

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 63

Spring 1994



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

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered charity 262481

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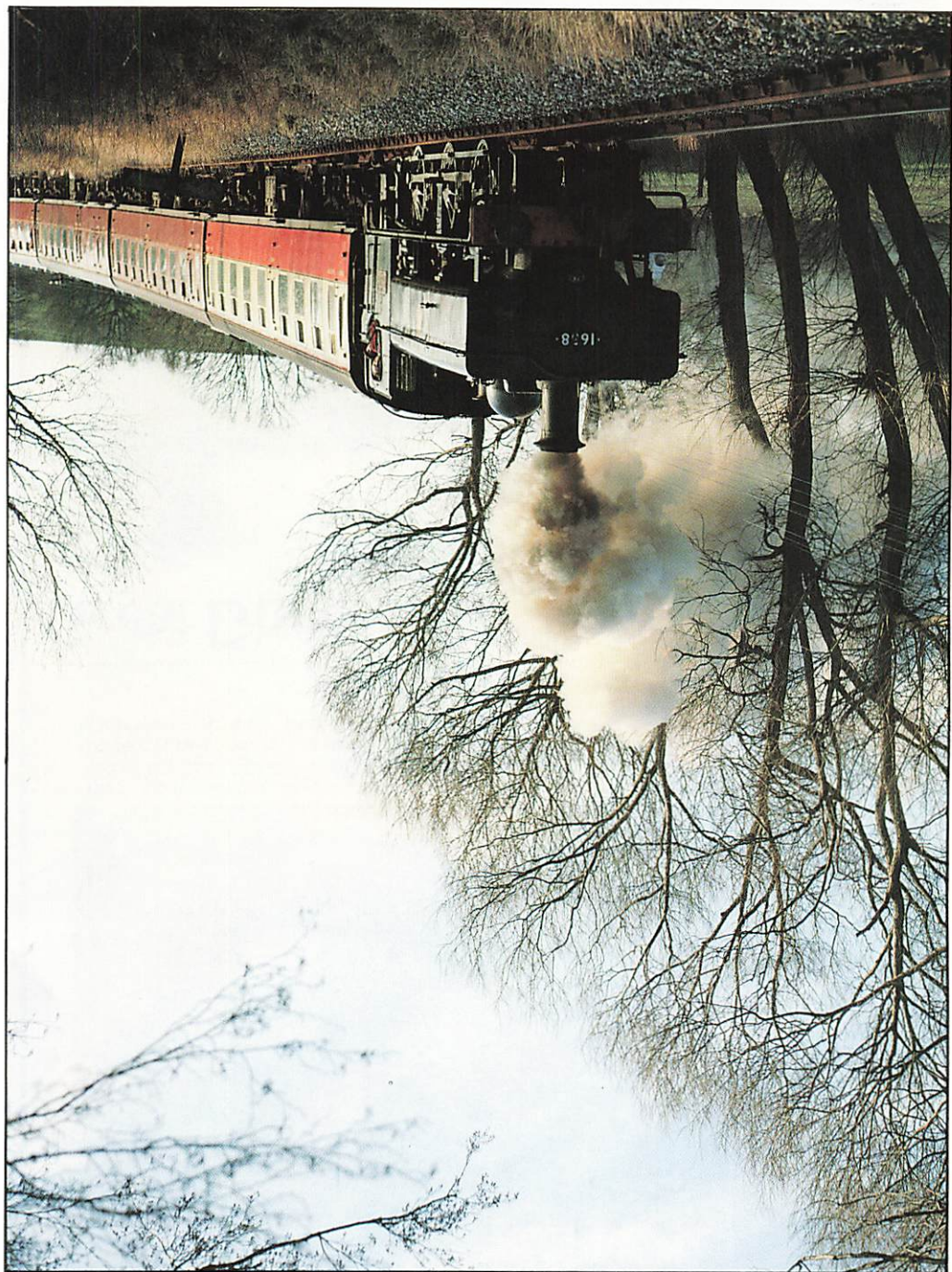
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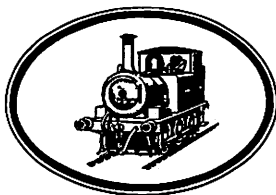


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The 500 year old manor hall is open together with the gardens, well known for a wide variety of plants. Some of the unusual plants have won awards at the Royal Horticultural Society Shows in London. 1½ miles from the K.&E.S.R. station at Northiam; follow the signposts in the village for a very pleasant visit. Telephone: Northiam (0797) 253160



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FRONT COVER

Recalling a moment of 40 years ago. 32650, alias. 32678 (74A), rounds Orpins Curve bound for Tenterden on 12th November 1993. (Geoff Silcock)

FRONTISPIECE

Pannier tank No. 1638 heads a Tenterden Train at Willow Curve, approaching Rolvenden, on 2nd January 1994. (Mike Esau)

Editorial

Do we know what we are?

The appearance of diesel locomotives and railcars is becoming commonplace on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. Unfortunately much of the evidence suggests that passengers try and avoid them - after all, one diesel is very much like another and there are still plenty to see on the national network. British Railways left no lasting legacy on the line during its six years of passenger operation - arguably the trains and methods were very much as before, apart from a change of liveries. Geoff Silcock's delightful and authentic anniversary specials have shown a new generation of visitors just what the Kent & East Sussex was like. To confuse the issue to satisfy the whim of a few newtime locomotive owners will do nothing to encourage passengers, nor will it advance the public understanding of the Railway, its history or its traditional methods of operation.

* * * * *

The index to *The Tenterden Terriers* covering the years 1989 to 1992 (issues 48 to 59) is enclosed separately with this mailing.

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1994

Independent Railway of the Year



The Kent & East Sussex Railway was joint runner-up in the Independent Railway of the year award for 1993, sponsored by Railway World. The number one place went to our neighbours, the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, and second place to the Festiniog Railway. We share the runner-up position with the West Somerset Railway. The photograph shows Tenterden Railway Company Chairman, David Stratton, receiving the award from Chairman of British Rail, Bob Reid, at a ceremony held at the Royal Society of Arts on 8th December 1993.

(British Rail)

Secretary's Report

The 1992 Accounts were presented to the Membership on 15th January 1994. (Not before time, I hear you murmur, but we have all realised now that we were asking too much in expecting to change a system and with same volunteer personnel produce Annual Accounts to a very tight deadline.) (This year's AGM is scheduled for 17th September.)

The revised Articles recognising a Life Membership category were promulgated at the same Extraordinary General Meeting. An overview of the Five Year Plan was followed by a constructive Members' forum. It was clear that the vast majority of those present, while they were prepared to suggest fine tuning of the systems, were themselves in tune with Company policy, which is based on the premise that we are in the business of promoting a living museum, an absorbing hobby, and a significant leisure attraction.

Two Directors have retired: Dave Hazeldine, amicably, for reasons connected with the good order of the Company, and Mark Toynbee, who resigned after discovering during a sabbatical that there IS Life after Railway. During his directorship he had put a lot of burns on seats, as well as very significantly enhancing the image of the Railway. It has to be admitted that his single minded uncompromising attitude was sometimes difficult for others to live with.

The Board is currently three members below strength. On the other hand the original reasons for augmenting the numbers of directors may at least partially have been superseded by the present management policy, which has given Managers the job of managing without constantly looking over their shoulders at the Board, which consequently has been able to address itself to broader matters, whilst confidently leaving the day-to-day running in safe hands.

As I wrote in the last edition of *The Tenterden Terrier*, we all find difficulty in balancing this "absorbing hobby" with added job and family responsibilities. It is over twenty five years since a short trousered Mark Toynbee without a care in the world, would have first stood outside the back door and been hosed down and his clothes fumigated after a dirty weekend on the Railway. Perhaps Mark more than most has had to come to terms with the constraint that there are only 7

days in the week. None the less you cannot easily break the habits of one third of a normal lifespan, and I am assured that Mark's volunteering will continue, albeit on a lower key. In conclusion, I know I echo the sentiments of many when I say how helpful and absorbing I found Nick Pallant's book, which is reviewed elsewhere in this journal. It ought to be compulsory reading for all members, but particularly for the newer and younger ones. May we say, "To be continued in your next," Nick?

Locomotives

No. 3 (Bodiam). Boiler options are now being considered by the Board and engineering department, and also the costs of a heavy repair generally.

No. 8 (Knowle). Boiler work is being progressed with an outside contractor.

No. 10 (Sutton). After its notable outings, some disguised as 32678, on the charter mixed trains in November and December, and its appearance on the 1950s mixed to mark the 40th anniversary of closure to passengers on 2nd January 1994, Sutton remained serviceable until its boiler certificate expired on 31st January. Work will now commence on feasibility studies for a general repair.

No. 11 (1556). In service, some minor boiler repairs are taking place as advised by the boiler inspector.

No. 12 (Marcia). No change since last report.

No. 14 (Charwelton). A retube of the boiler should be under way shortly.

No. 21 (Wainwright). This loco is now complete, and was steam tested in December and took part in road tests in January. On Saturday 8th January it hauled five coaches up to Tenterden without difficulty and proved to be in fine fettle. The livery is malachite green, with the later BR logos, plus nameplates and numbered DS 238.

No. 22 (Maunsell). The boiler is due back from Chatham early in the year and work will then progress on assembly.

No. 23 (Holman F. Stephens). Serviceable.

No. 24 (William H. Austen). Some motion work will be carried out this Winter, but otherwise it remains serviceable.

No. 25 (Northiam). Still awaiting its 10 year overhaul which hopefully will start towards the end of the year.

No. 27 (Rolvenden). Remains as static exhibit at Tenterden Town.

No. 1638 (Pannier Tank). Some repair work being carried out this Winter including a firebox

repair to a wash out plug. Hopefully it will be serviceable for the start of the 1994 season.

Diesel Locomotives

No. 40 (BTH Bo-Bo). Out of service still awaiting re-setting of springs.

No. 41 (Ruston). In service.

No. 42 (Hunslet). Still awaiting centre driving wheels, a low priority operation at present as the loco is not required for traffic.

No. 43 (Titan). Stored serviceable, for use as shed shunter.

No. 46 (D.2023). In service as shunter at Tenterden Town, still looking resplendent in BR green livery.

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

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

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

No. 08.108 (Dover Castle). Currently having a battery overhaul and should see service early in the year.

Cranes

No. 316 (DS17700. Grafton). In service

No. 311 (DS451. Taylor-Hubbard). Awaiting extensive repairs.

No. 336 (81S 36 Ton). Awaiting a Board decision on its future. The boiler is out of insurance cover.

No. 305 (5 ton diesel). Out of service awaiting repairs and the fitting of an automatic safe loading indicator.

"Hastings" DEMU Vehicles

The 3-Car set, stabled at Tenterden for the Winter, performed virtually faultlessly throughout the season and whilst not attracting too many passengers, did provide a splendid spectacle of a now almost forgotten sight. It has been confirmed that the set will remain on our Railway for 1994, but details of the service it will be operating were still being arranged as these notes were written. An important development, however, is that the unit's base, St. Leonards Maintenance Depot, is planning to hold an open weekend on 10/11th September this year, the first to be held there. It is with the full co-operation of British Rail and promises to be a grand event where everyone will be able to witness at first hand the splendid restoration taking place there. Further details will be available in the next edition.

"Derby Lightweight" Class 108 DMU

This two car unit, owned by the Tenterden Railway Equipment and Traction Co. Ltd., which arrived on the line last August, has received much attention from the owning group. Work has mainly been taking place on the mechanical side with the addition of many trips to Wales to collect sufficient spares in order to

keep the set serviceable. Unfortunately, due to pressure of work the group were unable to restore the BR green livery prior to the Diesel Day last November and anticipate this work being carried out this year. However, the unit performed well on the Diesel Day event, albeit on only three engines, was well filled with passengers and provided an excellent view of the route from the fully glazed driving ends. The funding of the purchase and restoration of this set is entirely borne by the owning group at no cost to the Company.

Norwegian Locomotive Trust

Now that No. 21 "Wainwright" has been outshopped, higher priority is being given to the restoration of the Norwegian, and the tempo of work on it has accelerated from lento to a fairly brisk allegro in recent weeks.

After many difficulties with the profile of the steel sheet inserted into the top of the smokebox, the chimney is at last fitted, the smokebox floor completed and both blower ring and ejector exhaust in position. GWR pattern firehole doors replace the old hinged door and flap which were beyond repair. Virtually all the new live steam pipework is fitted, and the air pump is positioned so that it can be tested when the boiler is steamed.

The rebuilding of the cab is well under way with the lower sheets in place and to which various components such as water valves, steam heat valve and brake ejector bracket have been fitted.

Two smaller air reservoirs replace the large one mounted between the frames which will facilitate removal when required. All the running plates have been renewed and are either in position or fitted ready for screwing down when the time comes.

The inclusion of new spring loaded buffers between engine and tender requires that a longer drawbar will be needed and this work will be put out shortly to contract.

The tender has been in the shed for some months and well protected from the elements. The frames have been painted and the inside of the water tank is currently receiving anti-corrosive treatment.

If the current momentum can be sustained there is hope, indeed expectation, that the locomotive should be available for service sometime during the late Summer of 1994.

Carriage & Wagon

SECR Family Saloon No. 177 (K&ESR No. 84):

The restoration of this vehicle is now nearing completion, with only a small number of items left to deal with. The interior now only awaits the fitting of the window blinds and a handful of wooden mouldings, plus, of course, the replacement carpet, which has now arrived. In terms of running gear, the only task requiring to be carried out, is the adjustment of the braking system.

