

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 58

Summer 1992



Journal of the Tenterden Railway Company Limited
Proprietor of the Kent & East Sussex Railway

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered charity 262481

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Bodiam Castle

A National Trust Property



The Castle is open every day from April till October, but weekdays only November to March, between 10.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. or sundown if earlier. Closed over Christmas. Built in 1385 as a defence against the French, it still have a magical effect on every visitor. It is possible to climb the circular stairs to the top of some of the towers and battlements, and to enjoy far reaching views. Shop and restaurant/tea room in car park.

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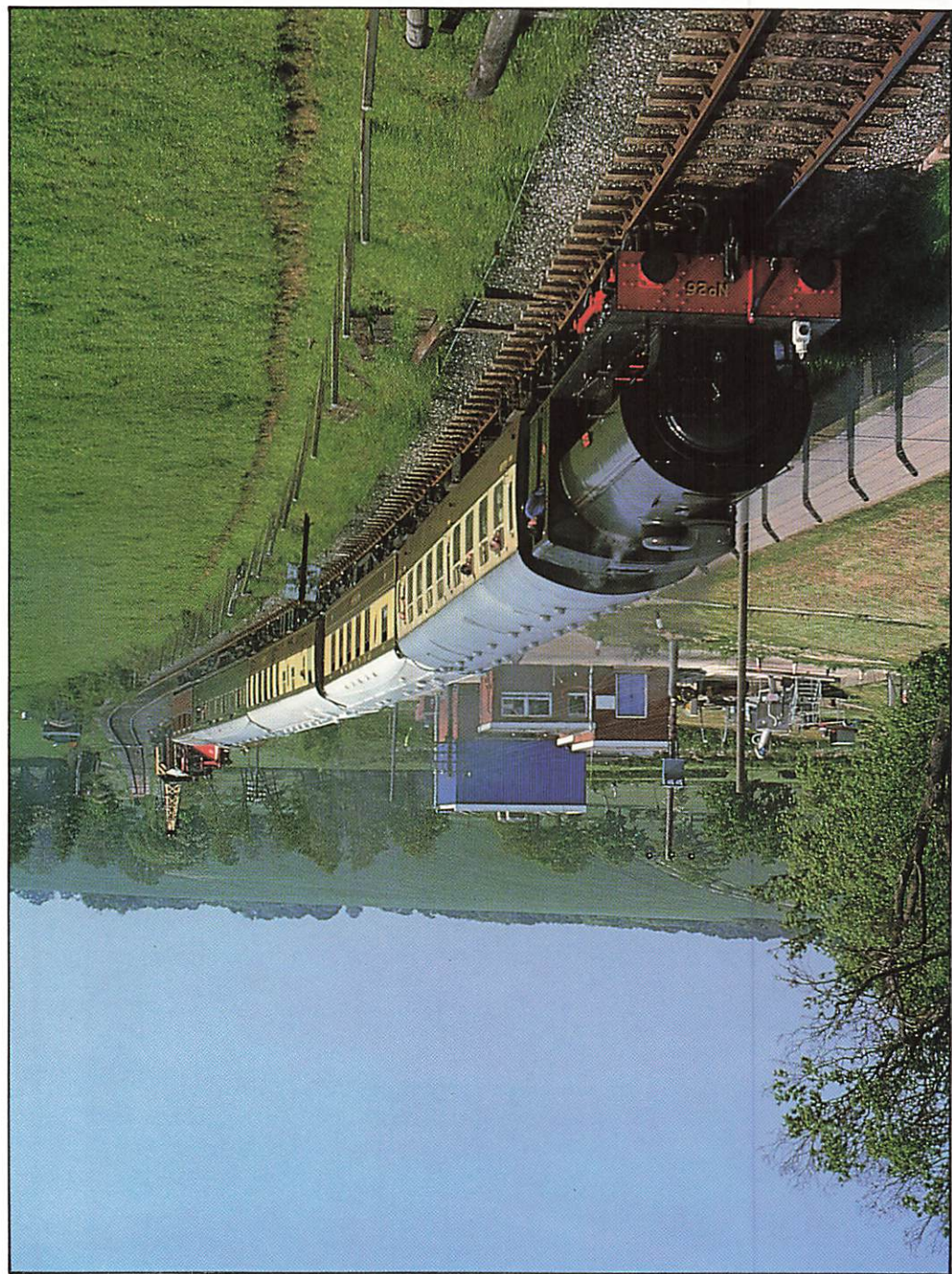
Great Dixter



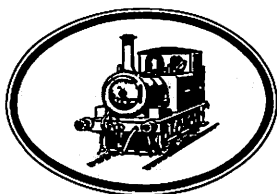
OPENING TIMES House and Gardens open Tuesdays to Sundays inclusive and Bank Holiday Mondays from 1 April to 11 October and 17/18 and 24/25 October. Open 2.00 p.m. Last admission 5.00 pm. (Garden open from 11.00 on 23, 24, 25 May, Sundays in July and August and 31 August.

The 500 year old manor hall is open together with the gardens, well known for a wide variety of plants. 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/Frontispiece

"P" class 1556 approaches Cranbrook Road hauling a Tenterden Train, with two Maunsell coaches, on a winter Sunday service in December 1991.

Austerity No. 26 "Linda" drifts into Robenden with an afternoon train for Tenterden, May 1990.

(Donald H. Wilson)

Editorial

More contributions please!

At the time of writing in late May, 1992 seems to have been an uneventful, even a dull and boring year on the Railway so far. With the two major annual events planned for mid-summer or early autumn, the spring has seen little to report on, or new topics to photograph. Plans for the extension to Bodiam and beyond are still at a formative stage. Visiting locomotives are planned, but nothing is here yet . . . The lack of news is reflected in these pages with some departments apparently having little or nothing to say at all. More contributions are needed - articles on topics that have not been covered before, which can be used when times are quiet. Armchair members - can you rise to the challenge? Departmental Managers, are you still there?

* * *

Heard on the footplate the other day: "The Tenterden Tatler appears to be strangled by the desire of its editorial staff to be uncontroversial."

Dear me - what about locomen in cloth caps and stationmasters in top hats?

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From the Chairman

Since my last report, the Board reorganisation announced in the last issue is in progress and a full report will be made in the Autumn issue after further possible changes following the AGM. I feel that the Board will then be in a much stronger position to deal with the problems of the Railway in the future.

The changing environment combined with the recession is proving to be very challenging for the Kent & East Sussex, and I am concerned that none of our Directors, Management and working staff should be found wanting in the tasks that they have undertaken for the Railway.

Our plans for the future now take into account objectives for up to seven years ahead, both in terms of sensitive improvements to the sites and ease of operation.

In my view, it is only a matter of time before we see failures in the Railway Preservation movement of ill-disciplined and financially poorly structured operators. As for this Railway, we intend to remain in business.

No reports have been received this time from the following departments: Operating, Commercial, Shop, Forestry, Robertsbridge project.

Secretary's Report

It is clear from the Railway Press that others beside ourselves in the Preservation movement have felt the strains of the severe recession which at present afflicts the country. Your Board will continue to take such steps as are necessary to maintain the sensible governance of the Railway.

Your Board of Directors has remained steadfast in not rushing headlong into impossible situations. Board deliberations over Operation "Final Push" to Bodiam have determined that it will in fact never be allowed to become a final "push over", which could endanger, if not sink the K&ESR. When the result of the feasibility study is published, members will be able to judge for themselves whether Robin Dyce and his associates are talking sense about the way

to get to Bodiam. Having said that, a provisional timetable towards the fulfilment of the project has been written, costings are being looked at. Relationships with those engaged on the Bodiam to Robertsbridge section are being carefully strengthened: clearly there must be a dovetailing of the plans for constructing both sections of the extension to agreed standards. In this connection, the Board reiterates that we are engaged in the business of ONE railway. The Chairman of Rother Valley Railway (East Sussex) Ltd., Mark Toynbee, has in fact himself also been at pains to emphasise that fact. It will be remembered that Mark Toynbee, Robin Dyce and Paul Wilson serve on both Boards.

The Board recently devoted a whole day to the business of Extension and Expansion. In spite of what is written in the first paragraph above, and the cautious note with which the second paragraph opens, the day was one of positive and meticulous planning towards the year 2000: and this planning HAS to include attention to all the sites and activities on the railway as it is currently operating.

Personnel Changes

Ken Lee has stood down as Commercial Activities Director, including management of the Station Buffet, after more than 9 years of loyal service. Both Ken and former Finance Director David Felton were presented with free life passes by the Chairman in acknowledgement of their contributions to the Railway.

Paul Ramsden has resigned from the Board but will remain as Manager of Carriage & Wagon department.

Richard Osborn was co-opted to the Board during the year and received confirmation of his appointment at the AGM on 30th May 1992, with 149 votes. David Hazeldine was also elected to the Board (149 votes), and the following Directors re-elected: David Stratton (183 votes), Andrew Webb (177 votes), Mark Toynbee (157 votes). A total of 192 members voted, 114 by proxy. Under the rules of the Company, any member standing for election to the Board must obtain a minimum of 50% of the votes cast - 96 votes on this occasion - in order to confirm his or her election.

Locomotives

The position at 14th May 1992 was as follows: No. 3 (Bodiam). Awaiting general overhaul and



No. 27 "Rolvenden" out stationed at Tenterden, undergoing repainting in blue livery, 11th May 1992.

(John Liddell)

a new boiler. Money will be allocated to this project to coincide with the reopening of the Railway to Bodiam.

No. 8 (Knowle). No change from our last report in November 1991.

No. 10 (Sutton). Available for service, but now showing signs of being in need of heavy overhaul.

No. 11 (1556). Available for service. This locomotive was due to visit Ashford at the end of May in connection with the 150th Anniversary Commemorative services and to Chart Leacon works the following week.

No. 12 (Marcia). No change from our last report in November 1991.

No. 14 (Charwelton). Available for service.

No. 19 (Norwegian). See separate report on the Norwegian Locomotive Trust.

No. 21 (Wainwright). Materials ordered are arriving steadily from the manufacturers. The principal task at the moment is to alter the main steam pipes to fit the boiler in No. 22. No. 22 (Maunsell). The wheels will be returned for this locomotive in early June; the springs are away for setting up and any repairs required.

No. 23 (Holman F. Stephens). This locomotive has just received a boiler washout.

No. 24 (William H. Austen). Currently out of service for attention to the regulator valve, which has been blowing through for some time.

No. 26 (Linda). Available for service.

No. 27 (Rolvenden). Being painted at Tenterden by a team led by John Liddell.

Diesel Locomotives

No. 40 (Ford). Awaiting both staff and finance for the completion of repairs.

No. 41 (Ruston). In service.

No. 42. Repairs pending include the fitting of intermediate wheels and re-conditioning of axle boxes.

No. 43 (Titan). In service.

No. 46 (BR Class 03). Currently undergoing a re-paint before return to service.

No. 47. Awaiting overhaul.

No. 48. This locomotive is scheduled to enter Rolvenden works when No. 46 departs.

No. 49. In service.

Cranes

No. 133 (DS451). Still out of use pending boiler repairs.

No. 145 (DS17700). The Grafton crane has received its annual rope and equipment

inspection; repairs are required, the main one being that the safe load equipment should be put in working order. A coat of high visibility yellow paint has recently been applied. No. 151 (815). The 36-ton breakdown crane has also undergone its annual rope and equipment inspection by the Insurance surveyor and a certain amount of work has been earmarked by the Inspector for attention. Smith 5-ton crane (un-numbered). This diesel crane has been inspected and a number of repairs have been earmarked by the Insurance Inspector including a load test to calibrate the new jib.

GWR Railcar Project

Since the last report in the *Terrier*, the efforts of the project team have been divided between preparatory work on No. 20, in anticipation of her eventual move to St. Leonards Depot, and the continuation of the restoration process. In the case of the latter area, progress has been made with repairs to the framework, with No. 20 gaining a new set of doorposts for the right-hand passenger doorway from Steve Beasall's skilled hands, while in the case of the metal-work, Len Ellis has fitted a new splash-shield under the horn compressor housing. In preparation for the manufacture of new panels for the vehicle, measurements have been taken of existing panels, or the relevant areas where the panels no longer exist. Also being undertaken, is an assessment of the vehicle's electrical system, in preparation for its eventual rewiring. It is also pleasing to report that the team now have access to a supply of compressed air, a facility which can enable the needlegunning of the steel framework to take place where required.

Norwegian Locomotive Trust

The Annual General Meeting of the Trust was held at Tenterden on 25th January 1992, with 14 members present. It was noted that no expenditure on restoration has apparently been incurred during 1990/91; several people had written recently to express interest in joining and so far 185 units of £100 each had been subscribed. After allowing for existing commitments, a sum of £3,000 was available for the further costs of restoration. Easter 1993 is now regarded as a realistic date for running trials, with the locomotive entering service during the summer. An inaugural train for members of the Trust, hauled by No. 19, is planned for July 1993, subject to confirmation from the Manager at Rolvenden locomotive depot that this will be possible. The considerable contribution made by Adrian Landi in terms of time and effort to the project was noted and it was agreed to send

him a letter of thanks. The Chairman, David Stratton, remarked that it was believed that other locomotives of the Class 21C, to which No. 19 belongs, are extant in Norway, and may be available for spares. Detailed work completed recently includes lifting of the boiler on 2nd May in order to complete work on the ashpan and to facilitate other small jobs. It was intended to reunite boiler and frames (for the last time!) at the end of May. New mountings for the gauge frames have been made and the overhaul of the air pump is nearly complete. An informal meeting of Trust members is planned for Saturday 25th July 1992 at Rolvenden to review progress.

Carriage and Wagon

Coaching Stock

SR BFO 4432. Due to the cold weather in February the painting of the bodyside was delayed for several weeks and problems were encountered with the primer paint failing to adhere to the bodyside steel sheeting. In order to complete the job on time, electric heaters were hired to heat the area around the coach which enabled the paint and lettering to be successfully applied. Following varnishing of the body and minor repairs and painting of the roof it returned to traffic during March.

