

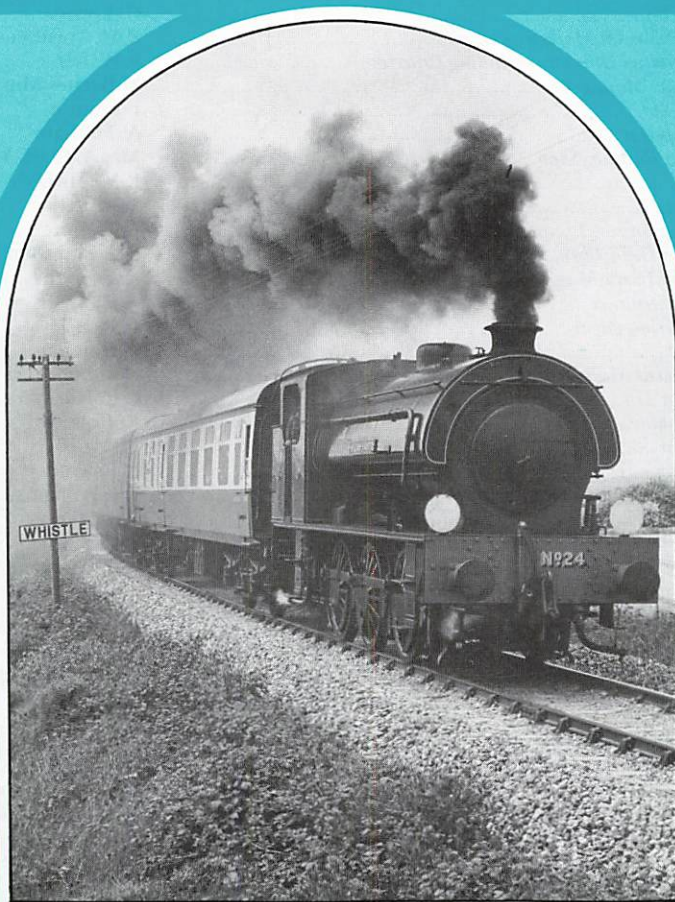


The Tenterden Terrier



Number 52

Summer 1990



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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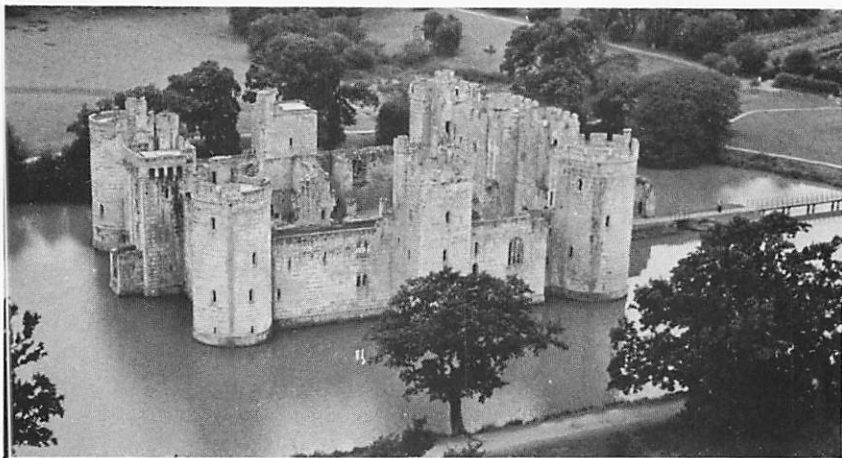
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Bodiam Castle

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.*

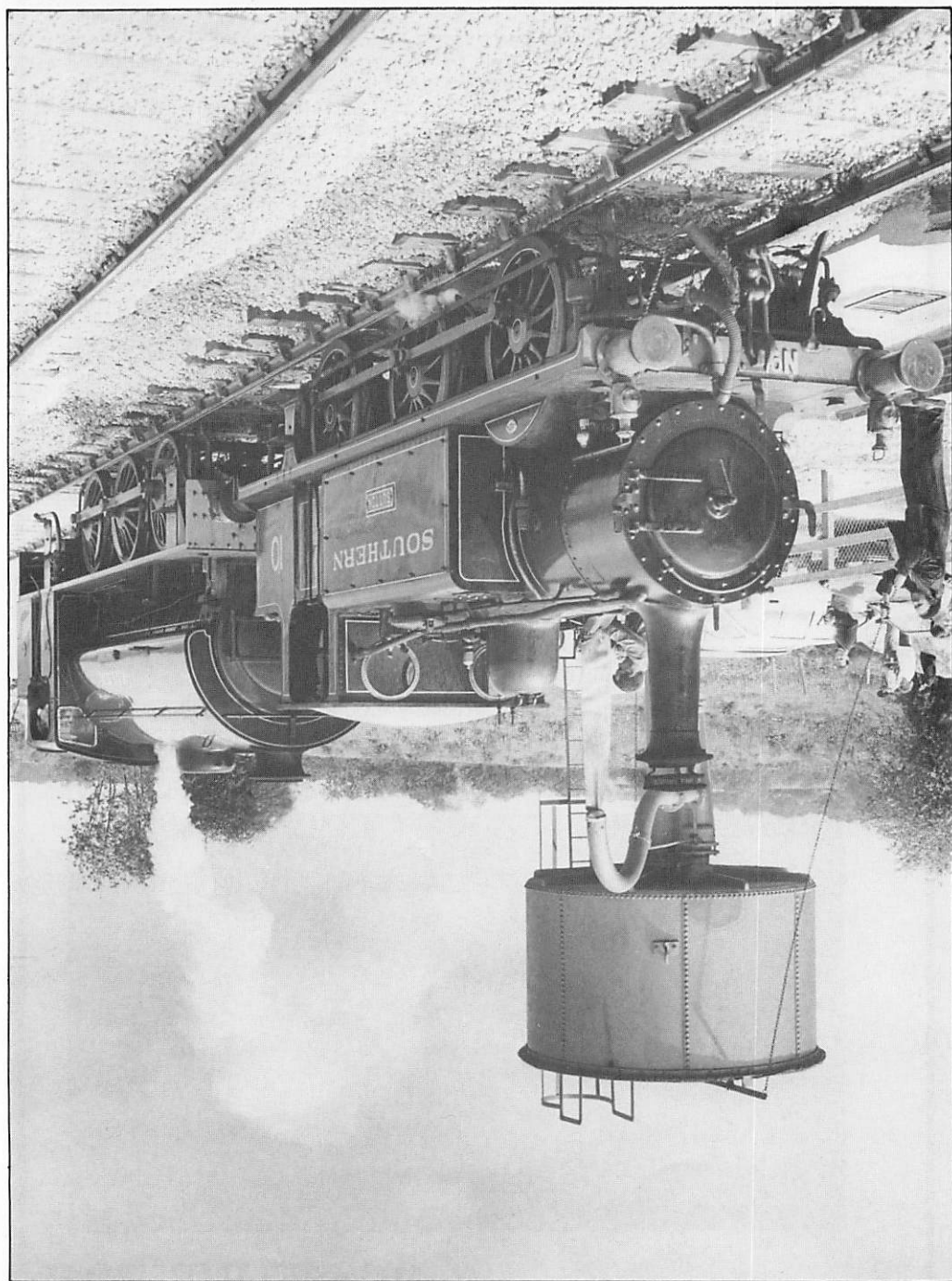
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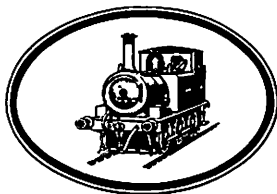


The 500 year old manor hall is open every afternoon (except ordinary Mondays) from April to mid October, also weekends October 20/21 & 27/28, open 2 p.m., last admission 5 p.m. The gardens, well known for the wide variety of plants is open earlier at 11 a.m. on May 26/27/28, Sundays in July & August, also August 27th. 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 (0797) 253160



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FRONT COVER. No. 24 "William H. Austen" heads away from Northiam on the first day of public services, 19th May 1990.

(Brian Stephenson)

FRONTISPIECE. No. 10 "Sutton" and 25 "Northiam" take water from the former Upminster water tower after arrival at Northiam on the first day of public services, Saturday 19th May 1990. (Brian Stephenson)

Editorial

Quality rather than quantity

The extension to Northiam is a magnificent achievement and all who were involved in its planning and execution are to be congratulated for their dedication and for their professionalism. The Railway Inspectorate, quite rightly, requires safety standards which leave nothing to chance and in this respect the Railway has emerged with flying colours. The initial indications are that the line into Sussex has been enthusiastically received by the public. Now we have to focus more closely on what we wish to achieve with our newly extended Railway. After all, there is no purpose in carrying more passengers merely for the sake of it – a quality product for the discriminating is much more satisfying within a voluntary organisation

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1990

Lineside News



Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

Starting in early 1986 the plans, that were to actually bear fruit, were laid that ended at Northiam on 4th June 1990. Much has happened in between times. The fortunes of the Permanent Way department have been revitalised. The low point was at the turn of 1986. Since then the catalogue of major relaying exercises, together with drainage works almost amount to a route map of the line. There remains much to be done, on the Tenterden to Wittersham section, for permanent is the last word that describes the state of the track.

Other departments too have spent much effort gearing up for the extension and their efforts will continue. Carriage and Wagon will produce a complete third carriage set of Maunsell coaches. The loco department will be fully stretched maintaining and restoring our fleet of locomotives. The commercial and operating departments will be extended providing the volunteers to run the lengthened line.

The real expansion of the line is just beginning. The next two or three years will see report after report in Lineside news of projects designed to consolidate on our position as the longest standard gauge preserved line in the South East.

And then there is Bodiam

The Chairman

The Chairman, David Stratton, writes:

"Today the 18th May 1990 as I write this report I

am mindful that exactly 12 months ago to the day and time the last fishplates were being fixed enabling '1556' to propel a matchwagon into Northiam station. The Board's agreement to extend, surveying Southfleet and agreeing mutual terms, lifting and transporting the track and concrete sleepers, the bond issue with nation-wide publicity, arranging finances from our bankers – are just a few facts of a major contract of works that will become part of our folklore and our heritage.

"I, for my part, will leave the full technicalities and practicalities of this extension to our experts who are far better equipped to explain and their comments will be stated elsewhere. I am already aware that members of other premier preserved railways are most impressed with our new extension and have stated as such. The completion, at great personal cost to many people, is indicative of the dedication and professionalism of our members. Change requires hard work and imposes stress.

"We enter the 1990's in good shape. Much still needs to be done, particularly bearing in mind that our standards are high. The Railway Inspectorate have already shown, by their standards, that this must be the case. I am confident that our Directors, Managers and working volunteers know our objectives and realise that NO change is being undertaken without careful consideration or proper understanding of its effects on the railway and we the members.

"I perceive the railway, by being extended to Northiam, will change and will be considered a proper railway by the operating staff. Let us hope, however, that our attitudes and character does not change.

"Mere words are not enough to convey the emotion of travelling on the footplate of the first passenger train to Northiam. Finally we have been most encouraged by your support on this project."

Steam Locomotives

No. 3 (Bodiam): No change.

No. 8 (Knowle): Loco wheeled but lifted again to allow painting to the original colours.

No. 10 (Sutton): In service – Minor repairs to the regulator have been carried out.

No. 11 (1556): The P class failed its annual boiler inspection and this resulted in the replacement of seam and firehole rivets.



No. 23 "Holman F Stephens" approaches Cranbrook Road on its last day of running prior to withdrawal for 10 year boiler inspection, 30th September 1989.
(Brian Stephenson)

Subsequently it passed the hydraulic and then steam tests. The loco is now in service.

No. 12 (Marcia): The boiler has returned from Hedges in Chatham along with a little progress on the rest.

No. 14 (Charwelton): Still awaiting resources.

No. 17 (Arthur): This loco used to be on the line. It was the third loco available at the official re-opening of the line on 1st June 1974. It left in 1985 and when acquired in January 1990 by the Middleton Railway Trust in Leeds, it was based at Buxton, Derbyshire, on Peak Rail.

No. 19 (Norwegian): The boiler has been replaced in its frames. Adrian Landi is now replacing the smokebox support.

No. 21 (Wainwright): The boiler has gone to Hedges and Sons at Chatham for the fitting of a new tubeplate.

No. 22 (Maunsell): In service – minor repairs

have been carried out to a rotted ashpan.

No. 23 (Holman F Stephens): continuing to undergo general overhaul. The boiler is away being repaired by a contractor. To be painted brown when complete.

No. 24 (William H Austen): In service.

No. 25 (Northiam): In service.

No. 26 (Linda): In service – due a boiler inspection at the end of June.

No. 27 (Rolvenden): This loco gets more use as a static exhibit at Tenterden than all the others. Children seem addicted to it.

Diesel Locomotives

No. 40 (Ford): Remains out of service since its derailment in May 1989.

No. 43 (Titan): In service.

No. 46 (BR class 03): Work continues slowly on

commissioning this loco.

No. 49 (BR Class 14): In service. Running well following repairs to the gears at which time other minor maintenance was performed.

Cranes

No. 133 (DS451): passed annual boiler inspection at which time attention was paid in general to the motion.

No. 145 (DS1770): is still out of service with damage to its drive shaft and bearings. This is awaiting a suitable match wagon before repairs can be carried out.

No. 151 (81S): In service.

Carriage & Wagon

3 MK 1s passed through the workshop in 2 months receiving light overhauls and repaints.

TO 65 was painted in the newly adopted maroon livery and lettered and lined in KESR style. Minor repairs to bodyside sheeting around the window frames were carried out at the same time and it entered service on 16th December.

CK 87, which was formerly red and cream, required a repaint, due to deterioration of one side, and similarly painted in maroon, re-entered service on 19th May.

BDO 75 (Petros) painted in red and cream after extensive repairs to corroded bodyside sheeting had been carried out, re-entered service 19th May. Internally the carpet has been removed and replaced with red lino which will enable the coach to be kept cleaner. Fixed seats have been fitted at the lavatory end of the saloon to cover the steam heat controls which were damaging the loose chairs. The seating has been rearranged to 1+2 across an offset aisle with tables modified to suit which will present a tidier and more regulated interior.

Maunsell CK56. Steady progress with the defective body framing of both lavatories and the completed fitting of new roof boards and water tank covers. Work has now started on fitting out the first class compartments with new ceiling panels and associated curved framing.

L.NWR Flatrol wagon 121 has had both buffer springs repaired by a contractor in Ashford. The damaged handbrake wheel and shaft are at Rolvenden awaiting repairs. The vehicle was released, in this incomplete state, for urgent work on the extension on 18th March.

The gales in January have provided an unwelcome bonus of work. GWR covered van 103686 was fitted with a new roof canvas and returned to use as the P. Way department tool van on 25 February. LMS covered van 514184 had defective bodyside boards repaired while a new canvas roof was fitted.

It was re-painted in Bauxite red with LMS lettering and returned to Rolvenden Locomotive department as the packing van on 18th March.

Work is now in progress again on the GER 6 wheel coach No 81 and LNWR saloon No 82.

Forestry and Conservation

The work of clearing the extension for the Department of Environment Derelict Land grant resulted in an interim payment to the railway of £8000. Hopefully the remaining money will be obtained. Clearance work continues along the extension but was suspended to enable assistance to be given at Northiam. The experience of working with other groups was useful and it was interesting to learn of other people's problems over lunch in the Inn. The main task of jacking and packing the platform roads has convinced many that a permanent transfer is not to be welcomed! A cattle grid at Cyster's crossing has been constructed.