Maunsell CK No. 5618 (K&ESR No. 56): Work on this vehicle is continuing to progress well. Internally, the reinstatement of the remainder of the ceiling panelling in the corridor has been taking place, while at the same time, some attention has been given to the wiring of the electrical system. Externally, the wooden framework around the Headcorn-end corridor connection has also been receiving attention, with new sections having been made up to replace the build rail above the buffer beam at that end, while the rotten sections at the top of the corridor doorway have been cut out and removed, along with the section of frame attached to the top gangway connection mountings, in readiness for new sections. The buffer beam at this end is also receiving attention for damage believed to have been caused by a shunting mishap in the 1960s, which has required a section of the beam to be removed for straightening. Meanwhile, the other buffer-beam and the rest of the external areas of the underframe have now been undercoated, and treated to a coat of gloss black paint, along with items such as the buffer casings. The external area of the corridor side of this vehicle has also had further new steel body panels fitted, resulting in over three-quarters of this side now having been completely repanelled, while two windows on this side have also been reglazed.

LSWR Invalid Saloon No. 11 (K&ESR No. 83): The metal roof hoops from this vehicle have now all been primed and undercoated, while the entire section of framework at the Robertsbridge end has been removed, in order to enable repairs to be made to the build and cant-rails. The buffer-beam has also been removed from this end, owing to the timber having split in several areas.

Mark 1 TSO No. 85: The overhaul of this vehicle is proceeding well, with the interior having been the focus of a considerable amount of activity. The ceiling panels have been repainted, while the internal woodwork has been completely stripped of all the old layers of varnish, and is now in the process of being revarnished, this making a vast improvement to the inside of the coach. The luggage racks are also being cleaned up, and refitted in their

rightful places. Externally, the arduous task of sanding the loop side of the vehicle back to bare metal has now been completed, and this side has now been the recipient of a coat of red oxide primer. The underframe is now being needlegunned back to bare metal, while underneath, one of two overhauled vacuum-brake cylinders has been refitted.

Full advantage is being taken of the "closed season" to undertake essential maintenance of the running fleet, with attention currently being given to the braking systems of both the Great Eastern Railway six-wheeled composite No. 197 (K&ESR No. 81), and the District Railway Coach No. 100. It is also planned to overhaul both vacuum cylinders on Pullman No. 185 "Barbara" (K&ESR No. 52) during this period, and also to re-roof Maunsell BSO No. 4432 (K&ESR No. 53), in due course, as well as carrying out any other necessary repairwork on the rest of the carriage fleet.

The programme of shed improvements is also continuing to make good headway, with the setting up of the new machine shop well in hand. Most of the equipment has been transferred from the old work shop area at the Rolvenden end of the shed, to its new location beneath the first floor stores area, which until last summer, had been the resting place of a "Birdcage" coach, for nearly a decade! Next door to this, a store room is being established, for the benefit of such items as the jacks and lifting equipment.

Permanent Way

As predicted in the last *Terrier* the point for the siding at Northiam was duly installed; however, the connection to the siding remains to be completed. Instead the point into No. 3 siding at Tenterden has been retimbered.

Due to the current financial squeeze the department's activities this winter are of considerably smaller scope than last year. The first task this winter is the replacement of the life-expired point outside Wittersham signalbox, which was reputed to be held together by more ties than sound timbers. Pre-assembly of the replacement point was commenced in the Autumn. The new point has a shallower turnout than its predecessor thus enabling the current 5mph speed restriction to be removed. The old point was removed on the first weekend after services ceased and the new one put in position on 21st January. There remains considerable work to complete before services can be restored.

Over Christmas the rains caused many problems.

Firstly there were minor washouts of the track bed either side of Orpin's crossing. There was a much more serious track washout on the Willow Curve which required over half a hopper of ballast to restore. In addition the Newmill Channel flood embankment beside our bridge overflowed and washed away, flooding the farmer's field. This embankment was temporarily restored but will require further work later this winter. Only due to the efforts of a few individuals was it possible to restore the line fit for the New Year's Eve Pullman. Due to the rain that day the water levels in all the drainage channels and ditches remained consistently high. So much so that the New Year's Eve Pullman had to turn back from the Newmill Channel bridge because water was over the abutments. Hexden Bridge was closed to all traffic over the New Year period and services were curtailed at Wittersham.

By the end of January a start had been made on a relay around Foxbury Wood corner, at the end of Gazedown Wood straight. Thirteen 45' lengths of 91 1/4 lb rail have been removed to be restored with 95 1/4 lb rail on concrete sleepers. Just before the job started the rain struck again and a small piped culvert washed out. This has had to be dug out completely and a properly constructed concrete surrounded pipe fitted to reinstate the drainage arrangements. Unfortunately this is not covered by the budget allocation and the money for this extra culvert will have to be found from other jobs.

Signals & Telecommunications

The Department is making good use of the winter closed season to carry out tasks that would be inconvenient during the summer period. One such project involves alterations to the mechanical interlocking at Tenterden box, to allow for the eventual commissioning of a "calling-on" signal to allow a train from Rolvenden to enter the platform when already partly occupied by another train. Also envisaged is the provision of a "shunting" staff to permit movements to take place within the station area without a signalman having to be present. This will be particularly useful during periods when no other services are running, to permit coaching stock to be remarshalled or movements in connection with the carriage shed to be shunted. The shunter will obtain the staff by reversing a lever in the box, thereby protecting his intended movements by locking signals at Danger against incoming trains. Any signalman opening the box in the intervening period will be aware of shunting movements as he will be prevented from signalling any conflicting moves.

At Wittersham Road, the opportunity is being

taken to re-cable many of the signalling circuits, using the newly-installed underground route. This is in addition to temporary removal of outdoor equipment and alterations to the locations of certain signals to take account of the renewal of pointwork outside the signal box.

On the telecommunications side, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken on Rolvenden exchange to ensure reliability, and to provide additional capacity to allow it to work with Northiam exchange. The "carrier" system, which allows up to eight calls at once to take place over one pair of wires, has been upgraded to four channels. Of these, three are used for speech lines, the fourth for alarms to give warning should a problem arise with the exchange at Rolvenden.

Chris Lowry continues to maintain, improve and extend the system of overhead telegraph lines, assisted at times by Andre Freeman, Alan Sampson and Clive Norman; recent tasks have included removing the wires from their former termination point on Newmill Bridge to a new pole fifty yards the Wittersham side of the bridge, and also raising the height of the wires round Gazedown curve, mainly to facilitate civil engineering work at these locations. Also undertaken are regular repair and maintenance patrols to remedy faults and damage caused by severe weather and winds.

Thanks must also be given to Peter Watson, who single-handedly completed the restoration of the signalbox lavatory at Rolvenden. This was acquired some years ago from Tunbridge Wells West "B" signal box, and is an old style building with traditional fittings of which Colonel Stephens himself would doubtless have approved.

Forestry and Conservation

Most of last year's work has been concentrated on keeping the trees and bushes cut back from the running line. Some work was carried out in the Summer on the high fire risk areas with limited success, as some sites were still set alight by passing trains.

Other areas that received some attention were around the stored stock at Northiam and for about a further 200 yards towards Bodiam so that additional stock can be stored there if required.

Work has now been completed on clearing all undergrowth between Northiam gates and Cysters curve so that the extent of the rabbit problem can be assessed, although this may have been re-assessed following the recent flooding in that area.



Track relaying between Newmill Bridge and Gazedown Wood during November 1993. Concrete sleepers are being used to replace the existing worn out wooden ones.
(John Liddell)

At present the trees and bushes around Cysters curve are being cut down to improve the sight line at the occupation crossing so that the train crews can observe earlier if the cattle are being transferred from one side of the line to the other. At times, because of the poor sighting when cattle are crossing, approaching trains have had to brake suddenly.

Fire, Health and Safety

During November we were visited by Mr. David Fuller, Her Majesty's Inspecting Officer for Railways. He started his visit at Northiam, travelling there by the Hastings DMU and worked his way back through each station to Tenterden. His main interest on this visit was primarily first aid equipment, fire extinguishers, electrical portable appliance testing, insurance certificates on lifting tackle, machine shops, etc. Apart from a few easily correctable problems, he seemed to leave with an overall impression that the standards of safety on our Railway were well on the right tracks and that we will continue to strive to improve on safety in the future. Roland Meek, now fully certificated to British Standards "Fire Extinguisher Services Engineer" continues to maintain all our fire fighting equipment and will later this year be attending a course at the

national fire service college in Moreton-in-the-Marsh so that he will be able to train our staff in the correct use of fire extinguishers. The department has acquired a portable fire pump which will be based at Tenterden, which if needed, can be transported to the scene of a fire in a short space of time to all areas of the Railway.

Richard Osborn, with the help of Lawrence Donaldson, is creating a set of written standards and procedures to outline and clarify the purpose of the department and the responsibilities of both the managers and directors. When this is completed it is hoped that this will be adopted as Board Policy.

Commercial

1993 in Retrospect

The latter part of 1993 saw a number of special events designed to appeal to serious minded railway enthusiasts. October's "Century on Rails", held over the weekend of 16/17th, provided the chance to show off our fine collection to best advantage. By carefully pairing locomotives with the most appropriate rolling stock, a series of passenger and goods trains, demonstrating aspects of rural railways from the 1860s to the 1960s, were created.

More modern motive power was in action for "Diesel Day" on Saturday 6th November. Despite a varied programme of passenger and goods trains featuring the "Hastings" DEMU, Classes 14, 08 and 03 as well as the debut of the recently acquired Class 108 DMU, attendance was modest with fewer than 250 passengers travelling; however, takings in other areas such as the gift shop and buffet were up, indicating that many visitors were attending whilst not necessarily taking a journey.

The season ended with a three day event, held over the New Year bank holiday, to mark the 40th anniversary of the closure of the line to passengers. Centre piece of the celebrations was to have been a series of special runs made by 32650 hauling a re-created 1950s mixed train almost identical to those that ran on the line just prior to closure. A birdcage coach and three wagons had been repainted in their 1950s liveries by a team of photographers led by Geoff Silcock. Heavy rain and resultant flooding that precluded the running of trains between Wittersham Road and Northiam necessitated some hurried amendments to the weekend's services. The formation of the "mixed" had to be changed for much of the weekend with the "birdcage" being replaced by a Mark 1 to allow passengers to be conveyed. The 1950s "mixed" did, however, make one return trip to Wittersham Road on each day much to the delight of the many photographers who had come especially to see this train in action.

Of course it must be remembered that the vast majority of our visitors are families, and in December they were out in force, filling the ever-popular Santa Specials to capacity. Extra trains were run to try to meet demand but the level of passengers fell by about 10% compared with last year's total. Some of this shortfall was attributed to one of our Mark 1 coaches not being serviceable in time for the peak trains.

Looking at the 1993 season overall, passenger numbers rose slightly by 1½% which is a little disappointing, but in view of the drop in Santa figures already mentioned, plus the engineering works on Tenterden bank last Winter in April, which created some disincentive to potential passengers, these results are very creditable. The rest of the season showed a 6% increase which is excellent in these economic times, and also proves that providing the product is right and properly marketed we shall continue to attract more visitors. However, our experience last February and March is an important lesson in making sure we meet our visitors' high expectations and should serve as a warning what happens if we fail. It is therefore important that

what was learnt by some of our errors in 1993 are not repeated as face the challenge of 1994 and beyond.

Looking forward to 1994 Gillian Howie, our new Commercial Manager, writes:

My first few months at the K&ESR have been fun, traumatic, an eye-opener and given the word "challenge" an entire new meaning. Amidst, Santa, Snowmen and Pixies, I have taken a little time to look at our Commercial services and to make outline suggestions for 1994. Maybe a good place to start is to throw some light on what the Commercial and Trading activities will be for the new season.

The emphasis will be placed on re-building staff confidence in our various trading areas and ensuring that our services are profitable, efficient and provide the level of service and high standards to meet "passenger" expectations. The key word will still be "service" but more consideration will be given to ensure that there are adequate resources, capital, equipment, facilities and most importantly, people. We are currently not maximising our revenue potential, but I cannot see how we can hope to increase our business or expand in 1994 unless we have the basics right.

Therefore the new year will be one of consolidation and assessment and certain areas of trading that are not as profitable as one may have perceived, have been reviewed.

The principles for ordinary passenger services agreed in 1993 have been generally retained with a slight reduction during off peak periods and some daily services. There is a slight increase in adult and group fares, whilst the child fare of £1.00 remains the same.

The profitability of on-train catering has undertaken serious review and a major area of concern has been the Wealden Pullman. The train has suffered a decline of standards resulting in customer complaints and staff dissatisfaction and if the train is to continue to operate, it must be on a different understanding. 1994 will see the Pullman run from April throughout the year, with a maximum of 36 covers and the voluntary position of Pullman Manager is now available. It will not be possible to run the Pullman throughout the season with the current level of staff and so many more volunteers are needed. If we have to introduce additional paid waiting staff again, then this could be the last year of such a prime service.

The Rother Valley will continue to be run volunteers, led by Christine Tibbatts and Ron

Draper, with development of on-train catering services during the peak season.

Private charter bookings and other special bookings including filming contracts will only be taken if they are profitable and within the resources available.

The role of the Commercial department will be to generate and maximise business of all the trading areas of the Railway and to ensure a significant level of revenue needed to sustain the continued operation and reduce our debts. Commercial activities will also be more concerned with staff views and how people feel about "their" Railway. It will take time before any further changes or expansion of services can be implemented. We cannot work in isolation, the Commercial department needs full support from the membership and working volunteers to succeed and generate revenue for the future.