Pullman Barbara. Entered the workshop during March and received light repairs and repainting of the roof and revarnishing of the body. Several modifications were carried out to the interior to upgrade the car for Wealden Pullman service. The kitchen has been fitted with a new floor covering and the cooking equipment repositioned to provide an open layout. The bar has been shortened by one window bay and the loose armchairs and tables replaced by bench seats along each side of the saloon. This work has been carried out by contractors. A new gas water heater and associated plumbing has been fitted to the bar storeroom to provide washing up facilities, and a new carpet fitted throughout. Steam heat repairs were carried out to the interior radiators and involved replacing some of the original feed pipes which had rusted through and leaked into the saloon. Maintenance repairs were carried out on the running gear and a new set of reconditioned batteries was fitted to improve the performance of the lights and other electrical equipment. This vehicle returned to traffic in late March.

BSO 4443. Entered the workshop in early April for upgrading work associated with running the coach on the Wealden Pullman. The body received minor repairs and a full revarnish, the roof receiving a repaint.

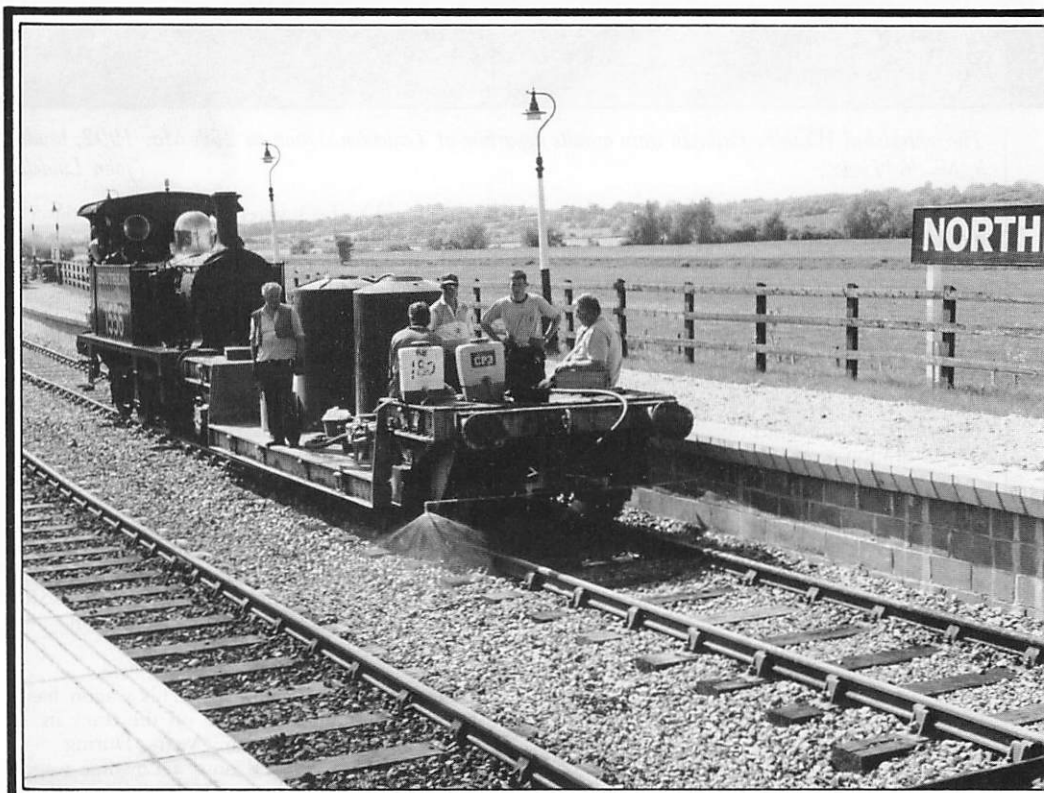
Internally, new wiring and sockets have been fitted for table lamps, and carpet laid in the centre gangway aisle. A new set of tables has been made and installed by full-time carriage restorer Maurice Dallen. This vehicle returned to traffic during Easter.

PMV 1808. Wealden Pullman Supply Van. This vehicle entered the workshop during March for modifications associated with upgrading the Wealden Pullman services. One end of the van, which was formerly the mess room, has been converted into a washing up area and fitted with sinks and drainers. A water tank has been fitted into the roof area and supplies the sinks by gravity feed. Filling of the tank is by external pipes fitted at the vehicle end which run to a filler mounted on the roof. Other interior work has involved fitting two fridges and repositioning storage cabinets. An additional gas bottle cabinet has been fitted to the underframe and preparations made for fitting battery storage cabinets, although this work and that of modifying the gangway have had to be postponed until a

later date. This vehicle entered traffic on Saturday 25th April 1992.

LNWR six wheel saloon. Due to shortage of staff to undertake the modifications on this vehicle it returned to traffic during March. However, it returned to the workshop on 25th April 1992 with a broken door droplight glass which necessitated the removal of the entire door to gain access to the droplight. While out of service awaiting the delivery of toughened glass the opportunity was taken to modify the brake rigging to improve the braking performance of this coach. It returned to traffic on 17th May 1992.

Pullman Theodora. This vehicle entered the workshop on Easter Sunday 19th April, for the fitting of a new roof canvas as the original was expired and damaged allowing water to penetrate into the interior. Following a thorough inspection it was decided to fully repair the body exterior to make it watertight and prevent further damage. All the upper cream panels, which are life expired, have been



The weed killing train in action on 19th May 1992.

(John Liddell)



The refurbished Wealden Pullman train awaits departure at Tenterden station on 25th May 1992, headed by No. 26 "Linda".
(John Liddell)

removed exposing the body framing which requires some areas to be replaced due to dry rot. Other areas to be repaired are window frames, body end vestibule pillars and the top fascia panel and associated mouldings. It is intended to paint in Pullman livery and exhibit the vehicle for raising funds for the restoration of the interior. Work on the interior and the overhaul of the bogies and brakes will not start until sufficient funds are available to complete the restoration work.

Wagon Fleet

SR 5 plank wagon 5916. Returned to traffic during March following overhaul and repairs to the body. It has been painted in the private owner livery of Nathaniel Pegg coal merchant, and carries the fleet number 155. Colours are mail red body with black ironwork. This wagon has been fitted with interior handrails and steps to enable easier access for Permanent Way department staff who will be using it for storage of track fittings.

LMS Banana Van No. 107. This wagon has been stored at Northiam for many years awaiting restoration. Unfortunately the body

was found to be severely rotten due to the cork insulation absorbing water over the years and an inspection revealed it to be beyond economic repair and restoration. During February it was moved to Wittersham where the body was set on fire and removed. The underframe, which is in good condition, has since been moved to Tenterden where it is intended to carry out modifications to enable a South Eastern Railway brake van body to be fitted. This body was rescued from a garden in Ashford last autumn and is featured in the last edition of the *Terrier*, centre page section, bottom right hand photograph. Details of its origins are being researched but it is believed to have been built at Ashford c1880 as a freight brake van. For service on the K&ESR it will be vacuum braked for working on vintage services.

Dropside Open Wagon 110. This wagon has been languishing out of use off the track in Wittersham Yard for many years. During February it was craned onto a Lowmac wagon and moved to Tenterden. Unfortunately, the wooden underframe is in very poor condition with many sections missing or damaged and to

restore this wagon would require a complete new wooden underframe to be built. Therefore, it has been decided to scrap this wagon and to recover components for maintaining other wagons and completing the restoration of sister wagon No. 111 which is a static exhibit in Tenterden Yard.

LMS Covered Van No. 138. Since arrival at Wittersham in September 1983 this wagon has stood off the track awaiting siding space. During February it was finally craned onto K&ESR metals and will be moved to Tenterden during the summer for repairs and restoration. It will be used as a stores van for the C&W Department.

Recent Departures

The following wagons were identified as surplus to requirements and during January they were despatched to the Wealden Railway at Groombridge as part of an arrangement involving surplus railway equipment. Five wagons were involved:

LNER Goods brake van - K&ESR No. 119

BR 5 plank wagon - K&ESR No. 156

Flat wagons - K&ESR Nos. 113, 115, 116.

The brake van required extensive repairs to the bodywork and the fitting of weights to enable it to be used as an effective brake van on the K&ESR. In view of the amount of work required it was decided to concentrate efforts on the remaining four goods brakes in the fleet.

The BR 5 plank wagon had been used for a short time by the Permanent Way department but due to its large drop doors it was found unsuitable for most work. It also required renewal of most of the bodywork timber.

The three flat wagons, although being fully serviceable, were surplus to the requirements of the Permanent Way department as they now have the use of high capacity Lowmac and bogie bolster wagons.

Latest Arrivals

SR PMV No. 1213. Built Ashford 1936, converted to mess and tool van DS70006 in 1958. Purchased from Hoo Junction in North Kent. Arrived Wittersham 21st January 1992, K&ESR Fleet No. 92, to be used as Permanent Way dept. mess van.

SECR PMV No. 1972. Built Ashford 1919. Converted to stores van 082757 in 1967 and based at Guildford Cable depot. Purchased from Hoo Junction, arrived Wittersham 22nd January 1992, K&ESR Fleet No. 93, to be

used as C&W department stores van.

SR "Ironclad" Coach, SK, No. 748. Built Eastleigh 1924, converted in 1959 to DS229, Breakdown Train Tool Van, latterly based at Hither Green. Purchased from Hoo Junction primarily as a source of spares for bogies and running gear but will be used as workshop and stores for the C&W department at Tenterden. Arrived Wittersham 6th May 1992, K&ESR Fleet No. 94.

SR PMV No. 1240. Built Ashford 1936, converted in 1956 to mess and tool van DS154. The body is in poor condition but it was purchased for using the underframe on one of the LCDR carriage bodies acquired from Ashford in 1986. It was delivered to the Wealden Railway, Groombridge, during January for storage until restoration of the bodies commences. This vehicle also came from Hoo Junction.

Permanent Way

As the seasons change the department moves on to routine maintenance work. This involves the spot resleepering of the timbers on the non-standard SECR 91¼ lb. track and also general tamping of the line in readiness for the weekday services.

We then moved on to the construction of a new point for the crossover at Northiam. This has been preassembled at Wittersham Road and will be railed in when we are ready to install it.

In conjunction with this work we have upgraded the Bodiam end of the main line and loops which has consolidated after last year's work here.

Finally, if there is anyone who feels that the work in the department is too hard, but would still like to get involved, I am looking for people to patrol the line during the week. If you are interested in this, or general P.W. work, please feel free to contact Brian Muston at Tenterden.

Building

At last the laying of granite setts at Tenterden has been completed although there are still one or two small additional areas where the laying of setts may be carried out in the future. Once again our thanks go to Andy Fielder for carrying out the majority of this work.

At Wittersham the signal box has been treated with a waterproofing agent to try and stem the ingress of water through the walls. With the



Car "Barbara" with Pullman armchairs removed and replaced by bench-type seating. (Brian Stephenson)

additional electrical equipment being installed it is obviously imperative that it is kept as dry as possible.

A start has been made on the signal box at Northiam, at present it is at the planning stage but a physical start should be made in the summer.

Also at Northiam, Colin Edwards and Dave Green are building a brick face to the rear of the platform retaining wall. This will look more presentable than the existing concrete blocks.

Stations

The Exhibition Room at Tenterden has now received its awaited repaint, with the doors being painted to match the colour scheme of the station building. The exterior walls have been recoated with Cuprinol.

The static locomotive Rolvenden in the station yard has been repainted in an attractive blue by members of the Station team and the locomotive's owners. Lining and lettering has been carried out by Pete Salmon.

The "Gardening Team" continue to carry out great things with the flower beds and tubs, which are becoming quite a feature around the

station. Mention must also be made of the attractive hanging baskets replanted by Christine Meek, which promise a blaze of colour around the station for the summer months.

Signals and Telecommunications

The alterations and rewiring at Wittersham Road signal box, although planned to a tight schedule at the outset, were brought to the necessary state of completion to enable the signal box to be recommissioned at 2200 hrs on Thursday 16th April 1992, thus making it available for the operation of a peak three-train service over the Easter holiday. Because of the need for absolute integrity and safety of signalling equipment, it is necessary to allow ample time for testing and checking routines to be carried out, hence the apparent close timing of completion of the job.

Many minor tasks remain to be dealt with as time permits, but for the time being the efforts of the Department's relatively small number of staff are directed towards the installation of the seven lever ground frame to control the crossover points connection to the Permanent Way engineers sidings. Other planned tasks in the same area include minor repositioning of signals to take account of recent pointwork

renewal, and the fitting of track circuiting to upgrade security of operation in the area, which is not within immediate view of the signal box, particularly when train movements are in progress.

It has recently been stated that money for the initial construction work on Northiam signal box has been authorised, so the next notes will include a description of the plans for this new installation.

Fire, Health & Safety

Work progresses slowly as the members of the Department are also employed in other duties on the Railway.

The maintenance of the fire extinguishers has been carried out at all stations, with the exception of Tenterden and this should be completed shortly. An official visit by the Kent Fire Brigade highlighted one or two minor deficiencies which will be rectified. Water butts are to be topped up shortly and beaters will be replaced where necessary. This will be done on a weekday evening using a small freight train, comprising a brake van and the Esso tank wagon. The Department is still a little short on personnel. Anyone interested in the safety aspect in particular should contact Richard Osborn at Tenterden Station.

Catering including Pullman

Changes in the management of the Catering Department announced at the beginning of the year have now taken effect.

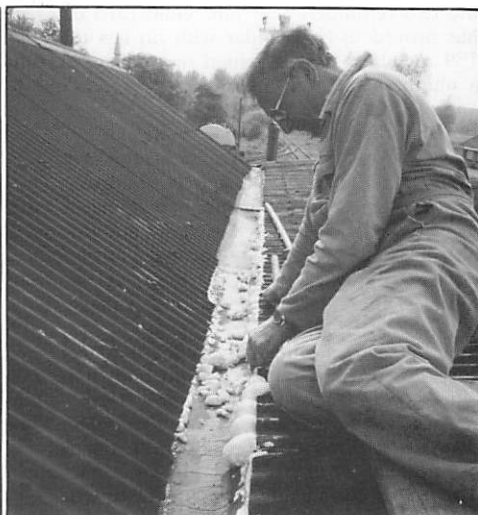
Some organisational problems need working out, but that is inevitable with such a challenge. The Sunday lunch service, Rother Valley Ltd., is also well taken up and the worst problems to tackle are the cleaning of the set and the loading of supplies which have to be done when the train is not in the platform.