Having worked in the outback for 3 years it is nice to have the rest of the railway catch up and the group will turn its attention to some of the high risk fire spots on the old operating section.

Permanent Way and Civil Engineering

Apart from the work at Northiam and providing a large part of the manpower for the job, the department has managed to finish off the extension trackwork. The Wittersham to Hexden Bridge section, over half of which was previously wooden sleepered, has been relayed in two weekends with concrete sleepers to the same standard as the rest of the extension.

The rail joint on the Rother Bridge has been welded. This will reduce the hammer blow, that is normal at rail joints, whilst on the bridge. The deviation in the track at Petty Foreland culvert was removed spectacularly by the tamper in February. Every rail joint on the extension has had metal shims inserted to adjust each side of a joint to precisely the same height. This should reduce the track movement at each joint.

The proof of the success of all this work is the

difference between the new track and the old. It is to the old Tenterden to Wittersham section that much remedial work must now be directed. The policy of full upgrade needs to be continued over the next few years with the nasty trouble spots receiving quick attention.

Signals and Telegraph

Ian Legg has stepped down as S&T manager and Peter Lawrence has been appointed acting manager. Ian has run the department through a difficult and busy period commissioning Rolvenden signalbox. His efforts are appreciated.

Work continues on finishing off the many small jobs remaining at Rolvenden signalbox. This process will naturally take a long time but the installation is working well. The ground frame at Orpin's siding is now a priority.

In conjunction with the opening of the extension various works have been undertaken. Firstly two ground frames, one to operate the level crossing end loop points and the other to protect the passenger lines from rolling stock in the headshunt, have been installed along with a hand point for the Bodiam end loop point. The

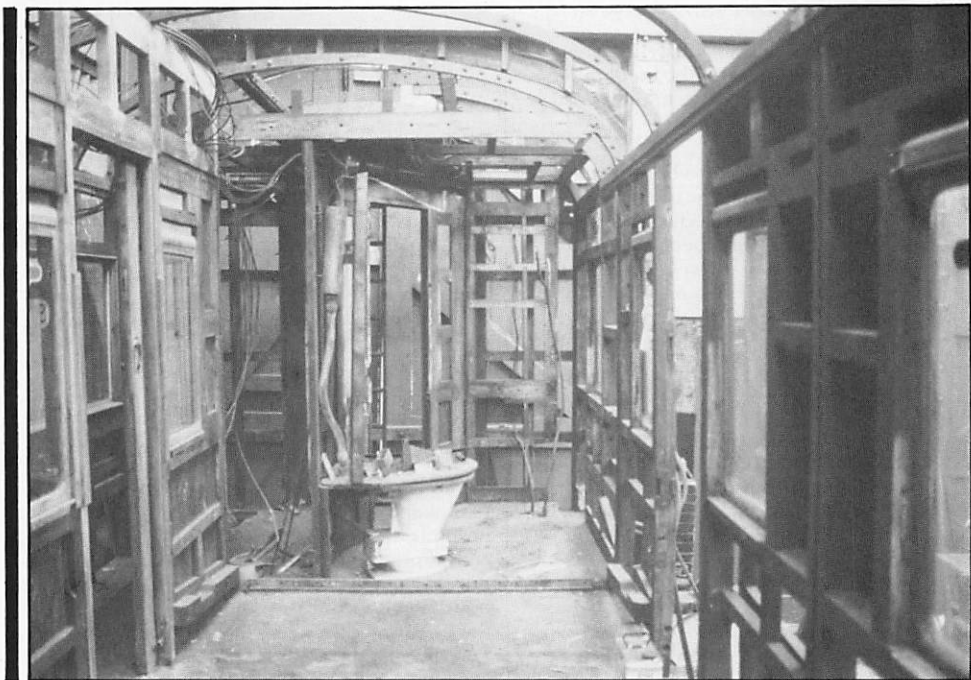
various fittings for the level crossing gates were installed. The closing out arrangements at Wittersham signalbox, removed for technical reasons when Rolvenden was commissioned, have been reinstated. This will allow operation of the line with only two signalmen on quiet days rather than three.

Just for the record it should be noted that the gates at Cranbrook Road were renewed with lightweight steel gates late last year. The previous wooden gates had gradually fallen beyond repair.

On the telephone side a phone line to Northiam exists and is being upgraded gradually. Eventually a telephone exchange will be installed at Northiam.

Northiam

Every department has either built something, helped to build, or simply assisted by allowing somebody else to work there. Since the end of last year the platform faces, backfilling of the platform, a car park, various drains, a complete run-round loop with points at both ends, a headshunt plus siding, a water crane, fencing, tarmac for the platforms, level crossing gates,



Maunsell CU 56 undergoing extensive repairs in the carriage shed at Tenterden, Autumn 1989.

(Steve Beastall)



Tenderden Station from the air, during the Easter week event, 15th April 1990 (Nick Liddell)

painting and a new toilet block have all been completed. Any list is bound to be incomplete but a few highlights are better than no record at all.

The level crossing has proved to be a big item. The original intention to renew the whole crossing has been postponed as the current one will last a while longer having been resurfaced. It was necessary to get a new level crossing order from the Department of Transport. This was left very late but was obtained just in time. This however left the time to build the equipment very short. Many hours were put in by Dave Hazeldine and Adrian Landi. The sight of the gate posts at Rolvenden provoked much comment mainly because of their seemingly too large size. However on installation the proportions seem appropriate. As proof of the design the first gate hung was perfectly level, without further adjustment, as the hinge pin was inserted!

Innumerable drains and manholes have been built over the weeks. Many a weekend has seen Colin Edwards, plus helpers, down a hole in none to pleasant surroundings, building yet another manhole. After many months, on the ground where only a dumper truck or digger

could move for fear of being bogged down, a car park has been built. The transformation amazed many especially those involved every weekend.

The platforms have had lighting installed. These were obtained from Hastings and some even had their original Hastings and St. Leonards Gas Co. plates on them proving their vintage. Half a dozen platform seats have also been repaired and then painted. While mentioning painting almost anything that did not move quickly enough was actually painted and this has given the station that special finishing touch.

Especial mention must be made of the toilet block. The construction of this has used both volunteers and, to ensure that the dates were met, contractors. In all this is a splendid job by anybody's standards. Whilst traditionalists may complain that it is not original, and maybe despoils the original station building, the compliment is best expressed by noting the number of people who believe it is original. The building also shows the commitment to meeting the needs of passengers in a way that took Tenderden almost 10 years to achieve from re-opening.

Despite the mention elsewhere of how easy

mechanically ballasted and tamped track is to prepare, at Northiam both platform roads have been manually jacked and packed. This has required many man hours of real hard labour, sometimes in unseasonably hot spring weather. In places the track has been lifted over a foot from the original track bed. Many have helped but especial mention must go to the clearance gang who, despite their normally relaxed working hours and approach to the job, still packed in a full day's labour.

Latterly No. 1 cottage has been in use as a staff mess room. On the couple of days when the weather turned wet this winter up to 30 people could be counted crowded into the cottage, an indication, if any, of the level of support the project has required.

The finishing touches to any project are what seals the success or failure of the project. In this case the painting of the various buildings and structures comes in for mention. John Liddell has organised the large number of helpers and so is responsible for the excellent appearance of much of the site.

Lastly the various contractors must be mentioned. Several have been employed and all have worked well even with volunteers who are not always the quickest on the uptake. Especial mention should be made of Kevin Hickmott who has been working on the extension since August 1988, almost continuously.

Tenterden

The area around the water column has been concreted. This tidies up what was a bit of an eyesore for many years since the water column was turned round.

Rolvenden

Preparation work has been done before fencing is installed alongside the field.

Operating

From a closed season that was not only open, but also busy with a large number of engineers trains to run in addition to the new passenger service, the Easter weekend found the operating department ready. A half hourly service was run requiring 2 train sets, 3 locos and 3 crews (insufficient time being available for loco and crew servicing if only 2 are used), and still the engineers continued to run their trains.

The opening of the extension and the following

weekend have seen the half hourly service extended to Northiam (using 3 train sets, 4 locos and crews). This has required the hitherto quiet Wittersham to pass trains every half hour. This service has really stretched the resources of the department. Whilst a few peak working days are good all round the continuous summer operation of a two train service will be the real test for crews, locos and carriages alike.

On staff side congratulations go to Howard Wallace-Simms and Adrian Chapman on joining the ranks as steam loco drivers and Stuart Phillips as a guard. Claire Stuchbury has stepped down as Cranbrook Road crossing keeper roster clerk and the post is vacant. Roger Rowe rejoins us again and is now acting traffic coordinator consequent upon Graeme Richards' resignation.

Fire, Health and Safety

The continuing emphasis on the Health and Safety at Work Act has resulted in the appointment of Richard Osborn as the Fire, Health and Safety Officer. He will now set about coordinating various activities and relieve the company secretary from part of his burden. To assist Richard, Roland Meek is appointed Assistant Fire Officer and Vanessa Toynbee is First Aid Officer. Every department already has a safety representative who attends a quarterly meeting, chaired by Richard, to coordinate activities. These reps are also responsible, independently of the managers, for ensuring safety and safe working practices within each department. This process, including instilling the correct attitude to safety, takes much time to set up but by continuous hard work not only can our hobby be pleasurable but we can also be reassured in the knowledge that all is being done to help us remain as safe as possible.

It is certain that this area of activity will increase over the coming years.

Filming

Combining moments of light relief and interest, with periods of boredom waiting for something to happen is the lot of those who help out with the filming jobs. These bring in much needed revenue. This year is off to a good start already with the following an abbreviated list:

Les Dennis Laughter show – to be shown after 9th June.

Parnell – starring Trevor Eve, this used the GER 6 wheeler and will be shown around November.

Hamlet commercial – featuring Russ Abbott, this is due out in May and was shot during the middle of the ballasting operations in February.

In addition 7 still photographic sessions, often for fashion shoots, have been done with minimal effort required on our part.

Membership

The advantages of membership are now advertised on stations and in trains. This, together with the increase in passenger numbers due to the upsurge of public interest following the opening of the Northiam Extension, has led to a most welcome increase in the number of new members. It is to be hoped that this will also lead to an increase in working members.

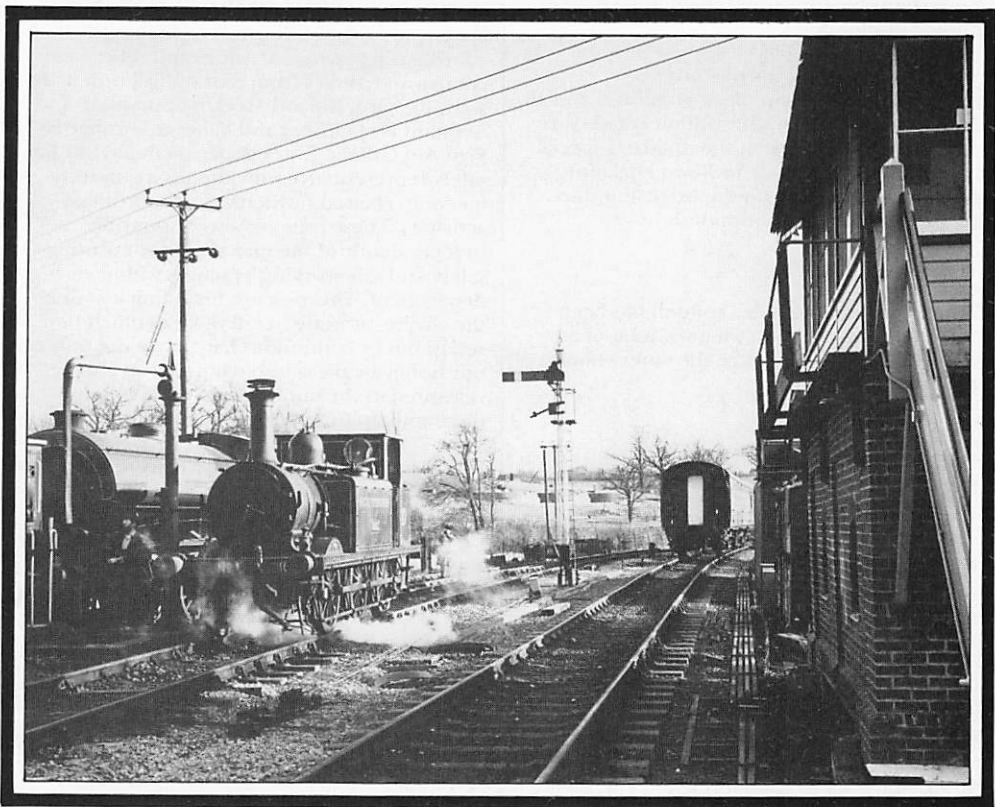
At time of writing, 273 new members, all categories, have joined for 1990, compared with 183 for the same period last year, a 49% increase.

Unfortunately, around 200 former members have not yet renewed their subscriptions for 1990 and will be getting a final reminder during July. However, in spite of this, it does look as though the Railway is on course for a healthy net gain of membership numbers by the end of the year.

Colonel Stephens Shop

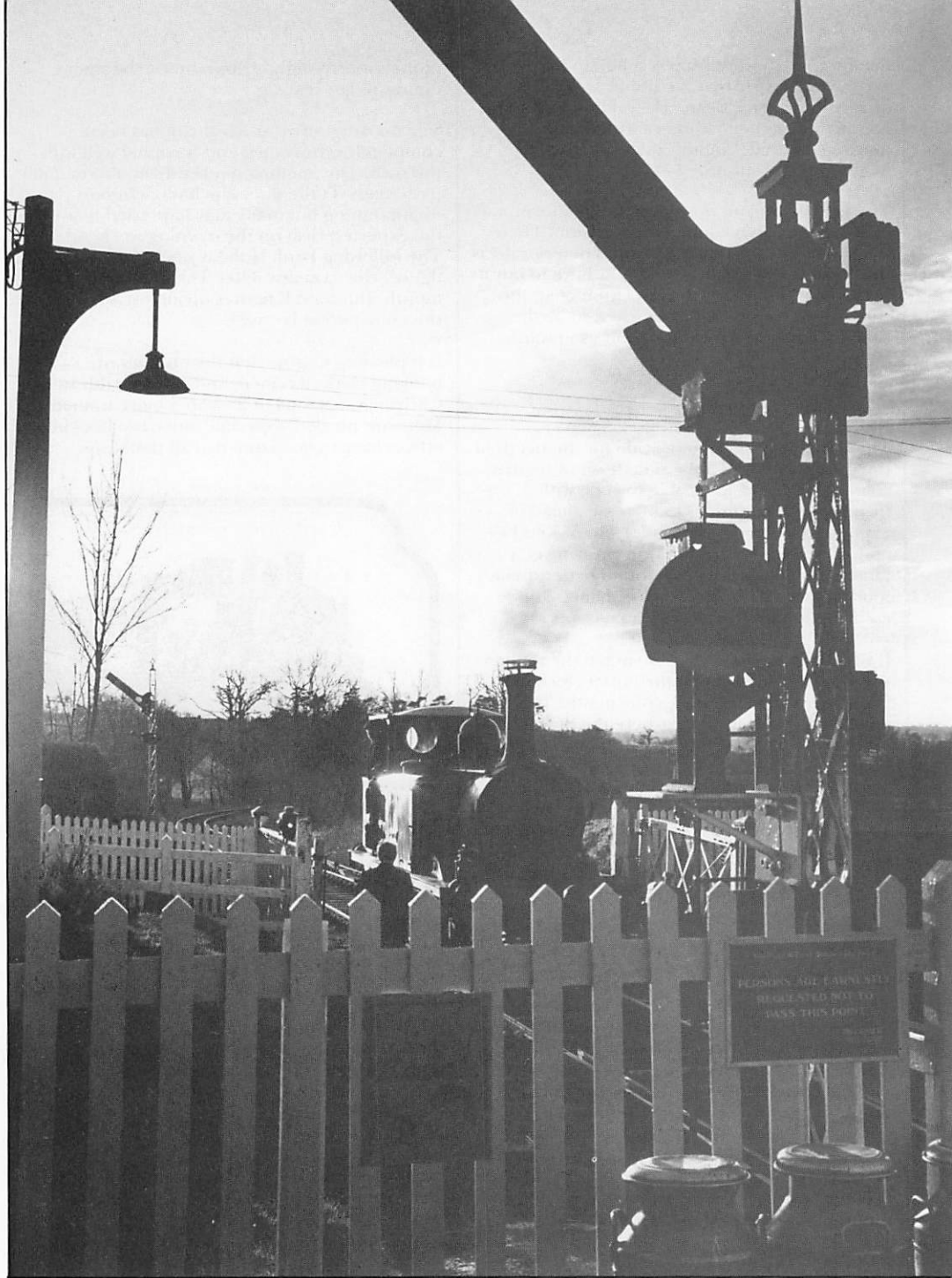
1990 saw alterations to the shop once again. Growth in turnover due to the increase in passengers and the subsequent need to stock a much broader variety of goods had lead to an attempt to create more space to displaying the goods and allow passengers more time and space to browse. Considerable thought was given to this re-arrangement and the result is for all to see.