Shop

Shop sales for 1993 ended on a good note, sales being up on last year and the final net totals actually some £4000 above the annual target.

Shortly after my last report to Lineside News the second Thomas Weekend for 1993 took place. This was again a huge success with sales only slightly under the first weekend. A great amount of planning goes into these weekends, but the pleasure they bring to the children, and not so young, really makes the effort worth while.

The monthly special event programme has certainly made a difference to shop income, and I hope that all our visitors were able to find some small memento of their day out.

It is now the time of year when we are looking for new items for sale. The Kent & East Sussex Railway does try to keep to a railway or nostalgic theme, but we have tried to find a small percentage of general gifts for our day visitor too. Some of these small trinkets were introduced over the Christmas period and all but a few were sold during the Santa Specials. We will therefore be looking to renew these during the next month or two ready for our main season.

During the Santa Special season we once again set up a sales stand in the marquee along with the carousel. Unfortunately the weather was atrocious and we had severe difficulty in keeping the goods on the stall due to gale force winds blowing around a forty foot square marquee. On a couple of occasions we were forced to abandon our efforts earlier in the day than normal and concentrate sales through the shop.

The latest K&ESR book, *Holding the Line*, by Nick Pallant is selling well. As already known to most of you Nick is a long serving volunteer member of the Railway, who has spent many days serving in the shop over the last couple of years. He has signed copies of the book and there are still some available at £14.99 (less membership discount) on the shop shelf.

Finally, our loyal shop volunteers have done a splendid job over the last year, and with only a minimum of problems we have managed to staff the shop throughout the season. We only hope that 1994 will prove as easy.

Membership

1993 saw a consolidation of the membership figures with a net loss of just 2 members compared with a loss of 106 for 1992; thus 2999 members were "on the books" compared with 3001 for last year.

New members joining totalled 299 (280), a gain of 19 but 266 (344) were struck off for non-payment of subscriptions, a number of whom have since re-joined.

However, 211 Full members took out Gold Card membership plus a number of linked Family members. In addition, 390 members subscribed under the tax-efficient (to the Railway) Deed of Covenant scheme.

Life Membership take-up is, at present, disappointing. Last year, 198 members expressed an interest prior to its introduction which begs the question: "Where are you all?". Please see details in the current *Rooter* on how to transfer!

Too many long-standing members are being lost; of those of 8 years standing and over, 39 were struck off compared with a past average of 15-20.

Experience has proved that the large majority of new members join only after having visited the Railway and so a determined effort is being made to boost the figures by introducing a two-pronged "attack", actually two types of application form.

The first (an inexpensive throw-away) is to be distributed over the Railway and enables the recipient either to join straight away or to request further details, in which case a glossy brochure will be sent.

It is hoped that this will help to lift the membership numbers out of the current doldrums. We shall see.

THE K&ESR 300 CLUB

Membership is open to all members of the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd and an application form is enclosed with this mailing. The more members there are the greater the prizes and the remaining income is devoted to projects around the Railway that probably would not be undertaken from existing resources. So don't forget that if you do not win a prize and someone else does, the Railway always wins! Recent prizewinners are listed below and in future will be reported in the *Rooter*.

November 1993 - Drawn at Rolvenden Works

1st.	Doug Lindsay	(233)	= £20.00
2nd	John Debling	(104)	= £15.00
3rd	Terry Gibbons	(181)	= £ 5.00
	Total		= £40.00

January 1994 - Drawn at Tenterden Mess Room

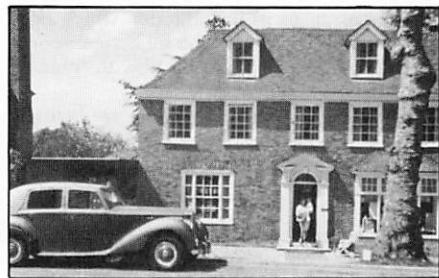
1st.	Colin Edwards	(85)	= £30.00
2nd	E.C. Moore	(197)	= £20.00
3rd	B.A. Reeves	(72)	= £10.00
	Total		= £60.00

December 1993 - Drawn at C&W Tenterden

1st.	D.J. Mann	(325)	= £100.00
2nd	Steve Race	(130)	= £ 60.00
3rd	Jack Wood	(162)	= £ 40.00
4th	Laurie Reed	(321)	= £ 30.00
5th	Maggie Remnant	(248)	= £ 20.00
6th	M. Cain	(214)	= £ 10.00
7th	R. Stannard	(41)	= £ 5.00
	Total		= £265.00

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Passenger numbers rose by 2% in 1993, but average train loadings are well down and revenue per passenger fell again. John Emmott and Philip Shaw present the facts.

Although the total number of passengers rose by 2% in 1993, 80 more trains were run and average train loadings slumped to an all-time low of 65. Ten years ago the average train loading was 84 and even topped 90 until 1991 when the figure dropped to 67. Santas peaked in 1989 with over 14,100 passengers and have fallen each year since then. Although the two Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine weekends were much enjoyed by visitors and staff alike, numbers were most disappointing - the one event in 1992 attracting the same numbers as two weekends in

1993. All this has served to put our costs up at a time when revenue per passenger has been falling, due to changes in the fare structure. In 1991 the average fare per passenger (excluding Santa specials) was £4.05; this fell to £3.62 in 1992 and slumped again to £3.58 in 1993. We have greatly strengthened our commercial team in recent months with the appointment of Paul Wilson as Commercial Director and Gillian Howie as Commercial Manager. 1994 will be a challenging year to get income growing again - but then we look forward to challenges!

	1992				1993			
	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avge per Train	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avge per Train
January	4	20	652	33	-	-	-	-
February	4	20	796	40	4	24	682	28
March	5	29	1595	55	4	24	704	29
April	14	96	7253	76	14	105	7973	76
May	16	130	7254	56	12	118	6461	55
June	16	86	9101	106	30	161	10448	65
July	31	160	9360	58	31	163	9541	59
August	31	222	16421	74	31	234	17084	73
September	19	126	5843	46	30	149	8249	55
October	9	72	2103	29	11	80	2923	37
November	9	50	2099	42	5	34	1188	35
December*	12	82	12111	148	14	82	10942	133
	170	1093	74588	68	186	1174	76195	65
Wealden Pullman/Charters			1961				2204	
Privileges			4973				4497	
Totals			81522				82896	
Bookings from:								
Tenterden			62781				64775	
Rolvenden			198				378	
Wittersham			43				82	
Northiam			9610				9711	
On train			1956				1249	
			74588				76195	
			11791				10567	
*Includes Santa Specials								

Nick Pallant writes about the first revenue earning trip of the K&ESR's Class 108 diesel multiple unit

I'd never had much time for British Rail's two car diesel mechanical multiple units. They were "non-Southern", boring and generally seemed to sum up everything bad about that last, hallowed, decade of steam. Even the purchase of a pair of Class 108 vehicles for the K&ESR had left me cold.

It was in much the same negative frame of mind that I volunteered for a trainee guard turn on the first day of Diesel Weekend, Saturday 6th November 1993 - more out of a sense of duty than with any keen anticipation. The only bright spot the day seemed to offer was the genial company of the guard, Alastair Forbes. But I must admit that when, on arriving at Tenterden during the previous evening, I was told we were rostered for the 108 my interest was unexpectedly aroused. The was, after all, to be the unit's first revenue earning trip on the K&ESR.

Saturday morning came, one of those steely grey dawns so typical of the Weald in winter. I was bleakly munching my way through a bowl of muesli when gricers - as opposed to our usual visitors - started to be seen around the station. But where was Alastair? With immaculate timing he then arrived, having left Preston at some unheard of hour, and with enough of a margin in hand for us to sign on, draw a guard's bag from the station office and set off for Rolvenden.

The working timetable indicated that we were "special D" and that the Class 108 was to leave Rolvenden ECS (empty carriage stock) at 10.40. When we arrived the dmmu was ticking over just beyond the platform and was about to be brought into the station by Mike Grimwood of the owing group accompanied by Loco Foreman Simon Long. "It's the same as the Hastings Diesel", said someone, "except it's got vacuum brakes". This was more-or-less reassuring news. Alastair and I had both previously worked on EP braked Hastings demu, but otherwise didn't know too much about Class 108.

Once inside the seemingly huge brake van (located in the middle of the unit) there was indeed the familiar and comforting sight of a red vacuum brake handle but, like the Hastings unit, no hand brake. At cant rail level, above the inwardly opening doors was to be found the "bus

bell" for signalling to the driver. Our next move was to test the brake from the rear cab where, by combining the Hastings and steam train routines, we used the cab buzzer to alert Simon and Mike and dropped the cab brake handle to destroy the vacuum - which the loco boys promptly recreated to show that all was well.

Once everything was in order, we were ready for the off and instead of sending the trainee to do the gates, Alastair, like the gentleman he is, went and opened them himself. This meant that I got to give the right-away for the dmmu's first trip in anger (albeit empty) and was photographed doing so - which appealed quite a lot to my vanity! Once over the crossing we stopped to pick up Alastair, made a brisk climb to Cranbrook Road - albeit the dmmu was only running on three out of its four engines - and despite the slack over the new embankment at the Rabbit Warren. Then it was my turn to get down and see to the gates.

At Tenterden, and in accordance with a suggestion by Simon, we conscripted our TTI's (travelling ticket inspector) and proceeded to strip all the safety gear and spares out of a Wealden Pullman BSO. There wasn't a single item on the 108 and we were, after all, about to invite the public aboard. I then had to rush off to a planning meeting for Volunteers' Day, which meant that Alastair was guard for the first passenger carrying trip, the 11.00 Tenterden-Northiam, and it was his turn to be photographed. One minor occurrence preceded this. A feature (hazard?) of a guard's life on the K&ESR is overhead lineman Chris Lowry and his legendary aluminium "bat ladder". The said ladder is likely to be thrust into brake vans at any point on the line and, sure enough, the first trip of the Class 108 was duly marked by the presence of Chris and his ladder in the huge luggage space.

Promptly at 12.25 the Class 108 returned. TRC Director Andrew Webb had, in the meanwhile having thoughtfully arranged the business of the meeting so I could make my contribution, grab something to eat and be ready to rejoin Alastair. By this point in the day it was becoming apparent that Diesel Weekend was proving a success. The Hastings unit had already been seen to depart packed to the gunwales and looking

like a rush hour train on the Dartford Loop. The combination of the Class 03 and one coach looked very "light railway" indeed, and that well-known species, *Gricea Photographica*, had taken root all the way up Tenterden Bank.

13.00 rolled round and Alastair handed the brake van over to me (whilst of course keeping an expert eye on what I was doing). The gates were open, the Tyer's No. 6 token was delivered to the cab and the platform end starter came "off". The station master raised his hand (station work complete), a quick look up and down at the door handles and the train, two "dings" on the bell and we were away. Once at Cranbrook Road I saw to the gates again, and then made a complete idiot of myself by trying to open the rear cab door the wrong way (it opens outwards) assuming it was locked and then walking all the way back to the brake van again!

By the time we reached Rolvenden a great advantage of dmmu's had become obvious - the superb forward view. November 6th was a freezing cold day, the heating was working well and all that was necessary when spotting signals and keeping a general watch on progress, was to open the connecting door and look ahead. No need to crane one's neck out into the sub-zero

airflow beyond the window.

We picked up two or three minutes at Wittersham Road (no passengers, intermediate stopping time advisory only) and then well and truly caught out the Northiam station staff. Class 108 is surprisingly quiet and, despite Mike sounding the horns for Cysters Crossing, there was no sign of the gates opening as we headed smoothly - the dmmu rides very well - towards the A28. They hadn't heard us coming and were only woken up by a double twin-tone blast! This was, allegedly, the second Northiam embarrassment of the day. On the first arrival of the dmmu the announcer was rumoured to have gone into the usual routine: "The train will be here for about 15 minutes. Passengers are welcome to watch whilst the loco runs . . ." and then remembered the only thing running round would be the crew. There isn't much for the guard to do either on a multiple unit turn at Northiam - no need to work the ground frame or move the tail lamp - but at least you get a longer break.

The return trip, followed by the 16.00 train, went well and the Class 108 showed its ability to keep time. I eventually discovered how to get



Class 108 DMU and Class 14, D9525, rest at Tenterden Town Station between duties on diesel day, 6th November 1993.

(Paul Tyer)

into the rear cab and how much easier this was than trying to climb into the brake van (as awkward as a Mk 1 but better than a Maunsell BSO). We found the light switches and also discovered they had a dimming facility. The dmmu seemed popular with the public but we also noticed that numerous members of staff were treating themselves to a well-earned ride in the new toy. In fact, such was the popularity of this that at one time the entire first class saloon (the Tenterden end) appeared to be filled with blue denim and HV orange. We also received visits from various guard colleagues eager to find out what-was-what, and were additionally treated to driver Adrian Landi riding in the brake van and reminiscing about the days when ex-GWR railcar No. 20 ran regular services.

After the final arrival back at Tenterden, we put all the emergency gear back in the Wealden Pullman and I managed to drop a bottle of first-aid eyewash under the unit. As a result, I dramatically announced I was "going under" and disappeared beneath the dmmu whilst shining a Bardic into the gloom - only to re-appear half a minute later, clutching a small plastic bottle and feeling stupid for the second time that day.

We returned to Rolvenden ECS and ended the turn by parking the Class 108 on Sewage works siding. Alastair and I locked up and found our way to the loco Mess room by the light of our Bardic lamps. That "end of the day" restfulness had settled on the line, the loco shed was silhouetted in the gathering darkness and the 08 diesel shunter was arriving as the final light engine movement. It was great to have taken part in a small piece of K&ESR history.