Sunday afternoon teas are popular and we hope to start on-train catering in earnest from "Diana" on Saturdays in June and also for mid-week running, subject to sufficient help being available.

The Buffet still has problems of staffing and space, but the small variations in the menu together with the coffee machine in the mess room have received favourable comment from the volunteers.

We are looking forward to the Friends of Thomas event on 27/28 June when a special children's menu will be offered, echoing the theme of the outside entertainment. Plans for a repeat of the Good Old Days event in September are also well under way including a special lunch marquee as last year, with local wines available.

A visit by the Environmental Health Officer resulted in minor comments which can be easily rectified, but refrigeration and hand washing facilities need to be upgraded. He was complimentary to the effect that we maintain a good standard, and that there have been no



Bodiam, 26th April 1992. Ken Lee removes the sash window from the Parcels Office for refurbishment, and infills the corrugated iron roofing to prevent rainwater entering.

(John Miller)

complaints from the public at all.

The Wealden Pullman is now operating once again with 72 covers and despite a few early problems seems to be running quite well. The train now comprises BSO's 53 and 54; both vehicles have been revarnished and No. 54 has been fitted with new carpet to match the new one in "Barbara". Barbara's kitchen has also been totally refitted and the washing up area has been transferred to the PMV. The bar has been shortened to allow more space for customers on arrival and there has been a change in the seating and table arrangements. The train has recently been host to a wedding reception and several other functions. Staff are urgently required to man the trains and anyone interested should contact Stuart Phillips at Tenterden Station.

Membership

Membership applications at the time of writing (early May) total 106 for 1992, very disappointing when compared with 180 (1991) and 154 (1990).

It is difficult to see why new members should have dropped off so dramatically, especially, as in recent years, there was no closed-season for the winter months.

In view of the above, please will every member endeavour to recruit at least one new member during the remainder of the year.

Membership renewals are holding up well with about 280 Full members not yet responded to the two reminders sent out. Gold card category has proved to be popular with no less than 139 members having joined or transferred, plus a number of Family members.

Bodiam Station Project

Having dealt with the roof, and hopefully, stopped rain water leaking from the gully between the canopy and main building, a start has been made on the station rooms. Priority has been given to getting the old parcels office renovated and into use. The first task has been to assess the extent of decay and damage.

For the first time in many years, the steel covers have been removed from both parcels office windows, though these have been replaced while the sashes are under repair. The door to the forecourt has also been opened having been virtually nailed up for some time. There is a considerable amount of rotten timber, mainly due to lack of maintenance but also because of the many nail and bolt holes resulting from past attempts to secure the

building. All the external mouldings will have to be replaced but the new timber will be to a replica profile of the old. The forecourt door frame and threshold is rotten and will be replaced - again to replica dimensions.

The parcels office floor is rotten inside the doors due to the penetration of rain water but there is no evidence of dry rot. It is hoped that much of the existing floor timber may be salvaged but a mystery remains. No allowance is evident for air circulation under the suspended floors unless this was intended to happen via the outer corrugated iron walls and the inner match-boarded walls.

All the old external paint is being burnt off as it is in such poor condition. In the process, we are trying to piece together the painting history of the building.

We know from conversations with the late W.H. Austen junior, and other sources, that following nationalisation in 1948, all the K&ESR stations were progressively repaired and repainted. At that time, the stations had not been painted since the 1930s and BR used stocks of dark green and cream paint from Ashford to replace the old K&ESR stations livery.

Photographic evidence suggests Bodiam station was repainted about 1938 when the outside corrugated iron walls were painted in a dark biscuit colour rather than the previous cream. The BR painting at Bodiam probably took place in 1949 and the wartime white bands around the canopy supports were perpetuated. Previously, the windows were painted totally in the purple-brown colour but BR introduced white sashes with the green frames. Unfortunately, the BR contractors did a thorough job and burnt off all the old outside paint, so evidence of previous painting is difficult to find - they also badly scorched the woodwork.

For some strange reason, BR seemed to have repainted Bodiam in 1959, this time in a lighter shade of green, some five years after the passenger service had ceased. Photographs taken in October 1958 show the station building looking very shabby but a year later the station looks quite smart and the white bands around the canopy support have gone.

From about 1964, the station building was rented by the K&ESR Preservation Society. Their tenancy was terminated in July 1969 when the building became a site office for the South Eastern Gas Board which was laying

pipelines for North Sea gas in the area. The Gas Board had finished its activities by the autumn of 1970 and the K&ESR Association resumed its tenancy from that December. Although some repairs may have been carried out, there is no evidence of repainting from 1964 until 1972 (and, incidentally, nearly all the glass would have been replaced in 1944 when a flying bomb fell just to the north of the station).

Then in 1972, the station was hired by London Weekend Television as the setting for a comedy series "The Train Now Standing". The station was transformed into the fictional BURBERRY HALT and in the process the corrugated iron and outside doors were painted dark brown and the windows and door frames cream. The inside walls were painted cream and other internal woodwork a very dark green. The remains of this scenery paint is still clouding the issue in our searches for the original colours.

The station was next repainted in 1975 when a version of the current maroon and cream livery was applied. From this time, Bodiam saw occasional use for events at bank holidays, culminating in the "Steam at Bodiam" days which lasted until 1982. During this period the original ticket office counter was removed to make way for sink, drainer, cooker, fridge and all the other paraphernalia associated with "events".

No serious attempts have as yet been made to find evidence of the original interior colours - although they certainly were not maroon and cream. Recollections of the "old-timers" suggest brown and cream of a sort, but it would be nice to establish the true colours.

The hope remains that examples of original outside colours will be found under the eaves, missed by the BR painters and protected from the fading effects of the sun. If so, it should be possible to draw up a more accurate painting specification for the original livery.

The dates of future working parties appear in the *Rooter* newsletter.

Museum and Archives

Perhaps surprisingly, personal momentos of Colonel Stephens' life-time continue to surface. Since the last report, we have been given a copy of a textbook, "Exercises in Practical Chemistry", in which the 16 year old Stephens has written in typical schoolboy fashion, "H.F. Stephens 23-1-85". The book is still in good condition after 107 years.

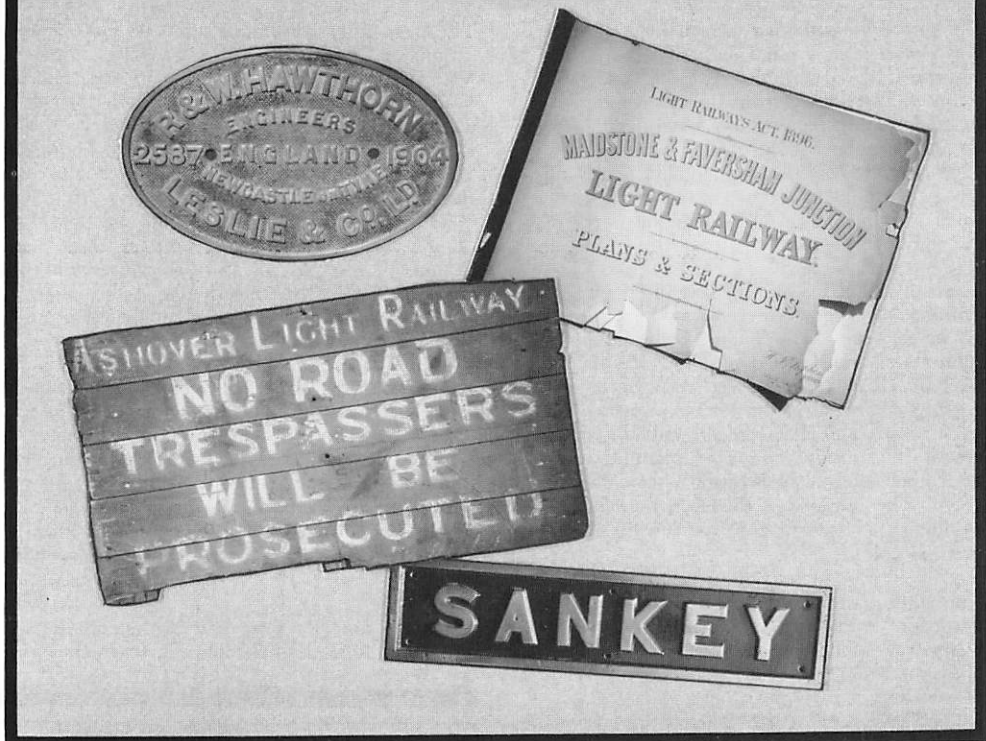
The most interesting acquisition we have made at auction is one of the maker's plates from K&ESR No. 4 "Hecate". This is in brass and is oval, measuring 12 inches by 8 inches. "Hecate" was delivered new to the Rother Valley Railway in 1904 and was sold to the Southern Railway in 1932. The engine survived into British Railways ownership becoming No. 30949 and was scrapped in 1950. An article on the various Hecates appeared in *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 12 and the photograph on page 25 of that issue clearly shows the maker's plate. The plate is on display in the museum.

We have had donated to us a number of Engineers Plans & Sections for proposed new lines, the most interesting of which are those for the Maidstone & Faversham Junction Light Railway. In 1899, Stephens was the Engineer for this abortive scheme which was fully written up by Tom Burnham in *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 37. The plans measure 30 inches by 22 inches and are badly torn but not beyond repair.

For some time we have had in the museum a 17 gallon cone shaped milk churn which was



Installing the new point at the Rolvenden end of Wittersham Road.
(Maureen Moore)



Museum additions.

(John Miller)

bought in a local sale. This had a label "return empty to Quanton Road". However, on a recent visit to the railway collection of The Hon. Sir William McAlpine, it was noticed that he had a similar churn but for return to Bodiam. We are grateful to Sir William for agreeing to "swop" and we now have the Co-operative Wholesale Society milk churn with the label

C.G. BOWERMAN
S.R.
EMPTY BODIAM

Incidentally, we have a rather battered 17 gallon churn for the Express Dairy, Tulse Hill, which has the label

E. BARTON BATES
NORTHIAM

and we have another label

B. RUSSELL
EMPTY K.&E.S.R.
NORTHIAM STATION

In this case, the dairy is unknown to us.

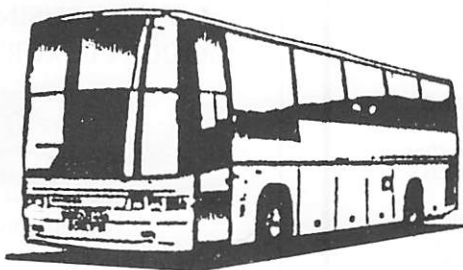
We would be interested to hear from anyone who can tell us more about messrs. Bowerman, Barton Bates and Russell, farmers in the Northiam and Bodiam localities.

Another successful auction bid resulted in the acquisition of a wooden notice board from the Ashover Light Railway. This is thought to have been situated at the entrance to the light railway station at Clay Cross. The notice is made up of five planks battened together and measures 30 inches by 17 inches overall. There is some deterioration in one corner which will require conservation work, otherwise the notice is in reasonably good condition.

For general reference purposes, we have obtained three "Bradshaw Railway Shareholders' Guide & Directory" for the years 1900, 1915 and 1923. Also, a large folding map of the UK which shows all the pre-grouping railway companies before 1923, including proposed extensions to some of the Stephens' lines.

Lastly, we are grateful to have on loan a nameplate from "SANKEY", a small 0-4-0ST engine built by Manning, Wardle & Co. in 1888, works number 1088. This engine worked the upper section of the short-lived Edge Hill Light Railway, from 1922 to 1925, and was finally scrapped in 1946. The nameplate is brass and measures 22 inches by 5¼ inches. It is on display in the museum.

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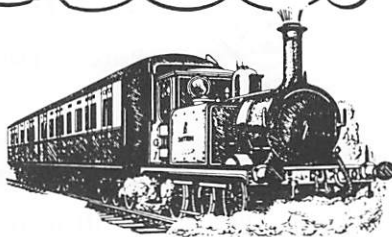
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Goodbye 1991!

A year when we faced up to the recession. Philip Shaw reviews the Company's income and expenditure account for 1991.

Following the excellent performance achieved in 1990, 1991 was the year when the recession really began to bite. Total income fell from £585,883 to £579,954, whilst expenses were up from £488,541 to £562,856. Interest payable was slightly down at £36,096, but overall there was a deficit for the year of £18,998 compared with a surplus of £57,178 in 1990. In consequence, it was necessary to make redundant two paid members of staff - Paul Hatcher and Mike Barnes-Murfin - to take into account the constraints of the current economic climate.

On the income side, fares and charter receipts, by far our largest source of revenue, were down from £232,596 to £226,614 and buffet takings dropped from £54,526 to £48,276. There were also significant falls in filming receipts and sundry donations. By way of contrast Santa Special receipts achieved a noticeable rise from £70,458 to £86,914, and membership subscriptions were up from £14,036 to £18,135. Most of our other activities - Bookshop, Wealden Pullman, etc., produced results fairly close to the previous year.

Despite the generally less favourable figures, the net contribution made by these activities to the overall viability of the Railway should not be under-estimated. After deducting attributable expenses the surpluses were substantial and a credit to the volunteer managers and helpers who keep these departments running throughout the year:-

Santa Specials	£61,926 net surplus
Bookshop	£35,879
Wealden Pullman	£34,229
Buffet	£24,817

Higher operating expenses reflected the fact that certain work programmes which had been budgeted prior to 1991 were allowed to continue; permanent way was up from £13,942 to £54,776, but repair and maintenance of locomotives fell from £74,935 to £65,734. These items are always subject to fluctuation from year to year, dependant on the number of major projects undertaken. With the exception of wages, up from £66,808 to £90,213, other operating expenses were contained at levels close to the previous year. Indeed rolling stock repairs were down from £23,354 to £15,482. Total administration expenses, telephone, printing, accountancy, magazine, etc., were up from £27,901 to £33,875. Although magazine expenses appear to have doubled from £7,538 to £15,433, this reflects mainly a change in the accounting allocation of postage and other items.

