the BTO, as they pass through the shed for overhaul in the course of the next two years. Thus the fixed formations are expected to comprise –

Brown & Cream set BTD 75 Petros + CK 86 + TK 63 + TO 65

Red & Cream set BTO 73 + CK 87 + TO 85 + TO64

A third set will be formed of Maunsell stock painted in Southern olive green.

At long last we have been granted a Manpower Services Commission, Community Programme project which involves four full-time staff working on the restoration of carriage stock, specifically Maunsell CKs Nos 55 & 56, and four part-time staff working on improvements to the station site, car parking field, carriage sidings and the C & W shed forecourt. The project, which started in early September, will run for 12 months.

Maunsell CK No 56 was shunted into the shed at the end of June to enable it to dry out as the roof was leaking badly. This is the first coach to be worked on by the CP staff. Apart from routine maintenance Mark 1 coaches are being ousted from the shed during 1988 whilst the Department concentrates on the restoration of some of the Railway's older coaches. Two further Maunsell coaches are to be early subjects of attention. Work has recommenced already on BSO No 54 – which seems to have taken up permanent residence in the shed – and a thorough survey has been made of open coach No 78, which has masqueraded as an ambulance car for the past year, as well as stripping out its interior.

During August a large quantity of carriage spares was donated by Resco Rlys Ltd, including seating, interior panelling, doors etc. Some of the seating, which is in good quality BR blue, has been fitted into TK No 63 to replace threadbare, life expired upholstery. Thanks are due to Rick Edmondson for his generous donation and also to Stuart Phillips for working many hours midweek, thereby speeding up the output of Mark 1s this summer.

MARK I COACHES

The KESR'S adoption of Third Class for coaching stock—there is no trendy Standard Class here!—has resulted in the reclassification of several vehicles running in service trains. To bring the 1987 Stock Book up to date, reflecting also new arrivals, details of the Railway's Mk I coaches are as follows—

KESR No	BR type when built	Present classification	Date built	Original BR No(s)	Seats	To KESR
63	SK	TK	1957	M25446	48	7/77
64	TSO	TO	1953	E3753	64	7/77
65	TSO	TO	1955	S4037	64	7/77
69 Diana	RU	RU	1960	E1955	33	11/79
73	BSO	BTO	1956	E9269	39	4/81
75 Petros	BSO	BTD	1956	E9254	††	5/82
85	TSO	TO	1957	E4640/ SC4640	64	7/86
86	CK	CK	1956	M15927/ E7927	24/18	4/87
87	CK	CK	1956	E7961	24/18	7/87
BSO	Brake Second Open		TK	Third Corridor		
BTO	Brake Third Open		TO	Third Open		
BTD	Brake Third Disabled		TSO	Tourist Second Open		
CK	Composite Corridor					
RU	Restaurant Unclassified					
SK	Second Corridor					

††39 when built: converted 1982 into disabled persons' coach with loose seating and guard's compartment removed. Re-equipped with guard's brake 1986.

Booking Office

August's figures exceeded all expectations with a total of 14,943 passengers carried during the month, the cumulative total for the year amounting to 43,678: this represents a 14.3% increase over the corresponding period last year. Thursday 13 August was a K E S R red letter day for we carried 646 passengers, the highest number ever recorded on a normal midweek operating day.

With the introduction of a site entrance fee (a modest 10p platform ticket), the number of non-travelling visitors can be judged and, to our surprise, the number by the end of August totalled 12,422: Now, if we could get these people to ride on the train as well.....!

A warm welcome is extended to three new

booking clerks—Ian Bowyer, Ron Dawes and David Goodwin—who it is hoped will have a long and happy association with the Railway. New recruits are always welcome. Booking clerks are often the visitors' first contact with the Railway and good initial impressions are vital.

Buildings

Construction of the signal box at Rolvenden progressed throughout the summer, the brickwork carried out to a very high standard by new volunteer Terry Walker, assisted on numerous evenings by Colin Edwards and Dave Green. It is hoped to have the signal box weatherproof before the worst of the winter weather sets in.

The new station layout at Tenterden has

necessitated the construction of a new study centre, set back on the boundary between the buffet and the toilet block. It was decided to buy a timber sectional building to be erected by the manufacturers. The base and flooring were laid by volunteers, the building itself being put up in June and was available for much of the "schools season". The building has timber shiplap walls, more in keeping with the rest of the site than the old "Portakabin".

In recent months a welcome return to the Railway has been made by Andy Fielder and Brian Deer. The assist regularly in the Building Department and it is intended to create a nucleus of volunteers willing to work on building projects on a monthly basis. No longer is the Department the preserve of the Stubbs family – others are more than welcome: anyone interested should contact Dave Stubbs on Medway 33337.

Catering

Catering Manager Ken Lee's enthusiasm is amply justified. By early August the new buffet building had been opened a full year. Compared with last year, turnover has increased by 29%, with the level of party catering doubled.

The building itself acts as a focal point at the end of the public part of the station area—it acts as a useful screen hiding the working and storage areas beyond—and the recently built walkway from the middle of the platform makes it readily accessible to visitors. It is evident that a significant proportion of those not buying train tickets nevertheless use the buffet facilities. No doubt they appreciate the traditional furnishings inside and the collection of wall posters that merit close inspection.

Behind the scenes there are already plans afoot



David Hazeldine watches carefully as a load of Irish minestone ballast is emptied on to the track bed on the operating section near Wittersham Road, March 1987 (Paul Sutton)

to upgrade the kitchen, including the provision of a much needed dishwasher machine. Four new members have been welcomed to the catering team this year. Ken Lee reports that on an average operating day a minimum of three staff are needed for buffet duties whilst up to eight pairs of hands are required on peak traffic days. With overall business steadily expanding more volunteers are always needed if catering standards are to be maintained.

Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop

During May and June, Ken Lee and Graham Hukins spent considerable periods of time adjusting the shop layout in order to improve both the display and working conditions for assistants. This, along with the new lines mentioned in the previous issue, has resulted in sales booming. In July and August takings exceeded a stiff budget target and the increase in profit over 1986 has already more than paid for the shop's refit.

Gross takings are now averaging almost £1.00 per passenger compared with 85p in 1986. On Wednesday 5 August over £800 was taken from 643 passengers—duty assistants Les Border and Kate Salter suffered shock and exhaustion but happily neither required hospital treatment!

It is also pleasing to report that several new volunteers have joined the shop regulars—clearly lured by the offer of a friendly lunch in the last issue! Ken Lee has taken over shop rostering from Graham Hukins who has now returned to his studies at Bath. If you are keen to join the friendly bunch of shop staff please contact Ken at Tenterden.

Tim Stanger, in his role of Shop Co-ordinator, has been closely involved with this summer's activities. The buying team, too, have been hard at work investigating special lines for the Christmas season, several of which will be marketed under the banner "The Colonel's Choice", introduced earlier this year and has proved highly successful. Anyone at a loss for presents this Christmas is recommended to pop in and have a browse around.

Marketing

Traffic throughout the season has maintained an overall increase of 15% and we are all set for another record-breaking year, for the third year in a row. This is against a budgeted growth of 8% and puts us on target for around 65,000

passengers by the end of the year.

The daily running period through August and early September saw train loadings up to six coaches on some days, with four coaches the norm, unprecedented on mid-week services.

An official return to service for 'P' class No 1556 was organised for Tuesday 28 July, in part to ensure maximum press coverage just ahead of daily running. Since the locomotive was built at the SECR's works at Ashford, the Mayor of the Borough, Councillor Deryck Weatherall was invited to break a bottle of champagne on the engine. Local press, radio and television turned out for the occasion and the ceremony gave us a good chance to discuss other subjects of interest with the Mayor over lunch afterwards. Also present was Mr Thomas Dadswell who had been instrumental in the locomotive's rescue in 1961 for use at Hodson's Mill, Robertsbridge.

The Marketing initiatives carried out earlier in the year have contributed to the on-going success for the 1987 season and by June attention turned to 1988. Next season's timetable was agreed in July, earlier than ever, and was printed in August. It shows some considerable expansion, partly to increase business generally and partly to reduce overcrowding on peak days and certain trains. The 'standard' timetable shows five departures, instead of four, each day, midweek running extended to Easter week, Tuesdays (in addition to Wednesdays and Thursdays) in June and July and to the last two weeks in July. A three year programme of steady expansion has been agreed to permit daily running from late May to early September in 1990 to coincide with the opening to Northiam. The timetable, together with a new eye-catching Group Travel and Day Excursions brochure, was sent to some 2,000 tour and group travel operators, social clubs and societies in September, with the aim of increasing pre-booked business over the year ahead.

Santa Special bookings opened on 1 August and some trains were fully booked by the end of the month. Train capacity has been increased by nearly 20% and there are high hopes for increased patronage on these ever-popular trains. Father Christmas will need plenty of stamina to talk and give a gift to every child riding on each train!

A thorough review of our Wealden Pullman

operation is looking at ways of increasing its profitability still further and at improvements in standards of service and food. The overall presentation of the train is being redesigned to promote a rather more up-market concept and this will be reflected in a fresh approach to Pullman advertising.

Further meetings have been held with Ashford Borough Council and the South East England Tourist Board on a number of subjects, ranging from car parking to the Northiam Extension. The Railway is taking a leading role in the new Ashford Borough Tourist Association and a family visit to the Railway is being held in mid-October for journalists and travel operators from all over the country to see what we have to offer visitors.

Museum

John Miller reports that The Tenterden Museum is staging an exhibition about hops, brewing and pubs in the town until the end of the year. The K E S R is represented with photographs of pickers travelling by train, Hop Marketing Board tickets and consignment notes for hop pockets.

Bob Fridd has kindly donated three 4mm scale road vehicles, representing 1920s vehicles local to the Canterbury area. Three showcases have been substantially renovated this autumn prior to being used for display purposes.

Operating

The operating side has met the demands made upon it following the success of the Railway's marketing strategies, resulting on occasion with crowds of prospective passengers thronging the platform at Tenterden Town awaiting the arrival of the train: sometimes the scene has been more reminiscent of the rush hour at a busy commuter station although the need to apologise for the late running of trains has been gratifyingly small. Staff resources have been stretched and a special thanks is due to all operating staff volunteering for midweek duties. Many services have needed five coach trains and the norm at weekends has been to run two train sets of three coaches each; the arrival of additional Mark 1 coaches will assist in relieving overcrowding on the busier train services.

The employment of a station pilot at Tenterden, usually No 1556, has been popular with both staff and public. The locomotive has

been gainfully used to shunt service sets as required and the odd movements needed by the C & W Dept, for example. Our customers have had something to watch whilst waiting for trains as well as the opportunity to look over a steam engine at close quarters. During 1988 a pilot engine will feature at Tenterden on peak Sundays, but not necessarily a steam locomotive since vacuum fitted diesels will be employed on this duty as well.