Class 108 may not be part of the railway's tradition, but somehow its presence on the K&ESR feels right. It fits the scene and doesn't seem out of place in either size or function. It is a direct descendant of the Ford railbuses of the inter-war years and shows how the railway's historic ethos can be successfully combined with a pragmatic approach. Those "observation car" end are going to be popular - let's exploit their commercial potential sensitively and sensibly. I still don't like dmmu's in their original context; I'd still rather be guard on a steam train. But as far as bringing a Class 108 to the Kent & East Sussex is concerned, I'm converted. Like a lot of other people, I'm looking forward to its return to service in green "cast-whisker" livery, hopefully during 1994.

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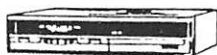
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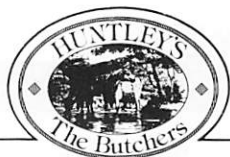
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The Birdcage that sang for its supper...

The date is forty years on from 16th December 1953. Observed from my side bench seat high in the lantern of our time-machine, Terrier chaff fuses overhead, making staccato patterns against the low sun.

The frothy exhaust dissolves, like an ebbing tide, across the neatly churned undulating field-scapes, and early winter meadows from Rolvenden. So it was . . . and so it is.

.....

I suppose it all started, when the first of "Silcock's Sunshine Tours" ran on the Dean Forest Railway, with another black engine. Pannier 9681 became 3775, a Dean Forest "regular" in the sixties with a motley freight, and a good time was had by all concerned.

On the way back to our East London lair that evening, a certain green Terrier was mullied over, as being "ripe" for a livery change, with only a year or so of its boiler ticket to go.

It became a devious challenge to Mark Toynbee a few days later. It went something like "How much revenue would No. 10 Sutton make in its present livery . . . and how much more in BR mode, bearing in mind the 30th and 40th anniversaries of the Hayling Island and regular passenger on the K&ESR closures?"

Certain accoutrements (bribes) were promised to aid the venture, namely crests and front number and shedplates, etc. Although the "take-up" seemed slow, out of the blue one evening in late November, Mark phoned to say that Sutton was turning black at that very moment - and to be quick with the crests and plates!

It was on the 1st of January 1993 that the rejuvenated "Black Swan" No. 32650 was first seen in action. Although scheduled to run with the two Maunsell 3rd Brakes, a tug of war ensued before departure time between one of them and a four wheeled utility van in the platform road at Tenterden. This was to result in the first two trains of the day with just No. 32650 and a single coach. This was certainly a reminder of the regular services of the old K&ESR in its final years.

Mark had also mentioned the Birdcage coach, which had become part of the fixtures and fittings for eight years, since the carriage shed had been built. It wasn't till early summer that I came to see it, and it was fatal fascination at first-sight - and luckily I was shown the best side

first! A month or two earlier I had orchestrated the combined volcanic thrash of two unrebuilt Bulleid Pacifics on nine "greens" out of Swanage, and now I was contemplating this wonderful Edwardian time machine in my mind's eye.

Cocooned for so many years, even malleable pipes had sprouted across the four-foot beneath its elegant bulk. While the viewing side still wore the early K&ESR preservation chocolate and cream, the side hidden by the shed wall was a faded white. It transpired that it was to be banished outside, as that part of the shed was to be concreted over and used as a store area. A meeting of minds indicated that it should at least be waterproof by then, as the Birdcage would commence a complete rebuild later in 1994.

The "Faithful" were summoned. There are only a few of us, fewer when the going gets tough. Half the working force of the Main Line Steam Trust GCR London Area would come - that was two. Two more friends who usually work on their 1950s cars . . . that made four. The other (very) odd occasional performers were photographers, now intent on seeing the first real "mixed" on the K&ESR for nearly four decades.

The good chocolate and cream side surrendered to rubbing and washing down without much resistance. Then came the eventful weekend when it was repositioned for us to work on the other side. It was like looking at the old girl again in a drab petticoat, and she was certainly in need of a lot of love and attention.

An attempt had been made many years previously to renovate the poorer side, but this had only deteriorated its condition further. About a quarter of that side's beading was found to be missing, along with most of the screws that secured the panelling. A major job done over the previous year had been the refelting of the roof, which would have been a daunting prospect otherwise for the unwary.

All this time, the regal opulence of the S&ECR Family Saloon was taking shape on an adjacent track. It transpired that our Birdcage, originally numbered No. 1100 had come from the Longmoor Military Railway also, being bought from the Southern Railway in 1943. It had thus completely avoided the British Railways time-span that we were about to create for it! As I had formulated putting a locomotive in two liveries at once - one side lined/one unlined - it

seemed natural to paint the Birdcage in two colour schemes, as the two sides never touched (luckily we weren't painting an auto-trailer!).

Early BR Red had never been attempted on a revenue earning coach in preservation, whilst the flip-side would be in early BR Southern Green. Much academic discussion went on with the photographers as to what side was going to be which, until I tossed a coin, then chose the other side anyway. Such are democratic decisions made, and I was paying for most of the materials.

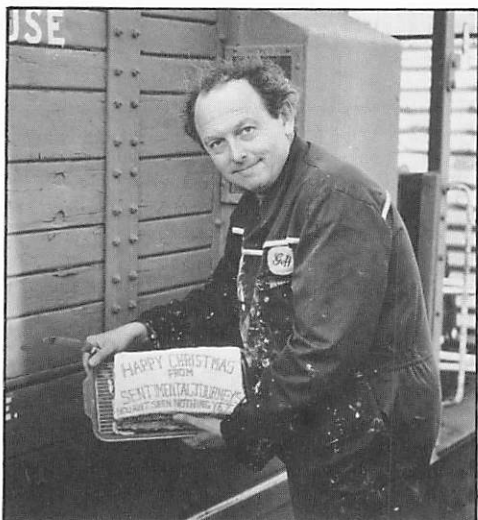
Progress was slowing down on the "rough" side, mainly through the laborious and time consuming job of inserting putty into every screw hole and crevice. By now, being most affected by the masterpiece nearing fruition nearby we were going to give them a good run for their money! A highlight at this time was that we found the Birdcage had a real bird's nest in it, giving rise to the comment that it was because it used to work on the Cuckoo Line!!!

It was never our intention to have an ex-works coach, and to this end much of the underframing and bogies were never painted, being cleaned with a mixture of oil and paraffin, which mellowed to give a worn look. I'm told this is what the Bluebell do also?

After preparing both sides for painting, it was an exhilarating experience when I returned from holiday in mid-August to find it resplendent in its new liveries, thanks to the lightening paintbrush of James Palk. Whilst the Southern BR was commercially available as Dulux Cumberland Green with its undercoat, a member of the group Peter Zabek obtained a "swash" of the early BR Red, and it was mixed specially for the rough side.

At least two Birdcage coaches were known to have resided on the K&ESR in the late 1940s/early 1950s, so the "green side" became S6638S and the "red side" S3291S. These, and the Guard transfers were obtained from the North York Moors Railway, taking most of the day to affix them in the correct positions. It became apparent that there were many different variants of Birdcage stock built, originally in sets of course, then becoming single units, as was the case with our two. There were even corridor end Birdcage sets introduced for inter-regional working, though they must have been rare birds(!) on branch lines.

The next weekend we went on a shopping expedition for the mixed wagons. The Southern Brake Van was the obvious choice. On the face



Geoff Silcock cuts the cake during his sentimental journey to the Kent & East Sussex Railway on 16th December 1993.
(Mike Esau)

of it yes, except of course it was never a Southern or a British Railways condition one, being built for the Army to a Southern design. The most obvious signs of this is the floor mounted vacuum gear, which was peculiar to the Army, and the retention of the large sandboxes on the veranda, which were generally removed from the pukka Southern brakes in early BR days. Although in SR "mud" livery, it was badly in need of a repaint.

One of the ex-LMS box vans on the railway was a delicate shade of pink, so that it came next on the list. I'd also had my eyes on one of the two ex-Southern Railway 8-plank open merchandise wagons. Only the Southern built 8-plankers in any quantity, and they were very much part of the early BR scene on the Southern Region. It would have been nice to have had more, but time and money was running out on me. There was also a limit to what Sutton could chaff up the bank with as well.

Used by now to the luxury of the confines of the carriage shed, it was a culture shock wielding a wire brush outside in force 6 gales and the odd torrential steady down-pours that became a feature of the September and early October sessions.

Probably the less said about paint mixing the better, suffice to say the "Southern" guards van became red oxide, and the same colour, plus some brown undercoat added, became a spot-on

Red Bauxite for the LMS box-van. What started out as light grey, mixed with a little bit of this and that resulted in a half decent unfitted grey (I know it was a fitted wagon really, but I like grey wooden wagons).

Again, right on cue James Palk swung into action with the wagon and Brake Van numbers, etc. What really made it, however, was something I'd noticed years ago on Southern branch lines in steam days, when Brake Vans were allocated to certain branch lines. Ours became "not in common use", and "to work between Headcorn and Robertsbridge only" - if only it could now! A day scraping the excess paint from the windows from Nos S6638S (and S3291S) was something I'd forgotten from the schedule. All was now ready for our photographic playtime.

So it was, that 32650, dressed up for the day as 32678 (74A) ventured up the hill on Friday the 12th of November to take out "The K&ESR Time-Traveller". A few more touches had been added to the "mixed" in the meantime. The LMS box-van now sported a genuine 1950s style poster proclaiming Silcock's Pig & Poultry Foods, and some of the compartments in the Birdcage proclaimed the correct "BR For schoolgirls only" - what we do for our photographer friends!

Although bathed for most of the time in autumn sunshine, the day was not to be without its problems. On its debut trip since the early 1960s, the brakes on S6638S and S3291S refused to come off, and delayed the proceedings by half an hour. All was not well with the cylinder cock drain mechanism on 32678 (74A), which continued to malfunction all day, despite the heroic efforts of the engine crew. At Rolvenden, the token had jammed in the apparatus, so pilot working was deemed necessary. Finally a difference of opinion between two members of the running staff meant that we were unable to traverse the Rolvenden to Wittersham Road section in the time available. This, however, was more than made up for by the "glint" photography towards Cranbrook Road later in the day. We were even given the accolade of "Scholars in Steel" by one Steam Railway Magazine, though looking back, it was more sweat than steel. Still, when did they ever get anything right?

Encouraged(?) by these events, co-organiser Mike Esau and I resolved to charter another "Time Traveller" before Christmas. This took place on Monday the 16th of December and another epic day ensued. With another 30 photographers savouring the perfect winter sun, we chuffed out to Northiam, and then returned

at a crisp pace, interspersed with photographic happenings of course.

Lunch was taken in the canteen at Rolvenden, and then it was off to the "elusive" trackage around the crayfish beds and Popes Cottage for another protracted photo session. To me, this was the highlight of the two "Time Terriers", with '78 and the "mixed" sweeping by time after time etched in the low light. True, we recreated history in our own image, but what better ones could there be of the K&ESR . . . past and present?

Another golden twilight ensued, on Orpins Curve this time, and I was reminded of what I had written a full nine years before about the K&ESR . . . on such occasions how could it be otherwise?

It was not, of course, to be the last of the "mixeds" outings, as it was to be the centrepiece of the 1st-2nd-3rd January workings, the 2nd, of course, being the anniversary of the through passenger services on the K&ESR.

In conclusion, I would sincerely thank the "BR Birdcage Team of '93", whose main bond with me is their masochism, which comes to the surface in these causes. (-) = Days worked.

Tony Collins (3), Mark Henderson (2), Graham Mallinson (2), Tim Mills (3), Alan Shaw (2), Yours Truly (11), Tim Stephens (4), Marion Stephens (1), Peter Zabek (2). Also a special thanks to Peter for the red paint, and John Everitt for the donation.

On the K&ESR thanks to Chris Cheney, Simon Long and especially all those in the C&W and Motive Power Departments for their help and understanding to a load of rookies, who came out a lot wiser than when they came into it. Also . . . to Mark Toynbee and Charlie Masterson for their wisdom and encouragement . . . and not forgetting Vi Siviour for keeping the "Time Travellers" virtualised on both occasions . . .

In the meantime, being a GN (BR) man from birth, I've got an appointment with an art-form - a quad-art form in fact. As for the "mixed", I believe its time-travelling is far from over. Although 32650, alias 32678 is now out of its boiler certificate, it is a pleasant thought about running the "mixed" again, with P class No. 1556 in a 1930s/1940s aura this time?

Then our Birdcage would be singing for its supper again . . .

Geoff Silcock

Goodbye to all that?



Approaching Hexden Bridge, 16th December 1993.

(Tim Stephens)



By Gazedown Wood, 16th December 1993.

(Tim Stephens)

Tim Stephens and Mike Esau re-captured the magic of the old Kent & East Sussex mixed trains during Geoff Silcock's chartered specials on 12th November and 16th December 1993, almost exactly forty years after passenger services were withdrawn by British Railways. Terrier "32650" dressed up as "32678" added to the authenticity of the occasion as the former locomotive never ran on the line during the British Railways period.



At Orpin's Curve, 12th November 1993.

(Tim Stephens)



On Tenterden Bank, 12th November 1993.

(Mike Esau)

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In the Shadow of the Colonel - Part 1

Philip Shaw writes about the life and times of William Henry Austen, whose career with light railways spanned a period of over 50 years.