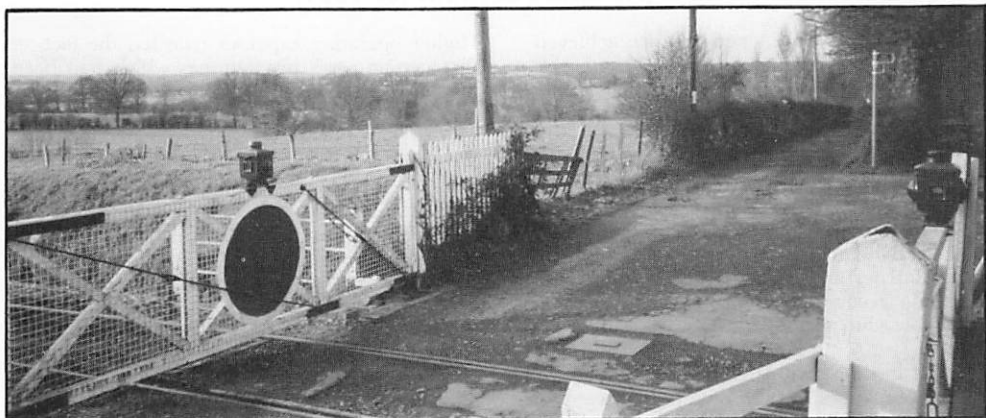
In an organisation such as ours, whilst we strive to make a surplus of income over expenditure, fairly substantial fluctuations from year to year are to be expected, given the discretionary nature of many of our expenditure items, which are carried out when time and money permit. As a registered charity without shareholders, our objective is to re-invest all income generated from running the Railway into the preservation and enhancement of the assets themselves. In this way we not only provide leisure facilities for our members but a service to the community - particularly to tourism in this part of Kent, carrying, as we do, some 75,000 passengers every year.

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited Income and Expenditure for the Year Ended 31st December 1991

			1990
Gross income		579,954	585,883
Operating expenses	517,183	449,735	
Administration expenses	33,875	27,901	
Depreciation and loss on disposal	11,798	10,905	
		562,856	488,541
Operating surplus		17,098	97,342
Interest payable and similar charges		36,096	40,164
(Deficit)/surplus of income over expenditure for year		£(18,998)	£57,178

Planning Matters

The threat to the environment at Tenterden Station site has receded.



Saved! The view from the level crossing over green pasture where plans for a hotel have been thwarted.

(John Miller)

Members will be relieved to know that the Planning Sub-Committee of Ashford Borough Council has refused permission for the erection of a 25-bedroom hotel on land at Pittlesden Manor Farm adjacent to Tenterden Station. The threat to the lineside landscape and indeed the viability of the Railway itself set out in the Spring 1992 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* has therefore receded, but we must remain watchful. The applicant could appeal directly to the Secretary of State to overturn the ruling of the Council or he could submit further applications for the development of the land in question. Indeed, in 1985 he submitted an application for housing on the site, which was also refused by Ashford Borough Council. If this were ever to be conceded, other landowners would undoubtedly follow suit and before long the landscape between Cranbrook Road and Tenterden would be marred for ever by speculative development, and our visitor numbers would begin to dwindle.

In support of our objectives, Major Peter Olver, Assistant Chief Inspector of Railways, stated that the level crossing at Tenterden Station is a private one, technically known as an occupation level crossing. This means that the only persons authorised to use it are the Tenterden Railway Company and their invitees, mainly visitors to the Railway who wish to park their cars, the inhabitants of Pittlesden Manor Farm and their invitees, and farm traffic wishing to go to and from the fields to the north of the level crossing.

In his report, the Planning Officer made reference to the policies concerning tourism set out in the Tenterden Local Structure Plan. The plan recognises that the Kent & East Sussex Railway is a major tourist attraction and the Borough Council supports its continued development. The report went on to say . . . "It is clear that the building would have a significant impact on the landscape. This is a landscape which is appreciated by a substantial number of people either viewing the site from a distance or travelling on the Kent & East Sussex Railway." In recommending refusal of the application the Planning Officer concluded "The proposal does not comply with policy TE33 of the Tenterden Local Plan in that it proposes a development which is not acceptable in terms of its relationship to the adjoining uses nor is it acceptable in terms of its effect upon the character of the immediate area as the building would be a significant intrusion into the High Weald Area of outstanding natural beauty and such prominence would severely interfere with the enjoyment of the public of the approach to Tenterden Station and their enjoyment of views out across the High Weald landscape."

It is here that the matter rests at the moment, but the Company will respond both vigorously and decisively to protect the interests both of its members and of the 75,000 visitors who come to Tenterden each year to ride on the Railway and appreciate its scenic delights.

David Stratton

All the Colours of the Rainbow

Nick Pallant reflects on a K&ESR dispute that got rather out of proportion during the early preservation years . . .

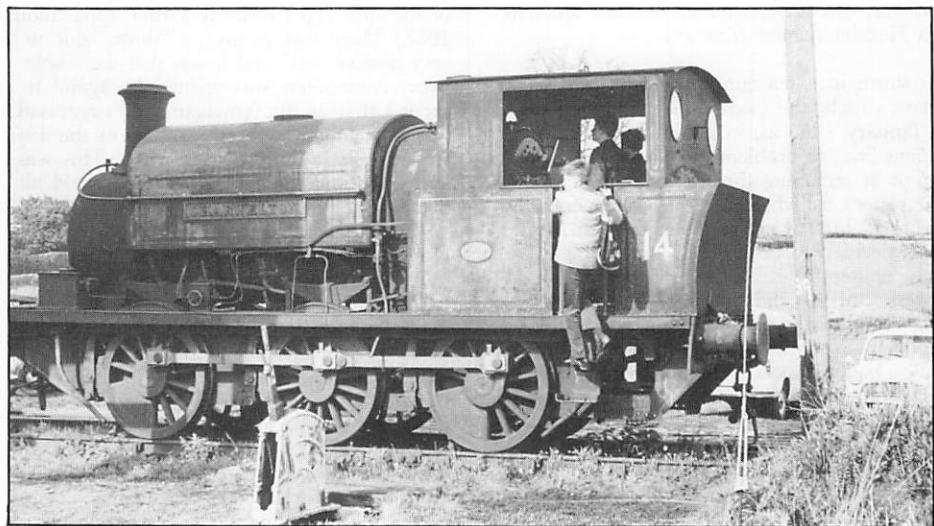
The first locomotive to be restored under preservation on the Kent & East Sussex Railway was the Manning Wardle-Sentinel hybrid 0-4-0T *Gervase*. This curious but charming locomotive arrived on the line in June 1962 and, after heroic efforts led by Derek Dunlavey and Dick Beckett, was brought back to steampable condition within 12 months. A minor, but immediately noticeable, aspect of this task was the application of a coat of Oxford blue paint lined out and lettered in Colonel Stephens style to replace the shabby green in which *Gervase* had arrived.

Blue was, of course, specifically associated with the Stephens era on the K&ESR, whilst during the period of W.H. Austen's management variations on the theme of green had been favoured. This made the choice of blue a little surprising as (and this is a very subjective impression) the early preservationists took the datum line of their interest from the work of H.C. Casserley, R.W. Kidner and the rest who had discovered and photographed the K&ESR in the 1930s. (The focus on the Stephens era, partly from commercial necessity, is of more recent origin.) I have yet to find proof of this, but I suspect blue commended itself by

immediately distinguishing the K&ESR from the then still predominantly green Southern Region.

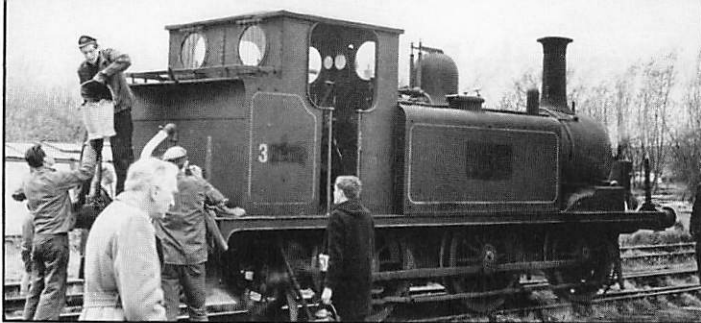
In July 1963, No. 12 *Marcia* arrived and in the fullness of time she also began to look very smart in Oxford blue. By the end of the following year the railway's locomotive fleet included, amongst others, the Terriers *Bodiam* and *Sutton* (the latter owned by the London Borough of the same name) and No. 14 *Charwelton*. Now, around this time the K&ESR had just a few problems (little things, like finding the money to buy the line). But whilst this was going on the correspondence column of the Society's journal included the following gems of what Private Eye might call "Tufton Bufton" style.

"It is with some concern that I have heard rumours regarding the painting of our locomotive stock. Nos. 10 and 12 are, as we already know, in the old K&ESR blue and the restoration of No. 15 has already been commenced in this colour. It seems, however, that this is where any standardisation may possibly end if some current thought is pursued. Rumour hath it that No. 3 is to be



Charwelton in old green livery, Easter 1966.

(Patrick Naimie)



No. 3 "Bodiam" in B.R. livery, with part of the insignia painted out. Easter 1966.

(Patrick Nairne)

green, and that No. 14 is to be lined out like a traction engine once again, in the mud colour in which she appears at present. If the "Terrier" Sutton is restored to full Stroudley livery, as I suppose she must, we shall then have most of the colours of the rainbow represented in our motive power, with Dom still unaccounted for - perhaps she will be pink."

and

"It seems to me that the object of a railway, like the uniform for an army, is to provide a ready means whereby individual units may be recognised, as well as an attractive and unifying feature of the line. Pride in the "colours" is an old and well tried point of loyalty. Surely then it is desirable that K&ESR stock should stay in its distinctive livery, rather than be decked out in coats of many colours. Sir, this is a railway not a travelling circus."

(Dom was, of course, another Sentinel and No. 15 a Hunslet named Hastings.)

This storm in a tea cup (or a paint pot) seems to have caught the Committee's attention on 3rd January 1965 as, in addition to the ongoing finance problem (including the first attempt at obtaining the sort of mortgage arrangement by which the line was eventually purchased) time was also given over to liveries. It was decided to do little at that moment, except obliterate all BR insignia on the Terriers. But this did not stop the subject being raised again on 24th January. At this Committee meeting a referendum was agreed to. The ballot papers sent out to members on 11th February, referred only to locomotives, and gave a choice between blue, green and a "write-in" option. Coaches didn't come up because we only had the Woolwich coach and the Pullmans at the time and, if memory serves correctly, chocolate and cream looked the favourite by default because of its Colonel Stephens/Pullman/GWR (suitable for the railcar) ambiguities. On this occasion Oxford

blue won the day. There was, however, a problem. The locos were in various ownerships and not everyone agreed with the decision!

Despite this difference of opinion, things then seem to have got back into perspective, or at least became less prominent, until early 1966 and let's face it, it probably wouldn't have mattered much at that stage if everything had been painted in protective primer. But on 1st January the original Preservation Society had amalgamated with the group which had unsuccessfully tried to re-open the Westerham branch and become the Kent and East Sussex Railway Association.

One has to be a little careful here, as it is beyond dispute that one of the most useful contributions ex-Westerham members made to the K&ESR was in the field of publicity. (The PR Group did much to keep the project afloat during the "bad years" which followed the refusal of the first Light Railway Order application in 1967.) There was, as ever, a "down" side to this very positive "up" and it was that the whole livery controversy was opened up again! It was argued that as the (amalgamated) organisation was now much larger the results of the 1965 referendum should be overturned. This was agreed to and the ballot was to be held all over again.

Not only in hindsight, but in the opinion of some people at the time, this really was getting the cart before the horse. As early as February 1966 a paper had been presented to the Committee suggesting the following livery scheme:

Freight locos - Oxford blue
 Passenger locos - Wainwright green with simplified lining
 Coaches - Maunsell green with pale green lining
 GWR railcar - "Pre-war" K&ESR livery (ie. chocolate and cream)
 Goods brakes were to be maroon and other goods stock grey.

All this has a somewhat SE&CR (dare one say it, Westerham) undertone about it and was coupled with a suggestion that the line should be called the Rother Valley Railway on the grounds that it was a more snappy title. There were some raised eyebrows at the time and, although the title change still doesn't appeal much, the livery now sounds quite attractive!

Once more ballot papers were issued (printed on page three of the April *Farmers' Line*, the name of the Society's journal at the time) and by this stage the proposals had been modified to:

- 1 - Under which title should the railway re-open?
- 2 - Should the locomotives be Oxford blue, apple green or varying colours?
- 3 - Should the coaches be brown and cream, Southern green or varying colours?

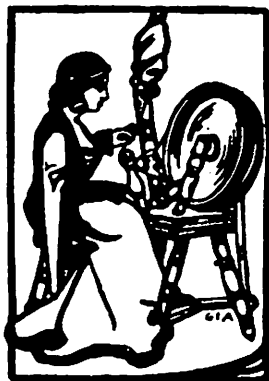
The decision, announced one month later, was to retain the title Kent and East Sussex Railway and, once more, to paint the locomotives blue and the carriages brown and cream. This was later changed again, by management decision, to apple green for the locos - and it was, after all, the historically correct livery for No. 3. (Come to think of it, BR had changed to rail blue by then!) Blue never completely went off the K&ESR agenda,

however. Both *Hastings* and *Charwellton* carried it until the beginning of the 1970's, and it has, of course, appeared more recently on No. 25 and on BTH diesel No. 40.

In any event, apple green locomotives hauling Great Western hued coaches re-opened the line, and this lasted for some years. Commercial pressures and fashions in railway preservation then led to the appearance of locos in the aforementioned blue as well as in apple green, Southern green, Army green, (blackberry?) black, red and Brighton umber. This is not to mention camouflage and in the case of *Charwellton* the "mud" colour favoured by her former industrial owners (or is it Brighton umber again?). Coaches have also appeared in a similarly wide range of liveries and although some people, including the writer, have a hankering for the circa 1974 livery, all this has appeared to be quite popular. Strangely enough the words "travelling circus" do not appear to have been heard!

* * *

The above article, although written for *The Tenterden Terrier*, is drawn from information researched for the proposed book *Holding the Line - Preserving the Kent and East Sussex Railway 1961-71*.



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Laying granite setts outside the carriage shed.