As well as timetabled services and weekend engineering trains, midweek crews have had to be found throughout the summer for many extra duties, for example filming contracts, ballasting, weedkilling trains and additional Pullman charters.

An irritant to all train crews is the need to open and close Cranbrook Road gates for want of a crossing keeper; the resultant delays can make timekeeping impossible as well as encountering problems of restarting heavy trains up the Bank when rails are greasy. More volunteers to man the crossing are sought for 1988—apart from the occasional train, interruptions there are rare so it is the ideal spot for a bit of peace and solitude.

A series of rules courses have been conducted throughout the summer and autumn, with a gratifying response, and will be ongoing during next year. Each series comprises six sessions and it is hoped that more members will be encouraged to come forward and complete a rules course with a view to participating in the running of the Railway. It is worth bearing in mind that if we hope to extend services to Northiam in three years' time, many more operational staff will be needed, on the footplate, as guards, to man signalboxes—training needs to start now.

Finally, work on the 1988 working timetable is well in hand—as those who use it will be aware, this is a remarkably detailed affair containing not just train timings, but stock and loco requirements, light engine movements, conditional train pathings and much additional information, for every operating day in the year: in addition Special Traffic Notices are compiled detailing works trains, stock movements, and other matters only arranged shortly in advance of their occurrence.

Signals & Telegraph

During August members of the S & T Dept



The signal box at Rolvenden takes shape. Compare with the picture of the foundations, somewhat inappropriately included in the Wadhurst Rescue article on page 35 of the summer issue.
(Brian Stephenson)

spent a working week at Rolvenden installing signalling equipment. With a gang of at least five people each day a large amount of work was completed, including the erection of two SR rail built signal posts which were constructed in the Department's workshop at Tenterden, 130 yards of point rodding from the Wittersham Road end loop points and 100 yards of concrete cable troughing. The weather was extremely hot which made the adjacent sewage works much too close for comfort!

Following the completion of permanent way work to Rolvenden loop three SR shunt signals also had been erected by the end of August. The signal dummy controlling movements from the locomotive yard is mounted on a short lattice post to improve its visibility. Various other items of electrical and mechanical signalling equipment have been installed. The results of many months restoration effort behind the scenes at Tenterden may now be seen by all at Rolvenden.

Following the completion of the brickwork of the Rolvenden signal box this autumn the erection of the timber upper storey will commence shortly under the direction of Building Dept Manager Dave Stubbs. Incidentally, this signal box is being built to our own designs and is not that from Wadhurst, as

may have been implied from the photograph caption on page 35 in the Summer 1987 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*; Wadhurst is destined for re-use at Northiam.

Also in August Chris Lowry lead a small gang which replaced seven telegraph poles in one day near Dexter Halt (between Northiam and Bodiam). This work was made considerably easier through the use of a motorised auger. When drilling one of the holes, however, the drilling bit jammed on a tree root but the motor continued to rotate: this resulted in Kevin Blakiston running round with the machine trying to get it under control and finally being flung into a large clump of stinging nettles!

Permanent Way & Civil Engineering

This summer has seen an encouraging number of new volunteers join the Department, which has increased the work output quite considerably.

The track has held up remarkably well after its tamping earlier in the year—even through weekday running using the heavier Austerities. It has been necessary to carry out jacking and packing on a number of the older sections of track, as well as the odd bit of slewing. Oxney curve, relaid 18 months ago, needed some minor slewing to correct small flat spots that

had developed: this is the first work that has been required on the section of line, clearly vindicating the policy of "doing the job properly". Conversely, the section of track from Tenterden home signal down towards Cranbrook Road, to the top of the "Rabbit Warren", has required attention on numerous occasions, a particularly bad kink developing in one spot on hot days. This kink was slewed about seven inches back to alignment recently—fingers are crossed that it will stay there!

The night of Friday 21 August saw several members of both PW and Locomotive Depts involved in resleepering Rolvenden loop. Whilst the job itself was fairly straightforward, Mother Nature unfortunately picked the same night to practice for a monsoon—highly effectively, as all those present would attest! No less than three storms surrounded Rolvenden and the rain was the heaviest for very many months. Despite this, by 2.30 am all the sleepers had been replaced by concrete ones, the rails joined up again and a hopper of ballast run in. Many thanks are due to the small band of masochistic volunteers who braved atrocious conditions to carry out this work.

The Winter work programme is looming ahead, with major works to be undertaken at Rolvenden and at Wittersham Road. In addition there will be maintenance tasks on the operating section. This will be the last winter working on the existing section before work commences towards Northiam: it must be right before the Extension is started. A special plea therefore from the PW Dept Manager Paul Wilson is for as many pairs of hands as possible; your assistance for even one day this winter will be a help. Please telephone Paul on 0843 586617 for details and to offer your help.

Stations

Poor Old Tenterden Town—Almost 100,000 visitors are expected to have tramped through its doors by the end of the year, a far cry from its quieter days in the 1940s and 1950s when only a couple of hundred people a week passed through! 100,000 visitors leave a lot of litter and over 45 dustbin loads a week were carted away during the summer, condensed into three huge 'paladin' bins.

André Freeman has been busy between the rain storms painting the exterior of the station buildings, signal box and the lavatory block.

Minor repairs to woodwork, gutterings and fittings have been carried out. Sadly, the appalling weather has put the work way behind schedule, but it was planned to have everything in its first top-coat by the day of the Bond Issue launch.

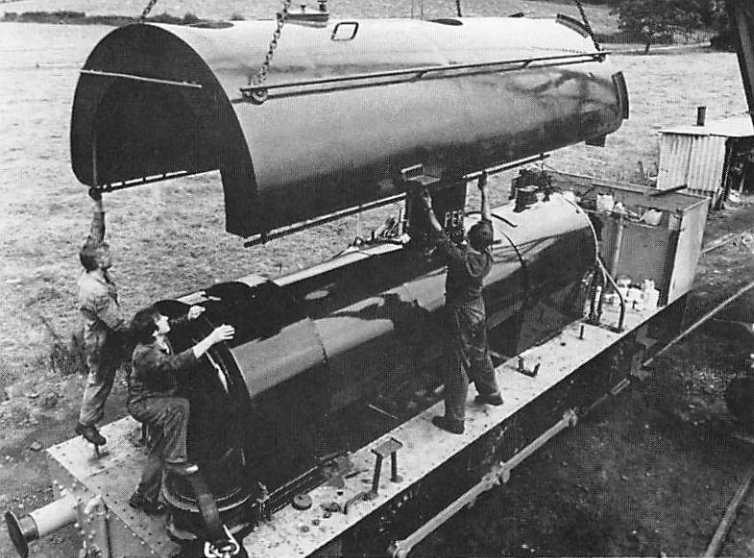
The hanging flower baskets, planted up on our behalf by "The Flower House" in Tenterden High Street look better than ever and are a mass of blooms. "The Flower House" has been a regular advertiser in *The Tenterden Terrier* over a number of years and it is pleasant to be able to support them as well. The flower tubs around the station were planted up by Ros Debling and have added splashes of colour in otherwise drab little corners. The flowerbeds themselves have received regular attention from Gerry and Pat Coombs, members from Orpington, and look a picture. A regular "hit squad" made up of Mark and Vanessa Toynbee, John and Ros Debling and the Coombs set aside one weekend each month to thoroughly clean and tidy the site, including cutting grass and hedges, repairs to fences and buildings, as well as routine painting tasks. Despite unkind jibes from certain loco crews who have named the team the "Parks and Gardens Division", the policy of concentrated effort by a number of people is working and Tenterden station site is more presentable and better cared for than in previous years.

Rolvenden station has had some remedial repainting undertaken by Ernie Stockdale but complete renovation must await the platform realignment and associated works, due to be undertaken this coming winter.

At Wittersham Road, Gerald Beck and team of Gill Edwards and Robin Levett have maintained the station and associated flower borders and picnic site in fine order. All the lamp standards now have lamp cases and an interesting collection of framed original and reproduction railway posters has been hung in the booking office. Ashford Borough Council has resurfaced the station entrance area which is now wide enough for delivery lorries and coaches to drive in without running over and damaging the grass verges.

The Wealden Pullman

The Pullman has run every Saturday evening from April until October, with other turns as well, resulting in over 40 services this year, all fully booked. It may be of interest to know that



Lowering the saddle tank on to the boiler of No 27 Linda, September 1987 (John Clark)

each Pullman has a complement of 14 staff comprising Conductor, Head Waiter, 5 Attendants, 2 Bar Stewards, 2 Chefs and 3 Pantry Attendants. Over the season it has been calculated that 3381 meals will have been cooked and served, 33,810 pieces of cutlery and 31,556 pieces of crockery washed (give or take a few hundred!). It would be interesting to learn whether any other preserved railway manages a train catering operation on anything like the same scale.

Amidst all this work time was found to fit a new kitchen into Restaurant car Diana between duties, the work being all but completed, as well as a new Stills boiler.

1987 also saw a new management team headed by Richard Osborn, assisted by Peter Broyd who is also head chef. Richard's fiancé Sara Oliver has taken over the mammoth task of staff rostering from Duncan Buchanan to whom thanks are due for his sterling service. Also standing down is John Head who has looked after Pullman bookings over the past four seasons: John originally believed that this would be a pleasant retirement job working mainly from home but he quickly discovered that it was virtually a full-time task looking after our customers. Now, perhaps, he can enjoy a more peaceful retirement. Stepping into the job is John Summersell—if anyone wishes to book up for next season he can be contacted on Headcorn 891393.

It always surprises diners that the train staff are volunteers and few are caterers by profession. More staff are always sought either to work on the train itself, or on preparation and cleaning

the following day—contact Richard on Maidstone 62119. Incidentally, there is no need to be apprehensive about silver service or serving drinks, everyone else has had to learn from scratch.

News from Area Groups

Ashford. Ashford Area Group members were relieved of any involvement in Kent County Show this year, as the Maidstone Group had more than sufficient helpers. As the weather turned out Ashford were mightily glad not to be there—commiserations to Maidstone!

On the evening prior to the County Show members from the Group, with colleagues from Maidstone and Croydon enjoyed a very pleasant summer's evening outing to the Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway. On 19 September Ashford Model Railway Club's exhibition was attended with a sales and publicity stand and the Group has been busy continuing with various fund raising activities for the "Ashford Carriages". Plans are already well underway for the Group's next Model Railway Exhibition—its twelfth, no less—to be staged at The Centrepiece, Bank Street, Ashford on Saturday 12 March 1988.

Meetings are held every third Wednesday in the month at the British Rail Social Club, Beaver Road, starting at 7.30pm—an interesting and varied programme is assured.

