

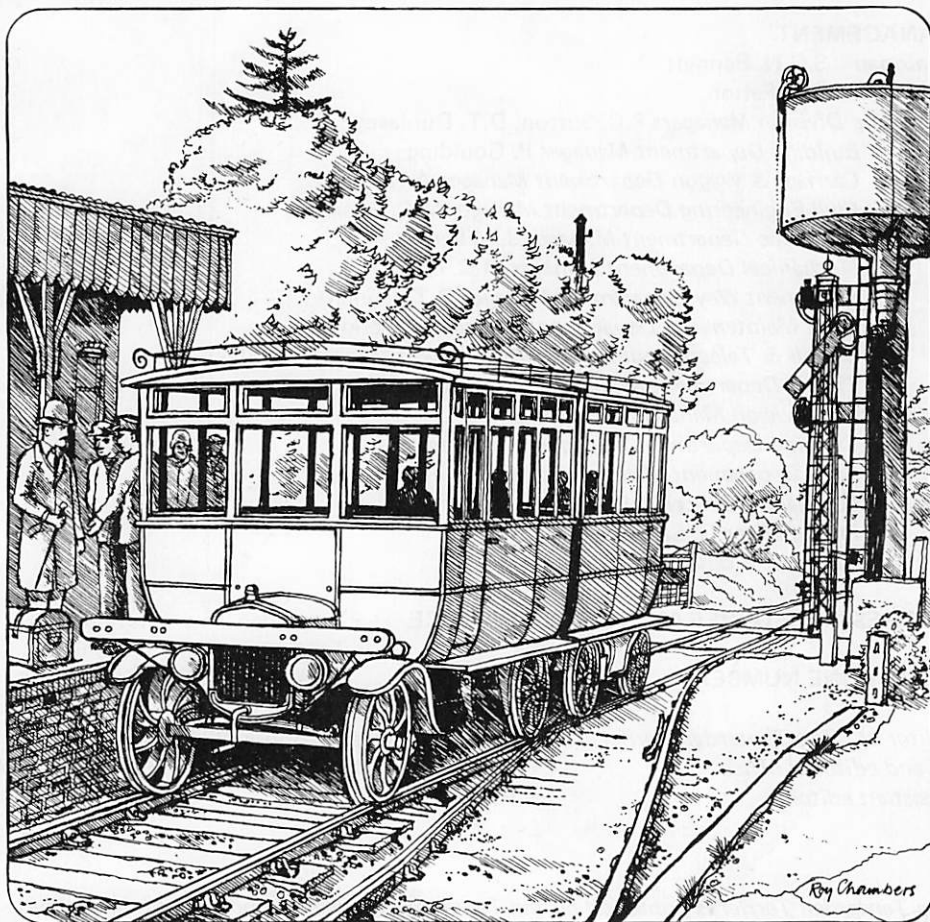


The Tenterden Terrier



Number 7

Summer 1975



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)

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Editorial

FORWARD TO WITTERSHAM

Included in this issue is an article by our Chairman, outlining the development programme for the Railway over the next two years. If all goes according to plan, we shall be running four miles of railway through to Wittersham Road station during the 1977 season, giving us for the first time a terminus at both ends of the line from which passengers may alight or join the trains. The capital expenditure necessary to achieve this objective is considerable and under present economic conditions our best hope of raising the revenue is to increase the number of passengers travelling on each train. Although we carried 37833 passengers last year and we have hopes of a slight improvement this season, the average number per train was only 91 and we had the capacity to carry at least twice as many within the framework of the existing service. We certainly need to publicise the attractions of our railway and perhaps we need to provide additional amenities to encourage more visitors to come to Tenterden. The proposed "Colonel Stephens" museum is one amenity which is being actively pursued and an important announcement concerning the siting of the museum will be made in our next issue. If you have an idea which could help us to increase passenger numbers, write to the Editor about it. All suggestions will be carefully examined by the Company management and a selection will be published in the "Tenterden Terrier".

