

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 60

Spring 1993



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 between 10 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. or sundown if earlier, but closed Mondays from November to March. Closed over Christmas. Built in 1385 as a defence against the French, it still has 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.

Telephone Staplecross (0580) 830436

Great Dixter

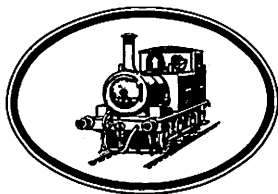


OPENING TIMES House and Gardens open Tuesdays to Sundays inclusive and Bank Holiday Mondays from 1 April to 10 October and 16/17 and 23/24 October. Open 2.00 p.m. Last admission 5.00 p.m. (Garden open from 11.00 on 29, 30, 31 May, Sundays in July and August and 30 August.

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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Number 60

Spring 1993

Contents

- 3 Editorial
- 4-13 Lineside News
- 15 "Dover Castle"
- 16-17 November Freight
- 20-21 Moving along the right lines
- 22-23 On New Year's Day
- 24-26 Cruising down the river
- 29 Hay there!
- 30-31 Letters to the Editor
- 32-34 Parliament, law and politics - Part 2
- 37 Tickets, please!
- 38-39 Winter Works
- 40-41 Preservation plans 65 years ago
- 42-43 Book Reviews

Editorial

Hopefully along the right lines

The major engineering works between Rolvenden and Tenterden this Winter highlight the problems that we face to maintain, let alone extend, the infrastructure of the organisation. A sum of upwards of £40,000 is needed to eradicate rabbits, make good the damage to the embankment and lay maintenance-free track for the future - a sum equal to about 50p for very passenger carried last year.

Plans for 1993 include include running more trains with fewer carriages, to boost income; this has to be the right strategy given our history of modest loadings, but the hope must be that it will be sufficient to service higher overheads as we seek to solve the volunteer problem by taking more more people on to the payroll.

FRONTISPIECE

P Class 1556 leaves Northiam with a two coach train in November 1992. (Donald Wilson)

FRONT COVER

No. 10 "Sutton" newly outshopped as 32650, shunts at Tenterden in the frost of New Year's Day 1993. (Mike Esau)

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Secretary's Report

Proposed changes in policy detail (the introductions of Life Membership, for example), have necessitated the revision of the Company Articles. This means we shall call a special general meeting which will probably take place on the day of the Annual General Meeting, immediately preceding that important event, on Saturday 19 June. The membership then has the opportunity to re-examine the Articles of Association, and vote on the proposed amendments to them.

Recent events have led us to look at some other legal documents. The provision of our Light Railway Order (1971), which gives us the powers to run to a point some metres west of Bodiam Station has yet to be fully implemented, of course, but, when the Rother Valley Railway (East Sussex) Limited, wish to put the line from Bodiam to Robertsbridge into action, they will need to make a fresh and more costly application, as the recent new legislation "The Transport and Works Act" has enabled the government to raise the price. Because of occasional trespass, we also looked at our By-Laws. Attention will also have to be given to updating their provisions.

Overshadowing much of what we are thinking about is "The Transport and Works Act", and it is the sections on Employees (read here also Volunteers) and the use (abuse) of drink and drugs, which have attracted most interest. Clearly, any measure which improves safety provisions and saves lives is to be applauded. London Underground recently sent me a 44-page policy statement in this connection. We are grateful for this useful information, but we are not at present considering any involvement in the Jubilee Line extension! The point is that is any TRC staff were contracted to work on London Underground (recovering surplus equipment, for instance), they would be bound by their regulations.

Another significant spin-off from Westminster will be the Privatisation of Railways. By the time this present article is in print, David Morgan and Peter Ovenstone, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the ARPS, will have given evidence to a Parliamentary committee. The ARPS will be very closely monitoring and protecting the position of preserved lines, particularly those with an existing OR

PROPOSED connection with British Rail as at present constituted. Clearly, the Kent and East Sussex Railway in its completed form, could be affected by the legislation, if only at Robertsbridge.

If all this depresses you, or sounds alarm bells for you, have no fear! In fact, you can take heart from the involvement and recognition of ARPS in all this. The new tariff for Light Railway Orders would have been much higher if it had not been for the Chairman's representations. There is no reason to doubt that any adverse effects of other legislative measures would be similarly ameliorated.

Locomotives

These notes are current at 5 February 1993.

No. 3 (Bodiam). Awaiting overhaul. A new boiler will be required and the Board are considering raising funds for this as a special project.

No. 8 (Knowle). The boiler is now with outside contractors for repair and refurbishment. Work on the frames is complete.

No. 10 (Sutton). Now in BR livery as 32650, the locomotive is serviceable, having just had its annual boiler tests. 10-year overhaul due March 1994.

No. 11 (1556). Awaiting boiler inspections and repairs.

No. 12 (Marcia). No further progress since last report.

No. 14 (Charwelton). Available for service, but is likely to need re-tubing when it is stopped for annual boiler inspection in March.

No. 19 (Norwegian). See separate report.

No. 21 (Wainwright). Lagging and tanks now in place, cab and bunker manufacture now in progress and more plumbing completed.

No. 22 (Maunsell). The boiler work at Chatham has re-commenced, whilst at Rolvenden the frames have been re-united with the wheels. The fitting of springs is the next task to be undertaken pending return of the boiler later in the year.

No. 23 (Holman F. Stephens). Available for service.

No. 24 (William H. Austen). Available for service, but will require a re-tube before the main season on expiry of annual certificate.

No. 25 (Northiam). Still awaiting 10-year overhaul.

No. 26 (Linda). Available for service.

No. 27 (Rolvenden). Static exhibit at

Tenterden.

1638 (Pannier Tank). Re-tube is in progress, and is currently awaiting a new spring.

Diesel Locomotives

No. 40 (Ford). Still awaiting repairs.

No. 41 (Ruston). In service; has been on a hire contract at Bristol during the winter.

No. 42. Still awaiting overhaul.

No. 43 (Titan). In service as works shunter and assisting with civil engineers trains on rebuilding the "Rabbit Warren".

No. 46 (D.2023). Restoration completed in time for the Diesel Day last November when it performed faultlessly. Has been confined to Tenterden side of engineering works on main line and suffered starter motor problems in January; however, these were overcome and all is now well. It is also in use as Tenterden shunter until the line is relaid to enable access to Rolvenden again.

No. 47 (D.2024). Awaiting restoration.

No. 48 (D.9504). Awaiting restoration.

No. 49 (D.9525). In service.

Class 08 (08 108) "Dover Castle". See separate article on this loco.

Class 25 (D.7672). Currently awaiting transport back to its home base in Staffordshire.

Cranes

No. 311 (DS451. Taylor-Hubbard). Has recently passed its load tests and final repairs are under way.

No. 316 (DS17700. Grafton). Serviceable.

No. 336 (81S. 36-ton Breakdown Crane). Annual inspection of lifting tackle complete, awaiting boiler inspection.

No. 305 (5-ton diesel crane). Has passed its proof load test but still requires further repairs.

GWR Railcar Project

Work continues, albeit at a slower pace in the winter, on this vehicle. Andy Webb has completed 17 drawings for the 57 new steel panels, while timber frame restoration continues spasmodically as and when time permits.

The group has recently benefited from the addition of two more regular volunteers, and would welcome more as restoration gathers pace. The upholstery has been removed from the car, and stored in "Theodora" which is now, of course, weatherproof. Much initial cleaning has taken place on the AEC engine units themselves, with several belts being replaced and a general inspection being carried out to assess what mechanical work will be required in the future.

As ever, help is always welcomed by the

group, who can be contacted through Chris Davies, c/o Tenterden Town Station.

Norwegian Locomotive Trust

An hydraulic test of the boiler, fittings, superheaters and main steam pipes revealed a leak in the left hand cylinder due to corrosion of the casting, although the cylinder liner itself is intact. The offending area has now been repaired but this problem has contributed to a delay in mounting a steam test. Additionally, much of the old copper pipework to injectors and clacks proved, on examination, to be in such poor condition that new pipe has had to be purchased and formed to fit; a time-consuming process.

Meanwhile, however, re-assembly has proceeded steadily. Vacuum and steam heat pipes are in place; the brake gear and its air cylinder are operational; all new running plates are well on the way to being fitted; the cylinder lubricator and associated pipework are being installed; new snifting valves have been made by Tony Baxter and are mounted on the valve chest; the air pump has been overhauled by John Hutt and is ready for mounting.

The cab itself was in such poor condition that it is to be totally rebuilt with new platework and already this work is under way masterminded by John Clark. It is intended to retain a wooden roof and we would welcome an offer from a joiner to undertake this task in due course - any offers?

It has to be said that this project is a few months behind schedule, but we remain committed to completing the work by the end of 1993, not least because the Railway will be in real need of another "vintage" type engine in 1994.

Finally, but crucially, it is estimated that the Trust needs to raise a further £2000 to finance the final cost of restoration. The need has only been revealed in the last few weeks, when, as stated above, hitherto unexpected costs have been incurred for new materials. Certificates of membership of the Trust are still available for £100 each, but any donation, however small, would be welcome, c/o the Norwegian Trust at Tenterden Station.

Carriage and Wagon

"Theodora" has remained in the shed since the last report, and now the outside has the appearance of a fully-restored Pullman Car, with all the transfer and lining in place. But although it gleams on the outside, the inside is



With exterior restoration nearly complete, "Theodora" basks in the winter sunshine outside the carriage shed at Tenterden on 13 February 1993.
(Doug Lindsay)

still an empty shell, with the ceiling being the only area worked on with new panelling and electric wiring. The running gear of the vehicle has not been touched and the vacuum brake cylinders and other equipment will require extensive overhauling.

SECR First Saloon No. 177 (84) has been in and out of the shed between other vehicle movements, and it is now sporting the beginnings of SECR crimson lake livery. Two broken saloon side lights have been replaced, one requiring new timber mouldings to be made to replace the rotten ones. The end steps and replacement end handrails have been fitted along with various other external items. The Headcorn end mouldings still have to be made and fitted along with several new droplights. Internally, Ken Lee has started to cover the ceilings with embossed wallpaper, one design for the central raised section, and one for the curved side sections. This will be painted in an appropriate colour to contrast with the dark varnished woodwork. The seats of the end compartment have been re-upholstered and re-fitted. Most of the plumbing fittings have been removed apart from the two small roof tanks which appear to have had the rest of the coach built around them. The wash hand basin has been re-plated along its top edge as before, and re-fitted complete with its tap unit that must be one of the most complicated castings in any carriage plumbing system.

District Railway Carriage No. 100 entered the shed at the beginning of December to have the old weathered varnish stripped from the bodywork and six new coats applied. Unfortunately there was a difficulty with the supply of the correct type of varnish so the

coach was not ready to journey to Rolvenden before the track was removed below Tenterden Town Station.

In December, PMV No. 1808 (Pullman) finally, two years after it was damaged, had its gangway bellows fitted by Paul Ramsden and Peter Palk, who had to struggle with the tangle of canvas and fittings to get the level adjusted correctly. All to no avail. 30 days later, the first move of the New Year sent the vehicle back to the carriage shed, its gangway and end wrecked. The other carriage that suffered this time was one of the Maunsell coaches which will require a replacement gangway. However, work has continued apace on the PMV and the roof and end panels are now repaired.

We have to report a change of management in the Department. Paul Ramsden has been in charge of Carriage & Wagon since 1965 and his efforts have been much appreciated. However, it is felt that with increasing pressures on the department both in terms of the volume of work and the time needed for its execution, a fresh approach should be adopted. In consequence, Paul has been asked to stand down as Manager and a replacement will be announced shortly.