The shop gives a more roomy appearance and much better facilities for displaying a wider variety of items. It is policy to order better



No.10 "Sutton" runs round its train at Rolvenden ready to form the 2.30pm departure on 28th January 1990.

(Mike Esau)



End of lovely day – No.10 “Sutton” runs down the bank from Tenterden to Rolvenden after the last train on 28th January 1990.
(Mike Esau)

quality goods and this has resulted in higher turnover, showing that the public will pay for quality if the price is fair. The addition of local handicrafts, pottery, wood carvings, and machine knitted "engine" sweaters have heightened selections.

The new shop front door onto the platform, was in some respects a courageous decision. There were some doubts that sales would deteriorate as members of the public would now have to buy a platform ticket simply to gain entrance to the shop. However this has not proved to be the case with turnover continuing on its upward course.

Buffet

The buffet continues to provide for the needs of the visitors and staff alike. The team of regular volunteers seems to be able to cope with a turnover that continues to increase ahead of expectations. Under the leadership of Ken Lee and Margaret Howard not only is turnover a target but the careful provision of better quality food is stressed which in turn enhances the contribution to the railway's finances.

It is at last pleasant to be able to tell the time in the station yard now that the buffet clock has finally been made to work consistently. This must be the only instance where the buffet has lagged behind expectations!

The previous staff mess room, in one of the Ashford area group coach bodies, has been converted to a store room. The staff now will not have to fight for space with stacks of canned drinks or packed lunch boxes awaiting use. Instead the old first aid room, also used as Santa's Grotto, is now the staff tea room.

Booking Office

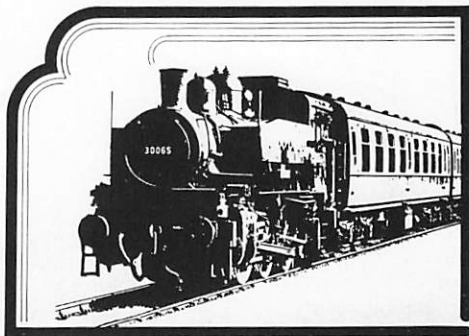
The closed season experiment has proved a success. Average loadings were around 100, 325 and 400 per month from January to March respectively. The 25th February, when the Vintage train service was run saw the railway caught by surprise. For once, despite the photographers free-loading on the lineside, the trains were full and standing. This proves the success of trying to produce the original KESR product. Though how we can run this and cope with the passenger numbers is a real problem.

As Easter is usually in March, though not this year, it is difficult to make a simple comparison with previous years. The Easter weekend was again supported well, though with only 6200 the

numbers were slightly down on the bumper figures of last year.

The booking office at Northiam has been completely refurbished and is coping well with the rush. The opening weekend saw almost 2500 passengers on the line, which was a little disappointing but many may have tried to avoid the expected rush on the opening weekend. The following Bank Holiday weekend saw figures rise to nearly 3500. This rounded off the month with overall figures up almost 70% over the same period last year.

It is pleasing to note that the number of booking clerks has increased considerably since Christmas to a total of 23 with 5 more trainees. More are needed, especially since two booking offices have to be manned at all times now.

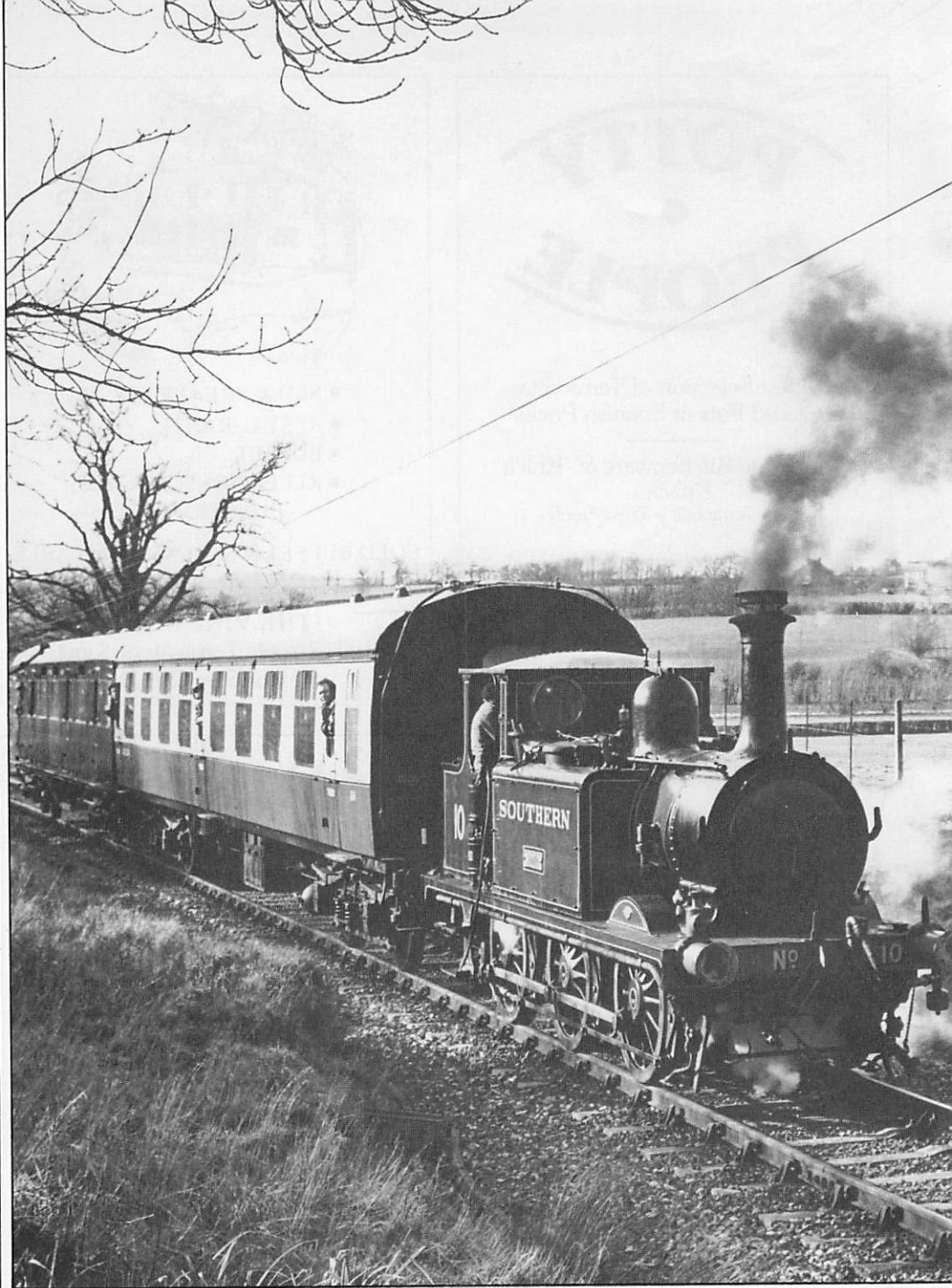


News from Area Groups

Ashford The group has donated a further £200 to the Norwegian Locomotive Trust. The group continues its regular programme of meetings and visits.

East Sussex The group has been at Northiam being involved in some of the painting around the station site. The group, in conjunction with Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club has donated the level crossing gates at Northiam. The club's money, which amounted to two thirds of the cost, was originally earmarked for the station footbridge, but they kindly agreed to redeploy it.

Maidstone Probably the best supported of the area groups, the group continued its successful trips with one to the Isle of Wight, in conjunction with Ashford area group. 53 attended enjoying everything despite the breakdown of the coach. Attendance at the usual round of fetes and events continues.



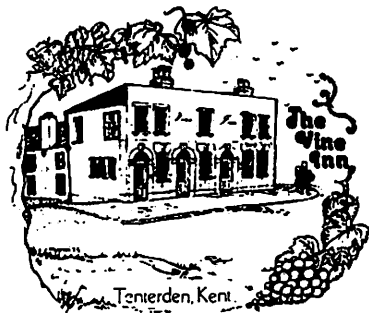
*Winter scene with No. 10 "Sutton" and two coach train on Tenterden Bank by the wet cutting,
4th February 1990.*

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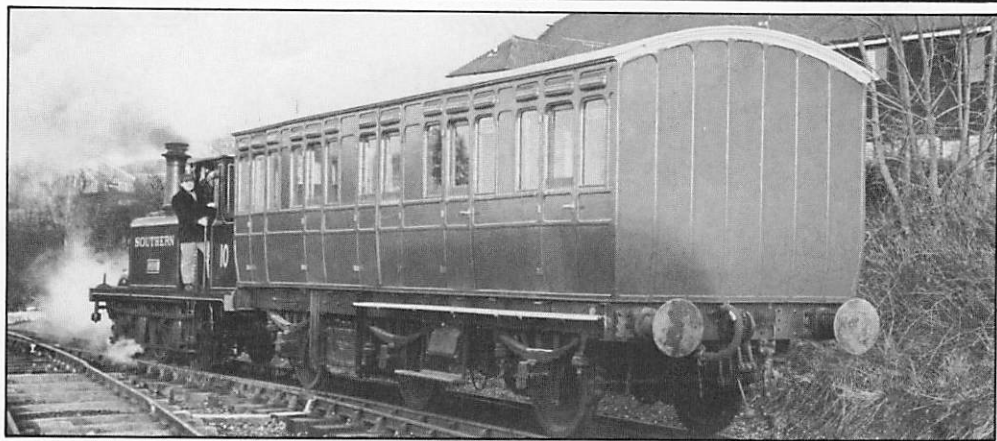
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Quality rather than Quantity...



Partially restored Great Eastern six wheeled coach being shunted at Tenterden on 4th February, 1990.
(Mike Esau)

In the spring edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* the commercial aspirations for the future were outlined. The main thrust of this programme – to raise the profitability of our operation – has been accepted by the Board and is now company policy. Like long-distance commuters on British Rail our fares are set to rise in real terms by up to 20% over the coming years. However every increase must be matched by a marked increase in quality.

As our passenger numbers edge upwards towards the 100,000 per annum level there remains little scope (or need) for further increases in volume. Instead greater profitability will be achieved through an emphasis on quality. The Carriage and Wagon Department was the first to respond and the whole of the Mark One carriage fleet is being overhauled and repainted. No longer will we feel somewhat embarrassed at running 1950's rolling stock in liveries of dubious authenticity. The two sets are being repainted in the colours of the time: one set in Maroon and the other in 'blood and custard'. Interior refurbishment includes new floor coverings where necessary, attention to toilets, moquette and to fittings such as mirrors and carriage prints all reflecting the style of the age. The smarter image achieved in a short time has allowed standard fares to be increased by a further 5% for 19th May on top of the increases already planned in connection with the opening to Northiam. This increase will bring in about

£8000 in a full year.

So now we have our rolling stock representing the 1950's. The next step was to review the fleet and to plan their long term restoration priority and composition into train sets. The next era to travel in our fleet is represented by our Maunsell coaches, built in the 1930's. A four car set featuring a BSO, CK, TO and observation car will be restored over the next year. Turning back the clock another 20 years, Edwardian travel is represented by our SECR Birdcage and saloon stock. The late Victorian age will be sampled in our impressive fleet of four and six wheeled coaches, built in the last two decades of the 19th century. One vehicle, the District Railway coach, is in traffic and another two, the Great Eastern six wheeler and the London and North Western Railway Inspection saloon are being restored at the present time.

Although we do not have the locomotive fleet to rival that of other steam railways, our carriage stock is varied and interesting, representing four different eras of travel, each twenty years apart. Our coaching stock is the key to our future individualism and profitability with the high standards being set by the Carriage and Wagon Department, matched by the speed at which they are carrying out work, we see commercial success of this policy achieved in a short time scale.

The Northiam extension is a fine engineering achievement and has attracted much favourable comment. As the engineers moved out, commercial staff moved in, complete with their traditional trademark, hanging flower baskets! Free from the pressures of space, that are such a problem at Tenterden, Northiam has the room to be developed into a delightful and authentic country station. Already the booking hall has been fitted out with traditional brown lino, a cast iron stove, historic (though reproduction) travel posters and a South Eastern and Chatham Railway table, recovered from Headcorn.

Although it is early days traffic growth exceeds even the most optimistic predictions, and every extra passenger helps to bring down the overdraft. The volume of media attention, with extensive television, radio and newspaper coverage, has kept the railway in the public eye without the need for any paid-for advertising. It has been very pleasant to note shopping baskets at Northiam and to learn that a small number of local residents have decided to use our trains to come shopping in Tenterden. We are truly a real railway.

Mark Toynbee



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Our Second Royal Visit

Organiser of the official Northiam Station re-opening day, Mark Toynbee, describes the arrangements .

The arrangements for the official opening of Northiam Station began back in April of last year. It was clear at the time that it would be "touch and go" as to whether the extension would be completed on schedule but that a degree of risk was necessary to secure a suitable person to officiate at the ceremony.

An approach was made to The Lord Lieutenant's Office at East Sussex County Council to gauge support for our request. The idea received official support and the promise that every effort would be made to secure a member of the Royal Family to visit the railway. The "Challenge Anneka" filming had just been completed and the railway, having hit the news headlines throughout East Sussex, was already becoming something of a talking point and this certainly helped in gaining support. A reserve list of dignitaries was drawn up in case we were unsuccessful.