Colonel Stephens is well known to the readers of this journal. During the 20 years that the writer has been Editor, a number of articles have been written about him, and his railways. This has been possible because our knowledge has been enlarged considerably by the collection of papers and artefacts from the Salford Terrace offices amassed by his assistant and successor, William Henry Austen, and fortunately retained by Austen's son - William Holman Austen - until comparatively recent times when the material was placed in the archives of the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Overshadowed by the charisma of the mighty Colonel, little has been written about Austen himself. When he succeeded to the top job in 1931, Austen was, by all accounts, a hard working and versatile manager, but he undoubtedly lacked the pragmatism and innovation of Stephens and never attracted the awe and affection of his staff for which the Colonel is remembered. Stephens' relationship with Austen was certainly one of mutual respect, paternalistic, perhaps bordering on friendship; gifts were exchanged between the two men and Stephens acted as Godfather to Austen's only son who also bore his name. But Stephens never socialised with Austen in the way that he did with, say, Gilbert Szlumper of the Southern Railway and other influential members of his London clubs, probably because of Austen's humble origins. Communications between the two men were more akin to master and servant over a period of forty years, evidenced by surviving correspondence. Referring to Austen in connection with a visit to his parents at their riverside home in Hammersmith in August 1895, Stephens wrote, "Can you let my man have the servant's room?", and on Boat Race day in March 1897, "May I bring my man with me? He has never seen the race and would appreciate it I think." However, by the 1920s attitudes had softened and Stephens wrote, "Dear W.H.A." in memos, when Austen was away on site visits.

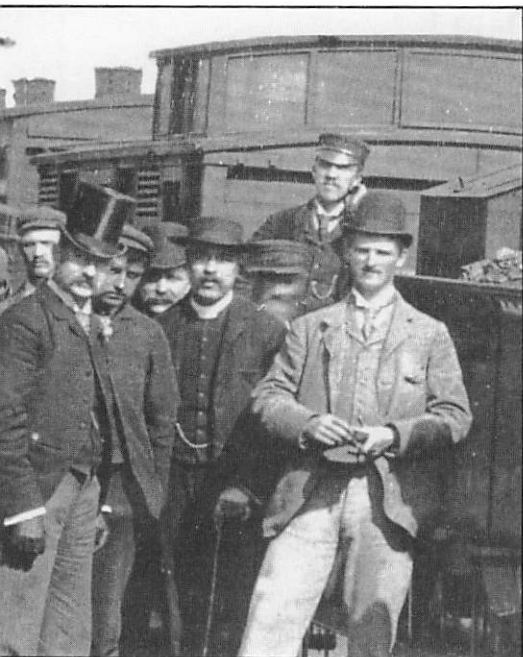
Both Stephens and Austen amassed superb pass collections issued to them by the pre-grouping railway companies, but whereas Colonel Stephens was always issued with first class passes, "Inspector" or Mr Austen usually had to be content with third class travel. Austen did, however, receive some first class passes from the

minor railway companies in the 1930s and a first class "all stations" pass for British Railways in 1948.

Stephens did not have a hierarchy of titles at Salford Terrace, the business was much too personal for that, but he referred to Austen verbally as his "outdoor assistant". In practice, this meant acting as resident engineer in the days of building new lines and general trouble-shooter in the latter years of management by memo and make do and mend, although it was usually Stephens who signed the memos. Stephens' "indoor assistant" was Arthur Iggulden, who joined the Salford Terrace staff straight from school in 1914. He proved to have a shrewd financial brain and remarkably retentive memory, and in due course was given responsibility for accounts, secretarial and audit matters. Iggulden also had the foresight to preserve a number of documents of immense historical value - notably the Stephens' family correspondence, which is now in the railway archive.



W. H. Austen, probably taken at the time of his wedding, 1900. (Colonel Stephens historical archive)



Opening of the Paddock Wood & Cranbrook Railway, 1st October 1892. Front row: H. F. Stephens, extreme right. W. H. Austen, third from right. Probably Edward Seaton, left.

(Colonel Stephens historical archive)

After Stephens' untimely death in 1931, without any nominated successor, it was Austen who obtained control and even purchased the Salford Terrace premises personally in order to ensure continuity. Iggulden stayed, but there was no love lost between the two men. Stephens had no surviving family and in his will his fortune was shared equally between Austen, Iggulden and two other Salford Terrace employees, George and Fred Willard.

Against the background the mounting recession in the early 1930s, Austen dropped all ideas of expansion. This was in stark contrast to the late 1920s, when Stephens was still forging ahead with plans for new lines; these included extensions to the East Kent in furtherance of the development of Richborough as a major commercial port; also a completely new electric light railway, the Southern Heights, designed to serve new suburban housing estates then under development near Croydon. Neither of these schemes came to anything, and after Stephens' protracted illnesses, culminating in his death, Austen finally bowed to the inevitable and abandoned them.



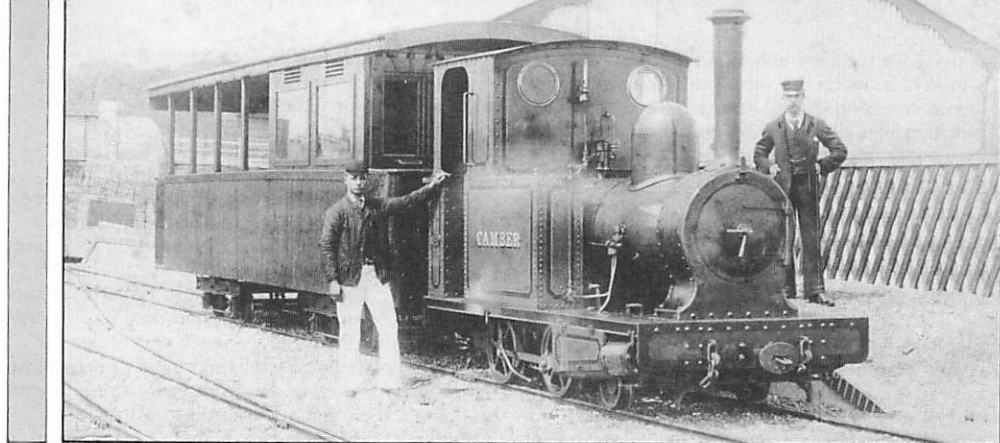
J. A. (Arthur) Iggulden, 1931.

(A. M. Davies Collection)

The offices finally closed on 7th June 1948, after the Kent & East Sussex, the East Kent and the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire railways were nationalised and much of the general consultancy practice lost. Austen, then aged 70, retired; his son, who had also worked at Salford Terrace for over 15 years, had made little impact there; other senior members of the staff were also approaching the end of their working days and although some of them went on to pastures new in the nationalised system it was the end of an era for light railways and Austen knew just that.

* * * * *

William Henry Austen was born at Snodland in Kent on 8th May 1878. The eldest of five children, his father (also William Henry) was a labourer at the nearby Aylesford Paper Mill. The family was poor and with so many mouths to feed, young William was sent to live at Cranbrook with his grandmother, Sarah, of whom he was very fond. Sarah had been married to Thomas Austen, a Master at Cranbrook School, and after his death in 1884, took in lodgers at her home, 29 High Street.

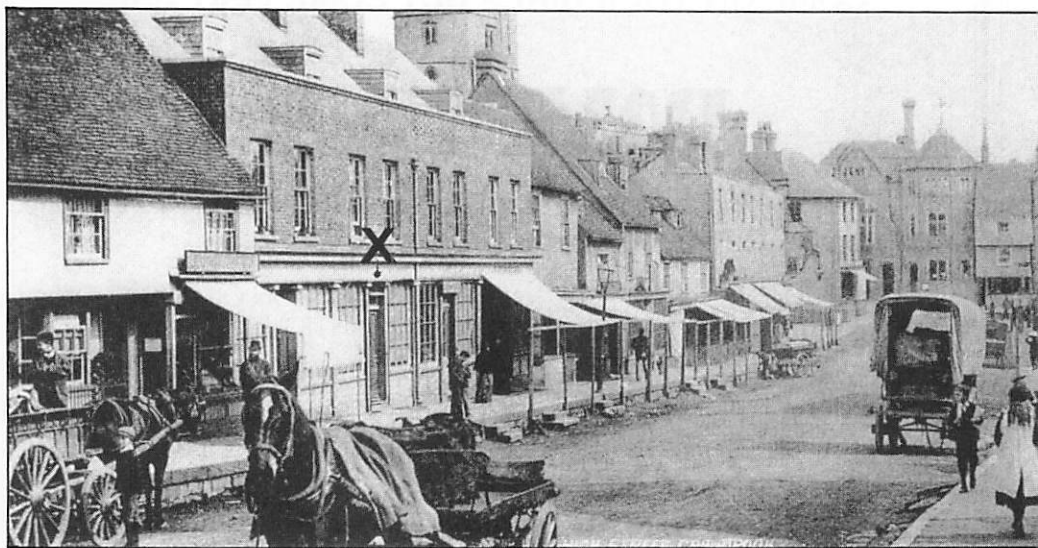


*W. H. Austen, in white trousers, alongside locomotive Camber, Rye & Camber Tramway, circa 1895.
(Colonel Stephens historical archive)*

When William left school in 1891 at the age of 13, he was given an apprenticeship with Messrs Joseph T. Firbank, the London Railway contractors, who were then engaged on the construction of the Cranbrook & Paddock Wood Railway. It is almost certain that whilst engaged on this project he first came in contact with Stephens, who at the age of 22 and having completed his apprenticeship at the workshops of the Metropolitan Railway at Neasden, was working on the Cranbrook line as Resident Engineer under the overall supervision of consultant engineer to the project, E. P. Seaton, and lodging in the hamlet of Hartley. The line

opened to Hope Mill (Goudhurst) in October 1892 and to Hawkhurst the following year.

By 1894, work with the contractors had come to an end, including the customary one year maintenance period after the opening of the line, and Stephens was looking for pastures new and for an assistant for his future consulting practice. After undertaking a small project for the Cranbrook Waterworks Company, Stephens then obtained a brief to design and supervise the construction of the Rye & Camber Tramway - a diminutive line which was built and equipped



*Cranbrook High Street in the 1890s. No. 29, where W. H. Austen lodged with his grandmother, is marked with a cross.
(Colonel Stephens historical archive)*

entirely for the sum of around £2000. Austen joined him, where he was "put in charge of the locomotive workshops" and to all intents and purposes was employed by Stephens as his assistant from this time although he never achieved any formal qualifications. The two moved on to the Selsey Tramway project in 1897 and then to Stephens' first major scheme, the Rother Valley Railway in 1898. During this time Austen probably continued to live with his grandmother until her death in 1896.

Stephens, who was by then lodging in Priory Road, Tonbridge, opened the famous light railway offices at 23 Salford Terrace in 1900, and Austen, who married in the same year, moved to 13 Douglas Road - conveniently near by. Austen and his wife Fanny had two children, William Holman ("Holly") born in 1902 and a daughter Ena.

During the next 30 years Austen assisted Stephens with all his schemes, being involved with general drawing office work, parliamentary plans, as well as the more practical aspects of railway construction and management. When Fanny died in 1922, her sister and her husband, Vincent Beretta, moved from Brighton to

Douglas Road, where they set up a joint household with the Austens, moving later to a larger house in the same road.

Holly, who had been educated at the Judd School in Tonbridge and the Crystal Palace School of Engineering, where he failed to score academically, went to work for the Southern Railway in 1924. He was dismissed in 1929 and after three years of unemployment, his father gave him a job as his assistant at Salford Terrace in 1932. By then, Stephens had died and in order to accommodate Holly, Austen was obliged to dismiss James Ashworth, the senior draughtsman, a move which caused a great deal of resentment amongst the other staff, coming so soon after Stephens' death. Despite being a practical and in many ways a talented man, Holly did not respond well to discipline and never fulfilled the high hopes of his father, but he remained at Salford Terrace until the office closed in 1948. Holly married in 1936, but the couple were childless and the Austen dynasty was destined to come to an end with his death in 1981.

(To be continued)

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A Terrier with water problems

There can be few left, who knew, and worked on No. 3 Bodiam, before her reboiling in 1943. Most of the Al Stroudly Brighton Terriers had been reboiled by Marsh between 1911 and 1922, with injectors, becoming Class Alx.

Prior to No. 3 getting this treatment at least 21 years later, the only way to replenish the boiler with water was for the loco to be in motion.

Two ram type pumps were fitted, the barrels bolted to the frames, and the rams fixed to the piston rod crossheads.

The water intake to the pumps was controlled by adjustable levers in the cab that controlled the flow from the side tanks.

Great care had to be taken with the fire during waiting periods at Robertsbridge and Headcorn, to prevent any blowing off at the safety valves. With injectors this can be controlled easily.

This also applied when returning to Rolvenden shed at night, as after cleaning the fire, we left a small fire in, ready for the morning. Failure in topping up the boiler properly meant being late home, as we had to run up and down track a few times to fill up.

This was not conducive to a happy working relationship with one's Driver, if it happened too frequently.

All locomotives have their peculiar quirks and faults. No. 3 was no exception, it was her feed

pumps. If we used the left hand one, the clack usually stuck up in the clack box, and had to be persuaded to seat again by clouting the box with the coal hammer.

The right hand pump we used all the time, it was on the fireman's side, and handy for him to control the feed valve. It was prone, however, to develop an air lock, usually on a dark, cold, wet winter's night.

To clear this, and get the pump working again, I had to clamber along to the front end, gripping the lip of the side tank with my finger tips, and shuffling my feet along the very narrow strip of running plate at the base of the tank. Not an easy task with the loco lurching and swaying about.