Operating

Neil Sime stepped down at Christmas as Operating Manager following seven very successful years. During that time the Railway has expanded from running a two-train service on a few peak Sundays a year to performing this throughout the summer timetable and running a three-train service on peak days. Rolvenden signal box and the extension of the line to Northiam have also been overseen with

his quiet efficiency. Neil has organised the operating side admirably, including the rule book which has been completely revised from its previously incomplete, ambiguous and contradictory format. However, the management of the operating department has become a very demanding job, not helped by the large amount of extra legislation, apparently designed to "help" the railway run safely. Consequently, it has been decided to split the job into two equal and equivalent parts of Operating Performance Manager and Operating Standards Manager. Mark Stutchbury and Duncan Buchanan, respectively, are the occupants of these new posts.

Each Inspector now has an assistant and in addition some specific tasks are being allocated to individuals within the department. One of the biggest challenges is that the timetable never ceases to increase and with it the need to expand the number of operating grades. This is not a problem unique to us but must be addressed with increasing vigour. As the railway expands not only must more persons be found to run it, but the standards of the operating grades must rise because of the more complex operation. Standards that were quite adequate a few years ago, with one train operation and occasionally two, are now quite inadequate for the railway as it is and as it might be in the future. One example of this is the need to run four separate Permanent Way sites at once, where previously one work site would have been a complete use of resources.

The timetable for next year has been agreed and the working timetable will be published shortly and with it the annual call for all operators to help out, especially over the summer months. Any members interested are invited to contact Charlie Masterson at Tenterden Station, or telephone 0580 763645 in the first instance.

Permanent Way

The second week in November saw the start of the winter work programme with a replacement of the rotten metal sleepers between Newmill Bridge and Oxney Curve. This was completed in time for trains to run again the following Saturday. Ballast from the Rabbit Warren has been used on this section and track has been tamped. Some minor finishing off work remains.

A catch point has been installed at the Wittersham end of the, currently unused, up platform at Northiam. This will allow the stabling of stock at Northiam during the winter

and is part of the long-term plan for Northiam.

We have obtained a quantity of metal keys for the remaining stretches of 91¼lb rail. 91¼lb rail is now non-standard and very difficult to obtain parts for at reasonable prices. We have had to ruse wooden (oak) keys which rot quickly and therefore are not part of a maintenance-free railway. This small supply of 500 should tide us over until the Gazedown Wood straight is finally upgraded to 95lb rail.

In addition to the work of the main gang, the usual tamping work has been carried out in many places. The Wittersham to Northiam section has had attention, though because of the quality of construction it merely needs a maintenance tamp - about ten times quicker than on some other sections. The new Rabbit Warren, above Rolvenden's down outer home signal, has been attended to several times over the year and has just survived ready for the winter programme.

During December the culvert walls, for the old mill race near Rolvenden that runs under the Rabbit Warren, have been extended upwards by 3 feet. With no access for ready mix lorries the old shovel gang and mixer were put to work - just to tone up the muscles for the winter!

After the cancellation of all renewals last winter, due to financial constraints, some catching up is now needed. Early January saw the start of this very ambitious winter work programme. Firstly at the Rabbit Warren the formation will be renewed to eliminate the burrowing into the embankment by the rabbits that has proved so destructive. The formation will also be strengthened to allow higher axle weight engines. When finished, the whole of this straight will have been renewed with concrete sleepers track capable of being looked after with minimal maintenance. On 9 January work was started on the section from Tenterden crossing to the home signal, to replace all the wooden sleepers with concrete ones. Unfortunately the weather at the beginning of January was not kind and some of our recovery time has already been used.

The wettest November on record and a none too dry December have caused a culvert along the Sewage Works straight to scour out the original channel, leaving a hole across the formation. Drainage between the Tenterden side fields and the Newmill channel has been affected. The solution is to totally replace the

failed culvert, probably an original Stephens wooden support structure, with a proper pipe and concrete the collection and outflow pits.

It is evident, from the scale of work, just how much work is needed to keep on top of the current operating section of railway. Over 10% of the railway's turnover is being put into the Permanent Way this winter. Working parties commence at Rolvenden every Saturday and Sunday at 8.00 am.

Signals and Telecommunications

As in most departments, winter is the time for repair and maintenance work to be carried out.

Work on the Northiam signalling installation has ceased for the time being, due to lack of funding and other priorities that require the department's attention. However, Graham Richards has led a small team in completing the task of connecting the new trap point at the station end of Northiam No. 2 platform to allow coaching stock to be berthed there by arrangement, as will be done in February and March while the line between Tenterden and Rolvenden remains closed and trains run between Rolvenden and Northiam only. Apart from this, the department's main project at Northiam is on the telecommunications side, restiring and adapting the mobile telephone exchange to allow further upgrading of the Railway's internal telephone system, upon which ever greater demands are being made. This project is led by Nick Wellington with a team of technical assistants.

At Wittersham Road, overhaul of the signal box interlocking will be completed during February, and in the meantime outdoor work continues on the completion of the Engineers siding ground frame.

Maintenance work at Rolvenden is being dealt with as required by James Palk assisted by others as available. At Tenterden work is continuing on bringing into use the calling-on arm to allow movements to proceed directly into the platform line even when already occupied. Efforts are also being made to effect repairs to the overhead telegraph wires between Tenterden and Rolvenden, which suffered damage during the stormy weather of early January. It is also necessary to reinstate the wires removed during the civil engineering work at the rabbit warrens at the lower end of Tenterden bank, in time for the resumption of train services from Tenterden in April. As always, this work is masterminded by our long-

serving overhead linesman, Chris Lowry.

Stations

At Tenterden Town Station, work is in hand to re-locate the Printing Department, hitherto at Northiam, in the exhibition building adjacent to the video room. It is hoped this project will be completed by the start of the main season service. Alterations are also being made to increase the catering capacity of the Buffet, with additional work being carried out. Roland Meek has resigned from his post as station agent to concentrate his efforts on our Fire, Health & Safety Department, and we welcome new joint station agents, Philip Clark-Monks and Michael Matjasz.

At Northiam, apart from the removal of the printing machine, much work has taken place on the car park side of the station to improve the very wet entrance driveway which our passengers have had to endure on their walk from the car park. New drainage is being installed as well as a proper pedestrian pathway along the rear of the platform to connect with the main station entrance. As soon as the print plant has been re-located, work will commence on repairs, where necessary, and other associated alterations to the former parcels room to provide a light catering/sales area. Plans are still being formulated for this area, but there is no doubt that it will be an absolutely delightful place to take an afternoon cup of tea on a hot sunny day whilst waiting the arrival of your train!

Building

Work on the construction of the signal box base at Northiam is almost complete and for the time being there will be no further work until budgets are approved for the construction of a new or rebuilt cabin to sit on the brick base.

This winter has seen the department working at Tenterden on the provision of a new concrete floor in the former exhibition room to enable the printing presses to be installed later in the spring. The opportunity was also taken to concrete the floor of the adjacent video room. Once the former print room at Northiam is vacated, work will commence on its conversion to a catering/sales area, but it is feared that a considerable amount of repair work will be found to be necessary during the course of this project.

Further unscheduled work was required when Tenterden station roof was damaged by high winds in January, thereby putting further strain

on our small and dedicated Building department.

Finally, another of the outstanding jobs which should be complete by the time this *Tenterden Terrier* reaches members, is the provision of a new door to the lavatory store at Tenterden.

Forestry and Conservation

In the latter part of 1992, work was concentrated on Cysters curve and towards Northiam to improve vision for crews approaching the occupation crossing there.

Some attention was also given to the section from Tenterden to Cranbrook Road to enable our passengers to enjoy the splendid views on this section. However, our sensitive F&C Department have been careful not to "overdo" the clearance, and the results of their efforts are very rewarding to both the railway enthusiast/photographer and the conservationist alike.

Much work was done in connection with the major civil engineering work towards Orpin's curve prior to embankment renewal, and included preparation for new fencing to be erected once the embankment work is complete.

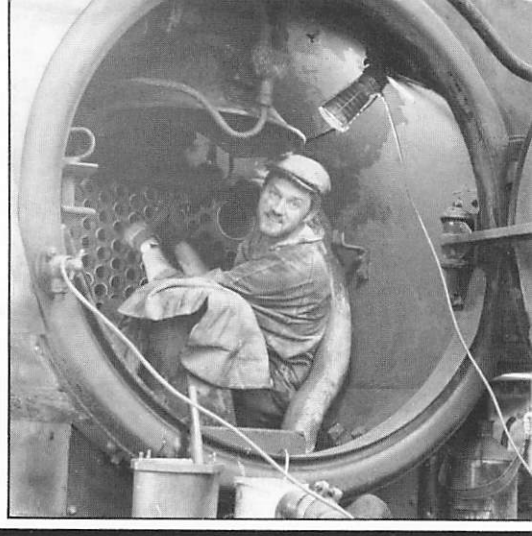
This year so far has seen work commence on the Rother-Hexden section to clear vegetation so that the rabbit warrens there can be dealt with before damage becomes too great.

Fire, Health and Safety

The start of 1993 has seen the purchase of our own Electrical Portable Appliance Tester which Mike Thorne has been seen using most weekends. The procedure for this has now been finalised and Mike is looking for persons willing to help him at weekends. Mike and Dave Green have also been busy advising Robin Dyce on the electrical systems at Tenterden. This leads on to the new appointment of Dave Green as "Electrical Standards Officer". Dave will be responsible for the safety and continuity of all the railway's fixed electrical systems and will be responsible to both the Quality & Safety and Infrastructure Directors.

As always the ongoing task of Fire & Safety prevention continues, especially in the light of so many new regulations that came into force at the beginning of this year.

Roland Meek has submitted to the operating department, amendments for inclusion to the rule book on action to be taken in the event



Lawrence Donaldson poses in the smokebox of Pannier 1638 whilst re-tubing, at Rolvenden, 25 July 1992. (N. Waddington)

of fire. He has also set up a course on Fire Safety, which will be taught to all staff, especially ticket inspectors, station staff, etc.

Management Co-ordination

Managers' meetings are held every 6 weeks or so under the chairmanship of Richard Osborn, who provides the link between managers and the board. There is a formal agenda and each manager has his turn to inform the other managers of his department's progress and future plans, and then face questions relating to his department from the floor. The meetings provide a vital link to keep all the departments aware of what each other is doing and thus prevents different departments working independently for the same objective. Any questions that require a board decision will be put to the board by Richard who will report back at the next meeting or sooner if necessary. Any member of staff can put forward questions to any manager, through the chairman of the meeting, providing this is done at least 7 days before the next meeting. The minutes of all managers' meetings are published on staff notice boards throughout the railway.

Commercial Operations

Our highly satisfactory passenger results are detailed elsewhere and make interesting reading. Particularly noticeable are the passenger per train ratios that reflect the limited seating capacity in the Victorian train, which has been one of our successes this year. Hopefully, the introduction of the SECR

Family Saloon into the set later in the year will help fulfil the demand for seats in this prestigious service.

Another very noticeable reaction has been the effect of running "authentic" trains, i.e. locomotives and coaches in complementary period liveries. This was borne out on the highly successful Enthusiasts' Weekend last November, when Saturday 7 November was 50's and 60's and Sunday 8 November was billed as "A Century on Rails".

For the Saturday we provided a real variety of 50's and 60's sights with the Class 25 "Tamworth Castle" and Class 14, D9525, sharing passenger trains of Mark I stock with the Pannier tank locomotive 1638, really believable historically correct combinations. Additionally, two more locomotives of the period made their debuts on the line hauling freight trains, our own Class 03, D2023, fresh from its completed restoration in BR green livery, and our guest Class 08, 08.108, in BR blue livery. Such is the current interest in these early diesel designs that we had very many telephone calls requesting details of their workings over the weekend, some from as far afield as Manchester!

The Sunday's "Century" was to demonstrate that we really can show the public more than 100 years of development on the railways, from our District coach of the 1860's through to our Mark I's of the 1960's, matched with our Terriers which date from the 1870's to our Austerities and Pannier of the 1950's, and with trains running in "matched" formations.