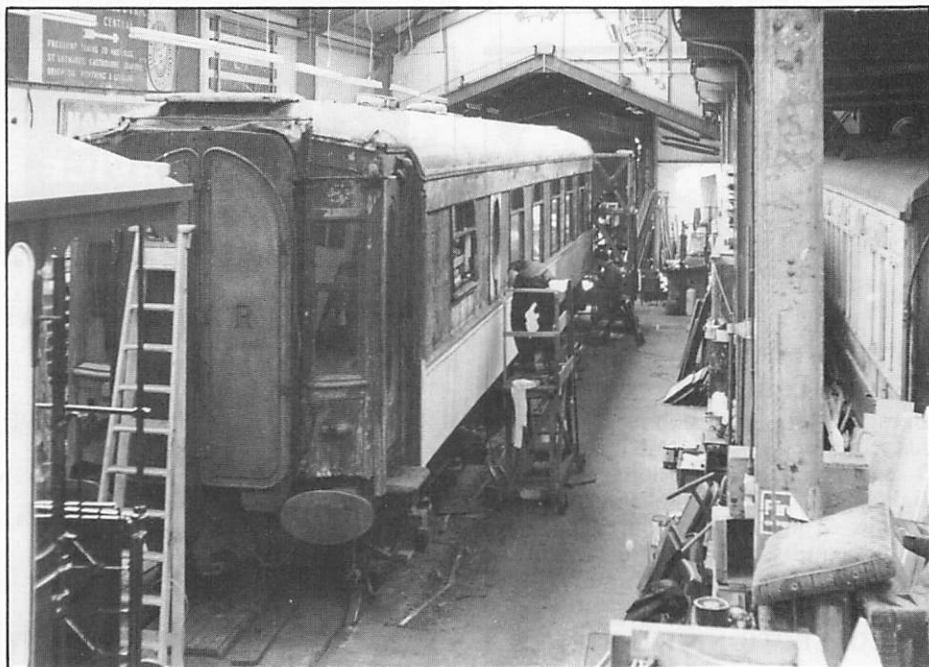


Track clearance at Robertsbridge looking towards Northbridge Street.



Photographed
by Brian
Stephenson
on 2nd May
1992

Class 03 diesel locomotive No. 46 awaits repainting.



Pullman car "Theodora" undergoing restoration.

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Rails to Sandwich Bay

The Sandwich Steam Tramway and the Guilford Tramway

Situated at the mouth of the River Stour, Sandwich was anciently an important harbour and a member of the Cinque Ports. Over the last six hundred years, however, silting of the river has left the town separated from the sea by two miles of sandy levels, while only small vessels are able to reach the quay under the historic barbican gate. In the late 19th century, maintenance of the Sandwich Haven was the responsibility of the Town Council, which owned a steam tug to assist shipping. Traffic included a twice-weekly service of sailing hoys to London (operated by the Sandwich Hoy Co., an offshoot of the East Kent Brewery) and the landing of coal (6,697 tons were discharged in 1894 and 7,640 tons in 1895), and sailing barges were built, often for Sandwich owners.

Sandwich had obtained a railway station, on the Minster to Deal branch of the South Eastern Railway, as early as 1847, and in 1895 there were ten or eleven trains from Charing Cross on weekdays, the fastest taking 2 hours 23 minutes and the slowest 4 hours. However, it escaped the development that turned its brasher neighbours of Ramsgate and Deal into thriving holiday resorts. This was perhaps due to its distance from the sea and to the apparent reluctance of the Earl of Guilford, who owned most of the levels, to encourage building.

Our story can be said to begin in 1887, when William Laidlaw Purves visited Sandwich and realised that the flat, sandy land towards the shore would be ideal for laying out a golf links. Accordingly, he and a few friends, mainly Scottish stockbrokers, formed a syndicate, the Sandwich Golfing Association, to lease land for a course from the Earl of Guilford's trustees and to set up the St George's Golf Club. By 1895, the Club had five hundred members and was one of the most famous in the country. Golfers from London travelled down by train, first class return tickets being available to members at the special price of 13/6d, but they were then faced with a journey of a mile and a half over rough lanes to reach the club house. Players and spectators from nearer localities often used bicycles, then the height of fashion, rather than put up in Sandwich.

To find a solution to the problem, the leading citizens of Sandwich had to look no further than their fellow Cinque Port of Rye, where,

on 13th July 1895, the Rye & Camber Tramway had opened. This 3 foot gauge railway ran from a terminus near the town for a mile and a half across sand dunes to the golf links at Camber - an almost exact parallel with the situation at Sandwich. The Rye & Camber had been built by local businessmen who had employed as engineer none other than Holman F. Stephens, here beginning his independent career. It seems that Sandwich interests, led by Alderman Hughes and the Town Clerk, Dick Baker (a solicitor in the firm of Emmerson & Co.), invited Stephens to draw up proposals for a similar line in Sandwich, which were unveiled at a public meeting at the Bell Hotel in October 1895. Details of the original plan are sketchy, but the line would have started from the Quay at Sandwich and run via the Golf Club house to reach the shore near the coastguard station (a former battery from the Napoleonic War defences).

"A Steam Tram for Sandwich! Who *would* have thought it. To picture a snorting, whistling vehicle whizzing into the sleepy old place is certainly peculiar", began a rather patronising account of the meeting in the *East Kent Advertiser*. "All the principal big-wigs were there . . . Mr. Stephens, the engineer, was a host in himself. He depicted the future career of the 'Sandwich Steam Tram Company' in glowing colours, and his sanguine, buoyant remarks infected his hearers with his own enthusiasm, and carried them in imagination over any difficulties or hindrances which suggested themselves to the cautious mind." Nevertheless, the *Advertiser* believed the scheme, if carried out, would be a great success and would promote the welfare of the town: "There is a magnificent stretch of sand which at present is by no means appreciated as it deserves, simply because of the difficulty of getting to it. As yet there are not many people who fix upon Sandwich for their summer holidays, but if they were able, for a small fee, to ride across the open, breezy dunes and reach the shore in less than half-an-hour, who should say whether the number who visit Sandwich would not quickly multiply? To run a tram-way from Sandwich to the shore would mean the opening up of fresh territory. With such an excellent means of communication one would not be greatly surprised, in twenty years time, to see the Battery surrounded by a thriving little village. Besides all this, the tram would undoubtedly be a very great convenience to

members of the Golf Club.”

The meeting was equally enthusiastic in its support for the proposed steam tramway, and appointed a committee to investigate further. On 19th October, its members visited the Rye & Camber and were pleased with what they saw, so that their Surveyor, Mr. Langridge of Tunbridge Wells, was asked to begin negotiations with the landowners over the acquisition of land for the tramway. The Town Council, alert for an opportunity to increase its rateable value, laid plans to widen the boundaries of Sandwich to take in the new development which it anticipated would flow from improved communication.

Negotiations over the land owned by the Earl of Guilford proved more difficult than had been expected. The 8th Earl had succeeded to the title at the age of nine in 1885, when his father died after a hunting accident, and his estate was in the hands of trustees. The terms of a possible agreement were discussed with the Earl's agent and by February 1896, Emmerson & Co. (acting for the promoters) were able to make definite proposals to the trustees. They were asked to lease the land required for the tramway and the shore terminus to the company for 21 years at a nominal rent of £1 a year. The company would have the right to

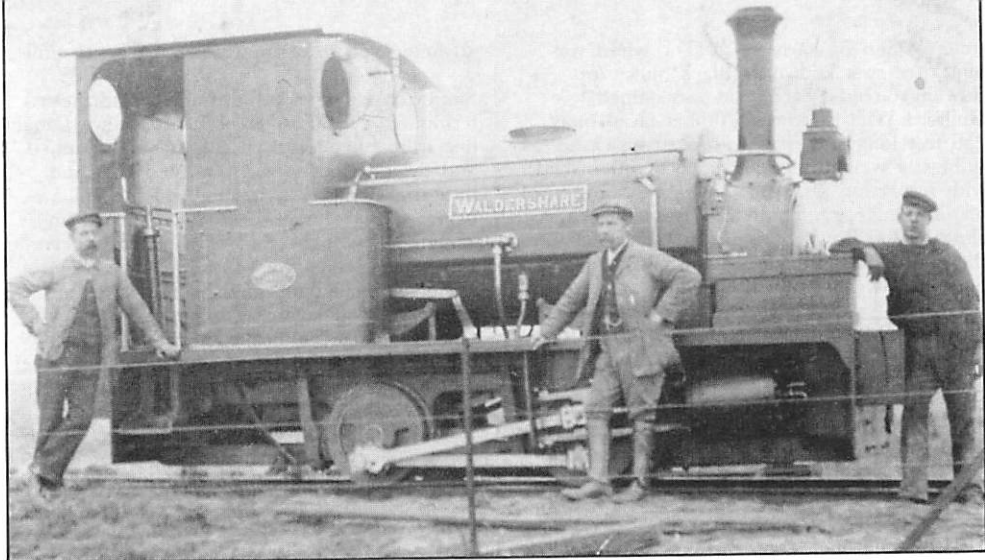
purchase the land outright at an agreed valuation during the first 12 years after opening. The shore terminus would incorporate a fully-licensed refreshment room, although the company agreed to give up the spirit licence there if a hotel were built in the vicinity. The tramway would carry building materials to the Earl's land and would have the right to take any ballast and sand required on payment of £3. These conditions suggest that building development by the shore was already being contemplated.

Unfortunately, the trustees appear to have been reluctant to deal with the property in this way so soon before the Earl would be of age and the idea of a tramway faded from the public view.

A year later, in early 1897, Stephens was still involved with plans for railway construction at Sandwich, but by this time their nature had greatly changed. It was now planned to build a standard gauge light railway rather than a narrow gauge tramway and to start from the SER station rather than from the Quay. The line would parallel the main line to Deal for about half a mile before turning to the north east and would pass several hundred yards south of the Golf Club house before reaching the shore near the Battery. It was admitted



The Barbican and Bell Hotel, Sandwich. The Steam Tramway would have terminated on the quay to the left.
(Commercial postcard)



Manning Wardle saddle tank "Waldershare", posed behind a wire fence with its proud crew, perhaps when newly delivered. (I. Gotheridge collection)

that the changes would greatly increase the cost and that there would now be little support from the people of Sandwich, who had agreed to find most of the money for the original tramway proposal. However, the new alignment was thought to give greater opportunities to develop the Earl's land and he was therefore asked to invest in the company - which, by the way, he would also have had the option of purchasing in 1919. It would seem that finance was not forthcoming, as nothing more was heard of the Sandwich Light Railway.

It was, however, by no means the last of building developments on the Earl's lands, or of railways connected with them. The popularity of the Golf Club continued to increase: in 1901 the SE&CR added additional carriages to the afternoon train on Fridays for the benefit of golfers and in 1902 King Edward VII became the Club's patron, enabling it to become the Royal St George's Golf Club. The prospect of developing sheep grazing land to accommodate weekend golfers encouraged the Earl to commission a report on the development of the estate from Thomas Jones, a senior partner in a firm of engineers and surveyors, which was completed in July 1902. This report seems not to have survived, but comments on it by A.R. Stenning are to be found in the Kent Archive Office.

Mr. Stenning was a surveyor who had acted for the South Eastern Railway in acquiring land for various extensions in the 1880s and was also surveyor to the Cinque Ports Light

Railway (an abortive project of 1899 for 68 miles of electric tramway around the coast from Ramsgate to Hastings). He supported Thomas Jones's suggestion of building a wharf on the River Stour near its junction with the New Cut, with a tramway to take materials from there to the estate, but also pointed out the need to improve passenger access: "It is quite as necessary to widen or get the Authorities to do so the road from the New Cut to Sandwich Station as after all the best way of getting the people from the town of Sandwich and also from the station to the sea front, a distance of something over two miles, is very important, and my view would be that the best way of making that would be a Horse or Steam Tram line from the station to the sea front . . ." He even envisaged extending the tramway south from the planned estate as far as Deal: "It would add very much to the success of the scheme if a Tramway was constructed from Sandwich Station down First Lane, Sandwich Road (sic - Sandown is presumably intended), over the New Road by Dickson's Corner, Willow Farm and so on into Deal. Such a tramway would, I think, become popular, as much as the one between Hythe and Sandgate, and it might be in the interests of the Estate even to run such a Tram Line though it might be at first at a loss."

Thus construction of the Sandwich Bay Building Estate commenced. The Earl decided not to proceed with a passenger tramway, but the wharf and goods tramway were under construction under the supervision of Thomas

Jones & Son by early 1903. The wharf was built at a spot known as Black Sluice (on Bowling Green Reach) and was named Guilford Wharf. It had a timber-faced quay 250 feet long equipped with a steam crane, sidings, a weighbridge and a locomotive shed with inspection pit. The Guilford Tramway, of 3ft 6in gauge, ran south east from the wharf, close by the Royal St George's Golf Club, to the end of the existing Sandown Road from Sandwich, by the present toll house. A plan to straighten Sandown Road to improve access to the Estate was not put into effect. From the toll house, the tramway followed the new Guilford Road to Sandwich Bay, where branches ran along each of the main avenues, King's Avenue and Waldershare Avenue, to the shore. The latter branch incorporated a loop and a long siding and eventually extended along the sea front, past the Guilford Hotel.

To work the line, Tapp & Jones ordered a locomotive from Manning Wardle & Co. of Leeds for the Earl. The order was placed on 21st May 1903 for delivery by the 16th July, but in the event this rapid schedule was not kept, and the engine was first steamed at the works on 28th July and despatched to Sandwich on the following day. It was an 0-4-0ST, works number 1611, of the "Special D" class with 8x12in outside cylinders, and 2ft diameter wheels with a wheelbase of 4ft 3in. The name "Waldershare", after the Earl's residence of Waldershare Park, appeared on a brass nameplate on the sides of the saddle tank. A number of trucks were also obtained.

The track gauge of 3ft 6in was used for only a few industrial or mineral lines in South East England. It was, however, quite widely used for electric tramways, including those of both Thanet and Dover, and the Cinque Ports Light Railway, planned to link them via Sandwich, would have been of the same gauge. The Kent Electric Power Syndicate was still talking about tramways in the district as late as 1903, and one of their schemes involved goods traffic from an improved Sandwich Haven, so it may have been felt advisable to select a gauge which would be compatible with these plans.