No thought was given about reducing speed for this hazardous operation, and reaching the front end of the tank I'd kneel down, and put my hand down amongst the whirling, clattering motion to feel for the pet cock on the pump.

Once this was opened, it only took a second or two for the air to be released, followed by a deluge of water. I never managed to close that cock in time to avoid getting soaked.

After uttering an obscene oath, or two, a quick prayer of thanks followed, for still having an unutilated hand to hold on with for the return journey to the comfort of the warm cab.

Monty Baker



The author on the footplate of No. 3 on 21st September 1935.

(Colonel Stephens historical archive)

What are we?

Sir Neil Cossons, Director of the Science Museum, recently caused something of a furore by remarking that the railway preservation movement had contributed little by way of original research into railways, nor had it advanced the public understanding of railways. He suggested that an important goal would be to:

"preserve and operate a railway to absolutely authentic historical and technical standards, in terms of real-estate, locomotives and rolling stock, and methods of operation, so that the public at large could gain an accurate insight into . . . the railway and its history."

That is a tall order. The first problem is that for many railways, much of the authentic motive power and rolling stock (and even buildings), have been destroyed. Secondly, "preserved" railways have to operate under current legislation which rules out some of the original methods of operation. This rather begs the question, so what is being preserved?

It may be easier for some of the narrow gauge railways to both preserve original stock and convey a sense of their historical purpose - and some standard gauge railways have pursued a strong identity with the company of which their line was once part. But is it really possible to create a time-capsule of an authentic railway at a given time - and operate it? If it is not operational, how is the enterprise to be paid for and how will public understanding then be advanced?

Peter Ovenstone* has raised a related issue in the Yearbook of the International Association of Transport Museums, where he asks whether "preserved" railways are operated as "museum railways" or "tourist railways". He suggests the first step is to ask: What is the primary objective of the organisation? That is an interesting question for the members of the Tenterden Railway Company. It could be argued that "tourist railways" have more in common with theme parks rather than preservation. They are there to attract visitors (and the more the better) to a given area and to make a profit. The use of volunteers may keep down the wages bill while allowing the volunteers to indulge their fantasies of playing trains.

Peter Ovenstone goes on to indicate that a "museum railway" is there to preserve for the benefit of future generations both physical

material and traditional operating techniques. He argues that there is something inbetween, that is a railway which uses historical equipment and techniques but nevertheless has a primary objective of railway operation. Most private railways will surely fall into this category and many will have as a stated primary objective the re-creation of an authentic historical period in a particular railway's history. However, there will surely have to be some compromise with authenticity if for no other reason that the railway has to pay its way. Few private railways receive any subsidy from taxpayers as do many of the conventional museums.

While not necessarily reaching full museum standards, many standard gauge private railways have sought to identify with a particular company, for example Great Western, Southern, London Midland, etc., in terms of station liveries, staff uniforms, and to some extent with motive power and rolling stock. They have often built up a relevant collection of small relics and railway paraphernalia and have adopted a suitable style for signalling, fencing, etc. And all this has been seen as the justification for the preservation of a particular section of line.

So how does the Kent & East Sussex Railway measure up to these concepts. Thirty years ago, the founders of the K&ESR preservation society justified their fight to save the line by its historical importance as the first light railway to be built under the 1896 Light Railways Act. Although all private railways now run under Light Railway Orders, the K&ESR remains as the only standard gauge example to have actually been built as a light railway. While most standard gauge preserved lines are but a fragment of the original system, the K&ESR could, potentially, comprise the complete original Rother Valley section. The line's historical importance is, therefore, undeniable.

For nearly 50 years, the K&ESR maintained an independent existence with its own motive power and rolling stock numbered in its own lists. It had its own liveries and peculiarities of operation. Under the management of the personable H. F. Stephens, who was well known in his day, the railway acquired a unique atmosphere and even as early as the 1920s and 30s, enthusiasts arrived at Robertsbridge or Headcorn to travel on the line.

Following nationalisation in 1948, hardly anything changed. British Railways still referred



Should this be what the K&ESR is all about?

(Brian Stephenson)

to it as the Kent & East Sussex line, and it still operated in its eccentric way with locomotives and rolling stock allocated to the railway. Rolvenden shed remained open, not closing until the passenger service ceased in 1954.

British Railways left no lasting impression on the line during their six short years of passenger services. Concrete bridge numbers and Drewry diesels in the goods only days, were the only things introduced by BR that were not previously on the line.

It is now 20 years since the first section of line re-opened in 1974 and it may be appropriate to reflect on our achievements since that time. We have re-opened 6½ miles of the ten miles purchased in 1973, and now have four operational stations. Facilities for locomotive and carriage and wagon repairs and maintenance have been provided to replace those demolished by BR. Catering, toilets and shop facilities, which historically never existed, have been provided for visitors and passengers. A fleet of engines, carriages and goods stock has been built up, most of which, it could be argued, is suitable for the line. Bridges have been rebuilt or replaced and much heavy civil engineering has taken place on the track formation. Signalling has been installed on the first 4½ miles. The railway is reasonably well known to the public and we boast of our year-on-year increase in passengers.

However, how authentic a line have we created? There may even be some misunderstanding amongst our own members as to what constitutes authenticity. Some would like to recreate the Southern era - but it never was part of the Southern Railway! Some would like the line to be set in the BR period - but as BR ran the line

much as before, isn't that an irrelevance? Surely the only period that makes sense (and justifies its existence) is to set the railway in its independent days, with some stock on hire from the Southern.

True, the name of Colonel Stephens has been re-established and he is perhaps as widely known today as he was in the 1920s - he even receives occasional correspondence! Stephens' name was a byword for economy and simplicity, and given that we can only recreate the style and ambiance, not a replica, of the K&ESR, have those attributes been kept in mind?

Is our signalling as simple as it might be or has it been conceived to satisfy the interests of the signalling staff? Has our civil engineering been designed with economy in mind or for an axle loading which is irrelevant to a light railway? Do the plans for mainline diesel units enhance in any way the ambiance of the line? Does the over use of public address add anything to an atmosphere of the past?

As locomotives and carriages are restored and repainted they all appear to revert to original identities. Will there be any stock left numbered in the traditional K&ESR lists? (How likely is it that a Mk 1 coach with a Scottish regional number would have strayed on to the K&ESR?) The railway initials do not now appear on a single engine and this appears to be part of an unstated policy to abandon any coherent theme as to which railway we are.

Long-serving members will remember that with the K&ESR we were preserving a RAILWAY, not just a demonstration line on which to exhibit a miscellaneous collection of restored vehicles. All of which makes one wonder: What motivates

volunteers to give of their time to run the railway? Is it to indulge their interests in playing trains, or just to socialise, or do they really feel they are playing a part in saving something for future generations?

In 1971, when the TRCo was set up it was granted charitable status on account of its educational aims. It could be argued that it has signally failed to educate the public and advance public understanding of the K&ESR as a "light railway" as few people seem to know what the term means. Even its own subscribing members appear to have little understanding of the railway's history. Admittedly, schoolchildren are given conducted tours and they presumably learn something of the social history context of the railway, and a team of contributors publish in this journal the fruits of their researches into the K&ESR and other railways in the Stephens' empire. So some of Sir Neil's criteria are met in terms of public understanding and original research.

The lack of understanding by our own senior managers was perhaps well illustrated by the recent well-intentioned announcement that the stations would be set in different periods of the railway's history. The fact that the stations remained almost totally unchanged during the

independent period but were partially demolished under BR did not occur to them.

Sir Neil and Peter Ovenstone may have done everyone in the preservation movement a service by raising issues which are fundamental to how we all perceive our primary objectives.

The dilemma may be summed up nicely. The K&ESR was operating at the same time as the companies represented by the restored vintage carriages, and it was also a contemporary of the big-four post-grouping railways, so it is possible that any of these could have "met" the K&ESR - but not a Terrier engine in BR livery.

There seem to be two choices. Either we recreate the style of the K&ESR with authentic liveries, uniforms, job titles, and operate with economy and simplicity, or we simply become a tourist attraction, "preserving" stock in an unrelated way, adding "modern" diesels, and upgrading the line with costly heavy engineering.

This article has been deliberately provocative in tone with the hope that a stimulating debate will follow.

**Peter Ovenstone is Vice-chairman of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies.*

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Letters to the Editor

Locomotive Policy

Sir - As a founder, albeit inactive, member, I feel compelled to register my dismay at the proliferation of diesels on the railway.

Those of us who lived through the agony of BR dieselisation will never forget the horror and misery it represented for anyone with an appreciation of the magic of steam. I find it incomprehensible that anyone could wish to repeat the folly and suggest the Board gives very serious consideration as to whether such a course is in the best interests of the organisation. If our railway does indeed become "the best place to see preserved diesels at work in the SE" I will transfer my allegiance to a place where such sacrilege is least likely.

Petworth, West Sussex

Duncan McGregor

Sir - The formation of The Tenterden Railway Equipment & Traction Company Ltd. must be regarded as an asset to the K&ESR, but surely the object should be to look for steam locomotives rather than diesels. We are, after all, advertised as a preserved steam railway which is what most people come to see. I realise we need some diesels for works trains, shunting, etc., but if we are not careful we shall soon have more diesel locos than steam.

When "Sutton" is withdrawn in March for its ten-year overhaul, it will leave us with no "Terrier" class engine in service, although there are three on the railway. This seems to be at odds with what the K&ESR is supposed to be all about, especially following the statement made by the Board last year concerning the need for small engines with short trains.

With the restoration of more of our older and more interesting carriages it is up to the Board and the Locomotive Department to ensure that suitable locos (Terriers and the P Class) are in service to show off these superbly finished carriages to best effect.

Newenden, Kent

Colin Carter

Sir - I have some sympathy with the views expressed by Mr. Miller in the Winter 1993 edition of the *Terrier* concerning the acquisition of more diesel locomotives for the railway.

I would not wish to see the K&ESR become home to an extensive collection of ex-BR diesels (and that includes any more diesel multiple

units), but I would make exceptions in respect of Classes 33 and 73. Both have strong local connections and have delivered rolling stock to the railway at Robertsbridge in the past. I believe that the railway must maintain a strong steam emphasis, but should also be flexible enough to provide a retirement home for these local stalwarts.

We know from past experience that our passengers overwhelmingly prefer steam locomotives, but diesels have their supporters too and an occasional "Diesel Day" does no harm to anybody. It is sobering to remember that the Class 33 has been in BR service for almost twice as long as any BR standard steam locomotive ever achieved.

Orpington, Kent

Ray Marlow

Sir - Following John Miller's letter and sketches in the last *Tenterden Terrier*, may I rush in where angels fear to tread? The sketches, in particular, reminded me of an article by Raymond Rolt in the Summer 1974 *Bluebell News*, in which he discussed the feasibility of producing new types of steam engine using major components of the standard Hunslet "Austerity" saddle tank. One of these types was a 0-6-2 radial tank, a wheel arrangement favoured by the Colonel for new construction, and ordered by him from Hawthorn Leslie for both the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction.

Compared with the PD&SWJR engines (the larger of these two classes of 0-6-2T), the "Austerity" has an identical coupled wheelbase (5ft 9in + 5ft 3in), slightly larger driving wheels (4ft 3in vs 4ft), 18 x 26in inside cylinders compared with 16 x 24in outside, the same boiler pressure (170psi) and a higher nominal tractive effort (23,870lb vs 18,495lb).

Rebuilding an "Austerity" as a 0-6-2T would involve lengthening the frames at the rear and providing a radial truck with, say, 3ft diameter wheels, constructing new side tanks, cab and bunker (perhaps with an extra water tank under the coal space), and providing new boiler cladding and boiler mountings. There would inevitably be some loss of accessibility to the motion, but it should be possible to at least equal the coal and water capacity of the "Austerity". I believe the result would be quite an impressive looking locomotive - but what is perhaps more important is that one would expect better weight

distribution and riding qualities, achieving a much more track-friendly machine, albeit at the expense of a little loss of adhesive weight.

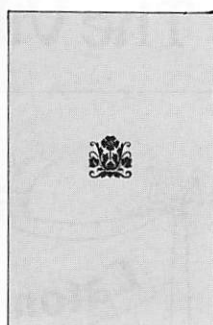
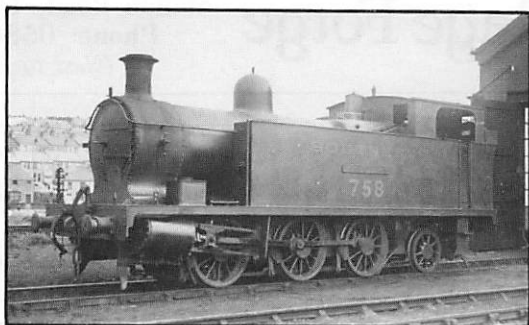
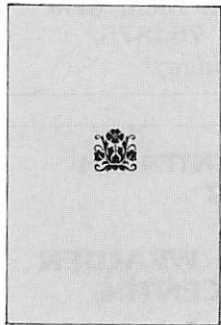
A project like this could hardly be a priority at the present time, especially as we still have several interesting and useful locomotives awaiting restoration or repair. However, can one look forward to the time when the engine of the train in the K&ESR bay at Robertsbridge will be

an Oxford blue tank of almost, but not quite, familiar outline, with a brass plate on the bunker reading "Rebuilt Rolvenden Works 2005"?

Imagine the PD&SWJR "Lord St. Leven", shown in the enclosed photograph, with inside cylinders and a round topped firebox for some idea of how it might turn out.

Sidcup, Kent

Tom Burnham



(Author's Collection)

20 Years On

Sir - I possess Number 4 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* dated Spring 1974 and in the inner cover the Editor is shown as P. D. Shaw of Putney.