No. 14 "Charwelton" was in charge of the Victorian train, whilst the P Class and "Sutton", being in 1930's Southern livery, were hauling the Maunsell stock and period freight trains, with the Mark I's being handled by D.7672 "Tamworth Castle" and No. 24 "William H. Austen".

The passenger results from this fairly low-cost weekend were quite staggering; over 800 tickets were sold, nearly 100 of them Day Rovers, which represents nearly half of the whole year's total of Rovers! This demonstrates quite clearly that if we can provide variety, and we have proved we can, then we can attract more passengers from other sectors of society. Other spin-offs from this weekend were extraordinary takings in the shop and buffet for November, plus the bonus of extra press coverage in the national railway press by way of photographs and editorial. We believe that locomotive

variety and "authentic" combinations are one of the keys to our presentation, and we must try to make it the "norm" for, particularly, our peak service. Later this year will hopefully see the USA locomotive "Wainwright", and the Norwegian enter service, so providing yet more variety on the locomotive front.

The debut of No. 10 in its BR guise of 32650 on New Year's Day attracted a host of railway photographers and cameramen from the two leading railway video companies. The loco and its one coach train were extremely photogenic and there was much praise for the quality of the painting and lining out. With luck the coverage in the railway press will encourage enthusiasts who had previously written the line off to pay us a visit.

The 1993 timetable and information leaflet has been published and initial reaction has been extremely favourable. The timetable aims to make the optimum use of our varied collection of locomotives and rolling stock while the programme of special events offers more variety than ever.

We have the ever popular Family Fun Weekend over the four days of Easter 9-12 April. Due to the exceptional success of the "Thomas" weekend last year, two weekends of Thomas's Friends are scheduled for this year, on 26-27 June and 18-19 September. The "Good Old Days", another winning formula, has been brought forward to 14-15 August, whilst in July we are holding an Industrial Transport Weekend on the 17-18 as part of the English Tourist Board's Industrial Heritage Year. The "Century on Rails" idea has been extended to a two-day event this year on 16-17 October, and the 6 November has been reserved for a Diesel Day.

Notable in the new timetable are the trains scheduled to be run with vintage Hastings DMU cars, providing yet another experience for our passengers and volunteers to enjoy. It is hoped that the two power cars of the unit will be at the Railway in good time for driver training, followed by a trailer car a little later and before the main season commences.

Finally, whilst the engineering work was taking place on Tenterden bank, to fulfil our Sunday service in the Winter timetable a bus was provided to connect the Northiam-Rolvenden train service to Tenterden and even that was in the hands of a vintage Maidstone & District Atlantean double-deck vehicle, DH558, reg. no. 558 LKP, still sporting the old M&D livery of



Storm clouds gather as 6619 climbs towards Wittersham Road with a train from Northiam on 1 September 1992.
(D. Trevor Rowe)

dark green and cream with original gold logos - is it likely that some of our passengers came to experience both forms of vintage transport in one journey?

Catering

The closing months of 1992 saw the catering department as active as ever with the three major elements of service.

The Rother Valley Limited luncheon trains continued to run to capacity on Sundays during November to close an extremely successful season of this highly popular service. The volunteers who came forward week after week to ensure the morning coffee/luncheon/tea service on the Rother Valley service was provided in a style befitting our reputation, are to be applauded.

The Santa Special season again brought its crop of hardened volunteers to the fore to provide our inimitable service both on the train and in the much overworked Buffet, to close the year with record figures once again.

The Wealden Pullman train ran the usual Christmas Dinner services on the Saturdays prior to Christmas, plus the traditional Hogmanay Special on 31 December.

For 1993, some facets of our catering could see some change with the appointment of an overall Catering Manager. Interviews are in

hand at present with a view to an appointment being made prior to the start of the season, but it is certain that our tried and tested successes such as the Rother Valley Ltd, will stay at the forefront of our package. In fact, "Diana" is now in the carriage shed for a facelift, and will be outshopped in BR carmine and cream lettered "Restaurant Car", to harmonise with the existing set of that colour. Not only will the new legend be more authentic, but the whole set will give that 50's look, which has been so successful of late. Also, whilst in the shed, the interior will be re-varnished and necessary attention given to the catering equipment in order that she will enter service ready for another busy year of "Rother Valleys".

Shop

The final two months of 1992 saw, firstly, the usual quietness of November followed by the hectic Santa Special days in December. As a trial, it was decided to extend the sales area in an attempt to stop the crush in the shop which usually follows the return of trains into the platform. This extra space took the form of erecting the sales stall in the marquee at the rear of the main shop. It proved very popular, especially for pushchair pushers and children who were part of a group.

Despite the recession, shop sales for the year topped the magic six figure number during December. This has not, according to available

records, happened before. The only problem is that we have been asked not only to maintain, but improve on this figure for 1993! To do this is going to be a hard task and as usual more volunteers are needed. If you are able to help in any way, please contact Angela Clark-Monks at the station, Monday to Friday.

On a sombre note, during November we were advised of the death of John Sorrell, one of our stalwart volunteers who has manned the shop on the majority of Thursdays throughout the season for a good number of years. John also wore other hats for the railway, mainly delivering thousands of timetables and leaflets over the years to hotels and businesses in the Ashford district, as well as being an active member of the Ashford Group. He was fluent in several languages, and helped as an interpreter for our foreign visitors. Our condolences and thanks go out to his wife, Angela and his family.

January and February are always quite times in the shop, especially this year as there are no trains at Tenterden until April. We must now look forward to the 1993 season, when it is hoped to bring in some new lines as well as continue to stock the popular ones.

When you visit the Railway, please ensure that you can make time to browse around the shop. There should be something to please.

Membership

As forecast in the winter edition of the *Terrier*, the Railway had suffered a net loss of 106 members at the end of 1992. This is, perhaps, not as worrying as it seems. There was a surge of enthusiasm during the second half of 1990 following the opening of the Northiam extension with a net gain of members for that year of 274. Most paid additionally for 1991 at time of joining (which is the usual form for those joining during the second half of the year). When the time came to renew that initial subscription, the novelty had worn off; hence the above-average lapses for the year in question.

Nevertheless, the number of new members is down considerably on the previous year (280 as against 436) and a New Members drive is a must in the near future.

To sum up, at the end of the year Full, Associate and Honorary members totalled 1990 and Family 1011, total 3001. Included in the above figures were 151 Full Gold Card members and 423 members paying their

subscriptions under Deed of Covenant.

Printing Department

As detailed in our Stations report, the printing department, long a feature of Northiam Station, is on the move.

First established in the late 1960's in the former parcels room at Northiam, our printing department has soldiered on for over 25 years in a very low key way, but nevertheless in that time it has survived to now become a museum piece in its own right.

From its inception in our youthful early days it has provided the wherewithall to print fairly simple letterpress items such as business cards, handbills, posters, and tickets, much as the original printing works did at Rolvenden in pre-nationalisation days. Of course, being at Northiam, it is only in the past couple of years that our passengers have noticed the printing shop at all; before re-opening in 1990, Northiam was all but isolated from the rest of the line. However, through summer and winter alike for many years, Ray Bowden has come down on Sundays to the print shop, to produce not only essential items for the Railway and Area Groups, but also work for outside contracts as well.

There was always a steady stream of interested onlookers in those early days - the inquisitive day trippers who noticed the level crossing, or the light railway gricer wondering when the service would be restored to Robertsbridge again - and naturally once we had resumed services at Tenterden in 1974, Ray was able to re-direct these people, and hopefully they became regular passengers. The sleepy backwater of Northiam Station and its "Sunday printer" were then shattered by all the engineering works (and Anneka Rice!) which enabled the Royal re-opening to take place, and really put the station on the map again.

During the re-building of Northiam, much thought was given to relocating the Printing department, and it was felt that here was an "attraction" in its own right. Plans were made to move the whole unit to Tenterden, not only to release the room at Northiam for use as a much needed catering/sales facility, but also to enable more of our visitors to view this now disappearing craft of letterpress production.

The location chosen at Tenterden was the exhibition half of the building which also houses the video theatre, and a new concrete floor was laid to enable the heavy machinery

to be installed in the early part of this year.

The two main printing machines are a handfed Victoria of 1930's vintage and an Automatic Vertical Miehle of 1948, plus all the associated equipment including guillotines, type racks, etc.

It is hoped that all the equipment will be up and running by the start of the main season, providing yet another attraction as part of our "package" at Tenterden, and at the same time keeping that historic link with our unique past alive.

Bodiam Station Project

Following-on from the last report, the hope of repairing the original platform side parcels office door was frustrated when the condition of the door was fully explored. Likewise, the door to the waiting room from the platform was beyond repair so replicas for both have been made. These have been primed and fitted but await better weather before painting.

The guttering connections for each end of the canopy have been manufactured and fitted, but there are still persistent problems of rainwater penetration from the gulley between canopy and station roof. Following the very heavy rain in December which washed away part of the covering soil, we were surprised to find the entire back wall of the platform in place and complete, and apparently undamaged. We had assumed the wall had been demolished during the 1960's rather than buried.

The TRC has been unable to allocate a budget to allow work to proceed during 1993 so the team are relying on donations. Maidstone Area Group has generously given £250 and other sources are being explored. Since August 1989 when the project started, approximately £4,700 has been spent on clearing the site, weedkilling, planting, fencing and renovations to the station building. Of this, £3,900 has been provided by the TRC in annual budgets and £800 has been funded by well-wishers.

Although work may slow down, it is the intention to keep the project going so as not to lose all that has been achieved so far.

Museum and Archives

The last report on Museum and Archives was given in *Tenterden Terrier* No. 58. In that issue, reference was made to the milk churn labels in the museum collection, with the request for more information on the farmers concerned. We have since heard from Town Councillor

John Bates that E. Barton Bates was a cousin of his who farmed at Bellhurst Farm, Hobbs Lane, Beckley, from the 1920's until the early 1940's. The farm extended to the banks of the River Rother opposite the point where it joined the Potman's Heath Channel.

A number of new acquisitions have been made by purchase, donation or loan which are representative of six of the "Stephens lines" and another of his interests. The other interest is the Medway Navigation Company, for which Stephens was a consulting engineer for five years in the late 1890's, and the item is a document offering for sale shares in the company.

The first of the railways represented is the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway for which we have acquired an unissued "permit to ride in the brake van", a practice which was allowed before Stephens converted the line to a passenger carrying railway in 1908. The permit is similar in style to a free pass and has light blue covers.

A number of colourful documents relating to the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway have been made available to us on loan from the BR Property Board, Bristol, and these may form the basis of an article in a future edition of the *Tenterden Terrier*.

For the East Kent Railway we have a Great Central Railway 1922 goods invoice to Wingham Station, and a consignment note from Eastry Station dated 1923; for the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway a 1947 goods invoice for the carriage of stone to GWR West Ealing; and from the Snailbeach District Railways we have some interesting relics reported to have been recovered in 1956 from under the floor of the gangers hut by the then 80 years old last employee of the line. These are a pair of rather worn red and green signalling flags and a hand lamp.

Lastly, we have a number of K&ESR items.

A 1911 "Official Illustrated Guide to the K&ESR and the Rother Valley"

We have also acquired

a very nice coloured postcard of Tenterden Town Station which is postmarked 11 May 1912, and we have had six items of K&ESR paperwork from the 1920's and 1930's donated to the collection. In September, we were successful in bidding for a copy of the timetable poster dated "21st September 1953 until further notice", which must be the last timetable for the K&ESR before closure. It originated from Northiam Station.

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"Dover Castle"



"Dover Castle" heading a freight train at Rolvenden, 7 November 1992.