FRONT COVER

Tenterden Town Station in 1924

[From a drawing by Roy Chambers]

Operating Notes

Compiled by Mark Yonge

Locomotives

Mike Hart reports that work on Sutton (No. 10) including modifications to the air brake system, re-tubing the boiler and re-plating has been finished. Re-painting is being done by David Dine and will consist of 2 undercoats and 2 finishing coats. The locomotive will then be lettered and lined out. It is hoped that Sutton will be ready for regular Wednesday and Saturday use by August. Saturday duties are at present shared between Bodiam (No. 3) and Norwegian (No. 19), the trains usually being confined to 2 coaches. Austerly (No. 23) regularly hauls the more heavily loaded Sunday trains and has proved to be more economical than Maunsell (No. 22). Her condition and performance is very impressive. Hastings (No. 15) is being stripped down to allow a boiler inspection. Whilst this elderly Hunslet may not haul regular trains, we are pleased to see it receiving some attention. On 25 May, Arthur (No. 17) hauled Westminster (No. 18) and the Shell tank wagon from Rolvenden to Bodiam. On the return journey the B.T.H. diesel (No. 16) was taken to Wittersham Road. This has not only cleared valuable siding space at Rolvenden, but provided a visual attraction for visitors to Bodiam. The diesel will be taken on to Rolvenden for renovation as soon as temporary repairs have been effected to New Mill bridge. Rodney Packham reports that the Southern Mogul No. 1618 was successfully steamed for boiler insurance in February. Work is now being carried out to the pistons and valve gear.

Carriage and Wagon

Alan Castle and his team are completely renovating "birdcage" coach No. 61. Steel sheets that were nailed over the original timbers have been removed from the upper portion as these were found to be harbouring large quantities of rainwater. Fortunately, the wood had not rotted and has since been sanded down and re-painted. The steel panels on the lower portion of the coach are in good condition and these have also been sanded and painted. The roof has been waterproofed. During the restoration work the two lavatory compartments, which had been blocked off many years ago, were uncovered and photographed. A full report will appear in our next issue. Work has commenced on the interior and all the old varnish is being removed prior to starting again. The seating is in good condition and will only need cleaning. Work has also started on re-furbishing the kitchen in pullman No. 52 "Barbara" to make it suitable

for use on the wine and dine specials. The dividing wall between the kitchen and pantry - will be removed to form one large unit and will be fitted with a sink and cooker. Plans are in hand to completely re-paint No. 52 after the end of the season.

Permanent Way and Clearance

On May 18th, following much winter re-sleepering, the line was extended to a new point at "Popes Cottage" permanent way hut, some 2½ miles from Tenterden. This new extension adds several hundred yards to the passenger route. The next task to be tackled will be the cutting between Cranbrook Road and Rolvenden, where there has been a fairly severe landslip, following the heavy winter rains. The slip will be contained by using railposts and sleepers. Once this job has been completed, re-sleepering will commence on the section of track between "Popes Cottage" and New Mill bridge. The plan is to have this section ready for use by March 1976. The Clearance Branch reports that during the next few weeks, work should be complete as far as New Mill bridge. The effort will then be concentrated on the section from here to Wittersham Road. Next Spring should see a start on attacking the jungle between Wittersham Road and Hexden bridge. At the end of April, the whole line was sprayed with weedkiller. A maintenance dose was all that was required on the operating section, but much heavier concentrations were required for the severe undergrowth between Wittersham and Bodiam. Our thanks goes to those members who took holiday to enable this work to be done.

Signals and Telecommunications

Nick Blake reports that the "down" advanced starter signal has been erected at Tenterden and the platform starting signal is to follow shortly. There will be a normal starting arm with a shunt signal positioned below it, sited at the down end of Tenterden platform and this should have been erected by the time this magazine appears. The home signal will be the next major construction and will be sited about 300 yards down the line towards Cranbrook Road. This will be a bracket signal indicating to an approaching train from Rolvenden that either the platform road or the loop road is being entered. A full report on signalling plans appears elsewhere in this issue.