Much too modest to draw attention to himself, the driving force behind the Group and organiser of all twelve annual model railway exhibitions is Eric Graves to whom the Railway

owes a large debt of gratitude, for raising many thousands of pounds over the years and for keeping local interest in the line alive through his publicity efforts.

Croydon & Sutton. A three week exhibition about the Railway was staged at Croydon Central Library in mid-summer. It is always difficult to evaluate the success (or otherwise) of an exhibition where there were no members in permanent attendance. Nevertheless, there seems to have been considerable interest generated: some 1,500 timetable leaflets were picked up by the public, together with some 200 membership application forms. The Group was extremely grateful to Sue Reeder, the Deputy Chief Librarian at Croydon, and to Rolvenden volunteer John Clark for the loan of his photographs.

The twelve Group members taking part in the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway visit decided to travel together by bus, in ex-London Transport Routemaster RM 1000 which was driven by K E S R member Freddie Soper who is also a member of the Routemaster 1000 Preservation Society. The vehicle performed well on the 100 mile round trip.

Due to other commitments, Penny Johnson retired as Programme Secretary after the Group's July meeting. Thanks are due to Penny for all her hard work during her time in office. Hopefully a successor will have been found at the Group's September meeting but in the meantime Allan Sinclair has been busy arranging a programme covering the end of this year and the first few months of 1988: his task was made that much easier by the information coming from the circulation of lists of potential speakers between Groups.

Mention was made in the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* of a visitor's book placed in the buffet at Tenterden. The table on which it reposes was renovated by Norman Johnson at home, and then transported by him to the station. The Group is most grateful to Norman for the fine job he has done.

The Group's new meeting place, the British Rail Staff Association Club situated behind East Croydon station adjacent to the former goods yards, is not only very convenient but has authentic sound effects as the Class 73s pass a few yards away on the Gatwick Expresses. The

Group is indebted to Club Secretary Terry Taylor for permission to use the premises. Meetings continue to be held on the last Tuesday of each month—programme details can be obtained from Allan Sinclair on 01-777 8025.

Maidstone. Ashford Group has already noted that it was well out of the Kent County Show for the event showed just what commitment was needed by the Maidstone Area Group volunteers manning the sales stand and pump trolley when it rained constantly for all three days. Inevitably takings were well down compared with previous years; non-availability of the miniature passenger carrying railway, a money spinner in previous years, also resulted in lower takings. Appreciation and thanks are due to Tom Grimwood who managed the Group's show site, as well as to his family, the Harriott family, the Coombes family, and Jack Fox who all braved the horrid weather in the Railway's cause.

On 25 July the Group entered a float in the Maidstone Carnival. Allan Tebboth and his clearance gang dressed in period costume provided the focal point, together with the pump trolley. Those on foot handed out over 4,000 discount leaflets to onlookers lining the route. The Group's committee thank all those who helped on the day, especially Dorothy Wicks for providing a superb buffet and Mick Cork of Northiam who loaned one of his coal lorries.

Back in the Spring a quiz at an open meeting provided a very entertaining evening. Invicta Radio's Paul Chantler acted as quizmaster, supported by Railway Chairman David Stratton (adjudicator) and Marketing Manager Mark Toynbee (timekeeper). The K E S R team comprised Steve Armstrong (Capt), Arthur Ratcliffe, Doug Lindsay and Peter Davis, whilst the Severn Valley Railway fielded the opposition. The S V R answered questions on K E S R history so confidently that the timekeeper was heard to suggest that it just proved the K E S R's publicity machine must be working! The home team emerged winners, each member receiving a commemorative trophy whilst the runners up each got wooden spoons.

The Group's pump trolley was in use at Allington Fun Day over the Spring Bank Holiday and again at a transport rally at

Oldsbrough Manor School at end-June. Outings have included visits to Chart Leacon works, Ashford and the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway, opened specially by the owner for the evening, an occasion enjoyed by over 100 members of three K E S R Groups.

The Maidstone Area Group's open meetings resume in January on the last Wednesday of the month at the Kimberley Clark Club, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, starting at 7.30pm. New members are always welcome: further details can be obtained from Paul Gray, Maidstone 677587.

Thameside. The late George Wright was a pioneer member of the Thameside Group and will be particularly remembered by his colleagues for the many projects he organised on their behalf. Most notable perhaps was the opening up of the western end of the Railway on Bank Holiday weekends, with steam at Bodiam a familiar scene for several years. The building of Dixter Halt was largely his responsibility.

In early July Group members attended Bexley Show at Danson Park, Welling where over two days 37,000 attended. The sale of railway souvenirs, books, etc raised £112 for the railway and £62 for the Group, but perhaps as important it provided valuable publicity just before weekday running started. Once again Bodiam station was opened for visitors over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The Group has experienced problems in finding suitable accommodation for meetings of late, and has been somewhat reorganised. Regular meetings do still occur, details being available from Kevin & Sue Jarvis on Dartford 54201.

Sussex. Weald. No reports from either Group on this occasion but each holds regular meetings. For details of the former contact Tim Lawrence on 0323 845108, whilst Clive Norman (0892 22532) will be pleased to provide information about the activities of the Weald Group.



At the end of the line – but not for long. Ruston 0-4-0 DE stands at the limit of operations between Hexden and the Rother bridges with a weed killing train, 17th September 1987 (Paul Sutton)

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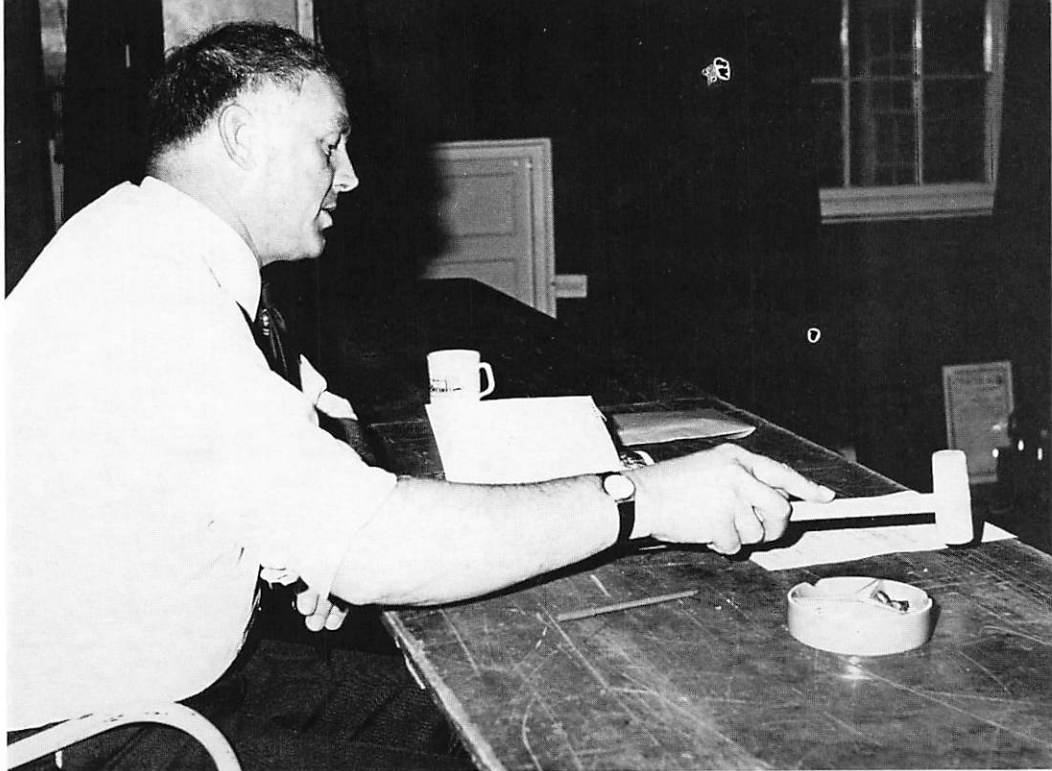
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George Wright conducting the A.G.M. relics auction on 19th October 1985 (Brian Stephenson)

Obituary: George Wright

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death of George Wright on 22nd July 1987 at the age of 47 years, following a short illness. George was one of the longest serving volunteer members, becoming a Director of The Tenterden Railway Company in 1981, a position that he held at the time of his death. George Wright was perhaps best known as one of our "top link" drivers and included in the crew which was awarded the Steam Railway/6000LA "Footplatemen Of The Year" award in 1984. His cheerful enthusiasm made him a popular figure at Tenterden and an instantly recognisable, striking personality. Steam locomotives were his first love, indeed his employment as a British Railways driver stretched back to the days of steam. On the Kent & East Sussex he was involved with many other activities ranging from track recovery at Welwyn (an invaluable project which he masterminded) to the A.G.M. relics auctions in aid of Company funds. Our sympathy goes to his widow, Joan, in her sad bereavement and as a tribute to a much loved figure, a nameplate will be affixed to the steam crane recently

acquired for use on the Northiam extension, a project to which he was totally committed.

A collection from his friends raised the sum of £850 which has been donated to the Renal Unit at St Paul's Hospital, London, W.C.2.

D.M.S.

The following letter was received from Mrs Joan Wright:-

I have been quite overwhelmed by everyone's generosity and offers of practical help and also by the attendance of so many of you at George's funeral. It has been made very obvious to me the impact George made in peoples' lives by the many expressions of sympathy I have received and the very touching letters that some of you have troubled to write to me. You all know what the K & E.S.R. meant to George and I am grateful that he obtained so much pleasure and enjoyment from it over the years. It is difficult to find words to express the appreciation felt by George's family and myself, but believe me when I say we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.





People in Profile

10: John Liddell

John Liddell has been a member of the Kent & East Sussex Railway for nearly 20 years. During this time he has served the organisation in a wide variety of ways including membership of the Board, managing the Locomotive Department at Rolvenden, waiting on the Pullman trains and organising area group activities. Following the sale of his motor accessory businesses in Maidstone and Chatham and subsequent retirement, John Liddell moved from Bearstead to Tenterden to be nearer the Railway that he knows and loves.

In Brian Stephenson's portraiture he is shown attending to the coachwork on the Editor's private saloon, for which he completed the external restoration last year. He is also hopeful of being appointed team leader for the new Community Programme Project engaged on carriage restoration. By way of contrast, John and his wife Nancy are pictured relaxing in the grounds of their lovely home in Tenterden, on a warm evening last September.