(Author)

Another "new" class of diesel locomotive arrived on the line just before the Diesel Day in November, in the shape of 08 Class Diesel Electric 0-6-0 shunter No. 08.108. This locomotive, built at Derby in 1955 and originally numbered 13174, spent some considerable time allocated to Willesden, before moving on to Cambridge and March. During its career it was re-numbered D3174, before becoming 08.108 under the TOPS numbering system. It was withdrawn in 1984 and sold to Dower Wood Grain Mill near Newmarket, where it continued to work, retaining its BR blue livery.

It was purchased from there by a consortium in the summer of 1991, and moved to Shepherdswell on the embryonic East Kent Light Railway. Much time was spent restoring the locomotive to a presentable condition, it having been completely covered with a layer of oily grain which had done much to preserve its BR blue livery! This type of locomotive had worked on the East Kent Railway after the withdrawal of the "01" class in the late 1950's, prior to improvements being made to allow

Class 73's to haul the coal trains from Tilmanstone in the 1970's until these finally ended in 1984 (see *Tenterden Terrier* No. 33). It was quite fitting then, that this locomotive hauled the first train from Shepherdswell to Eythorne since final BR closure.

The owners of 08.108 decided it should attend our Diesel Event in November, and duly transported it to the K&ESR, where it was named "Dover Castle" just before the event weekend.

It performed well on the freight services over that weekend and has been a favourite with many of our crews since, covering duties around Rolvenden yard, assisting with the major works on the Rabbit Warren, and also helping to shunt the winter service trains. During the next few months it is hoped that a complete repaint to black livery will take place in order that it can star on the "Thomas" weekends as "Diesel", and eventually be restored to near original livery carrying No. 13174 again.

Doug Lindsay

November Freight

Photographed by Mike Esau



... At Northiam. ▲

▼ ... Wittersham Road.

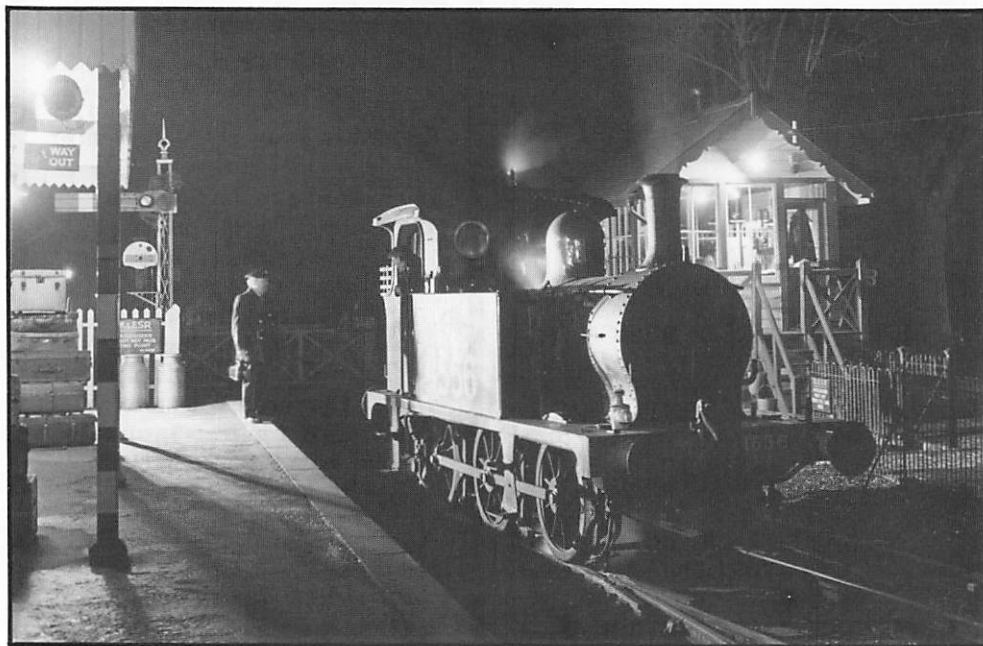


On 20th November 1992, a special freight train for photographers was chartered by John Titlow. This was the first charter train of its type on the K&ESR, and despite overcast skies a good time was had by all. This occasion could pave the way for other trains of this kind in the future.



... Near Newmill Bridge. ▲

▼ ... Light engine at Tenterden.



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Moving Along the Right Lines

Commercial Director, Mark Toynbee, outlines ambitious plans for expanding services in 1993

In the closing months of 1992 the Board undertook a long, hard look at the way the railway was being run to satisfy itself that the right level of service was being operated in order to maximise profit levels and hence provide investment funds for the future. A number of options were examined, ranging from a severe curtailment of services to an expansion of operations. With the aid of a computer, the effect of each option on income, expenditure, staffing and profitability was assessed. The fixed costs that the company incurs for just being there, and before it runs even a single train, are a staggering £219,000. The "quasi-fixed costs" incurred as soon as the company opens its doors and runs a train are an additional £99,000. This exercise showed that the first train of the season costs us £318,000, while each subsequent train costs only £169! The frightening level of overheads and statutory costs were a major consideration to be borne in mind and helped to decide upon the option chosen for the future.

It is, of course, possible to increase profit by reducing the level of trading activity. However, the marginal costs of running the railway are more effectively recovered from fares and any reduction in services increases the potential trading loss by spreading the fixed costs over fewer days unless these can be pruned substantially, and, in particular, the wages bill. This is not considered possible, even on the very minimal service examined, which would entail a weekends-only operation run entirely by volunteers. A "Beeching-style" axing of services was ruled out, for even a minimal operation requires at least two paid staff.

A reduction in services in the off-peak months of January, February, March, October and November was examined, but again with an overall worsening of the financial picture. It was agreed that to maintain the existing level of services requires at least three more paid staff since both the existing complement of employees and the volunteer workforce are severely overstretched. However, this would actually worsen the profitability of the business by increasing the fixed overheads. A modest expansion of services in the summer months, requiring a total of five additional staff, bringing the railway's total employees up to eleven, would actually improve profitability,

even allowing for only a modest increase in traffic. After a great deal of soul-searching and the presentation of the Board's findings to a meeting of the railway's volunteers and paid staff in November, it was decided to proceed with the expansion option, especially in the light of the railway's success in increasing business through 1992 when many of our colleagues in the tourism industry were facing a substantial fall in visitor numbers. The 1993 timetable is our most ambitious ever with 1230 scheduled passenger trains running on 185 days. The variable costs of running this service are £209,000, which is budgeted to produce a fares revenue of £351,000.

There is a degree of risk in the proposal, for external factors beyond our control could have a serious effect on our trading. The economic outlook remains blurred. Any change in interest rates will either boost or damage our business and the threat of unemployment reduces many people's expenditure on non-essential items. It is the role of the railway's Commercial Division to identify and maximise business opportunities, minimising the risk to the company. The expanded timetable offers scope for new initiatives and to take a fresh look at the way in which the railway is marketed.

The focus of marketing efforts in recent years has been to build up a strong family client-base, with a particular emphasis on a 40-mile radius of the railway, equating to about an hour's drive time. Our lack of dependence on foreign visitors, holiday makers and on the weather has ensured that our visitor numbers have not fluctuated to the same degree as other local attractions. This market has shown itself to be more resilient to the effects of the recession than others, but to increase overall visitor numbers, other "minority" markets have to be explored. A criticism has been levelled at those responsible for marketing the railway that they take no account of the railway's historic roots in their plans, and indeed, that they wished to turn the line into some poor man's EuroDisney theme park. Nothing could be further from the truth, but our railway would not survive if it geared itself only to the needs of the comparatively small number of Colonel Stephens followers - look again at those fixed costs! We have to serve the family visitor, always likely to form well over 80% of our

annual total, to earn the money to start to pay for other "niceities". 1993 will see a turning point in the way the railway is to be presented. Instead of increasing the number of coaches on trains to meet passenger demand, we are going back to our roots and will run a more frequent service of two-coach formations, hauled wherever possible by our small, historic locomotives which will overcome capacity problems while offering a service which is more faithful to the Colonel Stephens tradition.

The family market will not be sacrificed to satisfy the Colonel Stephens devotee, but there is a substantial shift in emphasis to present our activities in a more serious manner. The new timetable leaflet, of which 250,000 have been printed, attempts to put the railway in its historic context and appeals to the more serious transport enthusiast, in addition to the family looking for a day out. The delicious variety of our locomotive fleet is reinforced, and the staff at Rolvenden Locomotive Depot are committed to steaming a wider choice of engine, in preference to the diet of "austerity" tanks upon which we have relied upon in the past. The terrier number 10 "Sutton" has been restored by Peter Salmon to its British Railways Hayling Island branch identity as number 32650. The cast number and shed plates were provided by well-known steam photographer Geoff Silcock and the first steaming on 1 January saw more photographers on the line than we have seen for many years - watch the monthly steam magazines for an increase in the level of photographic coverage we enjoy. A series of events throughout the year, aimed at the enthusiast, and the correct pairing of the engines with the right rolling stock will help to attract increased numbers of visitors by showing off this varied fleet to best advantage. With no less than seven different classes of engine expected to be in traffic in 1993 including the welcome return to steam of the Norwegian Mogul, there is no reason why we cannot shed the "austerity and Mark One" image once and for all with all-round benefits to own morale, historic accuracy and to the balance-sheet. Additional motive power variety will be supplied by the ex-Hastings line narrow bodied diesel multiple unit, making a return to its home territory after several years on the Swanage Railway. To be based at Northiam, the unit allows for an earlier first train to be provided at an economic price than is possible with steam and permits some one-train service days to be stepped up to a two-train, hourly frequency, service at an acceptable price.

The Carriage and Wagon Department is playing its part with some refurbishment to the popular "Victorian Train" and an additional vehicle - the SECR Family Saloon - is expected in traffic by the early summer to boost capacity, thanks to the efforts of Andy Fielder. Our Mark One restaurant car, E1955, will receive a much-needed repaint and "out" goes the pseudo-Pullman livery (who are we trying to kid?) and "in" comes 1950's British Railways livery to match the rest of the set. Some changes to the interior will increase the flexibility of the vehicle to suit better its dual role as a restaurant and buffet car. The Wealden Pullman set sees some refurbishment before the start of the season, with the second of the two Maunsell coaches being reupholstered and the unsympathetic seating the car "Barbara" replaced with authentic armchairs and sofas. The employment of a full-time Catering Manager will allow train catering to make further steps forward to reach its full potential, building on the successes of 1992.

Ever conscious that not every household has access to a car and that travelling by public bus transport to our railway is not easy, a pilot bus link has been arranged to run on Sundays and Bank Holidays only from Robertsbridge to Northiam. The costs are being underwritten by our colleagues at Rother Valley Railway (East Sussex) Limited who will be looking to recover the costs from those using the service. It gives them the additional benefit of attracting visitors to Robertsbridge to view their activities and, to make the site more interesting; a historical display is being established. Members will be most welcome to use the bus, but regrettably privilege ticket entitlements cannot be used.