Chris Lowry reports that 6 telegraph poles have recently been replaced and that a number of poles have been obtained as further replacements this

summer. The pole route was last replaced in 1950. Preventative measures can be taken to arrest further deterioration of existing poles and this entails applying a special waterproofing liquid to a small area of selected poles. This can only be carried out in dry weather and Chris Lowry would like to hear from anyone who would be prepared to do this urgent work. Two people are needed.

General Acknowledgements

We should like to thank the members who have begun to tidy up and repaint Bodiam station. Some of the original Rother Valley flat bottomed rail, which was previously lost in the weeds, can now be seen in the sidings. Andrew Mallion, who lives locally, has spent a great deal of time here, both on maintenance and on manning the sales department. Tenterden station garden is nicer now than it has ever been, thanks to the efforts of Tom Waller. Recent planting will ensure that we have flowers in bloom throughout the summer. On the museum side, David Matthews has done some superb work on enlarging old photographs of the line and his display was much admired during the 75th Anniversary celebrations. Chris Mitchell is also doing stalwart work on the photographic side, keeping the Editor regularly supplied with photographs of the Railway. Finally we should like to thank Martin Black (Wire Ropes) Ltd, who supplied a new set of ropes for the Smith crane, completely free of charge. The crane has been used on a variety of jobs, such as signal post erecting and plant movements.

News from Area Groups

London. The London Area Group is an expansion of the Blackheath Youth Group which, under the leadership of Gordon Laming, covers South and South East London and Thames side. Until the opening of the line, the Group looked after the section from Rolvenden to the former limit of operation, but the Group has now left this section to keep the boys away from moving trains. The present work is in the vicinity of Wittersham Road station. This first involved the clearing of undergrowth and stacking the heavy metal sleepers stored there. The culvert has had to be extended to make way for the new passing loop and the laying of new pipes. The work coincided with recent flooding, but the boys, in this case from St. Dunstons College, Catford, worked willingly with their feet in water. The trench was filled in with ash from the old goods platform by boys from Welling and Bexley with some help from the Tunbridge Wells

Group. Over Easter, most of the earthwork was completed and the points are now ready for reinstatement further up the line. The Group has also cleared a space in Rolvenden yard for three new containers, near to the site of Jimmy Norton's notorious ticket printing hut. During the excavations, a few pieces of type and a bottle of (Stephens) ink were discovered. The Youth Group, which is affiliated to the Inner London Education Authority, now has a following of nearly 200. To help with transport, they have secured two buses. One is a 56 seater double-deck "Southdown" Leyland and the other a 35 seater "Lincolnshire" Bristol. Both buses have been restored to original condition and last year the "Southdown" attended a few bus rallies. London bus driver, Dick Deacon, gives his services free, which reduces costs considerably. The Group has also been busy at 2, Railway Cottages, Northiam, repainting three rooms and making structural repairs. The area round the cottage has been tidied up and the outside is to be painted this year. In the old days, this cottage used to be occupied by ganger, Dickie Hills. Gordon Laming's address is 71B, Foyle Road, London SE3, telephone 01-858 2998.

Maidstone. A very lively committee has been formed and during April the first open meeting was held. It is planned to have meetings on the last Thursday of every month — the venue being the Methodist Youth Centre, Brewer Street, Maidstone, at 7.30pm. The pattern of meetings is a short talk on a specific subject, a film or slide programme and a panel discussion where questions from the floor are answered. Other activities include working parties, publicity and exhibitions. In March and April an attractive display was mounted in the offices of the Hastings and Thanet Building Society at Maidstone. Officers of the Group are Simon Green (Acting Chairman), John Liddell (Secretary), David Felton (Treasurer and Sales Officer) and Jack Fox (Publicity Officer). Enquiries to John Liddell, Bower Cottage, Roseacre Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent, telephone 0622 37129. Although the main objective of the Group is to encourage membership of the Tenterden Railway Company, all are welcomed to attend meetings and there is no admission charge.