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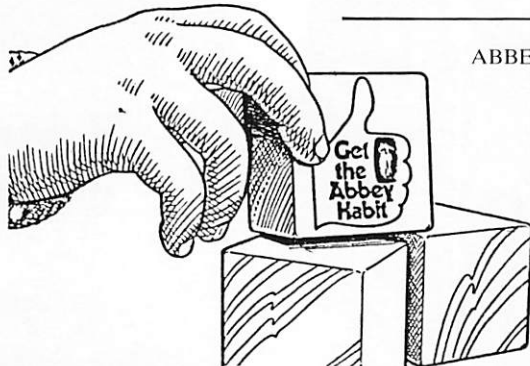
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Securing our Future ...

In 1981, the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd made history by becoming the first U.K. company since the War to make a public issue of bearer securities and indeed the first registered charity ever to issue a transferable fixed interest security. The sum of £20,000 required for the purpose of completing Wittersham Road station and bridge rebuilding was modest by today's standards. This was raised quite quickly, a small oversubscription of £500 being returned to unlucky applications.

The 1987 issue of £175,000 unsecured bearer bonds 1998-2007 as a contribution towards the cost of £225,000 to rebuild the railway from Hexden Bridge to Northiam is a much more formidable task, but does come at a time when the public at large are more aware of shares and bonds than ever before, following the various Government privatisation issues. In the 1981 issue, the single bond denomination was fixed at £25, but this time a wider variety are being issued, carrying different benefits, in order to broaden the appeal.

The bond numbers and denominations are as follows:-

15 at £1,000	each providing a numbered certificate, first class travel on the official opening train to Northiam and two tickets each year on the prestigious Wealden Pullman train for the first five years subsequent to the date of purchase.
60 at £500	each providing a numbered certificate. First class travel for life on the K & E.S.R. and a seat on the official opening train to Northiam.
800 at £100	each providing a numbered certificate and third class ticket with reserved seat on Northiam opening day

2,000 at £25 each providing a numbered certificate

The bond issue was launched on 29th September at Tenterden Town station with a press reception and special train. We arranged for a limited amount of paid advertising, but the K & E.S.R. publicity machine moved into top gear thanks to Mark Toynbee and a considerable amount of news coverage was obtained, both in the national press, local papers and on television, including the breakfast time programme complete with City comment.

The £1000 bonds were sold out in two days and the £500 in two weeks, the minimum subscription of £35,000 being achieved almost before we had time to think about it! At the time of writing, a total of £80,000 has been raised, with more coming in the post every day. This still leaves us with the majority of the £100 and £25 bonds to sell, but it is felt that these will make ideal Christmas presents and a stand will be set up at the station in order to interest travellers on the santa special trains. We could therefore find virtually the whole issue sold out by the end of the year, with the distinct possibility that the bonds will become highly prized collectors items.

Meanwhile, work is in hand on the extension itself; we have already secured suitable track for the job—Northiam here we come!

Philip Shaw

If you have not already purchased a bond and would like to receive a prospectus, please telephone Tenterden Town Station (Tenterden 5155) preferably between 9.00am and 12.00noon, Mondays to Fridays and one will be sent to you. They are also available to callers, on request, at any time during Saturdays and Sundays.

(Upper left) T.V. camera crews filming the launch train

(Lower left) The press briefing with extension committee members Tim Stanger (left) and Mark Toynbee

(Upper right) Richard Darbyshire (right) proprietor of the Rother Valley Inn, Northiam, receives the first bond accompanied by Chairman, David Stratton, Jenny Farrant and T.V. weatherman, Ron Lobeck.

(Lower right) Displaying the bonds with Nigel Embry, Director South East England Tourist Board (left) and Mark Toynbee



Securing C

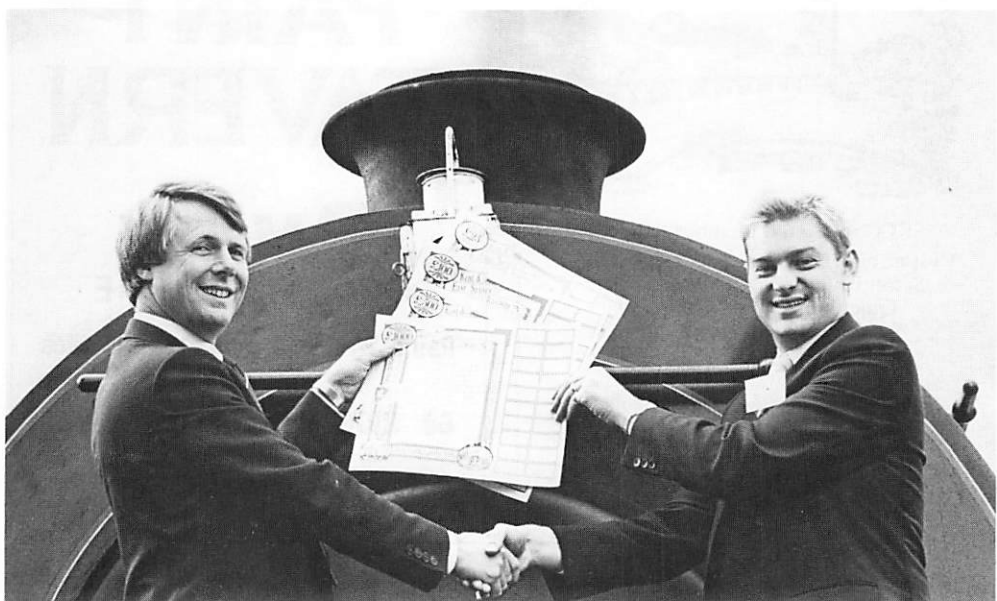
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Hopping Down the Line

Upon opening, the KESR crossed a countryside rich in hop gardens. Dubbed the "Farmers' Line", the Railway might as aptly be named the "Hoppers' Line" although this sobriquet could be applied equally to the Hawkhurst and Maidstone branches from Paddock Wood. All about the KESR were signs of what a sixteenth century writer described as "a wicked and pernicious weed"—regiments of stout poles, interlaced by wires and twine to support the growing hop bines, and oasthouses at every farm, each drying kiln topped by a cowl swinging to the breeze, distinctive features of the Kent landscape.

By late August the hops themselves are ready for picking, followed by drying in the oasthouses and then despatch to market and brewery to give that distinctive bitter taste to English beer. Traditionally, farmers called in pickers from elsewhere, especially London and the Medwy Towns, to supplement local "home dwellers" and itinerant gypsies. Pickers once walked but by the 1850s the hop gardens became accessible by train, enabling more and more Londoners to travel with their families.

The South Eastern Railway was quick to cash in on this annual traffic and for about a century, Cockney families flooded into Kent (and parts of East Sussex) by train each year for a working holiday lasting upwards of a month. Special trains, from London Bridge and New Cross carried them to Tonbridge, Paddock Wood, Headcorn and numerous smaller stations. To fit in with other traffic, the hoppers' trains often left London around midnight and despite slow, sometimes circuitous journeys, would decant their human cargoes at remote stations in the small hours of morning, stranded, until daylight enabled the pickers to find their farms. For these trains the most decrepit carriages would be pulled out of overgrown sidings to be hauled by any engine that was available.

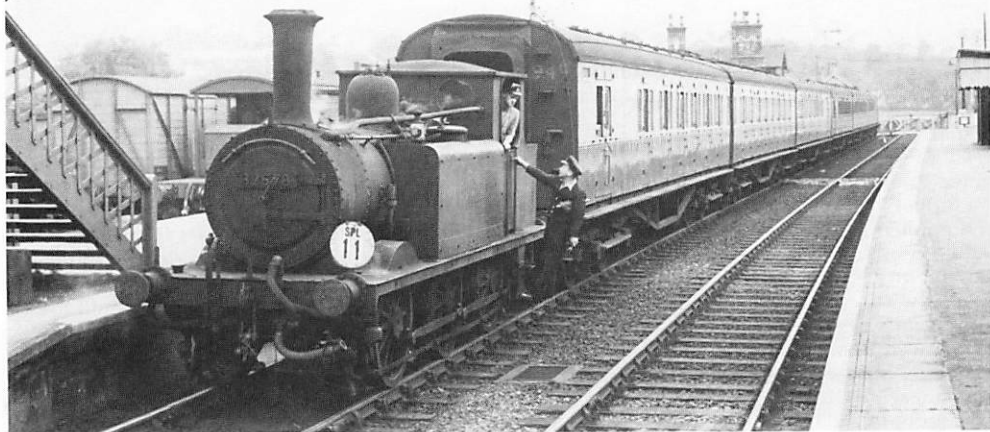
The pickers were not known for their orderly conduct or respect of property and so the local constabulary turned out in force. With money in their pockets and often the worse for drink, returning pickers could be unruly and abusive, giving the upholders of law and order plenty of work. "Children in arms" travelled free: generously interpreted, mothers could be seen struggling with great big children wrapped in blankets on their backs in order to avoid payment. Others were secreted in baggage or under seats. Discovery meant payment and

those who could not do so might forfeit their shoes. Luggage was plentiful, pickers regularly taking all their possessions with them, having given up their lodgings to seek new ones upon their return. Down the years it was a common sight to see pickers trundling their belongings piled high on old prams between station and hutted encampment where they would live.

It was the ripening of the hops which determined the start of picking. Trains ran at short notice but from the 1920s arrangements were carefully orchestrated to avoid the chaos of earlier years. The Southern Railway distributed postcards to growers who, when the start date of picking was decided, would stamp each card and address to chosen pickers, before sending them to the Hop Controller's Office, based in a saloon coach berthed at Paddock Wood station; there each card had the relevant journey details entered before posting. Similar arrangements were laid on for homeward journeys, hop growers advising the Controller when picking was expected to finish so that the trains could be organised. In later years, "hop pickers' friends' specials" ran to take menfolk, sundry relations and friends on weekend visits to the pickers, leaving London on Saturdays and Sunday mornings during the picking season, to return back to Town on Sunday evenings.

In the 1920s the SR carried more than 30,000 pickers each season. Thereafter road competition, especially the use of lorries, made inroads into the railway's dominance. A brief resurgence occurred after the Second World War and into the period of petrol rationing in the early 1950s—for example 23,000 pickers' friends were carried in 1952. During the 1950s the numbers of hoppers' trains gradually dwindled until the last ran in 1960. The spread of hop-picking machines, less hop acreage and social change all contributed to this demise. The hops themselves were sent to market in Southwark and Bermondsey, predominantly by road rather than rail. In the other direction shoddy was brought in by rail as a manure for the gardens.

The KESR benefited from hop traffic. It straddled an area of hop farms that covered the Wealden slopes around and to the north of Tenterden and in the Rother Valley, particularly in the Bodiam area. It was at Bodiam that a well-known Irish stout brewer developed this country's largest hop farm. The



Hop pickers train at Robertsbridge in the early 1950's

(Mike Esau)

Guinness hop gardens grew from modest beginnings in 1905 when 358 acres of farmland were acquired, growing just 15 acres of hops: it was originally named The Ockham and Udiam Hop Farms. By 1946 hops covered 747 acres on farms totalling 1182 acres. They extended three miles north to south, and two miles east to west; the acquisition of Abbey Farm, Salehurst in 1951 extended the Guinness estate a further mile westwards along the valley. In 1946 it comprised 10 oasthouses with 50 kilns, six houses and 70 cottages. The regular workforce of over 100 men was supplemented each year by an influx of some 4000 pickers, including their families. In 1937 it was noted that 4106 people arrived at the farm in three special trains.