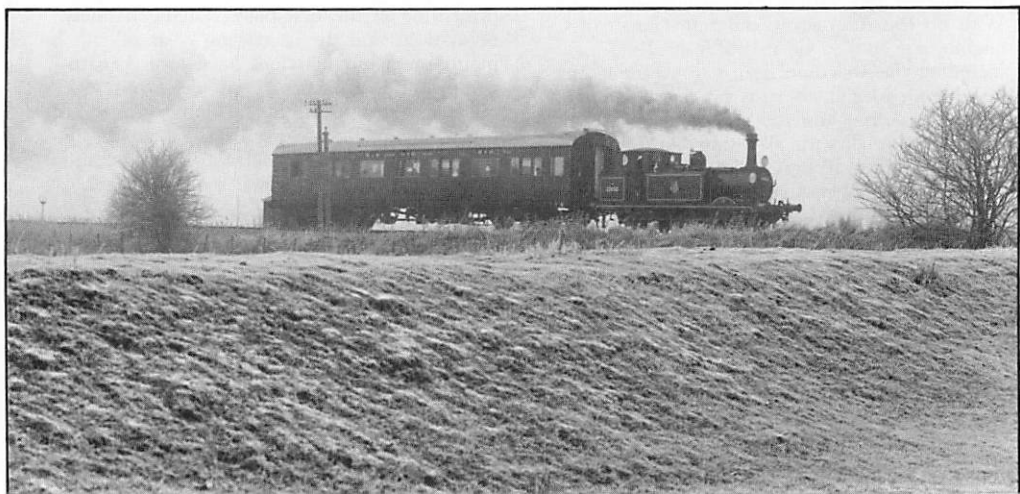
The Kent and East Sussex Railway has always possessed a charm of its own - indeed it was this charm that made the railway worth preserving in the first place. Changed safety regulations and the increasing costs of maintaining our activities have forced us to compromise on some of our ideals but 1993 offers us the opportunity to demonstrate that the Kent and East Sussex Railway really IS different by injecting back into our operation some of that charm which sadly has been lacking in recent years.

On NEW YEAR'S Day



... Only two to join at Northiam? ▲

▼ ... Perhaps Wittersham will be better?



Photographed by Robin Stewart-Smith

Terrier "32650" in newly-restored British Railways lined out black livery and complete with 71A (Eastleigh) shedplate was out on New Year's Day with a one coach train and an atmosphere very reminiscent of the line's last days of regular passenger services in the early 1950's. From all accounts, very few passengers were in evidence, but for once it didn't matter. Here was the Kent & East Sussex in all its glory as many knew and loved it.



... Oh, well, never mind. ▲

▼ ... It's off to bed at Rolvenden!



Cruising Down the River

For nearly forty years, from the opening of the Rother Valley Railway in 1900 until the outbreak of World War 2, "boating and fishing on the River Rother" featured on the railway's timetable posters as one of the attractions to be enjoyed by visitors to the neighbourhood. Today, the Rother appears to be the preserve of occasional anglers but it once had considerable commercial and leisure use.

Arising in the area between Mayfield and Heathfield in East Sussex, the Rother shares its valley with the Tunbridge Wells-Hastings line from just south of Stonegate station, through to Etchingham and Robertsbridge. Just to the north of Robertsbridge, the river turns to the east and passes under the old K&ESR at Northbridge Street. River and railway are never more than a few hundred yards apart until the K&ESR crosses the Rother, and the county boundary, at the Rother Bridge and river turns southwards. However, the railway remains on the Rother Levels (the area drained by the Rother and its tributaries) as far as Rolvenden station, crossing both the Hexden and Newmill Channels on the way.

For hundreds of years, sea-going vessels were able to navigate to Bodiam, 16 miles from the sea, and the seven miles to Smallhythe, then the port for Tenterden and situated on a tributary of the Rother. But with the inking (drainage) of the areas which gradually formed the Levels and the Romney and Walland marshes, the Rother silted up so that sea-going vessels could no longer safely navigate its waters. As the population grew and the demands of trade increased, the flat-bottomed Rother barge evolved and it is first mentioned in records of 1531.

The design of the barge was influenced by the changing conditions of the river but was probably little changed after 1800. Rother barges were built in Rye and the crews were generally drawn from Rye families.

A typical barge was about 55 feet long with a beam of about 12 feet and could carry a cargo of around 25 tons. The main features were small decks at either end under each of which was a cabin; the forward cabin for the crew's quarters and the rear one for stores. Between the cabins was an open hold about 30 feet long. The single mast was about 30 feet in length and situated well forward; the yard arm was about 18 feet to which was attached the

single, usually red, square canvas sail. When not under sail, a barge could be pulled along by rope while the second crew member manoeuvred with a long pole known as a quant. Smaller and larger versions of the Rother barge were in use, the largest being able to carry 40 tons of cargo. Typical cargoes consisted of timber, oak bark, beach, sand, stone, rape used as manure, grain, coal and coke.

The heyday of the barge was during the nineteenth century and up to World War One when there were over 20 barges in service. The names of some barges, "Wear", "Tyne" and "Tees", give a clue that much of the coal must have come by coastal vessels from North East England. Although most of the barges were of wooden construction, during the 1870's, four iron barges were built by the Rother Iron Works at Rye for Messrs Vidler, Sons & Co who owned the wharves at Rye and Newenden Bridge, these were the "Vulture", "Victory", "Vulcan", and "Viking".

After World War One, use of the barges declined and by the early 1930s only four were operational. One of these was the "Primrose", the last wooden Rother barge to be built, and also one of the largest with a capacity of 30 tons of cargo. By the early 1940's, the last barge had ceased trading and the surviving barges were left to become derelict. Recently, the "Primrose" has been recovered from Rye Harbour and has been taken to the Shipwreck Heritage Museum, in the Old Town at Hastings where it is being prepared for display.

Whether the barge traffic declined with the opening of the K&ESR is difficult to say. Certainly, the carriage of coal over long distances was easier by rail and Colonel Stephens advertised shingle and beach for sale at most of the stations, so competing with the barge traffic. There are no papers in the railway archives which might suggest contact between the K&ESR and the operators of the barges. However, the daughter of William Senior, station agent at Wittersham Road station in 1914, stated in a letter some years ago that she remembered goods being transferred between that station and Maythem Wharf by horse and cart.

If we know little concerning the K&ESR and the Rother barges, we do at least know a little more of Colonel Stephens' boating interests



Pleasure boats near Bodiam Castle, circa 1912.

(Colin Carter collection)

thanks to a recent correspondent.

In *Tenterden Terrier* No. 55, mention was made of the oars found in Northiam station loft. We are now informed that a 21 b.h.p. motor launch of wooden construction was registered in the name of "Holman F. Stephens of Tonbridge, Kent" in the Mercantile Navy List for 1916. She was named "Doreen" and was built at Hampton Wick on the Thames in 1915, possibly at Burgoine's Boatyard. The official number was 139146 and she was 29 feet 8 inches long by 6 feet 9 inches beam. As World War One was in progress, it is possible that the launch was requisitioned by the Government and this may explain why the oars were painted war-time grey when the boat was returned to Stephens.

The motor launch was kept below Vidlers Wharf at Newenden where Stephens had an

arrangement with the Manager, Mr Longley, for someone to be paid a small sum to keep an eye on the craft. Twice a year, Mr Gilbert, the Rolvenden carriage and wagon carpenter, went to Newenden to carry out routine maintenance on the "Doreen" and until recently, one of the trestles, stamped K&ESR, which had been left behind, still survived. How often Stephens used the boat is not known.

Strangely, the "Doreen" was still in the 1955 edition of the Mercantile Navy List and still registered in the ownership of Holman F. Stephens! If the boat had been scrapped, lost or sold, the registration certificate should have been returned or amended - so what happened?

Although Colonel Stephens, and later W.H. Austen, included the reference to "boating and fishing on the Rother" on the K&ESR timetable posters, no evidence survives of inclusive tickets for these activities. Detailed examination of timetables and guides gives no indication as to which stations gave access to the river so we must assume the day-tripper had to know the district. As there is no reference to it, we must also assume the "Doreen" was not available for hire but was kept for the exclusive use of Stephens.

The opening of the railway in 1900 gave easy access to the Rother from both Bodiam and Northiam stations. At Bodiam, motor boats plyed between there and Star Lock, just outside Rye. At Newenden Wharf, Messrs Vidler, Sons & Co maintained a small fleet of rowing boats for hire and similar facilities were

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A motor launch and rowing boats for hire at Bodiam Bridge, circa 1917.

(Colin Carter collection)

available at Bodiam and Star Lock.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith, the local author, would undoubtedly be familiar with the 1929 advertisement shown here. Writing of her childhood memories of trips on the Rother she says,

"In my youth, the crowning delight of summer was a trip up the Rother from Star Lock to Newenden. The memory of those days is fixed for me in heat and sunshine, and indeed I cannot suppose that my elders could have endured the expedition in any different sort of weather."

Miss Kaye-Smith recounts how the family set out at an early hour from Hastings by train to Rye; walked from Rye station the mile or so to Star Lock where a motor-boat just large enough for the family would be waiting. The boat would chug gently along, stopping only at the bridges for the crew to undertake bill-posting duties for local agricultural auctions, visiting circuses and the like. The writer finishes,

"Our trips usually ended at Newenden Bridge, so that we could take the train home from Northiam (via Robertsbridge), for though the river was navigable as far as Bodiam, the reeds grew so high that we could see nothing over them."

The advertisement mentions fishing tackle so it must be assumed that day licences for angling, either from a boat or the bank, were readily available, probably from the boat hirers. Fishing on the Rother was under the control of the Board of Conservators of the Rother Fishery District which operated from offices in Market Street, Rye.

Boating on the Rother had become popular during the Victorian period and continued to be so up until the 1920's. Thereafter, holiday-

makers wanted more sophisticated entertainment and the popularity of the river declined. The last motor-boat services operated from Star Lock by Bellhouse Trawlers ceased in 1934, a few years before the Rother barge disappeared from the river.

After World War Two, there was little interest in boating and the waterway became very quiet, left only to the anglers. In recent years there has been a partial revival of interest with a few cabin cruisers now stabled at Star Lock. Canoeists have also been using the quiet waters.

In July 1991, the first commercial boat service for over half a century was inaugurated, offering trips between Newenden Bridge and Bodiam with the motor vessel "Elsie May" (see *Tenderden Terrier* No. 56 for picture). The craft is a five-ton Sussex Beach boat built in the 1940's for sea fishing. Last year it was modified slightly and now sports a tall funnel through which the hot air from the engine is discharged. The boat has a maximum seating capacity for twelve passengers and the journey between Newenden and Bodiam takes 45 minutes each way. The 1993 services will operate from Easter until the end of September.

Although the carriage of bulk goods on the Rother will never return, with the "Elsie May" operating and the undiminished popularity of angling, we can at least say that "boating and fishing on the River Rother" is still alive.

John Miller

I should like to acknowledge the assistance of Colin Carter of Newenden and Henry Higgs of Sandhurst, and Leopold Vidler's "The Rye River Barges" as a source of information.

Further information on "Elsie May" services is available on 0797 280363 or mobile phone 0831 653862.

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Hay There!

What has hay to do with the K&ESR you may ask. In fact it played a part in an effort to help finance the railway during very hard times in the 1930's.

Each summer the platelayers and gangers, from the Tenterden, Biddenden, and Rolvenden lengths, armed with scythes, cut the grass between fence and trackbed, from Cranbrook Road to Headcorn. They then turned it several times with pitchforks until dry, and forked it close to the track for picking up.

The Hay Train was formed of the six K&ESR low-sided wagons still mobile, with Loco's 8 or 2, No. 4 running the goods and passenger service. At this time a railcar did the 7 am run to Robertsbridge, and the 11.32 to Headcorn. This left a loco for the Hay Train which was driven by Nelson Wood, or Jimmy Webb, with a platelayer firing, who on reaching the pick up destination, discarded his fire shovel, and joined in the loading with a pitchfork.

The driver dealt with the loco on his own during loading, moving the train as required, the platelayer changing his fork for shovel for the journey to Rolvenden. The loco had to be back in time to be prepared for the evening service to Headcorn.

The dump road at Rolvenden was shunted clear of scrap in readiness for the Hay Train to be put in for unloading the following morning, leaving time for the dew to dry before picking up the next day's load.

Stacking the hay was as labour intensive as loading it, as the stacks were very long, running at right angles to the track, this meant at least three men on the stack forking it from one to another the whole length.

After the stacks had settled, a Thatcher came and thatched them, surprisingly, as most of the K&ESR staff were expected to be adaptable.

The hay was advertised for sale by tender, with some being retained for the company's dray horse, stabled where the Tenterden Museum is sited, and looked after by Tom Beach, the drayman.