Out of the blue, in March came a telephone call from The Lord Lieutenant's Office that His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester had indicated his interest in our cause and would be delighted to attend on Monday 4 June. By this time the chances of opening as scheduled were looking even more shaky but His Royal Highness's offer was accepted.

An extensive guest list was prepared, embracing all the Local authorities at county, district and parish level, MPs, colleagues from the tourism industry and other private railways, contractors who aided the extension project and other suppliers – not forgetting the bank manager.

Formal invitations were printed and prepared for posting. But no word could be made publicly until Major Peter Olver from the Railway Inspectorate declared the extension fit and ready for service following his inspection on 14 May. Time was critical with just three weeks to go before the Royal visit and within minutes of receiving Major Olver's official blessing, a telephone call from Northiam Station to my office saw the invitations posted!

In the meantime a number of site meetings had been held at Northiam with representatives from East Sussex Police and H.R.H.'s Household and an itinerary agreed in great detail – all this before Major Olver's visit. Suffice

to say that there would have been some very red faces, had we failed the inspection, and some furious back-peddalling!

Monday 4 June dawned fine and the forecast was for a dry day. The catering crews started work at 7.30 am, cleaning the 4 coach train inside and out. At Rolvenden the locomotive crews ensured that their locomotives gleamed like new pins. By midday the train, headed by P class 1556 and terrier Sutton, and comprising Maunsell BFO 53, Restaurant Car 'Diana', Pullman Car 'Barbara' and Maunsell BUO 54, stood in the platform awaiting our guests. This was surely the smartest turned out train our railway has ever seen: no detail was overlooked. John Liddell had polished the door handles of each coach, Colin Edwards had burnished the buffers of "Sutton", the catering team headed by Chef Anthony Trice and Pullman Conductor Doug Lindsay had the train laid up with tablecloths and fresh flowers. Even the attempts by the local starling population to leave their mark on the coaches were defeated by a quick-acting Steve Beastall – ever ready with brush and hose-pipe!

The railway played host to the most impressive line-up of guests ever invited. We were honoured to welcome, amongst others, the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson, The High Sheriffs of both Kent and East Sussex, the Chairman of Kent County Council Sir John Grugeon and our President Lord Deedes. Sparkling English wine from Carr Taylor Vineyards at Westfield in East Sussex was served en route to Northiam where the guests disembarked to await the arrival of The Duke of Gloucester.

A few minutes early at 3.30 pm, a helicopter from the Royal Flight landed adjacent to the station and His Royal Highness walked across the road to be welcomed by Lord Deedes. His Royal Highness was introduced by Chairman David Stratton to members of the railway who had made an outstanding contribution to the extension project; Andrew Webb, David Hazeldine, Lawrence Brydon, David Stubbs, Richard Halliwell and Duncan Buchanan, before being invited to walk through the Booking Hall. Here, His Royal Highness was presented with a leather pass offering free travel on the railway by Company Secretary Raymond



HRH The Duke of Gloucester unveiling the plaque (above) and signing the visitors' book at Northiam on the occasion of the official opening, 4th June 1990. (Jim Berryman)

Williams. Pass number 2 was presented, Pass number one having been presented to The Queen Mother in 1982. The Duke of Gloucester signed the visitors book before walking on to the platform.

Lord Deedes made a short speech of introduction and paid tribute to the unstinting determination of the railway's supporters to save the line. The Duke echoed the theme and

welcomed the railway back into the local community. Like the project to save the engine 'Duke of Gloucester' with which he had maintained keen interest, our own railway had proved the doubters and bureaucrats wrong.

His Royal Highness then unveiled a brass plaque commemorating his visit, temporarily fixed to the exterior of the building. The plaque is now permanently displayed inside the Booking Hall.

In the company of David Stratton, His Royal Highness walked to the train to meet drivers John Baker and Colin Edwards and their firemen Dave Green and Tony Pearson. The Duke joined Colin on the footplate of "Sutton" and drove the train down the platform, breaking a white tape stretched over the line in the process. Mention must also be made of the splendid headboard painted for the occasion by David Dine.

Following the Royal Party's departure, the 102 guests boarded the train back to Tenterden, enjoying a first class afternoon tea during the journey.

The main aims of the occasion were four-fold. Firstly to mark in a suitable manner the triumph of extending to Northiam. Secondly to reward our suppliers for their support. Thirdly to show off our achievements and finally to open a dialogue with local authorities in East Sussex to seek out possibilities of external funding for future expansion. In all areas the day was a triumph, many new friends were made and others were reminded just why we were awarded ARPS "Railway of the Year": when it comes to showmanship and commercial expertise no one does it better!

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Justins

Bodiam Robertsbridge East Sussex

Letters to the Editor

Bodiam – Robertsbridge

I am reluctant as an "armchair" member, to dictate what the company should do but I agree with Brett Scillitoe and others that a more positive attitude over extending to Robertsbridge could be taken.

Although the company may have undertaken not to extend to Robertsbridge this would not prevent a separate concern (as has occurred with the Bluebell Railway for other reasons) applying for a LRO. This may appear cheeky but circumstances have changed greatly. The company were forced into this position despite unprecedented public support. A different government is in power. The abilities of the company and the value of the railway have been proved. Tourism has become a major industry. Encouragement given by Network SouthEast to similar projects is also important.

Any extension should be justified on commercial grounds. Sadly the number of visitors arriving via BR may not justify the costs.

A compromise would be to extend to a point close to the A21 itself, where a major "traffic" flow undoubtedly exists. This would create a "Welshpool" situation allowing the determined visitor to arrive by rail and walk to the light rail station avoiding the problems of bus links.

I believe that the logic of terminating at Bodiam was partly that the castle is a major tourist draw. However the clientele may be different. I know from experience in Derbyshire that visitors tend not to visit two major attractions in the same day.

I would strongly urge consideration of extending at least as far as the A21 as a long term objective.

Matlock, Derbyshire

Trevor Griffin

Sir – For the 'Stephens' preservationists, I am sure Bodiam must be seen as the last battle field, – but on purely practical grounds it is going to be difficult to preserve the site in anything like a former state, when it is required to be a terminal station. Already a run-round loop and watering facilities are required. Operational constraints will lead to further compromises.

I would like to suggest a possible solution to finish the debate and perhaps provide a 'win'

for all interest groups. At the same time this solution could at last provide some true historical representation on the railway.

If a 'new' terminal station could be built, a little distance on from Bodiam, perhaps at Junction Road, Bodiam could then be left as a passing station and the whole site preserved entirely as it was in some past era. No expensive compromises would need to be made for operational purposes. – In fact by its very nature as a 'Stephens' railway station it should be inexpensive to reconstruct and maintain.

The new terminal station could be built entirely and unashamedly with commercial and operational purposes in mind, with no compromises to 'Stephens' practice. Perhaps the station could be representative of the S.E.R. or L.C. & D.R., as neither of these companies are individually the single subject of any current preservation project. Spacious buildings, two platforms and appropriate station 'furniture' could be installed, which would probably enhance appeal to the average visitor.

Although perhaps ambitious, surely the idea would be worth a feasibility study.

Ashburton, New Zealand

Peter Holden

A number of letters have been received on this subject and the Editor thanks all correspondants for their interest. However, it is not the policy of the directors to pursue the Bodiam to Robertsbridge section. This correspondence is now closed – Ed.

The Kipling Connection

Sir – Rudyard Kipling did indeed use Etchingam station while living at Batemans. Richard Cobb, in his autobiographical sketch. "Something to Hold Onto", refers to an incident in about 1931 "that took place early on a Monday morning on Etchingam Station . . . There was a long queue at the ticket-office; an oldish man with a drooping white moustache and very shaggy black eyebrows, wearing a long black overcoat with a velvet collar, and carrying a silver topped stick, came in in a hurry, pushing straight to the head of the queue, without so much as an apology, and asking, in a loud, confident voice for a First Class Single to London. The man at the ticket office requested him, quite politely, to take his place right at the end of the queue and wait his turn, there was no need to rush, the train was not due in for a

quarter of an hour. 'Do you realise who I am?' stormed the old man, holding his ground at the front. This proved too much for the patience of the ticket clerk . . . 'I know who you are, Mr Rudyard Bloody Kipling', he shouted, 'and you can bloody well take your place in the queue like everybody else' . . . The great man decided not to travel that day after all, and flounced out of the station, purple with rage. He had already sent his chauffeur back with his car, so I suppose he had to walk all the way back to the house . . . "

Stephens and Kipling would undoubtedly have had mutual acquaintances, as Kipling's Aunt Georgie (his mother's sister) married the painter Burne-Jones who, like Stephens's father Frederic George Stephens, was a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Although the Brotherhood had only a short life in its original form, the members and their friends formed what was almost an extended family, touching

most of the artistic and literary life of the second half of the 19th century.

Sidcup, Kent

T.G. Burnham

The Kipling letter reproduced here is one of several in the Colonel Stephens Archive - Ed.

GER Saloon Coach

Sir - A quick note with reference to the 'new item of rolling stock' mentioned in the *Tenterden Terrier*: GER Saloon bogie coach, belonging to Rick Edmundson, left Steamtown for Tenterden during 1989, it is this coach which is referred to, not No. 5 (McAlpine's Royal). The true identity of the coach is as follows:

Built 1912 as First Saloon No. 3
Inspection Saloon No. 63 with LNER
(Renumbered 1924)
To NE Area 1927 as No. 21870

† BURWASH
1001 ETCINGHAM

BATEMAN'S
BURWASH
•SUSSEX•

6th January 1925.

Private.

Dear Colonel Stephens,

The Comprehensive Pass for the coming year has arrived. I send you my best thanks for it, though after the last month or six weeks I have got an idea it would have been more to the point if you had given me a free seat in a motor-boat, punt or barge from Robertsbridge to Paddock Wood. I don't know whether your lines in the west survived, but coming down from the north a few days ago it seemed to me that your big brothers in the Thames Valley were being tried rather high.

With every good wish for the coming year,

Very sincerely yours,

Rudyard Kipling

Lt.Col. H.F. Stephens, M.I.C.E.,
Salford Terrace,
Tonbridge.

One of several letters from Kipling to Colonel Stephens in the historical archives



*Andrew Barclay locomotive "Tom Smith" at the I.C.I. Castner Kellner Works, Runcorn. 1959.
(R C Riley)*

Later became No 900271
Given the false number 62429 for filming in
1977

Bought from McAlpine by Rick about 1980.

Ramsgate, Kent

John Lloyd

The Weston Point Light Railway

Sir – 'In 1959 I took part in a tour of various industrial organisations in the Liverpool, Runcorn, Widnes and Manchester areas arranged by the S.L.S. Among the places visited was the Castner-Kellner Works of I.C.I. Ltd at Runcorn. At the time I was unaware of the Colonel Stephens connection. Six Andrew

Barclay saddle tanks were seen as follows:

Roscoe AB 1399/15
P.R. Allen A.B. 1949/28
Tom Smith AB 1930/27
E.D. Glover AB 2308/51
J.W. Moore AB 2310/51

The sixth was the only six coupled engine and this was in the workshops, Castner AB 2066/39. It was understood that a seventh four coupled tank was out at work, this being Holt AB 2309/51. The engines were well looked after in blue livery.'

Beckenham, Kent

R.C. Riley

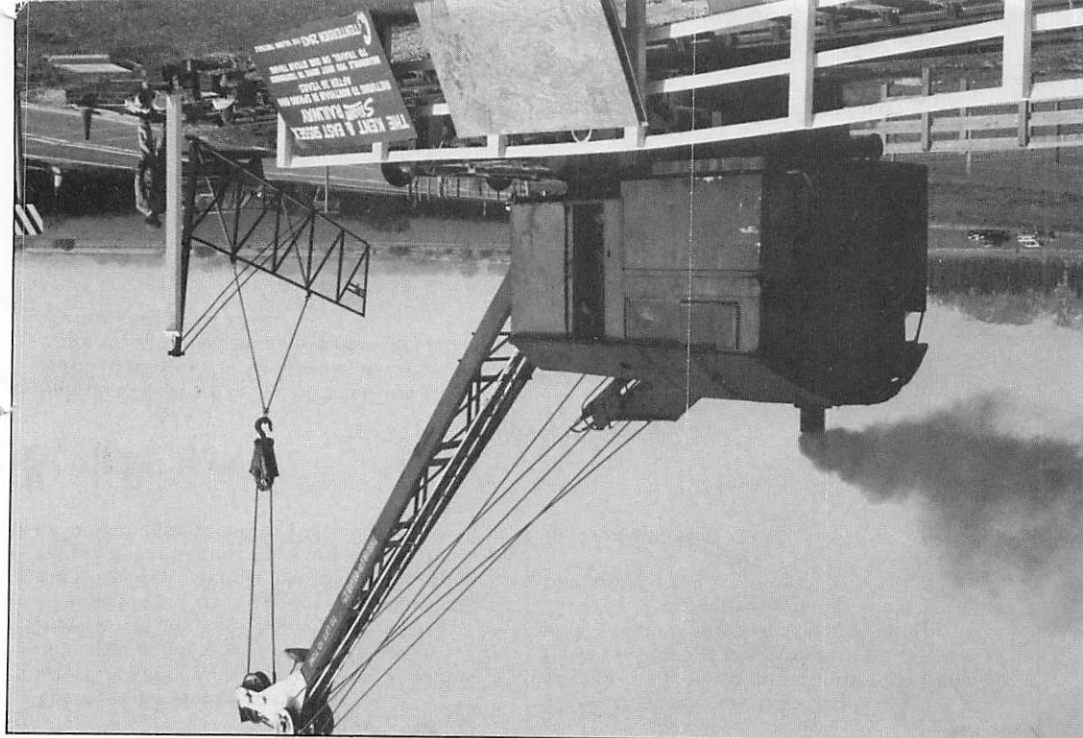
Book Review

Redhill to Ashford by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith, published by the Middleton Press. 96 pages of captioned photographs, with maps, and illustrations. Price £7.95.