The hops would be picked into hessian bins from which they would be measured using bushel baskets. 10 bushels of green hops were needed to fill a "poke" for transfer to the oasthouse for drying. About 25 baskets per person per day was considered a fair average, pickers being paid by the basket as recorded by the booker (tallyman). After drying, the hops were pressed into long hop "pockets", each 7½ft long, weighing about 1½cwt and containing 14 pokes, ready for transport.

If the Guinness farm was on the grand scale, other farmers along the KESR grew more modest hop acreages but still needed their quota of pickers. Details of the Railway's involvement in earlier years are sparse but it may be assumed that it wasn't until the middle 1930s that London trains ran through onto KESR metals: instead additional and strengthened service trains were run, stock being loaned on occasion from the Southern.

In 1936 a correspondent to Railway Magazine

noted that a normal KESR train was made up of just one coach, usually an 8-wheeled composite, but when the hoppers travelled a typical load was made up of two bogie coaches, a 6-wheeled composite and two 4-wheeled brake thirds, all of LSWR origin. In the same year, Thomas Dadswell, later proprietor of Hodson's Mill, Robertsbridge, described what must have been record loads for Railway when, each Sunday, a special Friends' service came down from London. At Robertsbridge several KESR coaches would be attached for the run to Bodiam. On one memorable occasion he recorded that the train comprised 15 bogie coaches and a van, to which were added two KESR 6-wheelers. This cavalcade, which he reckoned at 480 tons, was hauled both ways by the Railway's 0-6-0 ex LSWR Beyer-Peacock saddletank (No 4). The KESR coaches were left at Bodiam but, despite being still a heavy train, the 1-in-80 bank into Robertsbridge was negotiated on the return trip without incident. At Bodiam 500 passengers crowded aboard and more were picked up at Junction Road, the train being pulled forward several times because of the short platforms, amidst general confusion.

Mr Dadswell recalls that in the 1930s it was usual practice for the Sunday evening train to have three engines, two in front and one behind. On arrival at Robertsbridge the train would be taken straight on to the down mainline, being too long for the KESR bay. The two leading engines would be detached and run over the level crossing, whilst the banking engine returned to the KESR line. A Southern engine usually placed beside the water tank backed on to the train which left for London from the down platform, crossing over to the up line immediately. Prompt departures were rarely achieved for no sooner did the train

arrive than there would be a mass exodus to 'The Ostrich' pub over the road: the station staff had a terrible job getting them back on board again!

Reminiscences by former pickers reveal fond memories of travelling by the "Bumper" to the hop gardens. Locals recall the shouting and cheering from train windows. Pickers remember vividly the acrobatic feats of the Railway guards walking along the footboards to examine tickets. R C Riley recalls a memorable trip in 1950 on a Friends' special when ticket collection was made over a stream: by this means the collectors ensured that nobody nipped off the train and then got back in again after they had moved on to inspect tickets in the next coach. Calls of nature, urgent and inevitable given the consumption of ale on homeward journeys, were answered at station stops through open doorways. Petty crime increased and at Robertsbridge, for instance, the police force was strengthened at picking time. Mischief was common and the railway was not immune from trouble. On one occasion No 3, heading an evening train from Robertsbridge, struck a sleeper that had been placed across the rails by three boys from an adjoining hop garden; luckily no harm was done. Drivers reported that every year they felt their light engines riding up over obstacles that were placed on the rails, or stones between check rails, fortunately without mishap. The Railway formed a convenient footpath to the Robertsbridge pubs: the Old Eight Bells at Salehurst, being the nearest, always did a roaring trade.

Things were much quieter in wartime. Friends' specials did not run for the duration. At the height of the Battle of Britain, Tenterden was a restricted area because of invasion fears but the hops still grew. More use was made of local pickers than hitherto but some Londoners still made the journey: on hearing the sirens, pickers took shelter in trenches dug in the gardens—at least they were supposed to but they had grandstand views of the aerial combats overhead. Throughout the war a more sober, older generation came to pick and the hopping seasons passed relatively quietly.

The Specials returned after the war and the numbers of pickers travelling by service train also rose. A Railway Magazine correspondent noted that a 4.30pm Tenterden—Robertsbridge train one September afternoon in 1946 started with two bogie coaches and just

six wagons. Wagons were added at each intermediate station as well as several parties of hoppers and by the time the destination was reached No 4 was hauling no less than 19 wagons. No doubt some of the wagons conveyed hop pockets although Guinness had used road transport from an early date. 426 tons of hops reported as carried in 1913 is probably a typical year's figure.

On Saturday 20 September 1947 a through train of SR coaches was run to London for workers returning from the Guinness gardens. Curiously it started from Junction Road and was hauled by SR Terrier 2678, piloted by KESR No 4 (again!—by now this engine was into its last few months of service). Lack of run round facilities had caused the two engines to propel the empty stock from Robertsbridge.

Some 2000 pickers and their families came to the Guinness gardens by train each year in the early 1950s and although the KESR lost its regular passenger services in January 1954, hoppers' trains ran for the next five seasons. On Saturday afternoons, three workings ran from Robertsbridge, where mainline connections were made, to Bodiam calling at Junction Road en route; the train ran on empty to Northiam so that the engine could run round. In 1955, for example, trains left Robertsbridge at 12.35pm, 2.10pm and 4.16pm, the usual formation comprising two ex-SECR non-corridor coaches with a van between. Until 1954 Rolvenden depot had provided the motive power, but now the branch Terrier, based at St Leonards, worked the trains after its return from Tenterden with the daily goods: 32678 was regularly used on this duty and in 1957 former KESR No 3, by now BR 32670, put in an appearance. In 1958 diesels were employed on the goods service and for at least one Saturday (6 September 1958) 11223 worked the Bodiam shuttle but had failed by the following weekend when 32636 was used.

Bodiam visitors were provided with a through train to London Bridge each Sunday, departing at 6.40pm, thus continuing a service which had existed for very many years. Most years, mainline stock was worked up from Hastings by two Terriers: in 1957 the stock left Hastings at 4.40pm. In 1956, however, the six-coach train was double-headed from Bexhill West, leaving at 5.14 pm, as far as Robertsbridge, and thence to Bodiam with a Terrier each end.

1958 saw the last year of hopper's trains on the



Hoppers arriving at Bodiam station in the early 1950's (Tenterden Railway Company)

KESR. On 2 September an early morning special, hauled by UI 31890 brought pickers from London Bridge to Robertsbridge. Ashford provided Terrier 32636 and Brighton 32662 to work the train on to Bodiam. The following Sunday (7 September) the 6.40pm Friends' special was cancelled following storm damage. Finally, on 14 September the 6.40pm

Bodiam—London Bridge ran for the very last time, 32636 and 32678 again providing the motive power: its homeward journey took it via Orpington instead of via the Crowhurst spur and Oxted.

The following year pickers coming by train had to use road transport from Robertsbridge. The

same arrangements applied in 1960, the final year of hoppers' services. The last such train ran from Robertsbridge at 6.48pm on 20 September 1960, hauled by U1 31905.

Today there are no signs of hop gardens around Junction Road and Bodiam. The acreage grown by Guinness had reduced through the 1950s, then stabilised but in 1972 a decision was taken to end hop production for three main reasons –

- a. Entry into the Common Market gave access to cheaper continental hops;
- b. Soils at Bodiam were not capable of sustaining levels of production which the prevailing economics of hop growing demanded;
- c. The spread of *Verticillium Wilt*—a soil borne fungus afflicting hops—made eventual closure inevitable.

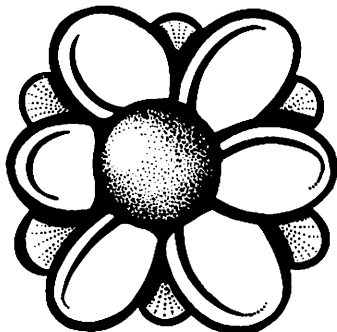
An eight-year rundown was planned but this was subsequently reduced to five years. In the event, men left so fast that it proved impossible to grow any hops in 1976, so the gardens were grubbed out and the Guinness farm sold at Michaelmas that year.

A similar story repeats itself elsewhere in the area, farmers no longer finding it worthwhile to grow hops. A train ride from Tenterden to Wittersham Road today will reveal only two hop gardens visible from the carriage window. Hereabouts, as elsewhere in Kent, converted oasthouses make sought after homes. Their distinctive outline still characterises this part of the English landscape. The heady aroma of hops being dried on a dewy September's morning, or wafting over the evening air, can still be enjoyed at a few farms. At least the KESR played its part at hopping time for nearly 60 years.

Neil Rose

In preparing this article I am thankful for the assistance of many people who have provided me with notes and information over several years, notably Peter Carey, T R Dadswell, Richard Filmer, Dr Gerald Siviour and R C Riley. Railway Magazine has provided useful snippets and "Guinness & Hops", by J F Brown and published by A Guinness Son & Co (Park Royal) Ltd in 1980 has been an invaluable source. Finally, the author would be pleased to hear from any readers having further information about hoppers' trains on the KESR, especially in the years before 1936.

THE FLOWER HOUSE



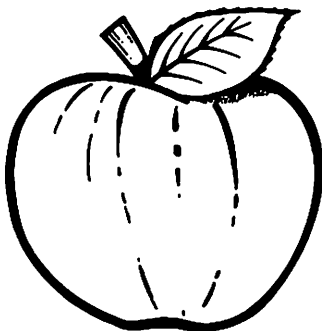
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Letters to the Editor

Critical Path Analysis

Sir—It was interesting to note in the Summer edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* that out of four letters published three were critical of developments on the Railway.

One has to sympathise the Gerry Siviour and his comments about both the Easter event and the proposed extension to Northiam and no doubt the Board has given these matters their deepest consideration. I would like to think that the Board try to achieve a balance between what the enthusiast would like to retain and what the general public expect, however, in the final analysis the enthusiast and purist will be disappointed if only because it is the general public that pays to keep the Railway going, and marketing requirements will take precedence over history, tradition and nostalgia. It is all very well to dream wistfully of a Terrier and a couple of 'Birdcages' trundling slowly through the countryside but it is only a dream.