Haymaking ceased in 1937, much to the relief of the platelayers, on the Headcorn section.

Dick Hills, and his Northiam gang also helped by cutting Osiers (young willow growth, used for basket making). This was done between Wittersham Road and Northiam. After they were bundled and laid alongside the track, the Hay Train combination took them to be stacked and sold at Rolvenden.

Thanks to all you enthusiastic members for preserving the K&ESR, which holds many happy memories of working on it 60 years ago.

Regards to Jack Hoad, could we be the last two survivors?

Monty Baker



No. 3 "Bodiam", No. 7 "Rother" and No. 5 "Rolvenden" parked in the dump sidings at Rolvenden in front of the Haystacks, November 1932.
(R.C. Riley collection)

Letters to the Editor

Protecting our heritage

Sir - It is pleasing to read reports that the Railway is to cultivate its light railway appearance in the future by running more trains with vintage rolling stock, and I sincerely hope this new-found desire to recreate the Colonel Stephens atmosphere will be extended to other aspects of the line's ambience.

One matter which really deserves attention is the steady growth of "heavy" railway signalling which has spread like a fungus over the Tenterden end of the railway in the past twenty years. Although the old K&ESR did have signals, these were always minimal in number and were invariably worked from ground frames rather than signal boxes. The operation of signals and points from an open ground frame would not only be more prototypical, but also much more interesting to visitors, as may be seen by the fascination with which passengers at Northiam currently watch the operation of the points when engines run round their train at our current terminus. Despite this fact, I understand that yet another signal box is planned to be installed at great expense at Northiam, turning yet another station into a cheap copy of a Southern Railway station and removing the otherwise fascinating attraction of watching the levers move from the public eye.

As regards the actual signals, it would be grand to see the reappearance of one of the famous three arm signals for which the line was once famous, but enquiries to S & T staff along such lines have produced various lame excuses claiming that such signals would not meet DoT approval - even though an identical signal exists on the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway and was presumably approved by the relevant authorities there.

Signalling development on the Railway since 1974 creates the impression that it is governed more by the fortuitous availability of redundant equipment from elsewhere rather than by any desire to preserve the light railway image - or even by any real operational needs. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the high quality of the work carried out by the S & T department, could it not be directed more usefully into recreating the light railway ambience rather than converting the line into an ersatz branch of the Southern Railway? In this connection, perhaps a way could be found to replace some of the economical facing point

locks with which it was equipped throughout when the line closed in 1962, but which now remain in situ only at Bodiam.

One further point for consideration is that of the Railway's overall image. The Kent & East Sussex Railway is the only line in the country retaining its own identity - all the other preserved lines are simply branches of larger railways now defunct. Would it not be possible for at least some of the locomotives and rolling stock to carry the original K&ESR livery of blue for locomotives and brown and cream for coaching stock? At present the coaching stock carries a variety of liveries associated with other administrations, but none preserve the Railway's own livery - surely a grave error for a Company which claims to be in the preservation business.

Our Railway is unique in so many ways - should we not try to preserve that individuality rather than submerging it by transforming the line into just another Bluebell Line?

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

R.W. Doust

The Victorian Train

Sir - The success of the Victorian Train is very encouraging. It confirms that many of our visitors are interested in more than just a ride behind a steam locomotive, and are able to distinguish between a Mark I and a Birdcage. It is regrettable that they have had to wait so long for this opportunity especially when one considers just what a treasure trove is lying around on the railway quietly rotting away.

Apart from the obvious such as the Maunsells and various pre-grouping carriages, how many readers are aware of the existence of a complete 1880's set on the railway? I refer to the Woodchurch carriage and the Ashford bodies.

Both the Woodchurch and Ashford brake/3rds were built by the LC&DR in 1889 and were numbered 105 (3059) and 108 (3062) respectively. Although the 4 compartment all 2nd body, No. 2947 was built by the SE&CR some 12 years later it was intended to strengthen existing sets and was therefore constructed to the same pattern as the earlier vehicles.

Several railways have restored individual examples of 19th century 4-wheel carriages but

none can provide a complete train of matching vehicles. The present mixture comprising the Victorian Train is stretching historical licence a bit even allowing for the Colonel's practice of using other railway's cast-offs. However, the K&ESR did run several 3 coach sets of 4 wheelers, albeit of GER and L&SWR origin, so the "Chatham" set would offer a far more accurate experience of Victorian railway travel for our visitors.

Commercially this set could also prove very attractive to operate, offering 100 seats in a train of less than 90 feet long and weighing about the same as a single Mark I coach. Even adding the SE&CR family saloon to increase the seating capacity would not overtax a Terrier or a P class tank engine.

Burgess Hill, West Sussex

George Jones

The Loves of Joanna Godden

Sir - The film *The Loves of Joanna Godden*, filmed in 1946 and based on the novel *Joanna Godden*, by Sheila Kaye-Smith, was shown on Channel 4 TV in December. Following this, it is possible to add to the comments on the station scene (involving K&ESR No. 3) in Gordon Webb's article in the *Tenterden Terrier* No. 51.

The episode shows the arrival of Joanna's youngest sister, Ellen, on her way home after her first term at a boarding school in Folkestone. The extract from the novel quoted by Gordon Webb describes the meeting as taking place at Rye station, rather than at Brodnyx, the fictitious station on the Lydd branch serving the village where Joanna Godden farmed. In the film, however, the meeting took place at Brodnyx, and was filmed at Lydd Town, appropriately renamed for the occasion.

Whatever the reasons for using Lydd, details of the station - buildings, lamps, fences - can hardly have changed since 1905, when the film

was set. The only obvious alteration made by the Southern Railway is the replacement of the South Eastern Railway wooden post signals, and as the new signals are the early SR lattice-post type, they do not look out of place.

The "Terrier" locomotive, K&ESR No. 3 (not named at that period), is rather simply disguised by attaching plates with the letters "SE&CR" to the tank side sheets, arranged in an arc in the same style as the letters "K&ESR" which were undoubtedly underneath. It would be interesting to know why the SR was unable to provide one of its ex-SE&CR engines for filming.

The two carriages forming the train were ex-SE&CR 7-compartment bogie carriages, given period lettering. One can be seen to be SR 928; this was built as 2nd class No. 2318 in 1900 and converted in 1943 for use as a mess and tool coach (1930S) in an ARP repair train. In 1946 it was presumably no longer required for this purpose and was therefore available for filming. The other carriage cannot be positively identified but is likely to be the other carriage from this train (1931S, formerly SR 932 and SE&CR 2322). A detail that can be seen in the close-ups is the matchboarding in the lower parts of the sides.

Two continuity errors are apparent in the scene. Ellen asks a porter to take her box from the van, when neither carriage in the train had a guard's or luggage compartment. The other is that the train is seen pulling in to the down platform from the direction of Appledore. After passengers have alighted and boarded, Joanna is seen watching it continue its journey - from the up platform towards Appledore.

Sidcup, Kent

Tom Burnham

Mr R.W. Kidner has written to apologise for an error in the caption on page 38 of our last issue, relating to his article, The Ilfracombe Connection. The frames are of locomotive "Junio" and not "Rother".

No. 3 at Lydd for the filming of "The Loves of Joanna Godden".

(Colonel Stephens historical archive)



Parliament, Law and Politics:Part 2

The second and concluding part of an article in which Nick Pallant looks at some of the events of 1967 which surrounded the refusal of a Light Railway Transfer Order for the K&ESR.

On 21 October, Association members gathered for their first General Meeting following the refusal of the Light Railway Transfer Order. After an account of the Committee's initial moves, the names of those MP's who had agreed to support the Association were requested. A list of 26 individuals was read out.

After some discussion around the possibility of moving the project to another line - several locations were named - Mr. Cannon-Rogers suggested that an injunction be sought to prevent the demolition of the track. The Hon. Secretary, Robin Doust, was able to confirm this was already under consideration. Later, Peter Davis (who chaired the meeting) confirmed, in an emphatic pointer to the future, that the fight for the Kent and East Sussex Railway was far from over.

Around this time Robin Doust noticed that the Light Railways Acts appeared to place the Minister under an obligation to "encourage" light railways. Feeling that this was the last thing the K&ESR had received, he immediately sought confirmation that a second legal action, this time challenging the Ministry's decision, might be possible. When the Parliamentary Agent (Solicitor) who had handled the LRTO had recovered from his loss of composure at the notion (Robin can still see the amazement on the man's face) he checked in Halsbury's Statutes and agreed that there might, indeed, be something in the idea. Quite separately, it was suggested that the MoT's decision was questionable and that the association should sue the Minister. The Committee were receptive to any such ideas that would enable them to combat the Ministry's decision and began to take legal action seriously.

News was soon received that British Railways had indeed sold the track to a contractor and that lifting was due to commence on 30 October. A consultation was immediately held with Mr. Ian Percival QC, MP, and, on 27 October, he obtained an injunction restraining BR from lifting the track. A second hearing took place on 31 October with British Railways represented, and, after a three-hour legal battle, Mr. Justice Buckley continued the

injunction until the full hearing of the case. This would revolve around whether or not the contract signed between the Company and BR in March 1966 was at an end. The injunction remained in force when, in early November, the next, and particularly public, stage of the campaign was reached.

By November signatures on the petitions organised by the Association were approaching the 10,000 mark and 40 MP's from all three main parties had contacted Mr. Deedes (MP for Ashford) following letters from K&ESR members. Many of these MP's had written to the Ministry only to receive "severely uncompromising" replies. Mr. Deedes now felt there was sufficient interest to raise the matter in the House of Commons and asked the Speaker for an adjournment debate. (A Parliamentary device allowing matters of public concern to be aired at the end of other business without actually being put to the vote.)

The debate on the K&ESR took place in the grim week which had begun with the derailment of a Hastings demu at Hither Green with the loss of 49 lives. This tragedy, which included the deaths of several people who had lived near the Rother Valley, put our problems into some kind of perspective. The accident, nevertheless, lent a sombre background to the evening of Tuesday 7 November when a number of members of the Association gathered at the Palace of Westminster to hear the matter raised in Parliament.

The writer has long had an interest in politics but this has, usually, stayed in a separate compartment from steam railways. To find one suddenly juxtaposed one on the other was a little strange! The adjournment debate began at 10.15 pm. Mr. Deedes began by briefly recounting the course events had taken and the reasons for the refusal of the Light Railway Transfer Order.

He continued that he and a great number of other MP's had found themselves involved due to the enthusiasm of the Association and that the way the Committee had swung into action had persuaded him that the K&ESR was



No.10 "Sutton" crosses at Cranbrook Road with a members' AGM Special, 21 October 1967. No doubt such an intimate scene would be considered far too dangerous today.

(H.J. Hare)

"surprisingly well-equipped". He had practically had to open a separate office to deal with the correspondence and believed that the Parliamentary Secretary (at the Ministry of Transport) had had to do the same. Mr. Deedes was persuaded that the Association meant business.

Ashford's MP then came to the issues central to the affair, possible road developments in 10 or 20 years, the Association's suggestion of temporary LRTD and the dispute about the level of road traffic. On finance, he referred to the offer of an Association member to stand surety against contingencies and mentioned that the assets of the K&ESR were hardly negligible.. The Association's replies had, however, fallen on deaf ears.

Later, Mr. Deedes returned to what he saw as much the most important issue, the objections raised after, and not at, the Inquiry - the weighty arguments, as they seemed to the Ministry, roads, bridges, and the financial liability of the Company. Nor had the Ministry been willing to discuss these matters with the Company since the inquiry. The Ministry could have made an order subject to conditions. On the evidence offered the inspector thought that, broadly, a case had been made out for re-opening. Of the three main objections advanced after the Inquiry to justify a contrary decision, two were irregular and one was not even discussed.