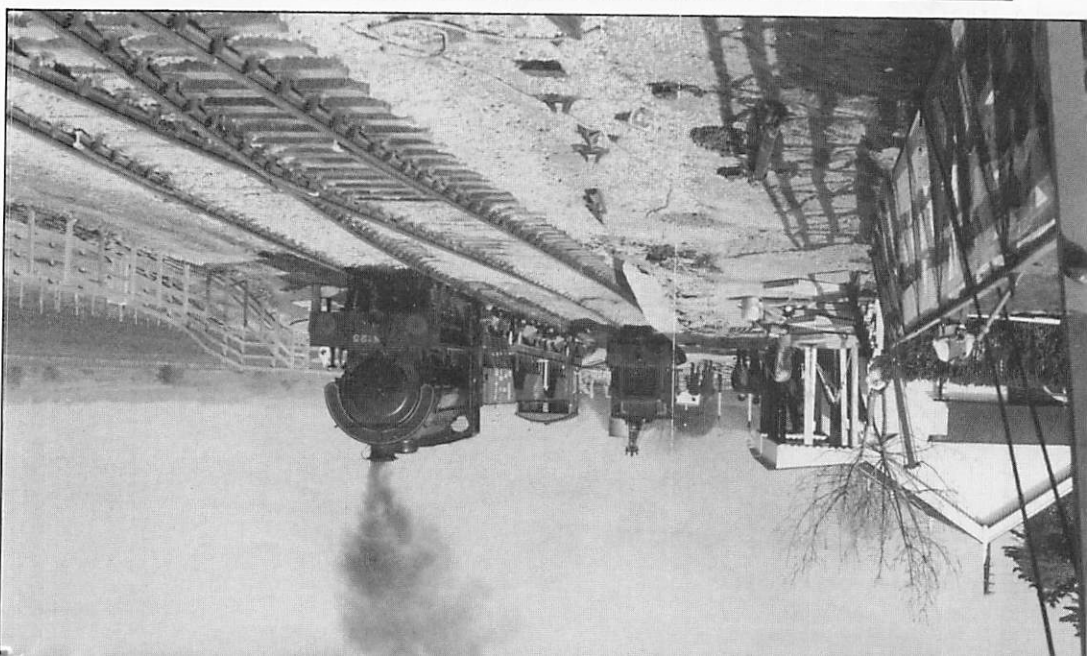
This is the ninth in Middleton Press's Country Railway Routes and covers this almost straight 55 mile route through the heartland of Kent and Surrey. Through trains no longer run, but the completion of the Channel tunnel could eventually signal a dramatic increase in traffic from Dover to Reading and beyond. The standard of photographic reproduction is high and although some of the subject matter has

been dealt with in other Middleton Press albums, all the photographs are new and the captions fresh and informative. There are eight photographs of Headcorn Station, including a magnificent double page spread, which shows the entire KESR layout after the quadrupling of the main line. All of the stations are given extensive photographic coverage and highlight the substantial changes that have occurred to the buildings over the last twenty five years or so. On the Tonbridge to Ashford section, for example, only Pluckley seems to bear any resemblance to the station as it was in steam days

P.D.S.



ALMOST READY.





John Liddell captures the final days of the preparatory work at Northiam on 5th May 1990, prior to the official inspection nine days later.





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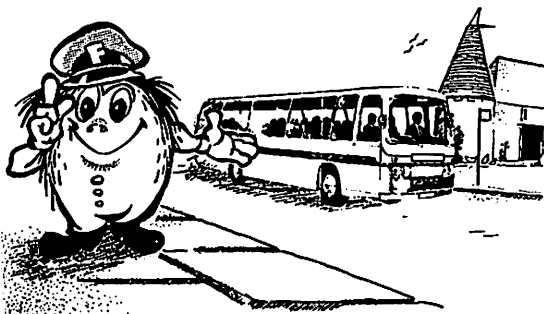
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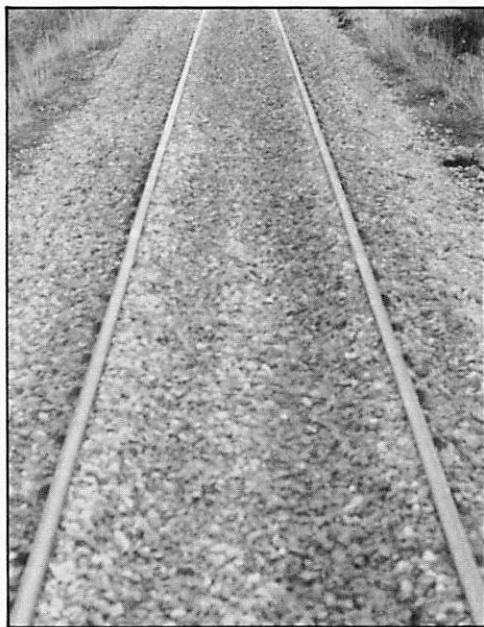
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Keeping Track of the Times

David Hazeldine



Before and After. Track prior to tamping and the finished track. Note lack of stone above the sleepers and the two ballast shoulders beyond the sleeper ends.

In May 1989, as most people will know, the track was relaid to Northiam. To the layman it might seem that most of the work was complete, but laying the track is only the mid point. This article will explain the work required to complete the task.

The object of the exercise is to attain a minimum of 200mm (8") of granite ballast under the sleepers and the sleepers 'boxed in'. After gaining the correct level and alignment, a ballast shoulder of 350mm (14") on the straights and 650mm (24") on the curves is required to stabilise the track.

The first operation was to lay sufficient ballast in the four foot (middle of track). This was done by using the Railway's three Hopper wagons, two Dogfish, one Trout, with a combined capacity of 80 tons/train load (8,600 tons have been used on the extension which equals approximately 170 trains). The wagons were loaded using a hired loading shovel, with bucket capacity of 5 tons, and a Poclain 60, which was used to stockpile the stone.

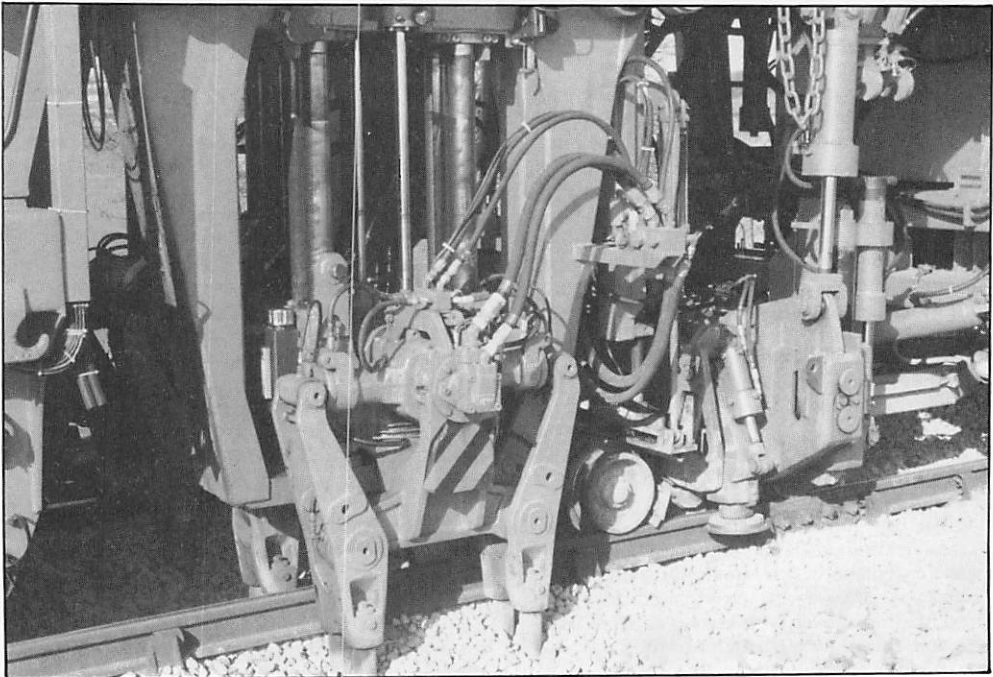
The second operation was to plough the stone from the middle of the track to around the rails. To do this a Ballast Regulator was purchased in 1987, which has been renovated by Clive Lowe and Boris Perkins. A Ballast Regulator is simply a machine similar to highway grading equipment. It is supplied with four adjustable ploughs for working around the track it runs on, and two for working beyond the sleeper ends. It has the capacity to plough up to a width of 7.5m (24') across the trackbed, including up and down embankments or cuttings. In addition a rotating brush is fitted which will lift stone down to sleeper height. The stone lifted is fed onto a transverse conveyor which disposes of the stone to the ballast shoulder on either side of the track.

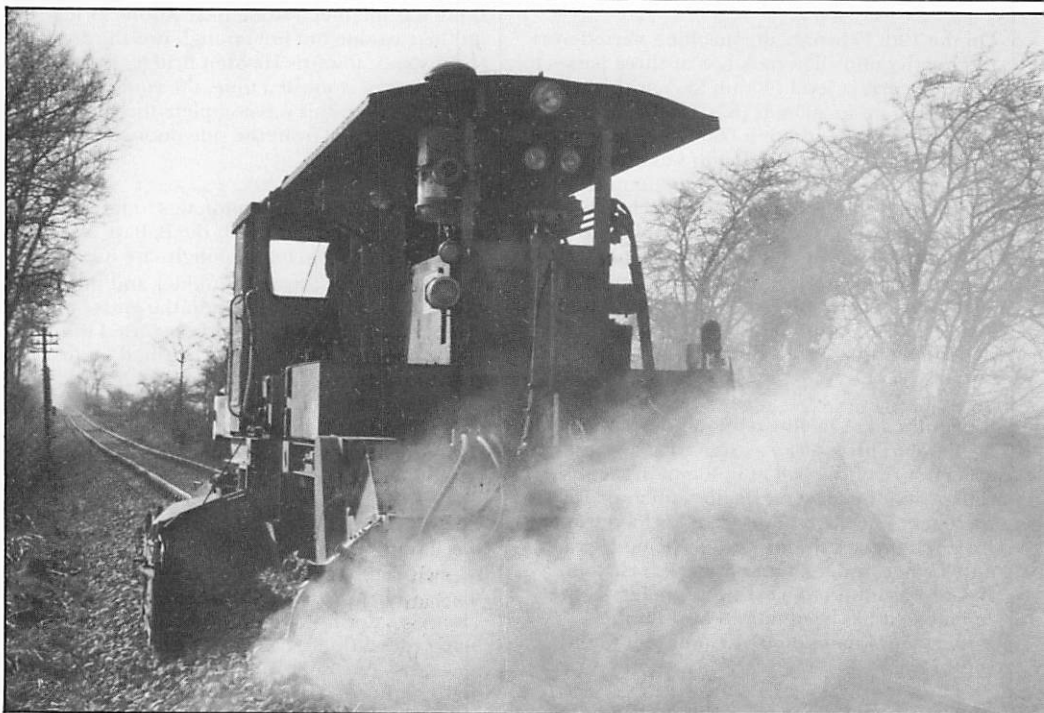
To plough the stone from the middle to both sides of the rail requires the rear two ploughs to be set to move the stone to the inside running edge and, using the plough tunnels, over the rail to the outside edge of the rails. This then leaves two deep humps of stone either side of the rails ready for tamping. Using this process

the machine can move approximately 2,000 tons per hour.

The third operation was to rough lift and align the track using a Tamping Machine. A Tamping

Machine's two main functions are packing the track to its correct longitudinal and transverse level and putting the track to correct alignment, both on the straight and on transition and circular curves. This is done by two tamping





Tamping and Regulating. The "tamping" operation, which involves lifting the track and squeezing ballast under the sleepers is followed by "regulating" the stone. As the regulator moves away from the camera the four rear ploughs of the Matisa Regulator are clearly visible pushing stone. stone away from the rails and together with the main ploughs are forming the ballast shoulder. In the final operation, the track is brushed clean. (photographed by John Liddell)

banks, one centred over each rail. The tamping banks with tools vibrating are lowered until below sleeper base. The tools are then moved in towards the sleeper centre line, thus squeezing ballast under the sleepers. In May 1989 about half this work was carried out using a machine hired from Grant, Lyon and Eagre. Due to machine breakdowns it was not possible to complete the work as the holidays had run out for the various volunteers. The completion was rescheduled for February/March 1990 by which time a new company, Clark Rail, had been set up running a Plasser and Theurer 08 Tamper.

This machine was more sophisticated having the very latest technology including Track Recording and Radio Telescope Geometric Control, and also dual lifting hooks on rollers for point work or lifting under fishplates. G.L.E's machine, by comparison, was 25 years old and unreliable. Clark Rail gave a very competitive quote of £5,000 to complete all outstanding work between Wittersham Road and Northiam.

On the 19th February the machine started work, the rough tamp align took two or three passes to get near correct level (40mm low), with each pass lifting up to 200mm (8"). On the approach to Hexden Bridge there is 600/700mm of stone under the sleepers. This height was due to the bridge being raised, in 1978, by 900mm (3') for flood prevention purposes. After each pass of the tamper, operations one and two had to be repeated, often working late into the night.

The fourth operation was to finish tamping and aligning. The required operation varies depending on whether the track is straight or curved.

Straight track: The finish lift was determined to be 40mm. This figure was arrived at because the average size of the ballast is 40mm in section, thus giving the most satisfactory lift and 'Top' to the track. The alignments were decided by pegs surveyed previously, the datums being Hexden and Rother bridges. Out of interest, Hexden Bridge was found to be skew to the rest of the railway so it has been moved over on the Wittersham Road side by 100mm (4") to the south.

The 08 Tamper uses a wire level and aligning system to measure the versine between the front and rear trolleys. The front trolley can be adjusted using a Radio Telescope to bring the Tamper and track into a straight line between the two datums. This is a three point lining system.

Curved track: This can be dealt with in three different ways. After taking advice from Clark Rail it was suggested that because the curves had been relaid so well, i.e. to a consistent radius, the best method would be to use the Tamper Track Recording facility. To use this, one marks a start and finish point on the track and records between the two points, the Tamper records all this data on a graph. By plotting a smooth line through the graph, a perfect transition from straight to curve can be achieved. To do this Four Point lining is used. This measures two versines along the wire, instead of one, giving a comparison of readings.

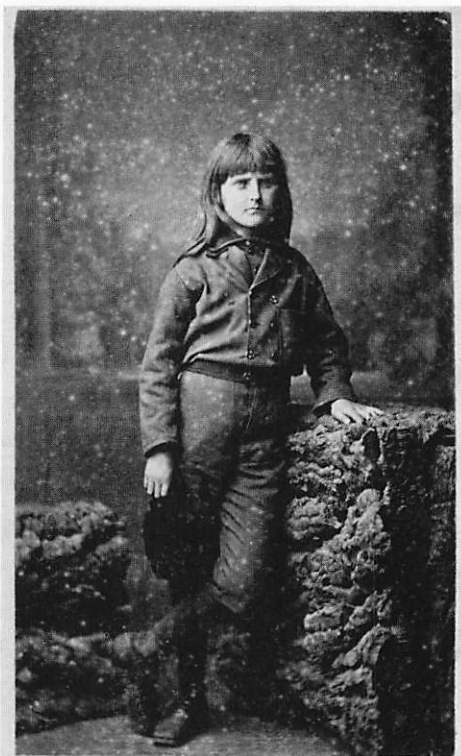
The fifth operation was to create an even amount of stone across and along the formation, this was achieved by using the Ballast Regulator with the ploughs set as close to the sleepers as possible and with the ploughs set to take stone away from the rails. To save stone and money this can take many passes when there is too much stone in one place and not enough elsewhere. For example, after finishing tamping there was too much stone near Rother Bridge on the east side but not enough two thirds of the distance towards Hexden Bridge, so, pulling 10-12 tons of stone at a time, the voids were filled in. When this was complete the shoulder stone was tipped from the side doors of the hoppers.

The sixth and final operation was to tidy the stone around the track with the Ballast Regulator. The two main ploughs are used to create an evenly formed shoulder and the rear ploughs to form the batten on the ends of the sleepers. When the brush is being used the small amount of stone left is brushed on to a conveyor and the direction can be changed according to which shoulder requires more stone. During this whole operation the cab of the regulator is pressurised, due to the dust storm outside.

The whole operation is obviously highly mechanised with up to three separate activities taking place at a time. The tamper worked in stages from Wittersham through to Northiam. The regulator followed with the ballast train being called upon, from Wittersham, as necessary. As some work was carried out at night, tight control of the movements was necessary using radios. To do a job, of this size, by hand would have taken years and also cost £15,000-£20,000 extra in stone alone. The Regulator cost the railway £850. To hire a machine like this based on the hours worked would have cost £12,000.