The inner cover of Number 62 dated Winter 1993 shows the Editor as P. D. Shaw of Tenterden. I suspect the same man also issued Numbers One, Two and Three which I believe were in Newsletter form.

I hope the Editor will print this letter of congratulation for such an excellent job over the last twenty years. I for one always read the issue through from cover to cover when I get it! Not only is it printed very well, but there is always something of interest in it. Thank you from a very satisfied member!

Winchester

Alan Cooke

Hopping at Bodiam

Sir - How interesting it was to read Major W. R. Moore's memories of Hop-picking trains, having worked on them.

I fired with Nelson Wood on two occasions in the early 1930s, when our loco availability was so sparse, we only had No. 4, the ex-LSWR 0335 class, to do this job with.

We coupled on to the rear of 8 coaches, and 3 vans when they arrived at Robertsbridge, with 22 inches of vacuum. We could only raise about

17 inches, this meant releasing all the cylinders manually before we could clear the mainline.

Not having a loco at the rear, we propelled the empty stock back. The guards kept lookout either side at the rear, plate-layers manned the Junction Road crossing, and we gave plenty of whistle for the signal at the Mill. Then we went like the clappers up the stiff gradient, back to the main line.

Thorpe Le Soken, Essex

Monty Baker

Holding the Line

Sir - Nick Pallant has produced an invaluable account of the early days of preservation on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. However, I think I should make it clear that I cannot lay any claim to fame as one of the trio of Maidstone Grammar School pupils who, in 1961, had the imagination to attempt to save the Railway. I was never at that school and can only claim to have joined the Society at Robertsbridge on Easter Monday 1966. Sadly I let my membership lapse after a couple of years when I moved away and only rejoined on reopening day, 3rd February 1974. Perhaps there is another Neil Rose! If either Tony Hocking or Gardner Crawley read this letter, can they remember their colleague? Or maybe someone else knows? It would be nice to set the record straight.

Wadhurst, East Sussex

Neil Rose

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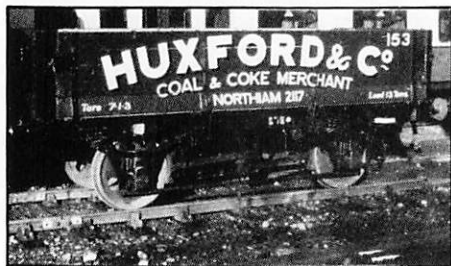
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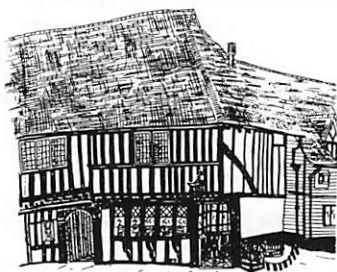
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Book Review

Holding the Line, by N. Pallant. Published by Alan Sutton Publishing, 204 pages of text, liberally illustrated with photographs. Hard Covers. Price £14.99.

Having been intimately associated with the Railway during most of the period covered by this new book chronicling the early years of the preservation venture I am not sure that I am the right person to assess it. For those who were involved with the Railway at the time, it is a fascinating walk down memory lane and a much needed reminder that despite all the problems and delays which resulted from the failure of the first Light Railway Order application, the original Preservation Society laid much of the foundation for the highly successful passenger railway which exists today.

Whether the detailed blow-by-blow account of the early battles with the Ministry of Transport and British Railways will be of equal interest to those not there at the time I am not sure, although I am delighted that this detailed record has finally appeared. It is entirely fitting that the dogged perseverance of the initial band of promoters should have been recorded in this way, and it also helps to present a picture - very successfully, I believe - of the preservation scene in Britain in the '60s and '70s, when public interest in railways was heavily in decline, and the Ministry of Roads was unable to see national transport requirements as anything other than the construction of ever more motorways and ever large juggernauts. That the Preservation Society was able to prevent the Line from being torn up at all is little short of amazing, involving, as it did, a small, and underfunded, organisation taking on the full might of the Ministry of Transport in a protracted legal battle. Although ultimately the legal battle was lost, it did force the cancellation of the contract to dismantle the Railway, which had already been given to Thomas Ward, and thus kept the Line in existence while further negotiations were carried out in a political climate which was by then beginning to see at least that perhaps railway lines should not be wiped out without giving them at least a chance for survival.

Needless to say, the whole direction of the preservation bid was changed as a result of political pressures, and the aim to provide a range of local freight and passenger services had to give way to conversion of the scheme into a purely tourist railway (although an eventual

return to Robertsbridge could still change that in the future). Many of those associated with the early days of the Preservation Society were very sorry to see this change in direction, but it is a measure of the enthusiasm of those behind the scheme that even die-hard "public service" fans such as myself have remained connected with the Railway. Mr. Pallant has drawn attention to this remarkable loyalty commanded by the Kent & East Sussex Railway among its supporters, and I am sure this is, indeed, a major reason for its success.

The book is remarkably well researched and incredibly comprehensive. A few items, which remain sensitive even to this day, are omitted, but Mr. Pallant has done his homework well, and I must congratulate him on a job well done.

I would, perhaps, query the need to provide two separate route maps, and a few additional photographs would also be welcome, although many fascinating early pictures are included, and shed much light on the ingenuity of those involved, with the Morris 20 railcar and the Wickham trolley mounted weed trimmers as outstanding examples.

I would have liked to see the footnotes positioned at the bottom of the relevant pages rather than at the end of the chapters, but I must commend the high production standards generally, which see the book printed on good quality paper, with a sewn binding and in hard covers - a combination which will enable it to long outlast the more common glued paperback productions which are much more commonly found today and the high standard of the presentation fully justifies the high price in view of the specialised nature of the book.

The only item in the book which I believe is not covered in the detail which it deserves is the subject of the two court hearings between the Ministry of Transport and the railway company. The outcome of these two cases, the first of which was won by the company and the second, on appeal, by the Ministry, were crucial to the history of the Railway - and, indeed, further afield, as they broke new legal ground, and I would have liked to see rather more detail on this point should the book ever run to a second edition. Nevertheless, I can thoroughly recommend this account of the formative years of the preservation venture.

Robin Doust

The PD&SWJR Today

Tom Burnham writes about a recent visit to the last surviving Colonel Stephens line on which a passenger service is maintained by British Rail

The Bere Alston to Gunnislake section of the former Callington branch of the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction Railway is the only line associated with Colonel Stephens to survive as part of the British Rail passenger network, and is probably the only British Rail passenger line to have been built under a Light Railway Order. Quite apart from its historical associations, it offers a most interesting ride with some fine scenic views, which can be recommended to anyone, railway enthusiast or not.

The line had its origin in the need to serve the East Cornwall mining area around Gunnislake and Kit Hill, where there were lodes rich in copper, tin and arsenic. Following various abortive proposals and false starts, the East Cornwall Mineral Railway opened in 1870 as a 3ft 6in gauge line from a wharf on the River Tamar at Calstock, up the steep side of the valley by a rope-worked incline, and for some 7 miles to a terminus at Kelly Bray, 640 feet above sea level, with branches to various mines and quarries en route. The quayside lines at Calstock were worked by horses, but two Neilson 0-4-0ST engines were obtained for the main line.

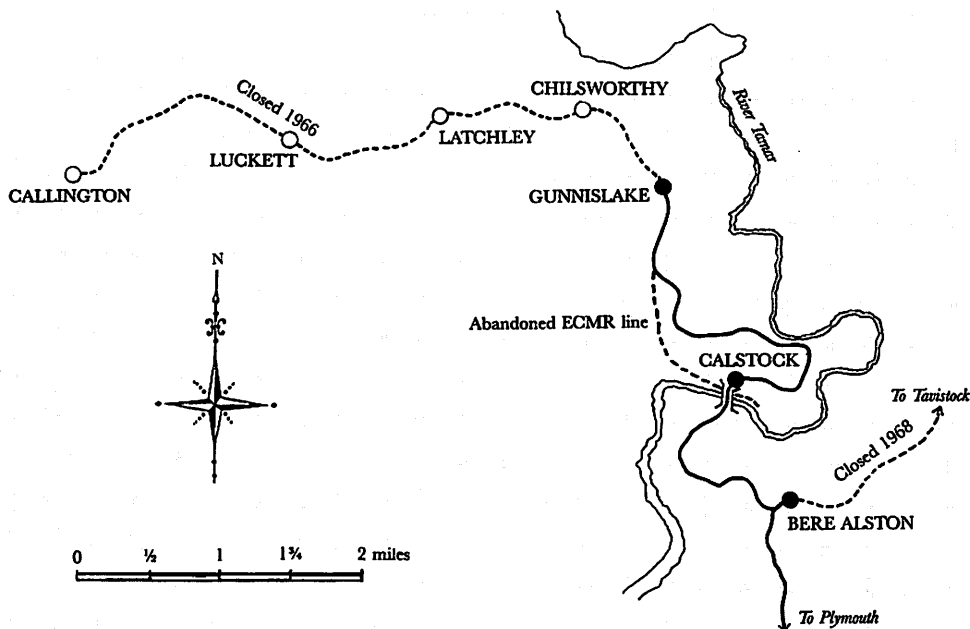
Later developments were linked with the London & South Western Railway's long struggle to gain access to the broad gauge stronghold of Plymouth. This was first achieved in 1876, but the approach from Lydford to Plymouth was by running powers over the South Devon (later Great Western) Railway's Tavistock and Launceston branch, a single line, not laid out for fast running, and with the additional complication of mixed gauge. A better line was needed, and this was provided by the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction Railway, which was promoted by local interests, and, although always worked by the L&SWR, remained nominally independent until the Grouping. Laid out as a double track main line by Galbraith and Church, the L&SWR's consulting engineers, it ran within a stone's throw of the GWR line most of the way from Lydford to Tavistock. From there it headed through Bere Alston and alongside the Tamar estuary, finally entering the L&SWR Devonport station from the west. It opened in 1890.

In obtaining its powers, the PD&SWJR had

acquired an obligation to take over the ECMR, which it fulfilled in 1891. The PD&SWJR Act also included a branch to Calstock to join the ECMR, but difficulty in raising capital meant that this was not built, and the powers lapsed in 1897. Revived as a light railway, the project was authorised by a series of Orders: the first in 1900 was for a 3ft 6in gauge line from Bere Alston to Calstock and the use of the original line to Kelly Bray for passengers. An Order of 1905 allowed use of standard gauge, and in 1909 an extension to North Hill (never built) was permitted. Engineering design, including the magnificent twelve-arched viaduct at Calstock, was again by Galbraith and Church, but Holman F. Stephens was appointed associate engineer, and was responsible for the conversion of the remaining part of the ECMR to standard gauge. This was carried out with a suspension of normal traffic of no more than two days. A steam-driven, vertical wagon hoist was built at the Calstock side of the viaduct to lower wagons to the quay, but until its completion, the rope-worked incline remained in use, and goods were transhipped at the point where the new and old lines joined.

The L&SWR was reluctant to work the new branch, so Stephens, who had now been appointed as manager and engineer, was asked to order locomotives from Hawthorne Leslie, his preferred supplier. They were an 0-6-0T, No. 3, "A.S. Harris", for goods traffic and two 0-6-2Ts, No. 4, "Lord St. Levan", and No. 5, "Earl of Mount Edgumbe", for passenger trains. In addition, narrow gauge Neilson tank No. 2 was converted to a standard gauge 0-4-2T in the hope that it would prove useful for shunting. Carriage stock was acquired second-hand from the L&SWR, and included a royal saloon of 1843, which eventually passed to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire.

The branch opened on 2 March 1908, with stations at Calstock, Gunnislake, Latchley, Stoke Climsland (later renamed Luckett) and Callington Road (later renamed Callington), despite being a good mile from the village) replacing the old ECMR "depots". A halt was opened at Chilsworthy in 1909 and another serving the Seven Stones pleasure ground existed from 1910 to 1917. In June 1910, Stephens's appointment was terminated, as he was not felt to be devoting enough time to his duties.



However, he seems to have remained on good terms with the company, as in 1911 he bought some old carriages, and in 1912 he converted Neilson tank, which became the Selsey Tramway's "Hesperus". The PD&SWJR was absorbed by the L&SWR immediately before the latter company became part of the Southern Railway. The working of the line continued much as before, although most of the repair work which had been carried out in the workshops at Callington was transferred to Plymouth Friary shed or Eastleigh works.

Goods traffic continued to be affected by the progressive decline of the local mining industry, and the Southern Railway's sectional appendix dated 1934 shows several of the numerous sidings on the branch as "out of use". In October 1934, the wagon hoist at Calstock was removed; it had been used mainly for wagons loaded with bricks, and when this traffic declined was thought not worth maintaining. However, other traffic at Calstock was doing well, with no less than 231,577 packages of fruit and flowers despatched in 1936, more than three times 1931's total. A special collecting lorry and temporary staff were stationed there during the season.

Nationalisation and the 1950s saw the branch become part of the Western Region of British Railways, but other changes were limited, one of the most obvious being the introduction of 2-6-2T engines of LMS design. However, the closure of Plymouth Friary station to passengers in 1958 and the opening of the Tamar road bridge in 1961 suggested that the Indian summer of the West Country railways might not last much longer, and in 1963 the Beeching Report proposed the withdrawal of all passenger services between Plymouth and Okehampton and between Bere Alston and Callington. The eventual outcome was only slightly less drastic. From 7 September 1964, the former Southern line through Devonport Kings Road was closed, all trains from the Bere Alston direction using the wartime connection at St Budeaux (opened on 21 March 1941) to gain the former GWR line. From 28 February 1966, freight trains were withdrawn from both the PD&SWJR main line and the Callington branch, apart from services to the Royal Navy depot at Ernesettle. The Callington branch was closed completely beyond Gunnislake from 7 November 1966, and finally all passenger trains were withdrawn between Bere Alston and Okehampton from 6 May 1968, leaving only a Plymouth-Bere Alston-Gunnislake service, as at present.