Mr. Deedes was of the opinion that the

Ministry had had bad luck. Nine times out of ten they could have got away with the decision but had been surprised by running into some rather determined and competent people who "have set about the matter and . . . have aroused the interest of about 40 members, at least of this House . . . that is really what democracy is all about".

He ended by saying that he thought the Ministry had behaved shabbily and hoped that it would have the sense to think again.

John Morris, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport rose to replay. A number of those who were present, including the writer, recall that this seemed to be delivered in a dismissive and sometimes patronising tone. Mr. Morris spoke of some of the details of the campaign since September before stating:

"No doubt all this is wholly admirable in terms of democracy, and I congratulate the enthusiasts. As the Right Hon. Gentleman said, this is what democracy is all about. The case might usefully be studied by those who take the view that the people of this country are helpless pawns in the hands of the bureaucracy. However, in our admiration for the pluck and determination of the Right Hon. Gentleman's constituents, we must be careful not to get the basic issues out of perspective."

"The main objections were all discussed at the inquiry." (This was, of course, hotly disputed.)

"At all events, I want to try to remove some of the emotional irrelevance which has become thickly encrusted round the affair, and to set out clearly what the Minister's position is . . . why, in spite of all that has been said during the last two months she does not propose to reverse or modify her decision."

Mr. Morris pointed out that the Minister was empowered to make a decision on the basis of facts found out "both by local inquiry and such other means as she thinks necessary".

Nevertheless, running a light railway was not a basic constitutional right. The case for being allowed to do so had to be established in the light of all the circumstances. It was not the Minister's function to rubber stamp recommendations and there was no specific provision which allowed for the granting of a temporary LRTD. He then raised issues which were, in the following two years, to have far-reaching consequences both on the course of dealings with the Ministry and the Railways Board and also on the internal "politics" of the K&ESR.

Mr. Morris stated that as early as May 1966, the Company had been warned, in writing, that proposals to reopen level crossings over main roads were bound to raise grave objections. Reopening the line could only be justified if there was enough of a public transport need to outweigh the disadvantages. He alleged the Company chose to ignore these warnings. This raised the question of how much weight should have been attached to the letter of May 1966. Much of its text stated points which were already widely known, or anticipated, and there was indeed a paragraph referring to the possibility of "serious objections" regarding the level crossings. It ended with a rather ambiguous sentence which might, in retrospect, have been considered sinister. It was the suggestion that the K&ESR might wish to take the Ministry's points into consideration in deciding whether or not to enter into any financial commitments (on capital expenditure) in advance of the decision.

Then Big Ben struck 10.45 pm and the Deputy Speaker adjourned the House.

Out in the gloomy November night a sense of anti-climax mingled with bitter disappointment that the Ministry of Transport showed no sign, even then, of softening its position. Across the river, Waterloo worked on bereft of the steam locomotives which had vanished a few months earlier. In August the following year British

main line steam would come to an end.

Already, in the south, railway enthusiasm was entering what many would come to regard as a dreary and characterless period which would, despite preservation successes elsewhere, last until the "Return to Steam" programme began in 1971. It was not an auspicious background for the course on which the Kent and East Sussex was now set.

A further meeting with Mr. Percival took place on 15 November. The QC had been present during the adjournment debate and had come to the conclusion that it was possible to legally challenge the Minister's decision. It was, however, no straightforward case and costs would be considerable.

The action centred on the legal concept of "Ultra Vires" - the exceeding of one's powers. Authority already existed to operate the line and the Rother Valley Railway Company has merely applied to have those powers transferred to itself. The Minister had, in turn, powers to grant, amend, transfer or refuse Light Railway Orders. The Ministry had, allegedly, treated the RVR's application as if it was for the construction of a new railway.

With the Kent and East Sussex Railway now taking up the time of Parliament and the Courts it seemed a very long way from sunlit afternoons on Tenterden bank or frosty mornings on the Rother Levels. It seemed even further from three sixth-formers in a Maidstone grammar school who had first thought of the K&ESR project.

As things turned out, the K&ESR eventually lost *both* Court cases but this at least had the effect of delaying matters until there had been a change of heart by the Ministry. This shift in the K&ESR's fortunes was aided by the Association's decision to aim for a steam hauled tourist service only, to give up hopes of freight and local traffic and, eventually, to abandon, for more than 20 years, any prospect of reopening the line between Robertsbridge and Bodiam. None of this, which led up to the birth of the Tenterden Railway Company, was achieved without much heart-searching and not a little acrimony. But that, as they say, is another story . . .

(concluded)

The above article is abridged from the proposed book "Holding the Line - Preserving the Kent and East Sussex Railway".

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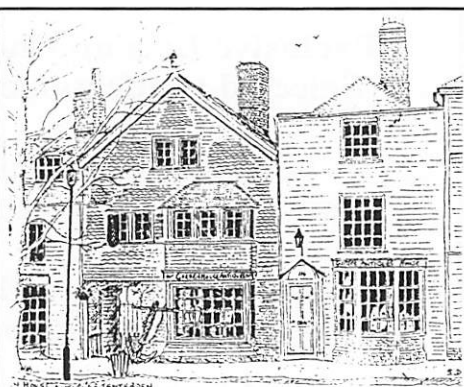
23rd January - 20th February - 12th March*
 9th April - 14th May - 11th June*
 9th July - 6th August - 10th September*
 8th October - 5th November
 *3rd December

* These Sales are Special Evening Events
 commencing at 4.30pm
 All other sales commence at 9.30am

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An analysis of passengers carried in 1992

1992 was eminently satisfactory in terms of total numbers of passengers carried; a 9% increase during a period of unparalleled recession shows that the Railway has lost none of its attractions, although it has been necessary to run additional trains to achieve the increase; the average loading per train has remained almost constant at 68. The number of Santa bookings at 11,791 was 7% down on the previous year, but June figures were up by a remarkable 30% due to the success of the Friends of Thomas Weekend. Schools visits dropped by 10% to 2387 - it would be nice to see these back to their former levels. The Wealden Pullman - up by 27% - responded to the increased capacity of 72 possible covers, but was still below the records achieved in the

late 1980's when 2500 or more diners were accommodated.

Although Tenterden continues to account for most of our traffic, the numbers joining trains at Northiam rose by 11%, a welcome improvement. 43 joined trains at Wittersham Road - no doubt tickets issued from this station will be regarded by collectors as a rarity in the years to come!

Once again, thank you booking clerks for your effort and dedication; we look forward to a challenging 1993.

John Emmott
Chief Booking Clerk

	1991				1992			
	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avg per Train	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avg per Train
January	4	20	558	28	4	20	652	33
February	4	20	508	25	4	20	796	40
March	8	56	3992	71	5	29	1595	55
April	13	81	4724	59	14	96	7253	76
May	15	106	6343	60	16	130	7254	56
June	18	96	7013	73	16	86	9101	106
July	31	161	8974	56	31	160	9360	58
August	31	204	14101	69	31	222	16421	74
September	20	114	6083	53	19	126	5843	46
October	9	54	2075	39	9	72	2103	29
November	5	27	1037	29	9	50	2099	42
December	13	84	13061	156	12	82	12111	148
	171	1023	68469	67	170	1093	74588	68

Wealden Pullman/

Charters	1544	1961
Privileges	4642	4973
Totals	7455	81522
Bookings from:		
Tenterden	57917	62781
Rolvenden	262	198
Wittersham	-	43
Northiam	8675	9610
On train	1615	1956
	68469	74588

Winter Works

Photographed by John Liddell



Immediately after Christmas, work started on two projects to improve the track between Rolvenden and Tenterden. These included re-sleepering the line with concrete sleepers on the section from the home signal up to Tenterden crossing, and rebuilding a 300 yard section of line commencing



*Re-sleepering at
Tenterden.*



*Track renewal prior to
digging out.*

from Orpin's curve in the Tenterden direction. This latter task is of major proportions, necessitated by damage caused to the infrastructure by rabbit warrens, which could have resulted in total collapse of the embankment. Firstly, the track itself was dismantled and then contractors and volunteers together removed large sections of the earthworks. Specialist materials have been inserted into the foundations to stabilise the embankment and eliminate the rabbit problem. The works were due for completion by the end of February, including the laying of concrete sleepers throughout, and some welded flat bottom track.



Specialist netting to stabilise the new embankment.



Embankment removal using contractors' plant.



Preservation Plans - 65 Years Ago

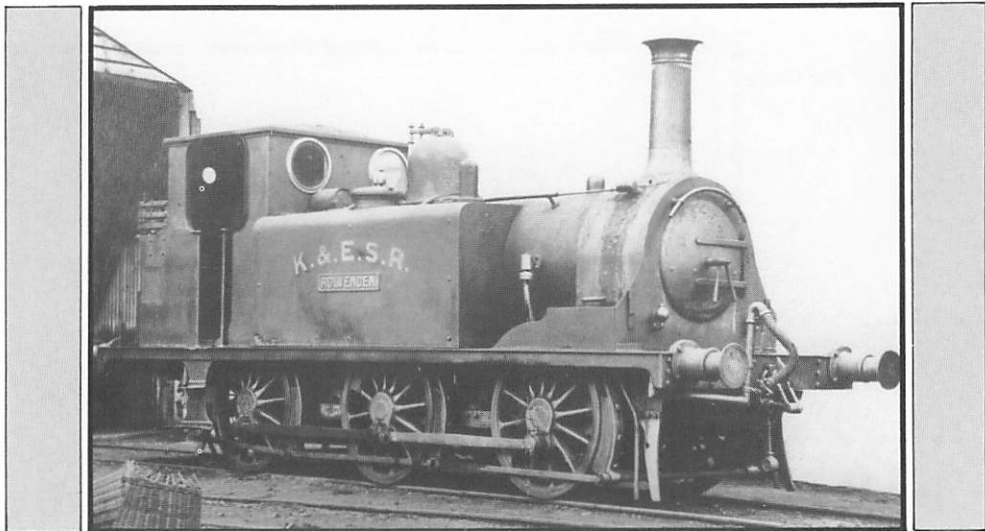
Of the two Brighton Terriers once owned by K&ESR, we tend to think of No. 3 "Bodiam" as a survivor, rebuilt twice by the old company, seeing much service with British Railways and now enjoying an honourable old age in the preservation era. No. 5 "Rolvenden", on the other hand, was laid aside by 1932 and gradually stripped of useful parts, before the remains were cut up for scrap in 1938. However, if proposals aired in the *Railway Magazine* of 1928 had come to fruition, the situations of the two Terriers might have been reversed.

At that time, and indeed for several years longer, the *Railway Magazine* had no Letters to the Editor column as such. Instead, correspondence from readers was included with short news items in the Pertinent Paragraphs section. Many names well known to railway enthusiasts appeared in Pertinent Paragraphs, amongst them C.R. Clinker, R.W. Kidner, Charle E. Lee, G.T. Moody and P. Ransome-Wallis. Another frequent writer was O.J. Morris of Beulah Hill, Norwood, who took excellent photographs, particularly of London, Brighton & South Coast Railway subjects, and regularly advertised his "burnished sepia tone-cards" for sale in the *Railway Magazine*.

It was in the April 1928 issue that a Pertinent Paragraph invited the views of readers in

regard to the preservation of a Stroudley "Terrier", in response to a suggestion by O.J. Morris, who had written "I am now stimulated to action by a recent renewal of acquaintance with the most noteworthy of all these engines, old No. 71, 'Wapping', at present spending its old age on the Kent & East Sussex Railway as No. 5, 'Rolvenden'. This engine, built for working the South London line, but, at first, drafted to the East London line then just opened, was the first of the class, and, happily to relate, the one nearest in condition to original. She was built in October 1872. I should now like to appeal to all 'Brighton' enthusiasts, and, indeed, to all who are interested in the preservation of old engines, to consider whether this famous 'Terrier' should not be saved from an ultimate scrap-heap. To save some of the other engines of the class would mean an extensive re-conditioning, as they have undergone a considerable amount of rebuilding; moreover, they lack the interest that 'Rolvenden' possesses."