My Dear Dah...

One of the most treasured collections in the Kent & East Sussex archives is a series of 195 documents, mainly letters, written by Holman Stephens to his parents. Included are 17 postcards written during Stephens' childhood, various childhood drawings and 10 telegrams from his later life. Many of the letters are written on the headed notepaper of the Railways with which he was involved. Stephens' handwriting is not easy to decipher and Kay Smailes undertook the not inconsiderable task of transcribing all the letters so that typed copies could be made for easy reference. In this article she has written down some of her initial impressions of the Great Man. Stephens always addressed his father as "Dah" and his mother as "Mam", invariably concluding the letters as "Your affectionate Son", usually unsigned, but occasionally as "H" or "Holly". The spelling, clearly not a strong point, has been left exactly as it was written.



DAVID REES. PHOTO. 298, CLAPHAM ROAD, S.W.

Holly, October 1877, aged 9.

In the early summer of 1989 a chance encounter, leading to a surprising discovery, gave me a unique opportunity to embark on a

strangely rewarding assignment. At the request of the KESR Archivist I was entrusted with the responsibility of transcribing a miscellaneous collection of letters, post-cards, telegrams and hastily scribbled memos, most of them written by or to the young Holman Fred Stephens (familiarily know as Holly) to or by his parents (Dah and Mam) between the years 1876 and 1911 – first during his early childhood and as a schoolboy, then as a student and later as an ambitious and enterprising engineer of many early Kent railways.

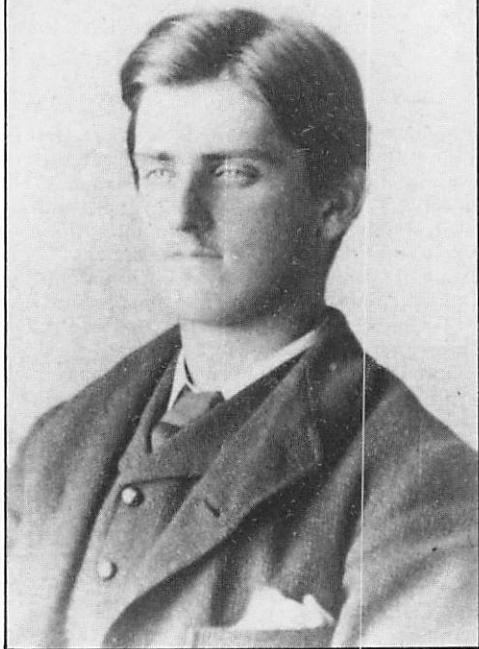
Like those of most children, Holly's first letters, carefully preserved and dated by Mam, were in the form of drawings: water-colours or pen-and-ink sketches, – of a steam-engine, a train travelling over a long, high viaduct, a coastal scene with sailing-ships. In this collection his first real letter, with a poem as introduction, was written at the age of eight for his father's birthday –

"I awake in the morning the robins are thair
Flying about in the sweet sentedair". H.F.S.

"dear Dah, i wish yu menny happy reterns of the day". Holly.

Holly's parents, Frederic George Stephens, a leading artist and critic, editor of the "Athenaeum" for many years, a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and Rebecca Clara, lived at 10 Hammersmith Terrace, W. From 1877 until 1883 Holly, a godchild and namesake of the artist Holman Hunt, attended University College School in London. After leaving he was sent to learn French with the family of Monsieur and Madame Rossignol at Vitre in Brittany, initially for two months. It is from that time on that we have the most vivid and lively descriptions of his activities and interests – swimming, fishing, driving a trap, riding a bicycle (very easy), later to be given up in favour of learning to play billiards in the evenings, as an honorary member of M. Rossignol's club.

Holly was greatly struck by the kindness of everyone he met in France. The French, he thought, were very nice people. M. Rossignol and his family were considered *gentlemen* (gentry?) and used to dine with the best families in the department (= county). Water-colour sketches of the medieval, turreted castle and of the Hôtel Rossignol, by far the largest in the



Holman Stephens, 1886, aged 18.

town and next to the Railway Station, accompanied his first letter from Vitré, and what most impressed him about his "dear little room" was the English Furniture and an electric bell!

His detailed accounts of visits and conversations with people he met reveal his early interests – amongst others, the Commandant of the 70th Regiment of Infantry, with whom he went to hear Military Music in the Public Gardens, and who expressed a keen desire to see portraits of English soldiers. On a visit to the barracks the critical eye of the 15-year-old described the portion allotted to "reservists" as not fit for a cow to live in, let alone a man. "The soldiers are all very little men with very big red trousers, (in which I believe they must carry their tents), a blue tunic and a ridiculous hat." Holly's letters and cards, some written with a "dreadful nib", are outpourings of infectious enthusiasm, with intermittent punctuation, erratic and varied spelling, and little thought of paragraphs, but the reader cannot fail to share in the sense of enjoyment he so obviously felt in visits to local fairs, military manoeuvres, and all the details of everyday life.

He much preferred to progress conversationally rather than by attending lessons, and had no fear of talking to the Mayor of Vitré or dining with the President of the Tribunal. He enjoyed his 6-course meals with wine and coffee, "when

we all talked French like steam-engines," but his great moment came at the Dépôt of Locomotives, when he rode one kilometer back to the station on an engine ("very jolly") with the Government Inspector, "who has taken a fancy to me, and very often I go to his cosy little office and talk with him and his colleague about English railways which interest him very much." In a letter to her husband after Holly's return from Brittany Mrs Stephens wrote – "I think that you will be pleased with Holly.

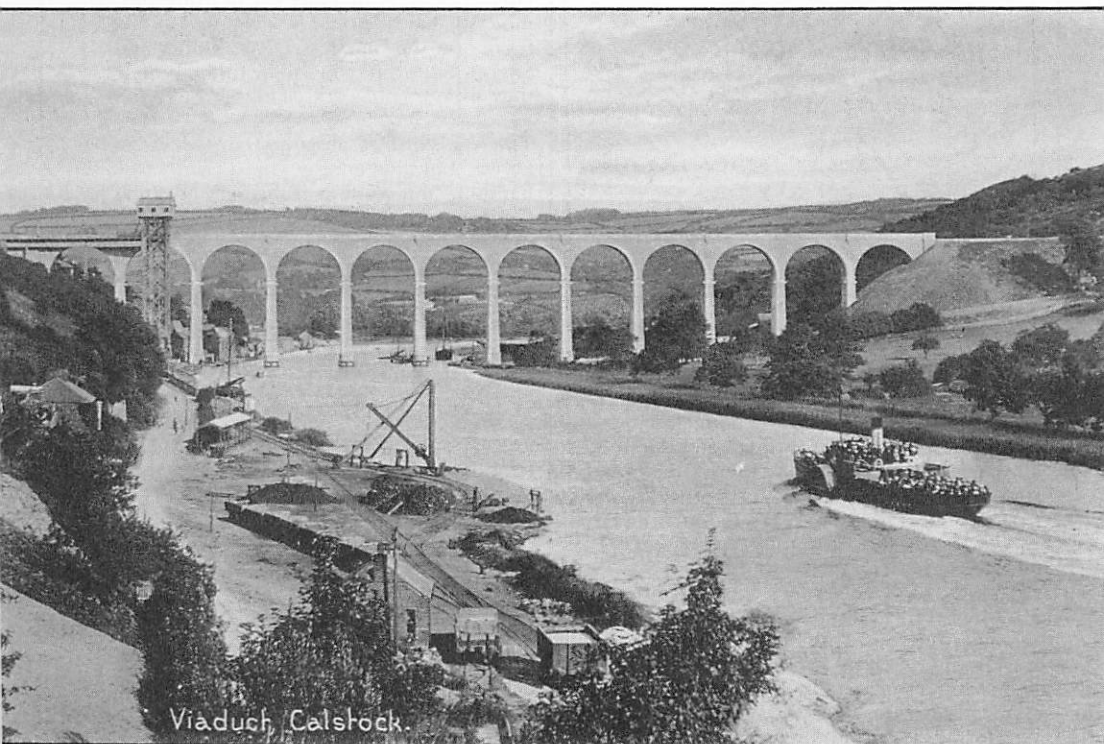
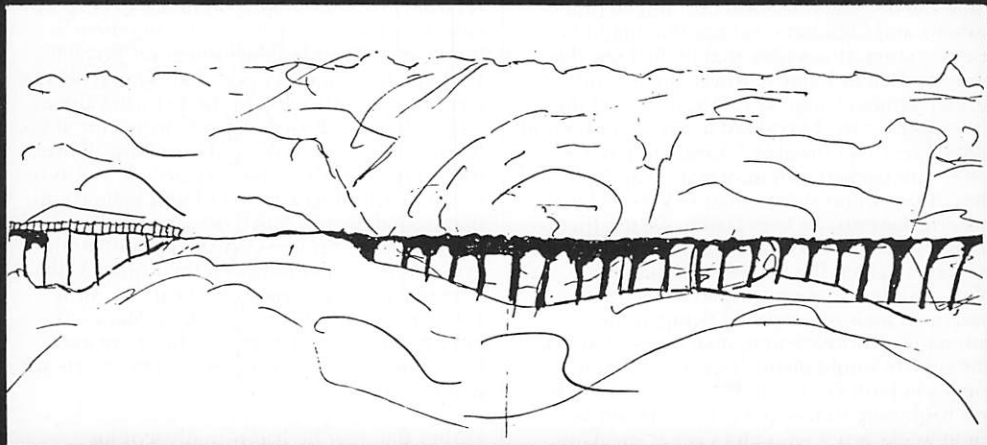
It is fun to hear him take off Frenchmen he has met. He says the utmost enjoyment he has ever had was at Cromer and at Vitré."

In later letters (1886-7) from Karlsruhe (Baden) in Germany, where Holly at 18/19 went to learn German, are plans and diagrams as well as detailed descriptions of scenery and excursions into the Black Forest, visits to historic houses and castles, his bathing in the Rhine and his encounters with many different types of people all of which show that he was a good mixer, friendly, sociable, observant and talkative, always keenly concerned about his progress and eager to become fluent in both French and German. He enjoyed frequent friendly spars with his host, Professor Kienitz, on colonial questions, such as the Cameroons, and gave his own curious view of the Prince of Wales' (later Edward VII) visit on his way from Cologne to Baden in August 1886 – "he was warmly received, people cheering him repeatedly. They don't cheer in a Christian manner but give vent to long Ho-o-o-ohs which sound as if the whole assemblage had suddenly been afflicted with violent toothache."

Karlsruhe he found a dull town, on the dead flat, 3 miles from the hills and 8 from the Rhine, rather large with rows and rows of well-built old-



The Hotel Rossignol at Vitré, Brittany, where Holly stayed in 1883.



Childhood sketch of a Railway Viaduct. Was this the inspiration for Stephens' magnificent viaduct over the Tamar at Calstock, constructed in 1907?

fashioned stone houses. He made frequent visits to the floating swimming baths, carefully calculating the cost of every journey, and soon knew the details of his local line and all other railways and Channel crossings that might be useful to him. It was here that he first saw the Simplon-Orient Express, where the up and down engines change at 7.33 a.m. . . . "all the passengers were at breakfast in the hotel car and looked very comfortable." Although Holly's letters are packed with information and descriptions, and show a mature knowledge of historical events, he begs Dah to excuse his scrawle, having only a quill, and very often he is rushing to catch the post. Overlooking the blots, smudges and crossings-out, the reader has, nevertheless, a sense of being in the company of a lively young man on his first trips abroad. He would dearly have loved to stay longer in both France and Germany, just as he was beginning to take part in conversations. Eight weeks is not enough to get a "speaking power" over the language, he wrote, but he knew it was impossible with the "exam. bogey" (London Matric) hanging over him.

*dear Dah i wish
you mummy
happy returns
of the day folks*

Letter dated 10th October 1876, the first in the collection.

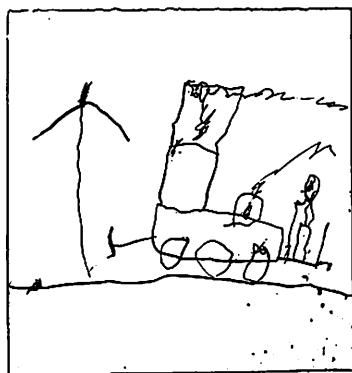
Holly's devotion to and concern for his parents (love and 10,000 kisses to you both, Your affectionate son) shows through all his letters. They were undoubtedly his closest friends and supporters. His anxiety about their health, their need for short holiday breaks, to brace themselves up – in Cornwall (Port Isaac), Norfolk (Cromer), the South Coast (Lymington), N. & S. Wales, is often expressed. His offer of free passes ("such a pity not to use them, it would not look well to send them back"), often to cross the Channel to Calais, and then on to Paris (for 19/- in 1903), or via Boulogne (for 15/6 in 1893), were balanced by requests for tickets to the Royal Academy Private View, a privilege not easy to obtain, and introductions to influential friends, so important for his future railway undertakings.

Throughout the 1890s, his early railway building years, Holly, now a qualified Civil and Mechanical Engineer, based in Cranbrook (Hartley) or Tonbridge, continued to keep in close touch with his parents, joining them at home or on brief holidays whenever possible. With the helpful influence of his father, he was elected to membership of the Reform Club in 1898. Already a Board of Trade Inspector at 26, "getting a little known", and travelling all over the country to advise and to learn, as well as to Belgium, the chief centre of Light Railways at that period, he was much occupied with Parliamentary business which kept him to the grindstone, particularly with the Rother Valley scheme, a project dear to his heart. In April 1900 he was at last able to write to Mam – "I have got this line open for traffic at last and hope that it will be a success. The prospects are good so far. . . ."

Earlier that year he had proudly sent his parents a photo of one of his Rother Valley engines built to his designs – "they are wonderfully powerful and very successful taking 40 trucks of goods at 20 miles an hour!" A year later he wrote with a mixture of pride and modesty that he would be delighted to take them over the Chichester, Rye, Rother and Sheppy lines "but you will be disappointed as they are not *great* works at all!"

The rest is history, already recorded and well-known, but what emerges most clearly from the handling and reading of this very personal family correspondence, a refreshing experience in itself, is a sense of being part of living history, its failures and successes, but still in the process of being made, 90 years on.

Kay Smailes hopes to write again on the subject of the Stephens letters in future issues of The Tenterden Terrier.



Locomotive sketch, 1874.

All Set to Go

Duncan Buchanan describes the visit of the Railway Inspectorate before the Railway reopened to Northiam



Standing guard at Wittersham Road.

(Neil Rose)

The recent inspection of the line, before opening to Northiam seems very grand but what does it really involve? My vision started with some words I once read in a book by Harold Gasson, "Signalling Days", of a signalbox inspection in the 1950's. "The little 14XX class tank engine with its one coach came to a stand opposite the box, and I could see down into that Inspection coach, where there were tables laid out with white linen, silver cutlery, glasses and bottles and a white-coated attendant. These Inspections blokes certainly were doing themselves all right. . . . I had a last quick look round the signal -box, the windows were clean, the floor highly polished, the levers gleamed like chrome plating, the brass release plungers shone, the stove had been black-leaded, even the coal buckets too, so there was nothing left to bring discredit to Milton box."

* * * *

What does an inspection involve? Surely more than just a casual glance over the track and a ride over the line?