A guidebook published in 1905 suggested the use of Guilford Wharf for despatching coal from the Kent coalfield and of the Tramway for passenger traffic to Sandwich Bay. In the early days of the Guilford Tramway, the Town Council still hoped for an extension to Sandwich, but there is no evidence that this was a serious proposition. Passenger traffic seems never to have been carried officially, although golfers are said to have taken

advantage of the Tramway from time to time!

Sandwich Haven was the intended northern terminus of the East Kent Light Railways main line from Shepardswell as originally planned, and the developers of a proposed port and industrial complex there (for which a Bill was before Parliament in 1914) had reached an agreement with the Earl of Guilford under which he would have constructed wharves along the right bank of the Stour and the developers (who were also connected with the Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate) on the left. Coal would have reached the Guilford wharves over the EKLR from Woodnesborough and also, it was suggested, over the Guilford Tramway, although it is difficult to visualise how. In any event, coal trains and factories would hardly have been appreciated by the golfers and Sandwich Bay residents, who were no doubt greatly relieved that the scheme came to nought.

Work on the Sandwich Bay Estate proceeded gradually. By 1905 the main roads had been laid out and the Guilford Hotel opened in 1906. This was a seven-storey steel and concrete-framed building on the sea front where it was described as "an ugly landmark". (It was later rebuilt on a much smaller scale and is no longer a hotel.) A contemporary guidebook noted that Sandwich "by its seclusion, is favoured by Society leaders, politicians, judges and eminent men in finance" and the houses, large residences designed for the most part by fashionable architects of the period, reflected this exclusivity. One of the largest and most exclusive was "Rest Harrow", the weekend golfing retreat of Waldorf Astor, and other residents in the years before the Great War included Sir John Lonsdale MP, H.H. Spender-Clay MP, Mrs. Moore-Brabazon and Lord Islington.

Amongst the North family papers preserved in the Kent Archive Offices is a box of accounts and receipts for the Sandwich Bay Estate covering the 1912-1921 period, and these give a fascinating picture of the operation of the Guilford Tramway under the supervision of the Earl's local agent, George Robinson. In 1914 we find the tramway hauling timber, bricks, tiles, scaffold poles, pipes and builders' plant from the wharf, mainly for George Denne & Son, who seem to have had a number of building contracts on hand. Haulage charges were from 4d to 1/- a ton for bulk materials, and up to 1/- a truck for other goods. The loco on at least one occasion hit a ewe, for which compensation of £2-10-0d was demanded. Many hundreds of tons of brick



The Guilford Hotel, Sandwich Bay, with a Guilford Tramway siding along the sea front. Note the solitary holidaymaker reclining on the shingle in the foreground, well wrapped up against the biting east wind.
(Commercial postcard)

rubble were carried by barge from the Smeed Dean works at Sittingbourne, unloaded at the Wharf and used by the Estate in road foundations. Development of these roads continued at a reduced level into 1915.

Later in the War military activity in the area became more intense. A battalion of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders arrived in May 1916 and began to improve the defences. As Lieut.-Col. J. Craig Barr, who supervised their efforts from a headquarters in the Guilford Hotel, noted, the golf courses "were badly cut up by trenches, strong-points, gun positions, and wire entanglements, and their value from a golfing point of view fell almost to nil." It would seem that on occasion the troops resorted to the Tramway as a source of sleepers to shore up their earthworks. The Tramway remained usable, however, as in the first quarter of 1918 "Waldershare" was hired to the Government Road Board for a total of 24 days at £2-10-0d a day and used to haul ashes, brick rubble and flints unloaded at the Wharf, possibly in connection with a camp of concrete huts which had been built on land requisitioned from the Earl of Guilford in 1917 to house troops undergoing training on the musketry ranges. It is, incidentally, something of a mystery as to how this unloading was carried out, as boiler

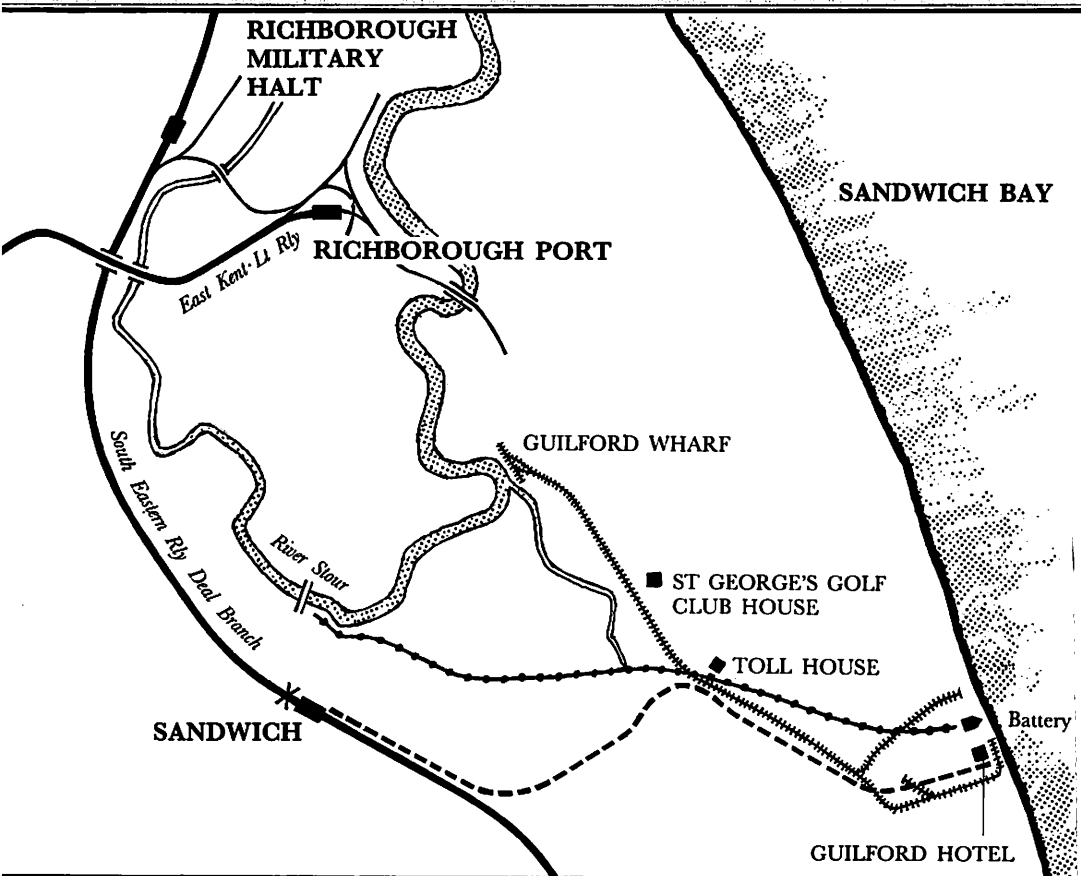
insurance receipts suggest that the steam crane was out of use by 1917.

Wartime developments at Sandwich Bay were overshadowed by the cross-Channel port complex which came into existence at Richborough and Stonar, across the river and somewhat downstream of Guilford Wharf. This has been described elsewhere, but it is worth noting that a standard gauge siding to the No. 2 Shipyard crossed the Stour and came within half a mile of Guilford Wharf.

Repairs to "Waldershare" and the steam crane were entrusted to local firms whenever possible. Troward Clark, of the Victoria Foundry, Delf Street, Sandwich, cast and machined bearing brasses and fusible plugs, but most of the general repairs were carried out by Arthur B. Clark of the Curfew Ironworks. Arthur Clark fitted a new smokebox door to "Waldershare" in August 1913 while injectors and crossheads required frequent attention. In November 1913, he supplied plates for plugging tubes, apparently only as a temporary expedient as the following month 40 new brass boiler tubes arrived at the SE&CR station from Manning Wardle, closely followed by a man to fit them. Truck repairs, and the necessary timber, were generally provided by W. Felton's Steam Saw

SER and EKLR —————
 Industrial sidings (some only shown) ————
 Guilford Tramway —————

Proposed Steam Tramway —●—●—●—●—●—●—●—●—●—●—
 Proposed Light Railway - - - - -

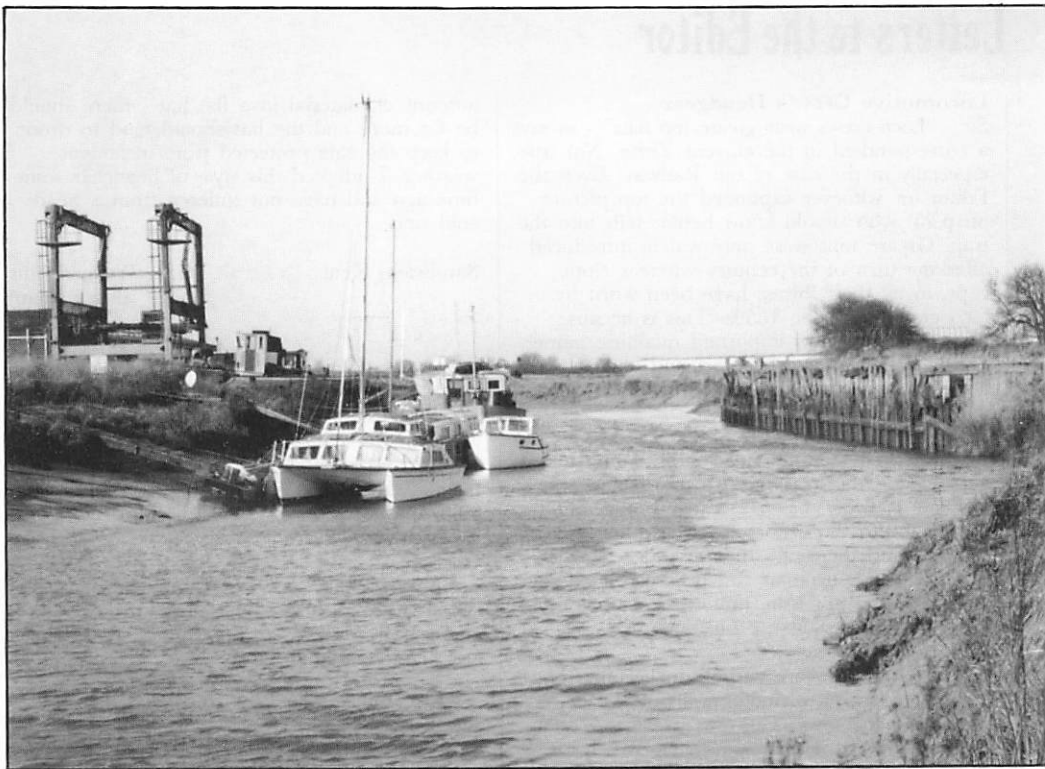


Mills.

The Sandwich Bay Estate staff included a driver in pre-war days; in 1912 George Robinson noted on a timesheet that he was "allowed half day per week extra as steam time, that is for getting up steam and to be on the works at starting time each morning". It is likely that the driver was responsible for both the crane and the locomotive, so that at times of heavy traffic an extra man had to be obtained from Arthur Clark - 20 days of loco driving at 8/- a day were charged for between August and November 1913. The staff was drastically cut back on the outbreak of war, but the driver was kept on until 1915.

After the War, the Tramway was in a run-

down condition and the boiler insurance on "Waldershare" was renewed in March 1921 only on the condition that it was inspected thoroughly before use. A new driver was engaged, coal was ordered and repairs to the engine's valves and injectors were carried out by (a sign of the times) G. Hibbert & Co. (Motor Engineers) of The Garage, Sandwich. The Tramway may have been used in the demolition and disposal of the hutted camp in 1921-22, but traffic after that seems to have been rather sporadic, as the pace of building was slower, the roads to the Estate had been improved, and brick and cement makers had begun to move away from the sailing barge for despatch of their products. However, "Waldershare" received a new smokebox and cast iron chimney in May 1924 and further repairs



Sandwich Haven in December 1991, with the timbers of Guilford Wharf on the right. Commercial traffic is still to be seen on the River Stour.
(Paul Burnham)

were carried out in late 1928, this time by the Wingham Engineering Co., who specialised in the hire and repair of traction engines, steam rollers and steam lorries and were one of the principal customers of the East Kent Light Railway's Wingham branch. The Tramway seems to have been used last in about 1929-30. "Waldershare" managed to survive the scrap drives of the Second World War, and was not scrapped until about 1950, not long after the Estate passed from the Earl's ownership to become a limited company.

Although very few remains of the Tramway exist, its course can be traced easily. Guilford Wharf survives in a disused state. The inspection pit and foundations of the engine shed could be traced until recent years, but the area behind the wharf has now been altered by modern drainage works. The line of the Tramway followed the private road to New Downs Farm as far as the entrance of the Royal St George's Golf Club. Rails could be seen at the road crossing until a few years ago, and may perhaps still exist beneath layers of

modern tarmac. The Tramway continued in a straight line across a field (no trace is now visible) to join Guilford Road by the Toll House. It ran along the north side of Guilford Road to the Sandwich Bay Estate, with branches down to the shore on the south side of Kings Avenue and the north side of Waldershare Avenue.

Tom Burnham

Acknowledgements

Information used in this article was generously supplied by Mr. Robert Butler and Dr. A.L. Minter of Sandwich, Mr. Gordon Green of the Industrial Railway Society, Mr. Ivor Gotheridge and the Secretary of the Royal St George's Golf Club. Other sources include the North papers in the Kent Archive Office, Maidstone, Home service by Col. Craig Barr, at the Imperial War Museum Library, and the East Kent Advertiser and the Deal Mercury at the British Library, Colindale.

Letters to the Editor

Locomotive Crew's Headgear

Sir - "Loco crews wear grease top hats" - so says a correspondent in the current *Terrier*. Not true, especially in the case of our Railway. Even the Editor (or whoever captioned the top picture on p.25) who should know better, falls into the trap. Grease tops were only widely introduced after the turn of the century whereas cloth caps, in all their forms, have been worn by loco crews since the 1850s. This is because they have four very important qualities: namely durability, cheapness, comfort and having acquired a layer or two of grease, they are waterproof too.

In the search for authenticity, the volunteers in general and the loco crews in particular, who run our Railway, have researched long and earnestly into the history of the Rother Valley Railway and the Kent and East Sussex Railway. And so far as can be ascertained, the Company did not issue uniforms, overalls or headgear to its staff.