More recent investigations, particularly by the late Donald Bradley, have shown that O.J. Morris was not strictly correct in claiming "Wapping" as the first "Terrier". Both "Wapping" and No. 72, "Fenchurch", left the erecting shop at Brighton Works on the same day, 28 August 1872, and "Wapping" was the first to make a



No. 5 "Rolvenden" outside the shed at Rolvenden, circa 1925.

(O.J. Morris)

trial journey, on 2 September. However, this revealed a fault in the cylinders, and while these were being replaced, "Fenchurch" entered revenue-earning service, on 7 September.

Considerable interest was aroused by O.J. Morris's proposal, and several letters are mentioned in the following issue of the *Railway Magazine*, for May 1928. Amongst them is one from C. Hamilton Ellis, who, according to his essay, "The steel byway", had a particular affection for the Kent & East Sussex as one of its regular passengers, six times a year. He wrote "I fully realise that it is impossible to preserve every locomotive that recalls memories of one-time fame; indeed, there are many that have claims in this respect, such as Johnson's 'Single', Beattie's well-tank, Drummond's old single on the late Caledonian Railway, formerly No. 123, to say nothing of many 'fine old gentlemen' that have now joined the ranks of the scrapped. Surely, however, something might be done to save a 'Terrier' from the great majority . . . The Kent & East Sussex Railway still possesses what is probably the oldest passenger carriage in service in Great Britain, so perhaps a place may yet be found for the old 'Rolvenden'." It is interesting that examples of each of the three other classes mentioned by Hamilton Ellis have also been preserved.

Further comments followed over succeeding months. In June, Mr Malcolm N. Niven pointed out that "Brighton" was a gold medal engine at Paris in 1878, and the first engine to demonstrate the Westinghouse brake in France, and reported seeing a "Terrier" in its original form shunting at Littlehampton the previous year. Which locomotive he saw is an interesting question. The regular Littlehampton Wharf shunter at this period was B653, later sold to the Weston Clevedon & Portishead where it became No. 4, but this had been rebuilt as class A1X with an extended smokebox in 1912.

In July, L.E. Brailsford wrote "it will be fresh in the memories of your readers that the Stephenson Locomotive Society was largely responsible for saving the equally famous 'Gladstone' last year, and perhaps the time is hardly ripe for them so soon to embark on a similar venture. Moreover, they cannot confine their efforts in this direction to one railway alone. To offer a few suggestions, I would propose Mr Morris gets in touch with the railway, as to the likelihood of their making a gift of old 71 to the nation, or alternatively, their most favourable terms, the cost of any small amount of restorations

required, and as to the willingness of the authorities of the Science Museum, Kensington, or of the Crystal Palace to find her a permanent home. On account of her small size this would not be difficult.

"There should be many among your readers, including those belonging to the various mechanical clubs, societies, etc., including individual members of the Stephenson Locomotive Society like myself, who would be keen in making some small effort to preserve this and other noteworthy examples of British locomotive practice."

"Gladstone", the famous Stroudley express 0-4-2, had been condemned by the Southern Railway in 1927, when the Stephenson Locomotive Society raised £140 for the cost of restoring it to its original condition and livery at Brighton Works. It was originally intended that "Gladstone" should be displayed at the Science Museum in South Kensington, but space was not immediately available and so the engine was loaned to the LNER museum at York, a temporary arrangement that has lasted 66 years. This was probably the first example in the country of an amateur group raising funds for the preservation of a railway engine.

It would be interesting to know whether O.J. Morris ever approached Colonel Stephens to ask him to give No. 5 to the nation, and if so what reply he received. It can hardly have been favourable, as by 1932 "Rolvenden" was out of use and parts were being removed to repair "Bodiam". Mr R. Dyson, who visited the K&ESR in 1937, reported that "Rolvenden" was partially dismantled, and the remains finally disappeared in the scrap drive of 1938.

This was not the last opportunity to preserve a "Terrier" in its original state, however, as the Brighton Works shunter, 380S (built in 1880 as No. 82 "Boxhill") had never been rebuilt with an extended smokebox, and in 1947 the Southern Railway decided to restore this locomotive as near as possible to its original condition and repaint it in Stroudley livery. It was kept at Nine Elms and displayed on various special occasions in the Southern Region. After a period of storage at Tweedmouth, it was returned south for display at the Museum of British Transport, Clapham, in 1963 and is now in the National Railway Museum at York.

Extracts from the *Railway Magazine* are quoted by kind permission of the Editor.

Tom Burnham

Book Reviews

The Sheppey Light Railway, by Brian Hart. Published by Wild Swan Publications, 104 pages of text and captioned photographs. Soft covers. Price £10.95.

Brian Hart's charming and eloquent study of the Sheppey Light Railway, the first authoritative work on this line, encompasses not only the history of the Railway but many of the features of the Island itself - a remote place which never quite made it in the dash to attract the holiday maker to the Kentish seaside at the turn of the century. From all accounts Sheppey has become both treeless and significantly less attractive with the passing of years, but the photographs are highly evocative of its Edwardian heyday and make the book an invaluable source of reference for those who wish to explore the Island for themselves, whether or not they have a particular interest in its transport. Passengers were always sparse, but the Sheppey Light Railway certainly justified its existence as a carrier of freight and the distinctive rolling stock and station buildings in the "Stephens" style gave it the feel of an independent line although to all intents and purposes it never was. Those with a sharp eye to detail will spot H.F. Stephens, the line's engineer, complete with bowler hat, by the station canopy in the photograph of the opening ceremony in 1900 on page 18 of the book. Could he have envisaged that nearly half a century later the line would be passing into history?

With eight stations in as many miles, the light railway certainly sought out passengers wherever it could, including the deserted Hartly Road, described by Arthur Mee as "a place of solitude . . . the lanes are so quiet that fifty sparrows will fly up from the roads in front of a car." Probably the best book on a light railway theme in 1992.

P.D.S.

Southern Steam in the South and West, compiled by Mike Arlett and David Lockett. 160 pages of captioned photographs and text. Published by O.P.C. Hard covers. Price £20.

This is the third volume of photographs to be published from the collection of the late Norman Lockett, selected and captioned by Mike Arlett in conjunction with Norman's son.

The book is in two parts, the first of which covers the main line from Southampton along the coast to Bournemouth and Weymouth, and also the Swanage branch. The second part features the main line from Salisbury to Exeter and the Lyme Regis branch plus a few photographs taken in the Bere Alston area although, somewhat tantalisingly, not the Callington line, which is merely referred to in passing. Most of the photographs were taken in the 1950's and 1960's and are of high quality, beautifully reproduced to the standards that one has come to expect from the renowned publishing house of O.P.C. The colour reproductions, of which there are ninety four, are interesting for their variety and serve to show how much technology has moved ahead in this area over the last thirty to forty years since Mr. Lockett was at work. There are some lovely views of the Lyme Regis branch in black and white, and colour, an obvious favourite subject of the photographer, compilers and indeed the reviewer.

P.D.S.

Southern Railway passenger vans, by David Gould, published by the Oakwood Press, 128 pages of text with 66 photographs and 21 scale drawings. Soft covers. Price £5.95.

It is only in relatively recent years that carriages and wagons have begun to be studied in the detail that locomotives have long received, and this book should provide all the detail that could be required on the vans and other passenger-rated stock of the Southern Railway. The Southern utility van was such a familiar sight for so long that it comes as a shock to realise that it is now practically extinct on the main line. From a prototype built by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway in 1919 (and now preserved on the K&ESR), a family of designs evolved - 4-wheeled and bogie, with guards' compartments, and with end doors - until the last appeared under British Railways in 1955. Although most variants bore a distinct family resemblance, there were many detailed differences, and these are all described. The book also covers SR special cattle vans (horsebox-like vehicles, intended for prize cattle rather than the common herd), milk tank wagons and Post Office vans. In addition to the many photographs (which include a number of detailed views for the benefit of model-

builders), each class of vehicle is illustrated by a scale drawing by Mike King. Although it has not been possible to reproduce these drawings to a standard model railway scale, they include dimensions allowing them to be re-scaled to the desired size.

As we have come to expect from this author, much emphasis is placed on the use of the vehicles in traffic, and this brings home the sheer variety of traffic carried by the railway, not just in the 19th century but as recently as the 1970's - utility vans carried milk, newspapers, bicycles, racing pigeons and elephants. Reference is made to the use of luggage vans in hop-pickers' special trains in the 1950s, but it would be interesting to know if they ever reached the K&ESR during its independent life.

Finally, details are given of some of the many SR passenger-rated vehicles which have been preserved. As far as those on the K&ESR are concerned, the book evidently went to press too early to include the arrival of luggage vans 1213 and SE&CR 132 - the history of the latter, the prototype "Cavell" van, was surveyed in the last *Tenterden Terrier* - while luggage van 1248 (K&ESR No. 80) did not have its body removed, although this had been intended at one time. The author states that 4-wheeled guard's van 442, preserved on the Bluebell Railway "has seen use on passenger trains", but does not mention that the K&ESR example, 440, was also used for this purpose for a period from May 1979.

T.G.B.

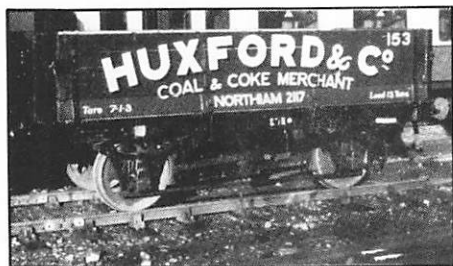
The Selsey Tram by David Bathurst.
Published by Phillimore & Co. 134 pages.
Hard covers. Price £11.95.

The author, in his introduction, gives three aims in writing this book; to inform the railway enthusiast; to interest the general reader or local historian, and to provide a guide book for those who wish to find evidence of the Tram for themselves. In all three objectives he undoubtedly succeeds.

The book has a large page format and is well laid out with 99 illustrations in the text. The photographs are very clear and many appear to be published for the first time.

The Selsey Tram was the third railway scheme to be built with which Holman Stephens was involved as engineer. The author outlines the origins of the line and gives a very readable account of its history from opening in 1897 until its sudden closure in 1935. He includes many anecdotes about the Tram and these help to make the story come alive. Unfortunately, some errors from his acknowledged sources are perpetuated, but these are irritating rather than fundamental. The author lives in the Chichester area and the benefits of his knowledge of the locality are evident in the guide book aspects of the text. The book is good value at the price and is to be thoroughly recommended.

E.J.R.M.



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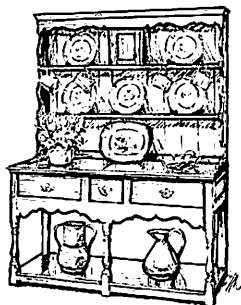
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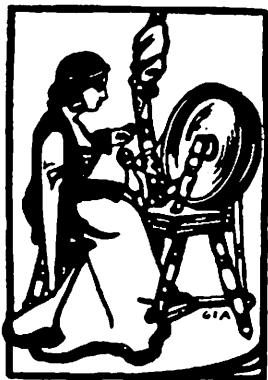
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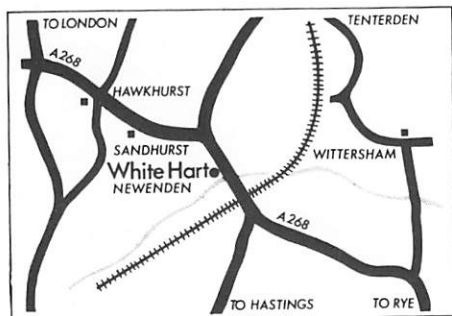
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