Increasing passengers every year require a degree of operation that bears no relation to Light Railway practice, indeed, the only thing common to the old Kent & East Sussex is the route. Although I sincerely hope that both Northiam and Bodiam will be developed and disturbed as little as possible some degree of alteration will inevitably be required and although the Terriers and Birdcages will have a role to play again, of necessity, the bulk of operations will be with the Austerities and Mk I coaches. Gerry poses the question; Should the Kent & East Sussex be bigger or better? Quite simply, to survive we have to be both; we have to extend to Northiam and, eventually, Bodiam and we have to always strive to improve our quality. Were the Railway to forever end at a nebulous terminus in the middle of nowhere (Hexden Bridge) then the effect on the working membership would be deleterious, new members would not be recruited and existing members would fade away and the Kent & East Sussex would fade with them. Growth of the Railway will encourage working members and new members and thus will quality of service also improve—although no one pretends the tasks ahead will be easy.

The use of the Mk I coaches will always by contentious whilst vintage stock awaits restoration but even when that stock is restored the bulk of services will be maintained by the Mk I's because of their high passenger capacity and their compatability with the policy of

on-train catering and sales trollies.

What is important is that whatever stock is used should be clean and tidy and well-maintained and presented in an attractive livery be it brown/cream, carmine/cream or green, but not tatty blue/grey.

In his letter, Tim Stanger shows concern at the developments near Orpin's Curve where a siding is being laid to store the steam cranes. From my own observations, there should be little or no effect on the visual impact of the area the proposed siding being nearer to Rolvenden gates than to Orpin's Crossing and in front of a large building which, whilst appearing in many photographs, has no aesthetic appeal. The fine views to the North will remain unchanged yet the equally fine steam cranes will be shown off to advantage.

Finally, N.C. Langridge expresses concern at locomotive liveries and once again the ideas of the enthusiast conflict with marketing needs. Here, again, a balance is required with a variety of liveries to stimulate interest. It might be of interest to Mr. Langridge to know that one of the most popular liveries, so far as children are concerned, is the non-authentic camouflage carried by WD191 (No. 23). Of course, and as the Chairman points out, it is the owners who have the final say and why not.

Allan Sinclair
Croydon

Vintage Coaches

Sir—Surely a lucrative marketing opportunity was missed this season when the ex G.E.R. 6 wheeler was removed from the Carriage & Wagon shed in January. 1987 is this vehicle's centenary year and, had the restoration team been encouraged and assisted to finish the renovation work quickly, the public would have had the rare opportunity of riding in a coach 100 years old. Quite naturally those involved with No. 87 have said they will not restart work until it is under cover again. Meanwhile much of their earlier efforts are being weathered away while it stands in the open.

This brings me to ask; when may we be told the Company's latest policy regarding our coaching stock? In the Boardroom notes in *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 42 it was stated that "a small committee was set up towards the end of last

year"—surely they must have concluded their deliberations by now. Some of the ex Departmental stock acquired has now been on the line for over twenty years and should they ever reach the head of the queue for restoration, they will be then be totally beyond redemption. It would appear that the Railway does not want historic coaches, but prefers Mark Is and perhaps two or three token Maunsells.

In view of the foregoing, I suggest we either scrap these unwanted relics (approximately 14 in number) or give them away to other railways who will restore and look after them. We certainly never will.

Having done that, we can then get on with the important work of acquiring and restoring yet more wagons.

Paul Sutton
Iden Green, Kent.

Early days of The Sheppey Light Railway

Sir—I expect you know that Lord Harris was best known as a cricket administrator as well as being, for five years, Governor of Bombay.

Stephens's concern regarding his approach to him was understandable as he could be a very formidable opponent. I doubt if he would have settled for anything less than "My Lord" from someone who, after all, was only a "railwayman".

Stephens would have found him a stickler for the correct procedure as in cricket he always insisted that players should be properly qualified (either by birth or by residence) to play for a county, and he fought an endless campaign against bowlers whose actions had any element of a throw.

For the record the Sheerness and District Electric Tramways actually lasted until 1917. At first though it may seem strange that a tram service in a naval town should cease during a war, but much of the equipment was due for replacement, and was German.

The articulated sets moved to the Weymouth-Easton line after the closure but that line only survived another 15 months. After this they were moved to Sidmouth Junction for the Sidmouth and Exmouth lines,

where a slightly longer stay was available for them.

J.F. Burrell.
Bristol.

Bodiam to Robertsbridge?

Sir—Now that the Kent & East Sussex Railway is hopefully extending to Northiam and later Bodiam, should we not consider the purchase of the trackbed between Bodiam and Robertsbridge as it becomes available, in order to allow a future link up with the national railway system.

The trackbed should be quite easy to acquire and we should object to any obstruction of the right of way by the proposed Robertsbridge bypass and other developments. The breach in the embankment to the west of Bodiam could perhaps be repaired using spoil from the channel tunnel.

A link with British Railways would make the K & ESR more accessible, especially as rising petrol prices restrict private motoring, and enable us to provide a proper public service to the local area as well as the tourist steam train service.

Jonathan Dalton
Eastbourne, Sussex

The Other Longmoor saloons

Sir—Thank you for sending me the article from *The Tenterden Terrier* (Summer 1987) concerning the Bicester carriage. I was glad that you could use our drawing showing this vehicle as rebuilt at Longmoor. If any of your readers are interested, we hold all sorts of drawings from the past, including some 300-400 working drawings of W.D. standard locomotives should anyone wish to build one from scratch! We also have a representative display of military locomotives and rolling stock, including 'Gazelle' from the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

J.A. Robbins (Major)
Museum of Army Transport, Beverley North
Humberside.

The Burls Report

Amongst the materials relating to the Kent & East Sussex held at the Public Record Office is a file, MT6 2247/3, intriguingly described in the Index as 'Burls Report'. Its contents are as intriguing as its title as they consist of a report published in 1913 comparing the relative costs of road and rail transport in the area served by the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Mr G A Burls prepared his report for a commission set up as a result of the Development & Road Improvement Funds Act 1909 and it was intended to be the first of a series of studies to determine whether "the needs of rural communities at some distance from main lines of railway will be better met by services of Road Motor Vehicles or by laying down of Light Railways". Not only are Mr Burls' conclusions on this matter of interest but the Report gives some fascinating insights into this period of the life of the Kent & East Sussex.

Mr Burls took as his brief a comparison of the service provided by the Kent & East Sussex between Headcorn, Tenterden and Robertsbridge and a comparable road service linking Headcorn, Biddenden, High Halden, Tenterden, Rolvenden, Benenden, Highgate, Hawkhurst, Hurst Green and Robertsbridge. He described the district between Headcorn and Tenterden as 'gently undulating rather poor land, mainly under grass, but with some hops' whilst that between Tenterden and Robertsbridge was 'a hilly well-timbered country also mainly grass but growing a considerable quantity of hops'. Farms were generally inaccessible to motor traffic on steep un-made tracks. Large consignments of bulky goods could be left at the roadside for collection but for most goods it would be necessary for any road service to be provided with depots in each town or village.

Mr Burls then turned to describing the Railway whose capital cost he calculated as £8807 per mile. In 1911 the Railway had paid a dividend of 3% on its ordinary stock and 4% on debenture stock. The Headcorn Extension, built on behalf of the South Eastern & Chatham Railway, had run at a loss in 1911 but the S.E.C.R. had guaranteed payment of 3% to investors in the Extension. It was also noted that the profitability of the Kent & East Sussex was enhanced by the special goods rates given to the line by the S.E.C.R.

Passenger traffic in 1911 had amounted to

87,081 passengers over the whole line but receipts for the Robertsbridge to Tenterden section came to £2662 as against £912 for the Headcorn Extension. The Railway did not have a monopoly of passenger traffic in the area; Headcorn was served three times daily by horse buses from Biddenden, High Halden and Tenterden and there was a daily return service between Northiam and Hawkhurst. However, later in the Report it is suggested that these bus services were unprofitable and had to be subsidised locally.

Mr Burls went into greater detail in considering the line's goods traffic. In 1911 there had been 15736 tons of minerals earning £779, 14196 tons of general merchandise earning £4183 and £71 had been earned by the carriage of livestock. It was noted that general merchandise accounted for 83% of goods receipts though only accounting for 47½% of goods traffic. It was particularly noted that rates for carrying coal and roadstone to stations between Robertsbridge and Tenterden were very much less than those charged on the Headcorn Extension. This was explained by the need to compete with river-borne traffic in the vicinity of the Rother. In fact the rates for carrying coal, roadstone or timber on this section of line were almost half those charged on the Headcorn Extension! Only livestock and hops were carried at comparable rates on both sections. Rates were quoted for transport from all stations either via Headcorn or via Robertsbridge but in practice goods south of Tenterden went via Robertsbridge and goods from Tenterden and the Headcorn Extension went via Headcorn.

Whether it was because of this difference in rates or because of the lack of road competition on the Rother Valley section 56¾% of goods travelled via Robertsbridge and 43¼% via Headcorn. It was emphasised that, with the exception of hops and the relatively small timber traffic, most goods traffic was into the district with most trucks leaving the line empty. Finally, it was observed that certain types of traffic, notably lime and manure, could be unloaded at the lineside to save collection from stations.

Turning from the Railway to the roads in the district, Mr Burls found those between Headcorn and Tenterden to be mainly broad and level with tarred macadam surfaces. Between Tenterden and Robertsbridge there



Road and rail at Northiam. A rare c 1902 view of 'Bodiam' in Rother Valley livery. The Burls Report road route would not have served Northiam at all although it was the second busiest station for goods traffic in 1911.
(R.W. Kidner collection)



Goods in bulk. Goods only trains were a rarity on the line. This one, hauled by 'Rother' is seen leaving Headcorn in 1910. Such loads would have caused difficulties if carried by road, though coal for Tenterden gas works was brought by road from Appledore.

(L.C.G.B. – Kent Nunn Collection)

seem to have been equal distances of tarred macadam and waterbound macadam. These were mostly in good condition but were unsatisfactory in the vicinity of Highgate. The main problem throughout the Tenterden to Robertsbridge section was the number of steep gradients. On the approach to Hawkhurst Mr Burls had observed a steel-tyred 3 ton steam wagon with a 2 ton trailer labouring uphill at 2½-3 m.p.h.

Anticipating that regular motor services on these roads, even with rubber-tyred vehicles on tarred surfaces, would cause rapid deterioration, Mr Burls had sought the advice of the Kent Surveyor, H P Maybury, as to the costs of preparing and maintaining the roads to cope with a regular service of twenty vehicles. Mr Maybury had estimated the cost of providing a 'pitch grouted road crust' at £1650 per mile with additional costs of £6000 for

certain widening works and £5000 for improved drainage throughout the route. Annual maintenance was estimated at £300 per mile based on an average working life for such a road of five years.