Surrey. The Surrey Group has made a flying start to the 1975 exhibition season and its members have attended events in Chelmsford, Greenwich, Grayshott, Eastleigh and Eltham, in addition to their own Holy Trinity Halls Model Railway Exhibition in Guildford. It should

perhaps be explained that Surrey Group regard their title as applying to a base of operations rather than a limit on the area covered.

The 1975 Holy Trinity Model Railway Exhibition was an even greater success than usual with an attendance of well over 1800 people. Our thanks are due to all the clubs and individuals who put in so much hard work to raise the £300 profit which this event realised. In particular, the model layouts themselves are largely provided by clubs and individuals having no direct link with the K.&E.S.R. Notable exceptions this year were Alan Dixon with his "O" Gauge Tinplate and Jim Wilson of Eltham Model Railway Club with an "O" gauge model of Bodiam Station. The door and refreshment sales are also largely manned by non-members and our thanks are due to all these people — without whom there would have been no exhibition.

The Surrey Group publicity and sales stand is active at Model Railway Exhibitions, Traction Engine Rallies etc, throughout the Spring, Summer and Autumn and at the time of writing, bookings have been received for future events at Andover, Mayford, Knowl Hill (Berkshire), Dorking and Reading. The formula for success at these events is to carry an ever-widening range of sales goods appropriate to steam and railway interests and to ensure that those goods represent value for money.

In addition to sales the Group's activities help to publicise the railway and bring details

of its operation to people who may not otherwise know of its.

Richard Halton is Secretary and his address is 47 Haig Road, Aldershot, Hants GU12 4PR, telephone Aldershot 312276.

Tunbridge Wells. The Tunbridge Wells Group was given approval last November to proceed with Stage 1 of its plan to build a station at Wittersham Road. After an exhaustive but unsuccessful search for a building in Southern England and East Anglia, the Group has purchased for £30 a potentially suitable building from Borth station, 7 miles north of Aberystwyth. The building is of wood weatherboard construction with an asbestos panelled roof, complete with finials. It measures approximately 20' X 10' X 10'. The Group already has a glass "pigeon hole" booking office window, and plans to partition off one end of the building to make a booking office which could be manned by one clerk. Several rare Southern Railway posters and pictures will be put up on the walls. Volunteers are needed to take part in this project. Members were up at Borth from May 28th to June 2nd, working on demolition and preparing the sections for removal. The Group's Annual General Meeting was held on April 8th, at which Robert Searle was re-elected Secretary. Enquiries should be directed to him at 10 Cobbetts Ride, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Urgent telephone messages can be left with Howard Strongitharm on Tunbridge Wells 34760.

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The Next Two Years

Company Chairman, Stephen Bennett, outlines development plans for the railway

Towards the end of 1974 the Board considered future plans for the railway in the light of one year's operating experience. Two main options were open to us. One was to continue the steady progress made in 1974 and restore the track westwards towards Wittersham Road from the present limit of operation; the other was to begin restoration at the Bodiam end of the line.

It was decided that the company would continue to expand the railway from its present limit of operation to Wittersham Road and that the reinstatement of the Bodiam end of the line as a separate entity would be deferred at least until such time as major expenditure west of Wittersham Road is due for consideration.

In arriving at this decision the Board considered the very large amount of capital required to open up even a small length of track eastwards from Bodiam. The market potential at Bodiam is possibly greater than at any other station on the line, but the financial outlay is prohibitive in the foreseeable future. This does not preclude some other form of activity at Bodiam and since Easter a sales and catering stand has been operating at the station.