So our cloth caps are entirely in keeping; one has only to refer to photographs of RVR/K&ESR loco crews. The few grease tops that did appear were either acquired privately or issued in BR days. The only point we can be faulted upon is that our caps are kept reasonably clean and not black with grease and dirt.

If one wishes to carp about authenticity, then direct your gaze at the delightful (and totally unprototypical) collection of varieties of BR, gas board, prison service, funeral and fruit cocktail bestrewn headgear effected by the rest of our operating staff.

Tenterden, Kent

Christopher Mitchell
(Driver)

Sir - I was amused to read the April Fools Day spoof by M.J.S. Hatch regarding authenticity and enginemen's hats.

He will, of course, know that if our present day enginemen dressed in the way of those from the days of H.F.S. they would probably be banned from the footplate. A look through any book with photographs from the early days of the K&ESR would reveal trousers with room for a manor house in the crutch, collarless shirts, old suit jackets and flat hats.

Where we fall down on authenticity is in the

amount of material in a flat hat - there should be far more and the hat should tend to droop to keep the ears protected from inclement weather. I adopted this style of headgear some time ago and have not suffered from a head cold since.

Sandwich, Kent

H.R. Wallace-Sims
(Engineman)

Holding the Line

Sir - Whilst research for the above title has proceeded very well, further information is becoming available all the time. Add to this "typos" and other similar errors (which always plague writers and editors) and I now have the following corrections to the spin-off articles which have appeared in the *Terrier*.

The Special Trains of 1964 (Summer 1991).

As already reported in the *Rooter*, the traction engine rally referred to on page 48 took place at Elham not Eltham.

A Short History of the Mess Coach (Winter 1991 and David Gould's letter, Spring 1992).

The coach body was delivered to Tenterden on 25th January 1964, not 12 months earlier as previously stated. Also, the reference in the final paragraph to the "Edwardian Experience" may be mystifying some people. The article was prepared before the name of the event held on 21/22 September 1991 was changed to "The Good Old Days".

The Ones that got Away (Spring 1992). The locomotive *Dunrobin* is, of course, an 0-4-4T and the Manning Wardle *Sir Berkley* a saddle tank.

Readers may also be interested to know that although the possibility of buying Isle of Wight 02's never got past the "thinking about it" stage, the purchase of IOW coaches apparently went as far as prices being discussed with BR. This idea then, unfortunately, foundered on the rock of transport costs.

My apologies to anyone either misled or irritated by these slip-ups. Anyone wishing to add to, or comment on, factual matters connected with this research is very welcome to do so. Letters to me please, c/o Tenterden Town Station.

London, SE9

Nick Pallant

Where are they now?

Sir - In the list of nameplates in your last issue you show under West Sussex Railway the name MORUS. I have been told that a spare pair of plates with this spelling did exist at Kinnerley, but all the time it was on the WSR the plates were spelt MOROUS. It seems probable therefore that there are four plates to be accounted for; the "Morous" ones were still on the engine when it was derelict in Selsey shed after the track-lifting; the other pair would no doubt have come into the hands of the Army in 1940, if in fact they existed.

Bow Street, Dyfed

R.W. Kidner

The Railways of Martin Mill

Sir - Within days of reading the second part of Norman Johnson's interesting article on the contractor's and military railways from Martin Mill, I came across two references to them in the *Railway Magazine* (while looking for something else, which I generally find the most reliable way of finding anything).

The October 1911 issue describes progress by S. Pearson & Son Ltd. with reclaiming the site of the Marine Station. It illustrates one of Pearson's locomotives (a Peckett 0-6-0ST named "Sir William Crundall") and notes that "no fewer than 14 similar engines are employed upon the works, together with hundreds of small mineral wagons, steam tugs, barges, and other craft for conveying the chalk across the Natural (sic) Harbour, from the temporary jetty built out at the foot of the East Cliff. By this process, a triple improvement is simultaneously effected. The removal of the chalk so as to leave a sloping surface in the face of the cliffs between Dover and the South Foreland not only gets rid of the danger of sudden falls of rock, such as have frequently occurred in the past, but renders the construction of the much-desired marine drive to St. Margaret's Bay all the more feasible; and, at the same time, the material required for the foundations of the Marine Station is obtained at the bare cost of excavation and water transit across the front of Dover Esplanade."

This suggests that only limited use was being made of the Martin Mill railway at this time.

The second article is one by J. Douglas McDonald in the November and December 1947 issue (possibly inspired by an Extension of Time Order for the Dover, St. Margarets & Martin Mill Light Railways in late 1946) which describes and illustrates the line as it was immediately before it was lifted by the Army in July 1937 but makes no mention of the

Second World War developments. Mr. McDonald remarks that the cliff top terminus of the Martin Mill line was at one of the gun turrets used for coast defence in the 1914-18 war and suggests that the railway may have been used in its construction.

Sidcup, Kent

Tom Burnham

Sir - I must disagree with a detail on your map. You show the site of DUMMY WINNIE on the wrong side of the railway. It was on the seaward side, and in addition the dummy housed the blockpost known as Decoy Junction. Thus the Decoy Junction on the map is in the wrong position, unless renamings happened after September 1941 when I left.

The high velocity gun was being talked about in 1941 and I took it that the gun foundation was being built. Evidently the foundation was for either Jane or Clem, a circular sea of reinforced concrete about 30 yards wide. Concrete was taken up by rail and we had a little accident. An empty wagon was inadvertently pushed over the edge into the concrete, where it partially sank. Authority took the view that it was merely additional reinforcement, but a bright Southern clerk kept on asking for the wagon back. He was shut up after a while by a chit to say the wagon had been lost by enemy action (the golden excuse of every army quartermaster).

One result of my writings on the MMR was a telephone call from an ex-sapper Payne, 50 years after we had been together. He was the blockman in the sleeper Martin Mill blockpost when a shell burst close by. A splinter went through the sleepers and killed a Marine who was sheltering with him from the rain. That was in 1940, before my time on the railway. Mr. Payne now lives in Rhyl, which he describes as the "Las Vegas of North Wales".

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Robertsbridge 1947-1950

Alastair Wilson recalls Robertsbridge at the end of the Kent & East Sussex Railway's independent existence.

My family moved to Robertsbridge in July 1947 and I exchanged a seemingly unvaried procession of Robinson A5 tanks at Amersham, on the former Metropolitan/Great Central line to Aylesbury, for a tank-engine-less view of the Southern Railway - or so I thought.

Our home at Robertsbridge lay about half-a-mile north west of the station, half way down a Wealden ridge. From the house I could see the last stretch of the main line from the cutting through the ridge to the station, dominated by the tall down outer home signal; and there was this other embankment which disappeared off eastwards . . .

We first visited the house on a brilliant June Sunday. My first train to be seen is indelibly etched on my memory: we were down in what were soon to be our fields on the north-east side of the cutting when "Schools" Class No. 921 "Shrewsbury" burst out of the cutting, heading for London, across the level valley of the Rother. The low embankment on which the line ran towards Etchingham had featured in my imagination ever since my mother had told me that the railway ran on an embankment

across the bottom of the fields. I had somehow imagined it as being like that well-known posed photograph of the SER's "Hastings Club Car Train" in the late 1880s, headed by one of Mr. Stirling's "F" Class 4-4-0s. It was nothing like that, of course, and Mr. Stirling's "F"s were long gone. I did get to underline one or two "F1"s in my ABC but that was probably at Tonbridge rather than Robertsbridge.

The main-line "expresses" (1 hour 40 minutes for 49 miles, for the 10.25 and 12.25 from Charing Cross) were invariably hauled by a "Schools". Actually, I am unkind, the 10.25 did not stop at Robertsbridge so it was necessary to change at Tonbridge into an ex-SECR "birdcage" set, hauled by one of the various elderly 4-4-0 classes inherited from the same stable, which followed the fast train stopping at all the stations. This meant that Robertsbridge was reached some twenty minutes after the express had roared through.

Ex-SECR locomotives still dominated most services at that time with 4-4-0s on the locals and "C" Class 0-6-0s on freights although N1 2-6-0s and, later on, Q1 0-6-0s added a more



Robertsbridge, 26th April 1947, with K&ESR No. 3 and train in the main line platform.

(Colonel Stephens Railway Archive)



Robertsbridge, probably 1947, with K&ESR junction to the right. (Colonel Stephens Railway Archive)

modern touch to these. I recall that N1 No. 1877, later 31877, was a particularly regular performer. The daily up goods was at Robertsbridge between 10 and 11 in the morning, dropping off wagons for K&ESR, and picking up wagons brought down from Tenterden either on the first train at 8.15 or the second which arrived at about 10.15. Virtually every up freight had three or more wagons of gypsum from Mountfield; I did not remember any "block" trains at this period. Of course, anything heavy came by rail; I remember my father ordering a twelve-foot five-barred gate from Covers of Chichester (price £4-10s-0d, I think) which came in its own open truck; Willie Barden delivered it with his horse and wagon.

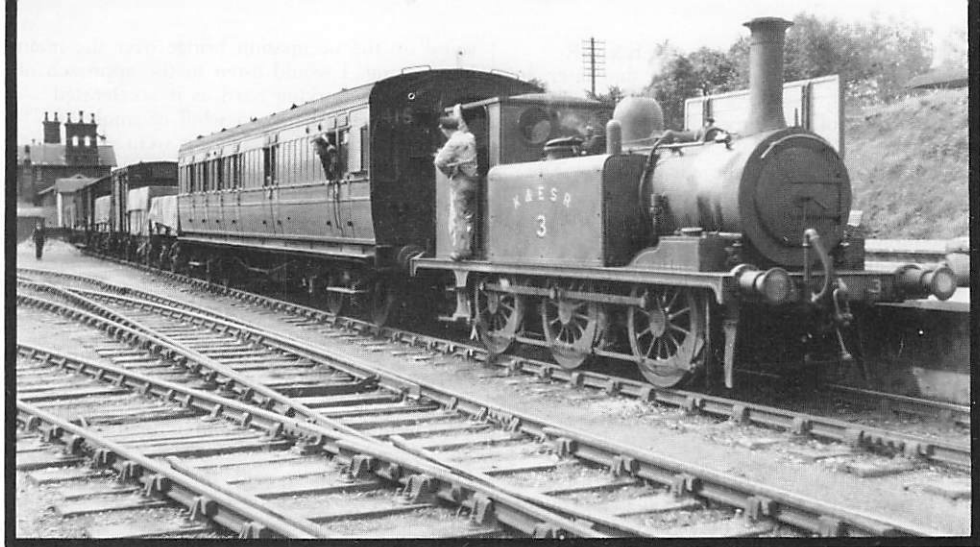
At last, a mention of the K&ESR. It was quaint, it was antiquated, it was, frankly, decrepit . . . and at this date it only had tank engines - or that was all one saw at the Robertsbridge end of the line. To a 13 year old it did not hold a candle to the main-line, so, to my lasting regret, I did not pay it the attention that I might have done. I cannot say what was the first K&ESR train that I saw. I do know that I saw old No. 4 and 2678 quite often in that summer of 1947. I suppose that I might have seen one or other of the "P's" but do not now remember. I remember 2678 very well because I got to know her very much better at a later date when she was shunting on the western side of the harbour at Newhaven. My little fishery protection vessel was based at Newhaven and "Terriers" were the

only locomotives allowed over the swing bridge which gave access to the wharves on the west side of the harbour.

Back at Robertsbridge I had taken up "train-spotting" seriously; from an upstairs window, with my great-grandfather's naval telescope - about 3'6" long - I could read the numbers of all the locomotives that passed up the main-line. One did not need to read the numbers on the K&ESR engines.

I have this lovely nostalgic picture in my mind: a fine September morning with mist lying in the Rother valley; to the east my view was limited - and focussed - by the tower of Salehurst Church; about 8.15 or so there would be a distant whistle for the crossing at Salehurst; about five minutes later the train would whistle again - just to tell the crossing-keeper on the A21 by Hodson's Mill that it really was coming; then the exhaust could be heard, and seen, as the driver opened the regulator again for the last run in and up to Robertsbridge. As the train passed the cricket field I could see the engine and coach, in shadow, for the sun was behind them. Probably there would be two or three wagons as well. Seeming to drift through the haze, the train passed over the last bridge before the station and disappeared from sight.

Later that summer No. 3 came back. I am not sure if I ever saw her before I went back to boarding school but I do remember the first time I saw her because of her colour and



*K&ESR No. 3 heads a mixed train for Tenterden at Robertsbridge on 17th July 1948.
(Colonel Stephens Railway Archive)*

cleanliness - you must remember that at this date I could not really remember having seen an engine painted any colour but black though I suspect I might have seen a green "Merchant Navy" at Waterloo on my way to school - in electric country!

It was about this time that I read "Farmer's Train", the evocative piece of verse by Hugh Bevan illustrated by Roland Emmett, which appeared in *Punch* in 1946 - I think in the Summer number. Much as I liked it, though, and the drawing was clearly No. 3, Emmettised a bit, it was set too much at the "other end" - all the references were to the Tenterden-Headcorn section except for, "*He whistles the miller at Northiam Mill.*". But it did describe the part the line played in the local economy. East-west communications in the East Sussex/Kent border area have never been very direct and in any case few people had cars and, for those who did, petrol was rationed. So the Line was a godsend - keeping the villages and Tenterden supplied with coal which was still THE fuel. Although mains electricity was generally available most cottages still had a kitchen range. (Our house had got electricity a couple of months before we moved in - previously it had a 50v system run by a single cylinder Lister coupled to a dynamo by a belt - with a bank of cells for use at night.)

Trains were all mixed; three a day, early morning, mid-morning and afternoon. The main action took place between 10 and 11 in the morning. In succession there arrived and

departed:

1. Up goods from Hastings.
2. K&ESR from Tenterden.
3. Down stopping passenger to Hastings.
4. 10.38 to Charing Cross (THE up train of the day - Pullman facilities available).
5. K&ESR to Tenterden.
6. Up goods to Tonbridge.

Sometimes there was a down goods fitted in somewhere (there was a long siding stretching back to that tall down outer home signal). The up goods would sometimes drop or pick up a wagon from the siding on the up side, south of the level crossing, which served Stenning's Timber Yard - now all housing.