10.30 on May 14th 1990 a group of people assembled at Tenterden to await the arrival of Major Peter Olver of the Railway Inspectorate, part of the department of Transport. The Chairman, David Stratton, Extension Director, Andrew Webb, Operating Director, Derek Dunlavey, Operating Manager, Neil Sime, S&T Manager, Peter Lawrence, Civil Engineer, Lawrence Brydon, and Project Foreman, David Hazeldine, along with the class 14 crew, a guard, three signalmen and the three operating department inspectors were all present. Also required was the buffet manager to serve the all important coffee.

A quick trip to Wittersham was followed by entering what was still an engineers possession. At Hexden, the current limit of operation, Major Olver, along with Brydon, Webb and Hazeldine descended to walk the track to Northiam preceded by the train. During the walk various items were looked at for example fencing, trespass notices, close the gate notices, culverts, occupation crossings, general civil engineering, bridges and the state of the track. Fault can always be found with any engineering job, especially one as large as this so it is necessary to convince the officer that not only are we aware of the problems but what we are going to do about them. He also comments on things he approves of so the walkways on the Rother bridge came in for favourable comment, especially the fact that they are metal rather than wood which are more susceptible to fire with steam engines around. One consequence of the mechanisation of the P.Way department is that the track is given a very neat appearance with all the stone carefully brushed out the way. This leaves the rails, fittings and sleeper tops exposed and this was commented on as on other railways it can sometimes be difficult to see what is being inspected. As a result it was noted that two rails, out of several hundred, require to be turned due to wear on them.

After arriving at Northiam the track gauge and platform gauge were used to verify the track is properly to gauge and that the platform horizontal clearance is adequate. In addition the vertical height of the platform from the track must be within tolerance. As a guide the limits being looked for are around 1 or 2 centimetres over measurements of about 1 metre or more.

An adjournment to the Rother Valley Inn was made and lunch taken. Reminding those whose memories are long enough that the KESR idea was formed in the Public Bar here in 1961.

On return to the station the signs and stop boards were inspected. In general passengers must not be allowed to walk onto the track or otherwise endanger themselves without having at least been warned against it. The ground frame was tested (i.e. it could only operate with the correct staff inserted and had to be restored before the staff was extracted, thereby ensuring it can only be operated by the staff present). Tom Craig the level crossing consultant had done his inspection the day before and issued a certificate. The officer inspected the level crossing as well, paying careful attention since this involved the A28 rather than a quiet side road. The roadside aspects including signs and road markings were not left out.

On the return journey to Wittersham the inspecting officer wished to travel above normal line speed of 25 M.P.H. in order to gain full knowledge of the condition of the track and the riding qualities of the train and coaches. Obviously the normal speed restrictions over the

two bridges were observed carefully. On approach to Wittersham the signal sightings were viewed. The new closing out arrangements at Wittersham Road signalbox were inspected. Like the old arrangements it must be verified that only a single staff can be extracted at one time. On return to Rolvenden the signalbox was examined in respect of the Wittersham closing out arrangements and the future arrangements for closing out Rolvenden itself.

This should give a flavour for how thorough the whole inspection is. Also of note is that the standard must be high before re-opening of a line. The standards have gone up over the years and we can expect no reduction in future. In conclusion Major Olver congratulated the railway on the high standard of workmanship, which was an unexpected, though welcome, compliment. The directors then signed and handed over an amendment, for the new section of line, to the sealed undertaking we have given to operate the railway under safe working conditions. Copies of the new local and signalling instructions were also passed over to complete the inspection.

Only after all this did the party retire to the buffet to celebrate with a glass of champagne.



All Clear. Chairman David Stratton (left centre) shakes hands with Major Peter Olver.

(John Liddell)

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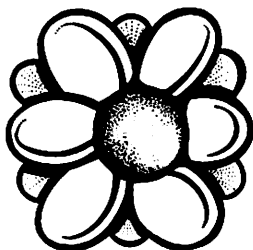
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More Light on the East Kent Terrier

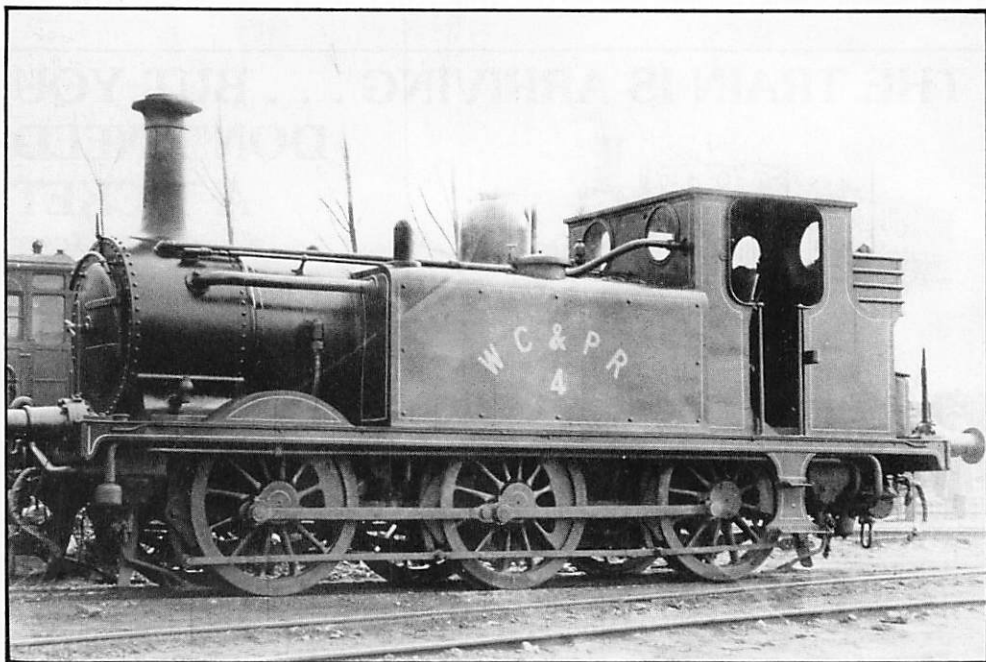
In Tenterden Terrier No.37 Tom Burnham described how the East Kent Light Railway purchased a Terrier boiler in 1926 and then, having failed to find a use for it, re-sold it to the Southern Railway in 1932. The question of why the East Kent considered itself in need of a Terrier boiler remain unsolved but Peter Cooper has discovered why the Southern Railway were willing to take it off the East Kent's hands and how it came to run on a Stephens line after all.

It is well known that conversion of a Brighton Terrier to A1X included fitting a Marsh boiler and an extended smokebox. It is also fairly well known that a "half and half" variety of Terrier existed, Nos E735 (former 668) and 680S (former 654) receiving the Marsh A1X boiler but not the extended smokebox. The latter locomotive is still in this condition in Canada. Less well known is that there was one Terrier on which the opposite condition could be found, an extended smokebox but an original Stroudley boiler.

The LBSCR had built twenty A1X boilers and the Southern built a twenty first in 1931. Nineteen of the LBSCR's twenty were used to convert sixteen of their own Terriers to A1X and

three belonging to other lines. The twentieth was not used until 1927 when it replaced the A1X boiler already fitted to B655 which was then refurbished and held as a spare. A sequence of boiler changes and refurbishments then ensued until the replacement of E735's Drummond boiler in 1930 left the Southern with no spare boiler. This presumably was the reason for the Southern's manufacture of a new Terrier boiler but this was soon snapped up to convert A1 No. W2 to A1X No. W8 on the Isle of Wight.

Through the early 1930s the Southern managed without a spare boiler, Terrier overhauls continuing without boiler changes. It was not really satisfactory to continue without a spare and one was duly found. The late D. L. Bradley, in his *Locomotives of the LBSCR Part I* recorded that Terrier No. B653 "had been laid aside with no driving wheels or chimney in the Eastleigh Paint Shop from May 1934 until overhauled in July 1935". This overhaul released a spare boiler which was fitted to No.2678 in 1937 after its return from the Isle of Wight. However, if B653's boiler went to 2678, which boiler was B653 now using?



No.4 complete with East Kent boiler on the W.C. & P.R.

(Stephen Garrett collection)

The mileage record card for this locomotive supplies the identity of this boiler as No.62. Although Eastleigh had confused the identification of Terrier boilers by issuing its own numbers to some Terrier boilers around 1930 this was not an Eastleigh number but the original Stroudley number. It had been fitted new to Terrier No.60 in 1875 and, when that locomotive was withdrawn in 1903, had been fitted to No.642. Boiler No.62 stayed with No.642 until withdrawal in 1925. The record card for this boiler still exists and says the boiler was "*Sent to Shepherds Well, East Kent Railway 8/27. But was not used apparently—sent to Eastleigh 7/34.*" Apart from the discrepancy of dates, the East Kent Minutes were only recording an intention to sell and not the sale itself, this is obviously the boiler described in Tom Burnham's article.

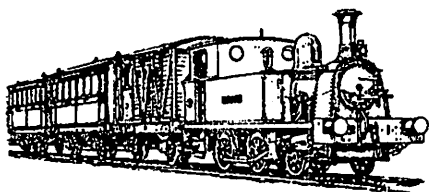
So there ran upon the Southern Railway on A1X with a Stroudley boiler but not for long. Less than two years after its rebuilding and with only 8217 miles 'on the clock' No.2653, as it had become, was sold. Appropriately, its new owner was another Stephens line, the Weston Clevedon & Portishead Light Railway, where it became No.4 and enabled services to struggle on until closure in 1940. With fellow Terrier No.2 Portishead it then passed into the stock of the Great Western Railway as No.6: No.2 became GWR No.5 and retained its name. No.6 was

repaired by the GWR in 1941 but, despite receiving its new owner's livery and brass number plates, only seems to have worked for eighteen months before going into store. It was eventually condemned in January 1948. By contrast No.5, which had not seen the inside of a main works since the mid-1920s, was selected for a heavier repair by the GWR and remained active until put into store at Swindon in 1950 and was not actually scrapped until 1954. Obviously the pedigree of No.6's boiler must have been an important consideration in deciding its earlier demise.

It should be added that the Southern acquired a further Stroudley boiler from yet another Stephens line when they purchased Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway No.9 'Daphne' in 1939 but although various parts were salvaged from this locomotive no attempt was made to make use of its boiler and what remained of the locomotive was eventually broken up in 1949. In the meantime the Southern had again found itself without a spare boiler on the mainland following the sale of the current spare to the Kent & East Sussex to rebuild 'Bodiam' in 1943. It was only when the Isle of Wight spare boiler was returned to the mainland after the War that there was a spare there again. There remained a spare from then on through British Railways days until the end of the Terriers in B.R. service.

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The Military Railways of Lydd

Part 1 Standard Gauge

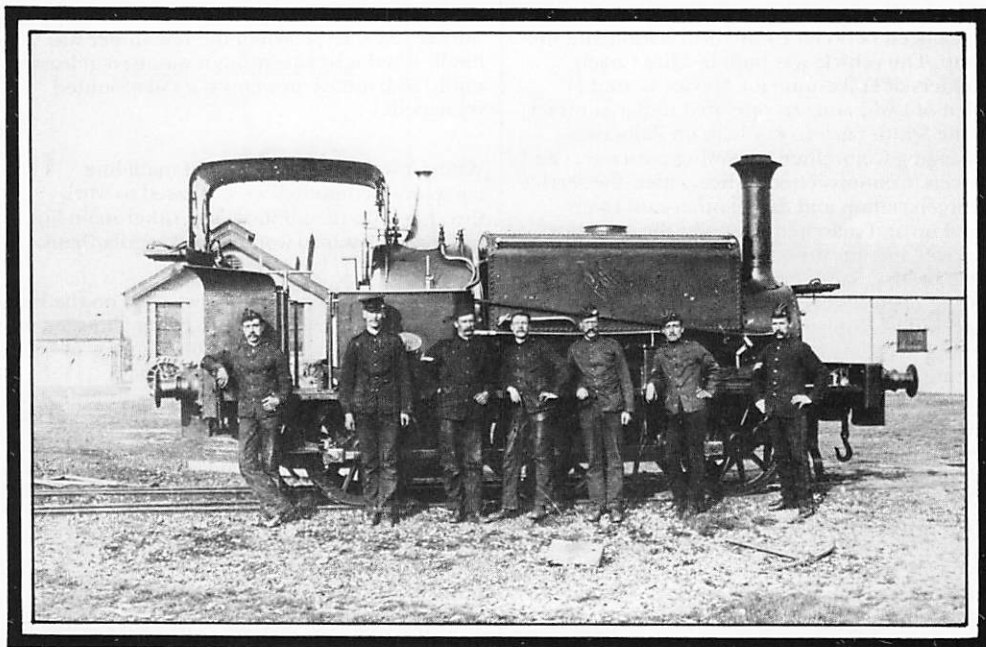
Following completion in 1881 of the Appledore to Dungeness branch line by the nominally independent Lydd Railway Company [later absorbed by the South Eastern Railway] (*The Tenterden Terrier* No. 44, Winter 1987), the first Lydd Military Railway was constructed in 1883 to serve Lydd army camp and the associated artillery ranges. Standard gauge, it commenced in the goods yard of Lydd Town station and ran for about 1 mile to the camp. Together with the track around the artillery ranges, the total mileage was approx. six. Curiously, the first steam locomotives did not appear until 1885, two years after construction. Was working during this period performed by four-footed horsepower?

During the succeeding 40 years the military railway was extensively used, the busiest period, not surprisingly, being between 1914 and 1918. Goods traffic was comprehensive consisting of, inter alia, food and other general barrack supplies, coal, coke, guns of all types together with fodder for the numerous horses employed.

Tanks and traction engines were transported on well-wagons and photographic evidence exists of derailments which suggests that the light flat-bottomed rail, latterly well-worn, with which the military line was laid, together with inferior shingle ballast, was inadequate for the weights carried over it.

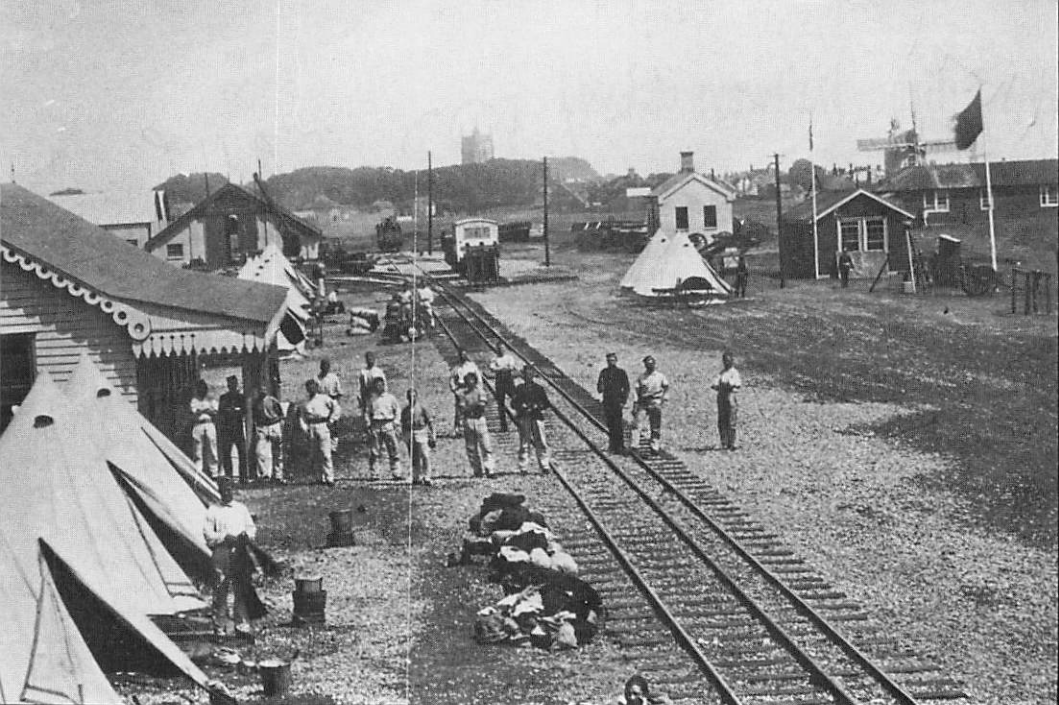
A brick locomotive shed, roofed with slates, was provided which, under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence Conservation Group, has been retained and renovated although now used for other army engineering purposes.