Upon further consideration Mr Burls decided that a regular service of twelve vehicles should be sufficient and would reduce maintenance costs. He reached this conclusion by calculating average loadings and speeds for a Robertsbridge to Benenden service and a Benenden to Headcorn service. Each section would need two 5 ton steel-tired steam wagons with 3 ton trailers for heavy goods, two 3 ton rubber-tired steam wagons for general merchandise and two kerosene-powered 34 seat omnibuses for passengers. There would also need to be one spare vehicle of each type to cover emergencies and repairs. A light motorcar and a motor bicycle should also be obtained for staff use.

Putting together the cost of roadworks and vehicles together with the provision of offices and depots, Mr Burls estimated the capital costs of providing a regular road service to the district at £80,000. This compared very favourably with the £193,762 it had cost to construct and equip the Railway. Running costs were, however, a different matter. A road service would require a large staff with each vehicle requiring a man and a boy for a relatively small payload when compared with a train and each of the depots would need to be staffed as well as causing delays while goods were unloaded. Above all the pattern of traffic predominantly into the district with vehicles returning empty would create much unproductive mileage. The yearly cost of running a road service would be £13300

compared with £7850 by rail. A road service might be more convenient and require less capital investment but it was undeniably cheaper to continue to use the trains.

Circumstances were, of course, to change dramatically in the years that followed. Road vehicles would become cheaper and more versatile and the cost of road maintenance would never be directly charged to the road user in the way that Mr Burls seems to have anticipated. Nevertheless, in counting the cost to a whole community of its transport services Mr Burls was not being entirely illogical, eccentric as his approach may seem today.

What did the Board of Trade, from whose files this Report has survived, make of it all? Mr Burls had submitted it to the Board for approval as he wished to have it published in 'Commercial Motor'. Apart from privately questioning some of the Report's calculations the reaction at the Board seems to have been noncommittal. Perhaps the wind was already blowing in favour of the road lobby or perhaps it was just official reticence. The Board replied to Mr Burls that it was probably the Kent & East Sussex Railway whose permission should be sought for publication and neatly sidestepped the question of their own opinion of the Report. The staff at 'Commercial Motor' have kindly searched their files but have found no reference to the Report or any surviving correspondence with Mr Burls. One must assume that the Report was never published.

Stephen Garrett

Grateful thanks are due to the staff of the Public Record Office and of 'Commercial Motor' for their assistance.



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RICHARD & CHERRY SMITH & ELSIE SMITH

Book Reviews

HASTINGS TO ASHFORD and TONBRIDGE TO HASTINGS, both by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith, published by the Middleton Press, price £6.95 each, both containing 120 well captioned photographs, maps and introductory texts.

These two books maintain the high standards one has come to expect of the Middleton Press, which now has established itself as the foremost publisher about railway lines in Southern England. Despite their prolific output, the enthusiasm of the authors appears unabated. The format of previous volumes is continued, blending well reproduced, always fascinating photographs with informative, generally accurate and often amusing captions. However familiar one may be with the routes covered, out-of-the-ordinary subjects and photographs generally not previously published, sustain interest throughout. In passing, it is curious how the detail revealed in many of the turn of the century pictures is better than in those more recently taken.

These books cover routes on two sides of the railway triangle about the KESR. 'Hastings to Ashford', in the South Coast Railways series, includes sections on the New Romney/Dungeness branches, the rarely photographed Lydd Military Railway and the goods only line to Rye Harbour: a minor criticism is that the latter is covered by several slightly confusing maps and three photographs, all featuring the buffer stops, but no trains. The reviewer remembers a C-class goods engine fussing about in the concrete works siding in the mid-1950s but unfortunately was too young to think of photographing the scene for posterity.

Within the Southern Main Lines series, 'Tonbridge to Hastings' does ample justice to a unique route passing through delightful countryside: the story of the narrow tunnels necessitating special rolling stock until 1986 is well covered. A spectacular picture of the blowing up in 1969 of the 17-arch Filsham Viaduct is included in a section on the Bexhill West branch which succumbed to Beeching's axe in 1964. Another excursion off the mainline covers the mile-long branch to the Mountfield gypsum mines, which still continue to provide freight traffic.

The South Eastern Railway was not generally renowned for the quality of its architecture, but William Tress designed a series of station

buildings for both lines that remain minor masterpieces to this day: apart from Winchelsea all retain their original purpose of serving the railway traveller. Virtually unaltered over the years most have been sympathetically renovated by BR and often look better today than in photographs taken 50 years ago: nowhere is this more so than Stonegate.

The facsimile tickets that fill-in odd corners well repay closer examination. Who on earth would buy a platform ticket at Brookland Halt on Romney Marsh? Obviously several people, since that illustrated is number 63. Likewise there cannot have been many first class travellers from Winchelsea to Rye. And finally, did anyone on 29 May 1957 travel from Brookland Halt to Ryde Esplanade and back?

N.S.R.

PULLMAN CARS ON THE SOUTHERN 1875-1972 by R.W. Kidner, published by the Oakwood Press, price £4.95. 64 pages of text, photographs and diagrams.

With the ever growing interest in all aspects of Pullman travel, possibly inspired to some extent by services such as our Wealden Pullman, this latest book on the subject is most welcome. Mainly sourced from personal experiences and records kept by the Author, Mr Kidner's look at the Southern operations of Pullman has much to commend it both to the enthusiast and the general reader who may have once travelled on, or watched, the familiar brown and cream capsules of luxury pass by on the fast line. The ten chapters outline the history, operations, demise and preservation of all Southern related cars in a concise, if fairly brief way. The text is accompanied by over 80 photographs of interior and exterior shots, including Barbara and Theodora, plus numerous menus, handbills, diagrams and advertising material. For the discerning Pullman enthusiast, it is a 'must'.

D.S.L.

Single Line to Dungeness

Norman Johnson relates the history of a rural Byway

Dungeness! Botanical, ornithological and angling paradise adjacent to Denge Marsh, four miles south east of Lydd. The name provokes thoughts of lonely windswept shingle haunted by the ghosts of Dr. Syn and his Nightriders. Indeed the area still has an air of mystery and romance, especially at dusk, despite being dominated by a giant power station complex.

Rails were somewhat late reaching Dungeness. Schemes for 1866 (New Romney Railway) and 1873 (Rye and Dungeness Railway) were authorised but not proceeded with. One is forgiven for wondering why a branch was built at all, the population at the time consisting of lighthouse keepers and their families, a few fishermen and precious little else. As late as 1923, the ABC Rail Guide curiously ignores the population of Dungeness by merely quoting "Dymchurch" 548! There were no roads and it is said that the inhabitants wore a type of snow shoe in order to walk over the shingle. Perhaps the railway promoters had an eye for a bargain. Land at Dungeness, not surprisingly, was at give-away prices in the mid-19th century and in 1892, only 11 years after the opening of the Dungeness branch, the South Eastern Railway Chairman, Sir Edward Watkin, produced a scheme for a terminal at Dungeness linked with a proposed steam packet service to Le Tréport, whilst in the 1930's, Sir Herbert Walker, Chairman of the Southern Railway, had similar ideas for a cross-channel train ferry at the same location. These schemes came to nothing and Dungeness slumbered until rudely awakened by the Central Electricity Generating Board with the commencement of construction of the Dungeness Nuclear Power Stations in the 1960's. This provides the sole regular traffic on the Branch today, the nuclear waste flasks being offloaded by gantry at mile post 74 and taken the remaining half mile to and from the power station by low loader road vehicle. Dungeness is at last, for better or for worse, on the map.

The railway from Ashford to Hastings via Appledore and Rye ("across the Marsh" to railwaymen) was opened for traffic in 1851 under pressure from the Government of the day which had visions of it being useful for military purposes. The line was to have been closed in 1969 but was reprieved, initially for two years, but today retains its passenger services with much of the route having been singled. It is, however, a diesel-electric enclave

in an electric empire and unless a decision is taken to electrify it, the future would appear less than rosy. It has been used extensively as a diversionary route to and from London on occasions when the direct London/Hastings line has been closed for engineering work, notably the singling of Mountfield Tunnel (1975), the major earthslip between Wadhurst and Stonegate (1977) and more recently during weekend possessions in connection with the 1066 Route electrification. In 1881 a Bill was before Parliament for a line to be built by the nominally independent Lydd Railway Company to the town of that name which would be single leaving the Ashford/Hastings line by a facing junction on the down side immediately beyond Appledore Station. The route was to be built across Walland Marsh with little in the way of earthworks or gradients, almost straight and crossing no less than fourteen local roads on the level plus numerous occupation crossings and drainage channels in its six and a half mile length. The expense of crossing keepers was, no doubt, a key factor in the decision to withdraw the New Romney service in 1967. An intermediate station was to be provided at Brookland, three quarters of a mile from the village, with a crossing loop. The station was reduced to a Halt in later years when the crossing loop was removed and the down platform fell into disuse.

The line appears to have been constructed swiftly, being opened for goods on 7th December 1881, an extension to Dungeness coming into use on the same day. Passengers were carried throughout from 1st April 1883. Bearing in mind the geographical location of, and paucity of human habitation at Dungeness, did the promoters have a sense of humour? Perhaps it was the same humour which caused the 9th level crossing out of Appledore to be named Mountain Crossing! Subsequently, on 19th June 1884, New Romney was reached via a junction one mile south east of Lydd, the whole undertaking being worked from the outset by the SER and absorbed by that company in 1895. Previously, in 1882, the Lydd Railway obtained powers to reduce the distance from London somewhat by building a line from Appledore via Tenterden to Headcorn and in 1883 extend northwards towards the London, Chatham and Dover line near Maidstone. Needless to say, nothing came of these grandiose schemes.



Dungeness station, possibly in pre-grouping days

(Lens of Sutton)

Dungeness Station, adjacent to what is now the old lighthouse, consisted of a single platform of shingle, faced with timber, with an arch-roofed building without a canopy. When built it was virtually on the sea edge. Today the site is nearly half a mile inland, such is the build up of shingle at the Ness. A run-round loop was provided together with a short siding, and further sidings were installed to serve a shingle pit on the east side of the line.

For many years the passenger service was worked by one train serving the New Romney and Dungeness lines in turn. Passengers for one destination were expected to de-train at Lydd whilst the train served the other. That it was a somewhat sparse service, there is no doubt.

Upon amalgamation with the Southern Railway in 1923 the ABC Rail Guide mentioned Dungeness as being 76¼ miles from Charing Cross (actually it was 75¼)—No Sunday trains—Departures FROM London as for Lydd—Departures FOR London *about* twice daily! Return tickets London to Dungeness cost 31/8d 1st Class; 25/4d 2nd Class; 19/- 3rd Class. No doubt the service had improved a little from the early days when, to visit Dungeness, one had to depart London Bridge at 5.30 am, change at Ashford, arrive Dungeness 9.20 am. The choice of train home was the incoming train which departed 10 minutes after arrival

at 9.30 am, or the next some seven hours later. Goods traffic consisted of flints for glazing railed to the Pottery towns, a little coal, fish and sundries. One spin-off was that the SER had access to an almost unlimited supply of shingle for track ballasting purposes.