It was rare for there to be more than one coach on the K&ESR trains; certainly, in the years that I knew the line, the passenger services only blossomed out at 'opping'. This, of course, was the peak of the year; not only did the Londoners come down to pick the hops but the great unwieldy hop "pockets" were sent away in covered vans afterwards. Our neighbour, John Luhman, fired his family oasts. He would disappear for a fortnight and come back with his face a brilliant rosy-apple-red, worn out from sleepless nights tending the drying fires in the oasts.

The Southern brought the hoppers down in as fine a collection of railway antiques as you could wish. As far as my memories go, these

did not usually venture down the K&ESR, though I could be wrong. I know that later, in the early 1950s, there was an occasion when a six-coach train of two three-coach "birdcage" sets set off with a "Terrier" at each end but I cannot recall this happening in the earlier years. The normal trains - mid-morning and afternoon - would be strengthened to two coaches and the women-folk would come in to shop. On Saturdays there were times when Robertsbridge could have done with Wyatt Earp - an exaggeration perhaps but life could certainly get boisterous. I recall one hoppers' special passing on its way home and leaving the embankment approaching Robertsbridge covered with empty beer bottles.

Unfortunately I never travelled on the Line that first summer while it was still independent. The notices were there, still signed W. H. Austen, and I never could understand why his office was at Tonbridge. It was not until the summer of 1949 that I took a trip to Bodiam with a French boy staying with us on exchange. I took a photograph at Bodiam but mon ami Français was not a bit interested. However, a subsequent visit with him to Heystan-Zee in Northern Belgium forced me to change my opinions on the comfort of K&ESR trains. A ride in the last coach of a Vicinal "Interurbain" - bogie motor car, bogie trailer and four four-wheel trailers - was like being a flea on the tail of a very friendly dog!

All I can remember about that trip to Bodiam was the musty smell in the compartment. We came back by bicycle - we had put those in the Guard's compartment, of course. That was the trouble with the K&ESR. You could not really do a useful out and back trip by it - not from Robertsbridge anyway.

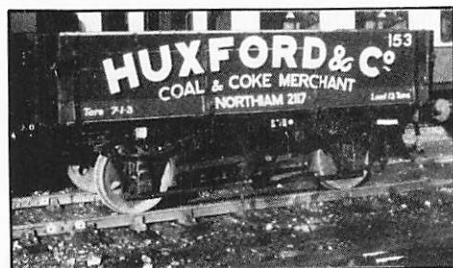
But the memories are still there. We would take a picnic down into our fields and I would

stand on the occupation bridge over the main-line cutting. I would listen to the approach of an up train working hard as it accelerated towards Etchingam - a whiff of smoke, a clatter of wheels, and away it went. Now, in my job, from time to time I have to try to explain to schoolchildren what it was like in the stokehold of a Victorian battleship - but how can you explain when they have not got a live fire at home, when many of them have never seen coal burning in a grate? To my generation steam was king; it was not until one grew up that one began to understand that servicing steam was a dirty and demanding job carried out in pretty primitive conditions.

So, for me, there was glamour in the main line, especially in the four trains carrying a Pullman. As I have said, the 10.38 from Robertsbridge took one to London and the same stock came back again on the 12.25 from Charing Cross. A second Pullman went up on the 2.38 and after arrival at Charing Cross was worked round to Cannon Street to form the businessman's express, 5.06 from Cannon Street, first stop Tunbridge Wells, and then fast to Etchingam, arriving at 6.14. By the time that it passed through Robertsbridge the K&ESR had gone to bed.

Now Robertsbridge is very nearly "basic railway". The goods yard has gone. "Pride of Sussex" flour no longer goes away by the van load and Stenning's siding and its timber traffic are long gone. 4-VEPs are not much of a consolation. I only hope that the new K&ESR is successful in building back to Robertsbridge to provide a link, if for different purposes, across that relatively unknown land that lies between the Weald and the Marsh.

Alastair Wilson is General Manager of the Portsmouth Naval Heritage Trust operating a Heritage Site which comprises HMS "Victory", HMS "Warrior" (1860), the "Mary Rose" and the Royal Naval Museum.



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Parliament, Law and Politics

Part one of an article in which Nick Pallant looks at some of the events of 1967 which surround the refusal of a Light Railway Transfer Order for the K&ESR.

On 30 March 1966, at a ceremony in Tenterden Town Hall, the Rother Valley Railway Company Ltd. - which had been set up by the Kent and East Sussex Railway Association - signed a contract with British Rail for the purchase of the line. This was subject to the Ministry of Transport granting a Light Railway Transfer Order not later than 31st December. At that stage, the Association still intended to run, in addition to a steam hauled tourist service, regular passenger and freight trains between Robertsbridge and Tenterden. Formal application for the LRTO followed in the autumn.

These developments were the culmination of five years effort and, with much work underway and the basic rolling stock acquired, the railway had a distinctly different personality about it when compared with the abandoned branch line of 1961. When it became apparent that the deadline would not be met, the Southern Region, realising Whitehall's capacity for delay, allowed first one, and then two extensions of time.

It was still anticipated that passenger trains would be running between Robertsbridge and Bodiam by Easter, and, it was hoped, a Public Inquiry would not be needed. The receipt of three objections, however, made such an inquiry necessary and this was held in Tenterden on 21/22 March 1967.

The formal objections were: One each from the Kent River Authority and the Rother Drainage Board - who were concerned about what might happen if a bridge collapsed into the water courses, and another from the owner of Great Dixter House who was concerned about weeds, fences and drainage. Guinness Hop Farms had similar concerns but made no formal objection. Neither Kent nor East Sussex County Councils objected to re-opening provided a public need was served in so doing. The K&ESR then had to wait for the Ministry to make its decision.

By the middle of the year the blazing summer weather matched the K&ESR's mood of expectation. In the wider world the Six Day War caused a momentary alarm about oil supplies, and, much less far away, the

remaining Bulleid Pacific's thundered towards the end of Southern steam. In June the *Farmers' Line* recorded that "All being well, we hope to get in at least a few weeks operation this summer", but by August and with the tourist season drawing to a close the re-opening had been postponed until Easter 1968.

Then, on 4th September, a letter was received from the Ministry of Transport informing the Rother Valley Railway Company that the Light Railway Transfer Order had been refused.

A long standing member has recorded that, on arrival at Rolvenden the following Saturday, he was greeted with the unusual sight of a group of volunteers sitting down at the trackside in sombre mood. He asked if anyone was willing to bet him that it was not the end - there were no takers.

The reasons stated for the Ministry's decision were:

- Insufficient financial reserves to cover costs in the event of some unforeseen emergency, such as the collapse of a river bridge.
- The level crossings, particularly on the A21 at Robertsbridge and its growing amount of traffic.
- In a further ten or 20 years certain roads might become dual carriageways that would require road overbridges built at the taxpayer's expense.

The Minister had concluded that despite some need for the railway, the inconvenience it would cause would outweigh its advantages. Over the years, a legend has grown up that the Minister, Barbara Castle, was influenced in her decision by political antipathy to private enterprise. There is a lack of verifiable evidence on this matter, and space limitations do not allow a full discussion here. The writer instead suggests that Mrs. Castle was asked to endorse decisions that had been made by her officials - officials who were notoriously pro road transport.

The situation had been considered at a combined Association Committee and Company Board meeting and it was unanimously decided that this was not going to

be the end of the matter. But there was, not surprisingly, much anxiety about the possible effect of members' morale, and the volunteers in particular. Following the meeting a letter was sent to the Ministry of Transport stating that:

- a member of the Association has indicated his willingness to stand surety against any possible financial contingency such as the collapse of a bridge. (The Ministry did not, unfortunately, consider this generous offer adequate for the long term and that arrangements would be required 'in perpetuity'.)
- the Inspector's report stated that, generally speaking, the two County Councils had no objections as highway authorities, and that only the Robertsbridge level crossing was of any real concern.
- that the Association had kept a detailed record of the amount of traffic using the level crossing over the previous few months. These indicated that the ESCC's figures were inaccurate. The County figures were based on 1964 data, and an annual growth of 8% had been assumed.

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Allowing for such growth there should have been at least 10,000 vehicles on summer weekdays and 15,000 at weekends. The Association's count showed barely half these amounts. It was therefore suggested that the Minister take another look at the figures and should at least seek further information.

It was further suggested that since the really busy periods were confined to a part of the morning and evening on a number of summer Sundays, that the railway agree to limit the use made of the crossing accordingly.

In respect of road overbridges which might be needed 20 years later, it was suggested to the Ministry that the LRTO be made for an initial

period of 10 years.

Finally, the letter suggested the Minister should look again at the matter, with a view to varying her original decision.

There also seemed to be an irregularity in procedure. It was a feature of Public Inquiries that the Ministry might seek further information after the Inquiry, but that they must inform all the interested parties of this information and give them an opportunity to make representations before announcing their decision. The question of road bridges was never mentioned at the Inquiry, and the Company was not told of this at all until the decision was announced.

A meeting of volunteers was called during the weekend of 9/10 September and when they met, the mood of despondency, which had been noted a little earlier, still persisted. The decision to fight on was explained but some persuasive oratory was needed - the Hon. Secretary, Robin Doust was prominent in this - to achieve the necessary change of mood. Once the workforce had been convinced, the details of the Inspector's report were read out. It then emerged that the Inspector had recommended that the LRTO be granted subject to a few safeguards!

Matters then proceeded very fast indeed and arrangements were made to enlarge on the Association's existing traffic census figures. Further traffic counts were set up, using the same methods employed by local authorities and which recorded five minute totals in both directions. Enough volunteers were found to staff the crossing by Hodson's Mill from 6.00 am to 10.00 pm. The necessary forms were rapidly duplicated in members homes and by the end of the week enough data had been gathered to indicate that the Ministry's figures were inaccurate by a factor of 50%.

Other action was also under way, and on Friday 15th the first approach was made to the MP for Ashford, Mr. William Deedes (now Lord Deedes and Patron of the Tenterden Railway Company). The K&ESR was represented at this meeting by Robin Doust and Peter Bengel-Abbott, a local resident, businessman and volunteer who was soon to become Chairman of the Association and assume a De Gaulle-like role in the history of the K&ESR. Mr. Deedes read the Ministry's refusal and the Association's comments on it, and immediately expressed the view that the K&ESR had indeed been fobbed off with excuses. He undertook to make immediate

representations to the Minister and British Railways that the matter should be re-opened, and that no steps be taken to scrap the railway.

Neither had the Association been behindhand in approaching the media, a press release being sent out during the week of 11th September. It was also necessary to obtain firm evidence of the public's support, although in relation to freight services there was, of course, the traffic to Hodson's Mill and another company was interested in facilities at Tenterden. It was now decided to prepare a petition and obtain signatures in the communities served by the line. Petition forms were duplicated and a contemporary account said that, on 16/17th, Tenterden Town station "resembled an army operations room". There was no shortage of volunteers and the exercise was effectively organised with the aid of electoral rolls and local maps. Groups of members called at as many houses as could be reached and there was a most welcome response on the part of local people. In one and a half days no less than 3,100 signatures were collected. The whole matter was rapidly turning into a cause celebre, and, at work, Robin Doust was quietly reminded that he had spent most of two days taking (unsolicited) calls from the press!

Despite these events, plans went ahead for a pre-arranged special train which Granada TV had hired for a film. There was, in the circumstances, considerable doubt as to whether BR would allow this to take place, but on the morning of Saturday 22nd September, No. 3 and two of the Maunsell coaches left Rolvenden for Robertsbridge. There were heartening demonstrations of support by local people and numerous shouts of encouragement. That such an event should have successfully taken place at a moment of extreme crisis, seems typical of that strange capacity of the railway to exist almost

regardless of the storm clouds which raged around it!

Meanwhile, the Parliamentary campaign was hotting up. Efforts were spurred on by the Ministry's reply (dated 15th September) to the Association's letter challenging the refusal of the LRTD. Almost predictably the answer was that the matter was now closed. Following the example of Messrs. Doust and Bengel-Abbott, other volunteers had been asked to follow suit and it was known that 12 MP's had been asked to help.

Although there was no formal appeal procedure, the Association hoped to get the Minister to reconsider her decision. Failing that, it was intended to apply for another Order. It was thus reasoned, that the more public and Parliamentary support which could be obtained the better and every member was supplied with a letter which could be adapted when writing to their Member of Parliament. An MP might, of course, refuse to help because the problem was outside their constituency. This was quite simply disposed of by pointing out that their constituent *was* affected and he or she *did* live in the right place.

Support was further reinforced by a second Petition targetted on the public beyond the railway's immediate hinterland and, by 5th October, 4,000 signatures had been collected. In the circumstances, work was concentrated on the rolling stock at Rolvenden, but at the same time consideration was being gloomily given to a 'line of retreat' in the event of the Association having to abandon the railway.

(To be concluded)

The above article is abridged from the proposed book 'Holding the Line - Preserving the Kent & East Sussex Railway 1961-71'.

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Going, Going - but still there!

High Halden Road station site was among over 130 properties listed in an auction at the Great Danes Hotel, Maidstone, on 5th May 1992. However, shortly before the auction, the station was withdrawn from the sale. At this stage it is not known whether the site has been sold privately, or whether further consideration is having to be given as to its future use. On 20th May, Ashford Borough Council planning committee was due to consider an application from the present owners to use the site for low-rent starter workshops for light industry. There is some local opposition to the proposed change from agricultural use.

Apart from the station building, there are 7,000 sq. ft. of redundant pig units on

the site of the former sidings and 18 acres of land, much of it the trackbed running towards Biddenden.

The station building is the only survivor from railway days. Various owners have maintained it in good order - even the ticket hatch is still intact. The platform has been replaced by a brick plinth and the canopy supports are resting on low brick columns. Until now, the site, known as Applegarth Farm, has been in agricultural use, with the station building being used variously as stores or offices. It will be interesting to see what plans any new owners have in mind for this relic from 1905.

John Miller



High Halden Station, 1920's.



(Colonel Stephens Railway Archive)



High Halden Station in May 1992, with most of the platform removed.

(John Miller)



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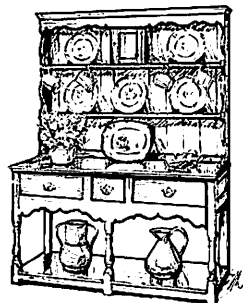
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