Although the future of any rural branch must be uncertain, Gunnislake has survived surprisingly well since 1968. The line is used by a fair number of regular commuters, schoolchildren, students and shoppers travelling to Plymouth or Devonport, for whom the railway offers advantages over the narrow and indirect roads, which involve a detour either via Tavistock, or via Callington and the congested Tamar road bridge. The local railway management has also been promoting the scenic value of the Tamar Valley Line, as it is now called, and has boosted leisure traffic by arranging a series of countryside walks and events starting from the stations and ranging from a "fungus foray" to a tour of the industrial archaeology of the Gunnislake mines. Combined boat and train excursions to Calstock - very popular in the 1930s - have also been revived.

One Friday in September 1993 I travelled on the 16.25 from Plymouth to Gunnislake, formed of a two-car Sprinter unit from Laira depot, 150 247, in rather shabby Regional Railways livery. These units had only recently taken over from the "Heritage" diesel units, an attempt a few years ago to replace these with four-wheeled Pacer units having been unsuccessful because of the sharp curves. We left from platform 2 (Gunnislake trains usually use the bay platform 3) with a good load of 67 passengers and called at Devonport, Dockyard and Keyham on the GWR

main line before crossing over to the up line and taking the connection to St Budeaux (Victoria Road). Here the driver unlocked a box on the platform to telephone the Plymouth power box and collect the single line token. Although these suburban stations have all ben reduced to unstaffed halts with modern metal and glass shelters, the trained eye could recognise that we were no longer in Great Western territory by the different pattern of iron railings.

Leaving St Budeaux, the line passes under the GWR main line before curving round to run alongside the Tamar estuary, beneath the approaches to Brunel's Saltash bridge of 1859 and the road suspension bridge of 1961. On the inland side there are sidings to the Ernesettle military depot, apparently not often used. We slowed for the bridge over the inlet known as Tamerton Lake, passed the derelict platforms and buildings of Tamerton Foliot station, a good mile and a half from the village it once served, and crossed a wooded peninsula before running on to the long, curving bridge across the mouth of the River Tay, with its eight bow girder spans. Once over the bridge, we started to climb, still with occasional views over the Tamar, to our next stop (on request, according to the timetable) at Bere Ferrers, where several passengers got out. The station house here is privately owned, and the owner is setting up a railway museum in the former goods yard, with a Hunslet diesel shunter



Calstock Viaduct - quay in foreground.

(Author)

and two or three carriages - harking back to pre-war days when the Southern Railway installed camping coaches at the station. The signal box has been restored to L&SWR colours, and is complete with a dummy signalman and a board with the name Beer Ferris, as the station was known from its opening in 1890 to 1898.

We continued to climb through undulating country beyond Bere Ferrers, eventually slowing to 20mph for the sharp curve into the reversing station of Bere Alston. The single line runs into the former down platform, where, although the station is unstaffed, the stone buildings are well maintained with the ironwork painted in red and green. The island platform, formerly serving the up main and the branch, is disused but also retains its buildings. The signalbox at the up end of the down platform is also disused, and the single remaining point was worked by the conductor guard from a 2-lever ground frame. Leaving Bere Alston with 35 passengers, we immediately turned on to the branch proper, and began to descend at gradients of 1 in 39 or 40 as we entered the steep-sided Tamar valley. On the far right of the river Cothele Quay could be seen, with Cothele House, the former residence of the Edgcombe family and now in the care of the National Trust, partly hidden in the woods high above. We continued to descend through a rock cutting and then levelled out across the viaduct, the speed limit of 15mph giving time to admire the magnificent view over the river and the village of Calstock some 120 feet below.

A sharp right curve from the end of the viaduct took us directly into Calstock station, the first in Cornwall, where seven or eight passengers got off. The platform here has been shortened, and the characteristic Stephens style building replaced by one of the modern metal-framed glass shelters. Leaving Calstock the train squealed round a succession of sharp curves, mostly with 10mph speed restrictions, as it followed the meanderings of the Tamar far below. Many glasshouses can be seen - most of them now derelict, but once the source of much rail traffic. The train stopped at an ungated level crossing and passed through a belt of thick woodland before emerging into more open country. After stopping for a second ungated crossing we passed two sets of derelict mine buildings, and then the flanges made a last protest as we joined the alignment of the former mineral railway.

More defunct mine chimneys are in view as we climb towards Gunnislake at 1 in 45, pass the site of some former coal sidings (once the Drakewalls depot of the ECMR), and then level

out across a bridge over the main road and into Gunnislake station. This was once the passing place on the line, with a 240 foot stone-faced island platform and an unusual double-sided variant of the Stephens-type buildings. All trace of the building has now gone, together with the access subway, and a modern waiting shelter is the only amenity. The single line ends with a buffer stop some 40 yards beyond the platform. It is a long, steep road up from Gunnislake village to the station, but the former goods yard provides room for a large car park, and promotion of the station as a railhead for the surrounding district (which has very poor road links with Plymouth) has met with some success. The bridge over the main A390 road by the station has headroom of only 12 feet, and it is planned to relocate the station to the coal yard site on the other side of the main road, allowing the bridge to be removed. The Winter 1993-4 timetable warns of an eight-week closure for the work to be carried out.

Beyond Gunnislake, the line can still be traced. It must have offered excellent views northwards across the Tamar valley, while many relics of the mining district around Kit Hill can be seen to the south. The stone platform of Chilsworthy halt is to be found among dense undergrowth, and Hingston Down quarry is still in operation, although of course it depends on road transport. The station house at Luckett survives in private ownership. At Callington, the former railway yards, which covered a large area, have been converted into the Beeching Park industrial estate, and some of the old workshop buildings may have been taken over by the present users.

On the former mineral railway section, the buildings at the head of the incline survive in surprisingly good condition in private ownership, and are now occupied by a removals and storage concern. There is no trace of the former tracks on Calstock Quay, and it takes quite an effort of imagination to visualise the bustle of industrial activity where attractive houses and their gardens now stand. However, it is just possible to make out the sawn-off ends of the girders that once supported the wagon hoist, set into the blockwork of the viaduct.

The Gunnislake branch is well worth a visit if you are in the Southwest. Although (with one very large exception of Calstock viaduct) there are few relics of the Stephens era to be seen, the journey from Plymouth offers a fascinating series of contrasts: the views of the Dockyard from the Great Western main line, the former L&SWR main line from St Budeaux up to Bere Alston, and the steep gradients and sharp curves of the light railway section.

Obituaries

Peter Goddard

Peter Goddard died suddenly in Perth, Western Australia, on the 8th July 1993. He and his wife Doris will be remembered by older members of the Company for the leading part they played in reopening our line.

Peter led a full and varied life. He was born in Tonbridge in 1920 and on leaving school was apprenticed to the Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company at Chippenham, where he worked on signalling installations for the East Coast main line and New Zealand Railways. While at Chippenham he joined the Wiltshire Yeomanry territorials but was drafted into the Royal Signals on the outbreak of war. He was attached to the Fourth Indian Division, seeing much action in North Africa and Italy, where he was involved in the bitter five-month battle for Monte Casino.

After the War, Peter joined the Distillers Company in their Experimental Division at Tonbridge, where he was involved in the manufacture and setting up of test rigs for sensitive and potentially dangerous experiments. During this period he took up motorcycle racing and was a regular competitor at Brands Hatch on his JAP engined machine.

In 1952 Peter married Doris and they later took over the garage at Ightham from Doris' father, expanding the business to include a school bus and coach hire service. Their first bus was an ex-East Kent 29 seat Dennis followed by an ex-East Kent Leyland Royal Tiger and other later and more sophisticated coaches. Happily both Dennis and Leyland later passed into preservation.

Peter was a skilled model engineer and a keen member of the Tonbridge Model Engineering Society, often running his self-built "Maid of Kent" L1 Class 4-4-0 on their track near Tonbridge Castle. Peter was involved in extending the track in the 1970s when he worked closely with W H Austen Jnr. who designed and supervised the project.

Peter was a committee member of the K&ESR Association from 1965 until 1971 and then a director of the Company until 1975. Although his principal interest lay in engineering matters his capabilities were manifold and he frequently turned his hand to anything that was necessary to further the cause of reopening the Railway. Wherever possible he devised an engineering solution to the problem and when asked to help

with clearing undergrowth from the very derelict track his answer was to attach two old Hayter mowers to a Wickham trolley chassis. These not only demolished the undergrowth but propelled the trolley with their driven rollers, which were carefully adjusted to bear on the railhead. At the time this was the only motive power operating on the line and that was unofficial. The device is immortalised in Wilf Watters' popular video of the line.

When the availability of steam locomotives dwindled in the late sixties Peter and Doris were able to finance the purchase of two ex-Army Austerities, No. 24, which is still on the line and No. 196 "Errol Lonsdale" which is now at the South Devon Railway. They also purchased one of the Longmoor birdcages and contributed substantially to the acquisition of the USA tanks. Their action helped to secure a basic locomotive fleet without which the line could not have survived.

In the years immediately leading up to the reopening Peter was in charge at Rolvenden and it was under his guidance that the locomotives were made ready for traffic and BR enginemen recruited to train volunteer footplate staff.

In 1979 Peter and Doris sold their business and railway rolling stock and moved to Perth to be near to relatives. They quickly became involved with the Hotham Valley Railway, more or less carrying on where they left off at Tenterden, Peter using his vast mechanical experience on locomotive maintenance and operating and Doris helping with catering and commercial activities. He became a Vice President of the Hotham Valley Railway and was also a founding member of the Northern Districts Model Engineering Society.

I make no apology for including Doris in this tribute to Peter as they always worked as a team, their widely divergent talents somehow complementing each other. Together with showed great kindness to people less fortunate than themselves and in spite of being weakened by heart trouble in recent years Peter continued to assist Doris with the voluntary care of elderly people.

Our belated sympathy goes to Doris and their sons David and Paul. Peter will be sadly missed on both side of the World.

Peter Davis



*Peter Goddard at Rolvenden in 1970.
(Tenterden Railway Company)*

Julian Morel

Sadly, we have to report the passing of Julian Morel who died on 23rd October 1993 at his home in Tunbridge Wells. Julian, who was in his 81st year, had devoted nearly all of his working life to catering, and for 21 years held the post of Catering Superintendent for the Pullman Car Company.

Having been educated in England and France, he held posts with leading hotels including the Savoy and Claridges before entering service with the Royal Artillery during the war. After hostilities ceased he joined the Pullman Car Company as Catering Superintendent, and held the post through its turbulent changes from a private company to an arm of British Transport Catering. His final position was a senior post with the Hotel and Catering Industry Training Board. He wrote many books on catering and regularly acted as a consultant within the trade. His final book, "Pullman", published in 1983, is now regarded as one of the classic books on the subject and the only one written by an ex-Pullman officer which leaves us with first rate, first hand anecdotal history of lasting interest.

It was through former Pullman Conductor George Hubbard (see *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 23) that I was able to first meet Julian and his wife Joan at their home in Frant in 1980, and from then on we had a very close friendship. At that time I was Wealden Pullman manager, and Julian was my constant source of advice, information and tips on the "attention to detail" which was the hallmark of Pullman. Julian became a member of the Tenterden Railway Company and an active participant in Pullman related events.

In July 1981, along with Joan and the late Frank



*Julian Morel alighting from the Wealden Pullman in 1981.
(Jim Berryman)*

Harding, former Pullman Car Co. Managing Director, he lunched aboard the Wealden Pullman and attended the opening of a Pullman Exhibition in Tenterden Museum (see *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 26). In August of that year he was guest of honour aboard our "Pullman 150" special and named Car "Diana" before departure that evening.

He wrote several articles for *The Tenterden Terrier*, including an appreciation of his former "chief" Frank Harding.

Julian was godfather to the writer's son Cosmo, whose christening celebration was held aboard Car Barbara in 1984. For many years Julian, his wife Joan and their grandchildren joined our family outings on the Santa Specials, events that were always high on their agenda.

Julian's interests extended outside of railways and catering, he was an active supporter of the Royal Artillery Association and their fund raising events and also a great enthusiast of "Big Band" jazz, Jack Hylton being one of his all time heroes.

Above all else, though, he was a family man. He was married to Joan for fifty four years and they were totally devoted to each other, rarely being apart in all that time; Joan, their two daughters and three grandchildren will miss him terribly.

Fittingly, our own Pullman Car Barbara is one of the cars which regularly formed part of the business trains which took Julian to London each day from Frant, and will remain as a lasting tribute to Julian and his colleagues of the Pullman Car Company.

Doug Lindsay

the White Hart

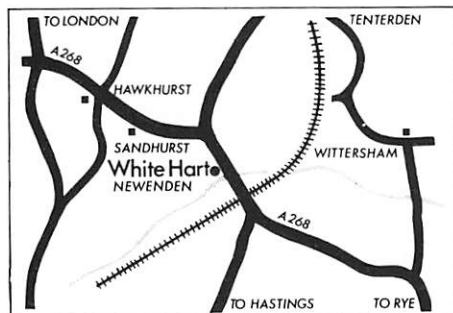
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