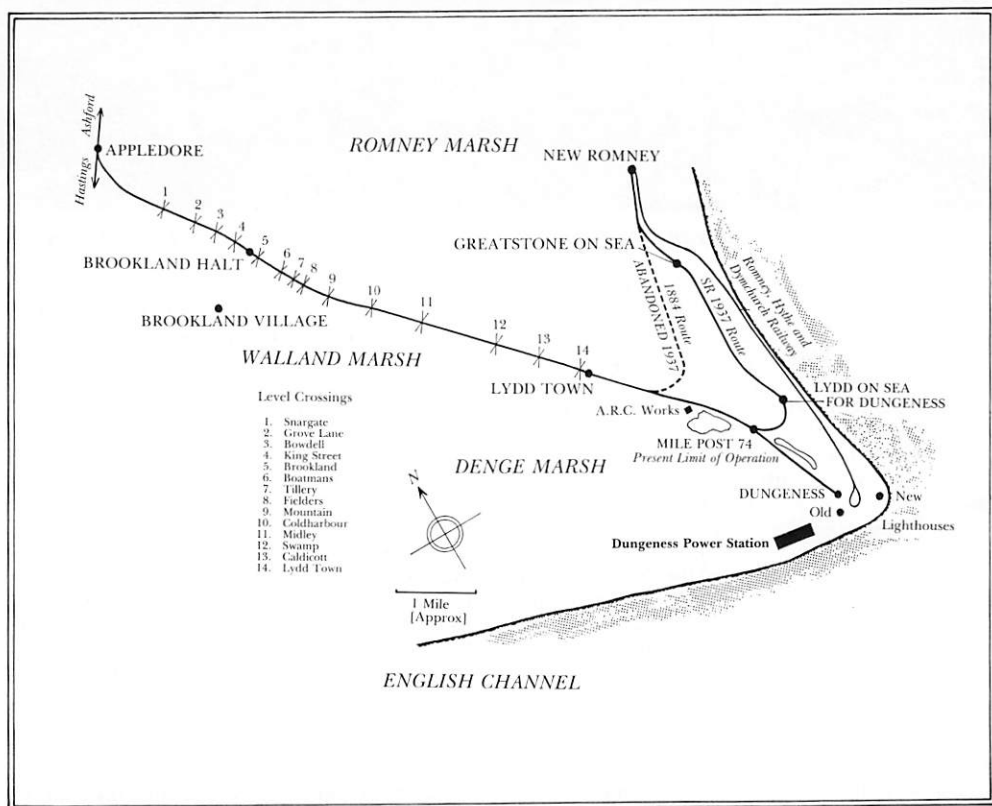
Suddenly, in 1929 Dungeness found itself with two railway stations, Captain Howey's 15" Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway having been extended for seven miles along the coast from New Romney to a loop terminus adjacent to the former SER Station. Things were looking up as, about that time, the SR discovered that the area had holiday passenger potential. Holiday camps and summer bungalows sprang up, many of the latter being redundant railway coaches shorn of wheels and other equipment. In order to tap the new traffic the SR decided to divert the New Romney section to run within ¼ mile of the coast instead of inland as hitherto, leaving the Dungeness line at a new junction 1½ miles beyond the original. New stations were opened on the diverted line; an island platform named Lydd on Sea for Dungeness, and Greatstone on Sea. Lydd was renamed Lydd Town, and Dungeness Station and branch was closed to passenger traffic.

The aforementioned changes took effect as from 4th July 1937 and the modified line to



A recent view of Lydd Town station

(Author)



New Romney, once the 1939-1945 war was over, settled down to carry reasonably heavy summer traffic including a through train Charing Cross to New Romney and return on summer Saturdays. All other passenger services started from and terminated at Ashford. During this period goods traffic was withdrawn from Dungeness and the branch was abandoned by 1953. Latterly, passengers were

conveyed to and from New Romney by DEMU stock, usually class 3H but sometimes by a Hastings 6s or 6L. Occasionally locomotive hauled stock would appear hauled initially by Type 2 D.5000 series diesel electrics with steam heating and subsequently by class 33 diesel electrics with electric train heating. Decline set in as habits changed with more people travelling by car and coach and going elsewhere

for holidays. Inevitably, the line succumbed and the whole section together with the five stations (Appledore excluded) lost its passenger service from 9th January 1967, the track being lifted from MP74 to New Romney.

About that time, the first of the Dungeness Nuclear Power Stations was commissioned the line to MP74 having been retained to facilitate the transport of spent nuclear fuel to Sellafield for re-processing. There was also shingle traffic from a private siding of Amalgamated Roadstone Company's works south east of Lydd (this has now ceased). During 1985 no less than four rail tours by various organisations worked to Dungeness. Stock included Hastings 6L and 6S and East Sussex 3D DEMU's, also class 33/2 Hastings Gauge diesel electric locomotives. Unfortunately the branch has since been removed from BR's list of "authorised" freight lines for railtours and such workings appear unlikely in the foreseeable future. Today the power station is served once or twice weekly, motive power being the ubiquitous Crompton Class 33 diesel electric or Class 73 electro-diesel. Run round loops remain at Lydd Town and

MP74. Line speed is 20 mph reduced to 5 mph over the twelve open level crossings with a mandatory stop at Brookland automatic level crossing (AOCL type with lights but no barriers), and also at Lydd Town Crossing which retains the old style gates operated by the train crew. The latter level crossing was retained for use by military traffic and is not normally used by other vehicles as there is an adjacent overbridge, the only one on the line.

The line is worked by "one engine in steam" with the single line staff, consisting of a piece of tube flattened at each end and suitably annotated, normally located in Appledore signal box.

Dungeness is worth a visit. The track bed from the old station is easily followed across the shingle to MP74 although the northern end is occupied by the power station approach road. The ruins of Dungeness platform can be discerned, many fencing posts and gate posts remain and a point lever, together with sleepers and a chair or two can still be found amongst the brambles by the keen-eyed.

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Exploiting the Learning Curve

Education Officer, Gerald Siviour, explains The Railway's value as a teaching resource

Members able to visit Tenterden only at weekends may have little idea of how busy it is on Wednesdays and Thursdays in June and July, when up to 500 schoolchildren a day descend on the Railway. Schools traffic has for some years provided valuable mid-week revenue for organisations such as ours, but many have offered little more than a ride on a train and perhaps an engine shed visit. This, in itself, is hardly educational, in consequence business has been lost to other outdoor activities such as safari parks.

By contrast, the K&E.S.R. has built up an educational service which attracted 3400 pupils in 1985, 5100 in 1986 and should approach 6000 in 1987. Our educational package was put together and marketed with the co-operation of the Woolwich Building Society. It aims to

make a visit to the Railway a learning experience which will encourage teachers to bring parties regularly year by year.

Developments in education over the last two decades have stressed the importance of fieldwork and a pupil centred approach to learning. Stress is laid on individual discovery, on first hand experience and opportunities for creative work. These ideas spread from the primary schools in the 1960's and are now reaching the secondary and tertiary stages, where the General Certificate of Secondary Education places much more emphasis on coursework and field study than the examination it replaces. Such developments offer scope for the private railways to be increasingly involved in education.



Pupils from the St Johns and St Philips School, Maidstone, with Alan Felton, 29th September 1987
(Alan Jones)

The K&E.S.R. package encourages children to learn from their observations and questions. Each party is met at the station gate and taken to the study centre. The introductory talk emphasises the place of the K&E.S.R. in the evolution of Kent's railway system, the past social and economic importance of railways and the factors behind the decline of the national network. An accompanied tour of the station site follows and the signs attached to features such as the water tower, the yard crane and the old cattle dock are self explanatory. Each child is given a workbook with text and diagrams appropriate to ability and on the journey to Wittersham Road ticket inspectors point out features of the landscape.

The workbooks and general level of personal attention given to each party are features much appreciated by party leaders, whilst letters received from children themselves, containing such comments as "I liked the driver" suggests that our staff are popular with all concerned. The first sight from the platform of the engine pounding up Tenterden bank and visits to signalboxes and footplates clearly make an impression on young visitors and it is indeed fortunate that we have members who, as operating staff, are prepared to enter into the spirit of providing children with not only an outing of educational value but enjoyable as well.

The new study centre which opened this year has plenty of room for the display of materials and illustrations and the only major feature that we lack is a museum on site which would then enable us to provide a worthwhile visit even

when trains are not running.

Our present objective is one of spreading knowledge of our facilities to as many teachers as possible. Information leaflets and letters sent to schools have a habit of ending up in the headteacher's wastepaper bin or hidden on overcrowded notice boards. Members might help here by making the existence of our educational service known to their schools. The 1988 study days leaflet will be available after Christmas and I will gladly send copies to anyone interested. A video and kit are available to help teachers and students make a study of railways or transport in general. Both are available for a wide age range. At present, about 85% of our visitors are from primary and infant schools, but there is scope for greater use of the facilities by the secondary sector. We are also very pleased to provide visits for small parties of handicapped pupils.

Our recent survey of the educational facilities provided by private railways showed the K&E.S.R. to be among a select group in providing a comprehensive service geared to the changing needs of schools. Its success has been due to the efforts of a small number of members who have been prepared to meet and talk to the various parties. I should particularly like to mention Doug Barrow, John Bourne, Alan Feltham, Graham Hukins, Di Siviour, Andrea Skinner and Kay Smailes amongst those who have contributed, not forgetting of course, the operating staff who run the trains. New faces are always welcome and I can usually be contacted at Tenterden station if members would like to help.

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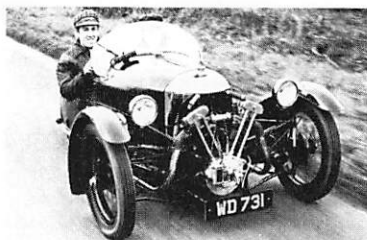
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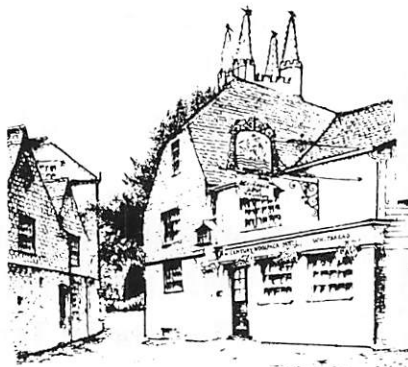
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