There was no evidence of passenger traffic on the line other than in-camp conveyance of army personnel to points on the ranges. For this purpose two coaches were acquired, one being ex-Metropolitan Railway, the other purchased new from the Metropolitan Railway Carriage and Wagon Company of Birmingham. In common with the goods stock, screw-couplings and safety chains were fitted but continuous brakes were not.



Manning Wardle Works No. 968 0-6-0T, built 1885. WD No. 134

(Edward Carpenter collection)



Mixed gauge at Lydd Camp

(Edward Carpenter collection)

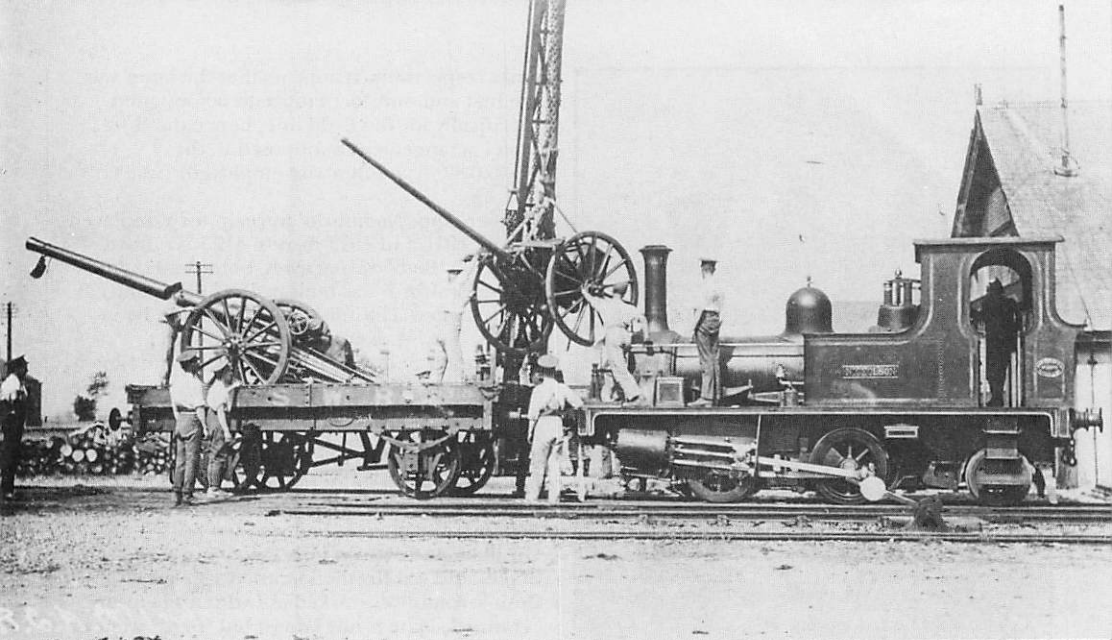
From 1905, a horse-drawn omnibus service was introduced between Lydd Town station and the camp. The vehicle was built by Hills Coach Builders of Folkestone for Messrs. G. and H. Allen of Lydd and was operated under contract to the South Eastern & Chatham Railways Managing Committee conveying passengers and parcels. Commissioned Officers used the service between station and camp; other-ranks were lined up and marched! Happily, the omnibus survives and was presented to Lydd museum in 1983 by Mrs. Sarah Paine where, currently, having been restored to a very high standard, it is on public display.

During the years following the end of the Great War, the Royal Artillery Gunnery Establishment was withdrawn from Lydd, being replaced by a battalion of The Royal Tank Corps. By this time the military railway had been heavily used for nearly 40 years and much of the track was in urgent need of replacement. In addition, much of the line was, by then, on private land involving the Government in payment of rent. For these reasons, together with the limited use the line would have during the peaceful years ahead, the decision was taken to close 75% of it the exception being the 1½ miles which linked the camp itself to the shore-line. Consequently, 4½ miles of track was lifted [including the

section from Lydd Town station to the camp] during 1926/1927. When the remainder was finally lifted is not clear but it was used at least until 1934; motive power was a rail-mounted velocipede!

Whilst it was most unlikely that main-line company locomotives were allowed to work through onto the military line, other main-line rolling stock was so worked on a regular basis.

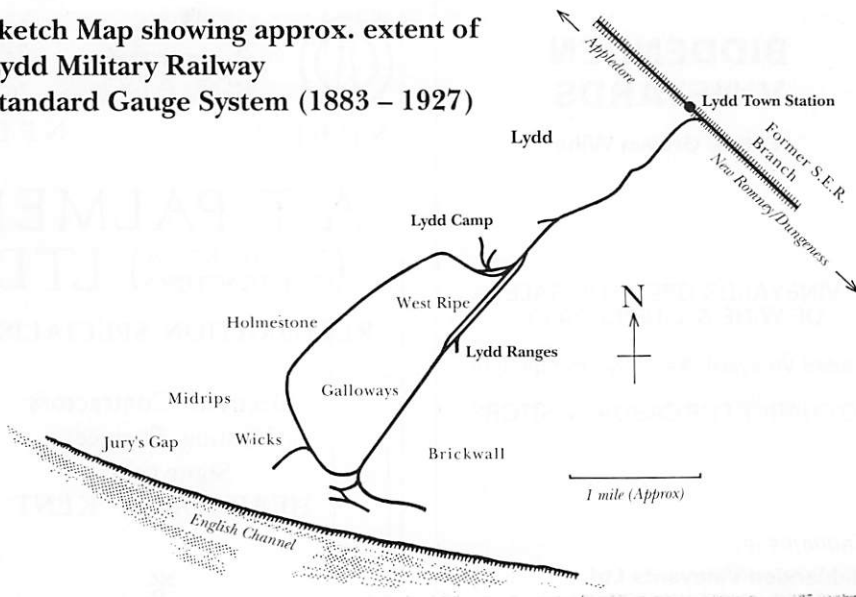
In all, 6 steam locomotives were used on the line during its 43 year history, two being allocated at any one time. There were also a number of 4-wheeled battery trolleys used to haul ammunition trucks within the ammunition area As mentioned earlier, steam arrived during 1885 two years after the line was completed in the form of two 0-6-0 saddle-tanks which bore War Department nos. 132 and 134. They were both Manning Wardle locomotives, built for service in the Sudan from whence they were soon returned to the UK [owing to the Indian Frontier Troubles and the consequent withdrawal of British troops from the Sudan] and allocated to Lydd where they worked until 1906/1907 being replaced by no. 2746 'Napier' and no. 1882 'Nicholson', both names of notable Field Marshalls, 0-6-0 and 0-4-2 side-



WD.1882 "Nicholson" at Lydd Camp, 1911.

(F G Ramsden/Edward Carpenter collection)

**Sketch Map showing approx. extent of
Lydd Military Railway
Standard Gauge System (1883 – 1927)**





*Horse fodder arriving at Lydd.
(Edward Carpenter collection)*

tanks respectively. It appears that the latter was the first and only locomotive to be designed specifically for the Lydd line, hence the 0-4-2 wheel arrangement as opposed to the 0-6-0/0-4-0 type otherwise employed.

'Napier' and 'Nicholson' were, in turn, replaced during 1916 and 1917 by nos. 4125 'Trafford' and 4199 'Betty' respectively, both 0-4-0 saddle-tanks. 'Trafford' was built in 1887 originally being named 'Hooton' and was worked by Messrs. T. A. Walker, contractor to the Manchester Ship Canal Company. By the time it arrived at Lydd, despite being rebuilt in 1903, it was described as 'well used!'. 'Betty', however, appeared to have been brand new and, with a tractive effort of 9479 pounds at 80% boiler pressure, was the most powerful locomotive to work at Lydd. It sported steel buffer beams [the previous locomotives had wooden beams], two Gresham and Craven injectors, hand and steam brakes and was finished in lined sage green. Both locomotives worked at Lydd until closure. 'Trafford's' fate is not known but 'Betty' went on to work the military line at Tidworth, Hampshire, for many years.

Norman Johnson

[To be concluded]

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From the Railway Archives - "Selsey"

The Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway opened in 1897 and was Holman F. Stephens' third railway project. The line was financially successful in its early years but by the 1920s a steady decline in its fortunes had begun. In 1931, the company, by then known as the West Sussex Railway, became bankrupt and a Receiver and Manager was appointed to run its affairs. The line limped along for a few more years, but on 19th January 1935, services were suspended "until further notice", a euphemism for closure.

The dormant line was purchased by a contractor in March 1936 and arrangements were made for the assets to be sold by auction on the 30th June. Messrs. Wyatt & Son were put in charge of the auction at Selsey Town station and their catalogue contained 324 lots, the last two items being locomotives "Morous" and "Selsey".

Frank Kellond-Jones began spending holidays with his family at Selsey in the 1920s. Travel on the Selsey line led to his interest in the Light Railways of the Stephens' 'empire' and he managed to visit the East Kent and K&ESR with his camera while still a schoolboy.

In June 1936, young Frank came upon Lot 323 "Morous" and Lot 324 "Selsey" parked at Selsey station awaiting their fate. As the railway was

obviously about to disappear for ever, what better souvenir of the line was to be had than a

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Selsey and Morous at Selsey Town, June 1936. Where has the nameplate gone?

(NE Stead collection)

Locomotive No 2 "Selsey"

"Selsey" was a 2-4-2 side tank engine, works number 681, built by Peckett & Sons at the Atlas Locomotive Works, Bristol. It was built in 1897 specially for the opening of the line, it is said to work the passenger services, and indeed it was the only new engine the Selsey Tramway ever possessed.

The locomotive was painted in the Colonel's favourite livery of dark blue with red lining, and had a large brass dome with Salter safety valves and a copper capped chimney.

The railway's archive collection includes a framed ex-works photograph which used to hang on Stephens' office wall, on the back of which is the builder's label and this gives Peckett's specification for the engine:-

Class: 'Selsey'

Cylinders: 12 inch by 18 inch stroke

Coupled wheel base: 5 ft 6 inch

Copper Fire Box and Brass Tubes

Working Pressure: 140 lbs per sq inch

Capacity of Tanks: 640 gallons

Weight Empty: 18 tons

Weight Loaded: 22 tons

Some of these details are at variance with figures given in published articles.

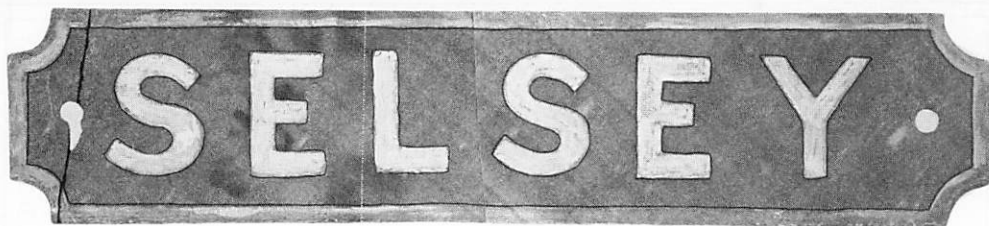
In 1908, the locomotive was returned to the maker and partially rebuilt. A new copper firebox and tube plate was fitted; the back of the cab was altered; the side tanks were shortened* (this would have led to a reduction in capacity though 400 gallons was given in an article published in 1897!) and the weight was quoted as being 15 tons empty and 18 tons loaded. The locomotive kept its blue livery but seems to have acquired a new works plate.

In the early years, the locomotive name was painted on the side tanks and it is recorded that it was not until about 1920 that the cast iron plates were acquired.

Unfortunately, the Selsey locomotive register did not survive at Salford Terrace, so little further information is available concerning "Selsey's" later life.

A report on the Selsey Tramway written in 1934 has the stark entry 'beyond repair', following so it is said, a burst boiler. In 1936, following the auction sale at Selsey Town, "Selsey" was broken up for scrap.

** an alternative version is that the side tanks were fitted further back extending into the cab.*



nameplate? Frank managed to find a screwdriver and after unsuccessfully trying to dislodge "Morous" from its engine, he turned his attention to "Selsey". The right hand nameplate was secured to the side tank by two large screws. The right hand screw was removed quite easily but the left hand one was badly corroded. As he attempted to lever the plate away from the tank, the left hand end snapped off across the screw hole. Having won his trophy, but feeling a little nervous, Frank hid the nameplate at home in his loft—and it remained hidden away for virtually the next 55 years!

Recently, thanks to the good offices of Dick (R.C.) Riley, Frank Kellond-Jones has presented the "Selsey" nameplate to the railway's Museum & Archive section, along with Selsey timetable posters for 1926 and 1934 and an album of

photographs taken by himself on the Stephens' lines.

The nameplate is cast iron and measures 24 inches by 5 1/4 inches. It is a rather rough casting with uneven letters and a small section is missing at the point of the break. Careful cleaning away of the years of grime has revealed that the lettering and border was originally painted chrome yellow and the background is black.

The break has been repaired with superglue but, as the nameplate is in otherwise excellent condition, the old paint will be left just as it is and the position of the break will be left obvious as that is now part of its history. It is hoped to have "Selsey" mounted and on display in the Museum in the near future.

John Miller
Archivist

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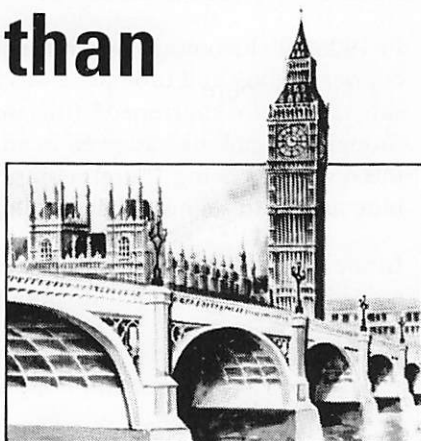
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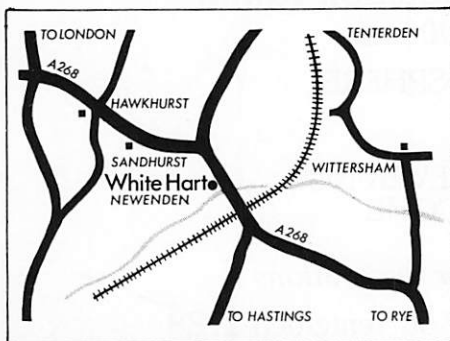
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