The extension of public services to Wittersham Road is due to commence in March 1977, subject to the availability of capital and restoration will be completed in two further stages. The section from the original limit of operation to Pope's Cottage was opened in May of this year. The extension to the Newmill Bridge is scheduled for completion in March 1976 and the final section to Wittersham Road itself in March 1977.

An integral part of the programme of expansion is the installation of signalling at Tenterden. This is scheduled for completion by March 1976 and will permit station working and the exclusion of Tenterden from the single line section. A temporary signalling installation will be required at Rolvenden by the time services reach Wittersham Road in March 1977. The section from Rolvenden to Wittersham Road will be worked on a one-engine-in-steam basis until signalling equipment is later installed at Wittersham Road.

The loop at Rolvenden is to be extended in the direction of Tenterden along the line of the existing siding. This will allow us to

pass five coach trains. We shall leave room at the Wittersham end of this loop for a platform to be constructed in the future if this is found to be necessary.

These improvements will permit a half-hourly service, when necessary, between Tenterden and Wittersham Road, thus greatly increasing the passenger carrying capacity of the line. In the light of these developments we shall need more serviceable carriages than we currently possess. The existing carriage stock will be progressively augmented as carriages are restored.

The Newmill Channel bridge (No. 1029) will need to be renewed by March 1977 to coincide with the extension into Wittersham Road. Preparatory work on the bridge began in 1974 when the Army carried out a geological and soil survey of the site. Reconstruction work is scheduled to begin on the bridge early in 1976 after preparatory work has been completed in 1975.

The original station at Wittersham Road has long disappeared. A new station will be constructed by the end of 1976. Preparatory work including clearing the site was completed earlier this year. Land on the Rolvenden side of the present turn-out will be filled and late in 1976 the turn-out will be moved 115 feet towards Rolvenden. The existing siding will be extended and connected to the new points. A new five coach loop will be built but initially it will be a siding finishing at the Northiam end of the new platform. The siding will permit the use of the station for passenger services with the aid of a pull-off locomotive. After March 1977 a point will be put in adjacent to the road and a loop created. This track work will be carried out by the Blackheath Group.

The Tunbridge Wells Group will construct a platform at Wittersham Road to serve the western end of the loop. A new signal box will be installed and a station building erected near the site of the previous one. This work is scheduled for completion by the end of 1976.

March 1977 will be an important landmark in the railway's development. Until that date the pattern of services will remain much the same

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Signalling at Tenterden

The problems arising from a curious track layout

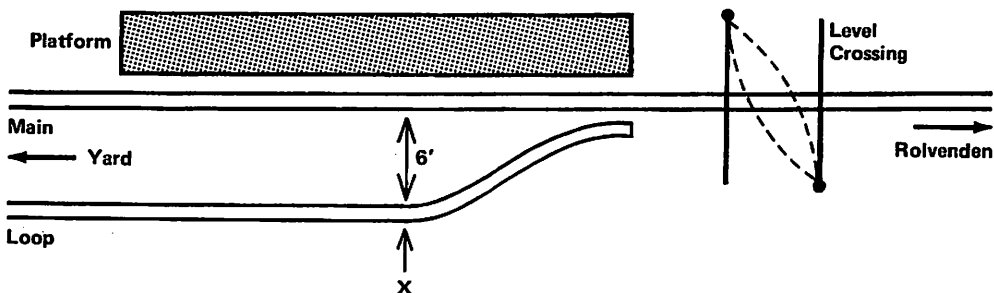


FIGURE 1

Regular visitors to Tenterden will have noticed that work has been progressing slowly on the construction of the Signal box, and that some lengths of point rodding have recently made their appearance between the signal box and the level crossing. In fact, the last couple of years have seen considerable activity in the S.&T. Department, particularly on the planning side and on the restoration of old signalling equipment, and if all goes according to plan, Stage I of the Tenterden Signalling Scheme should be fully operational by the end of the 1975 season.

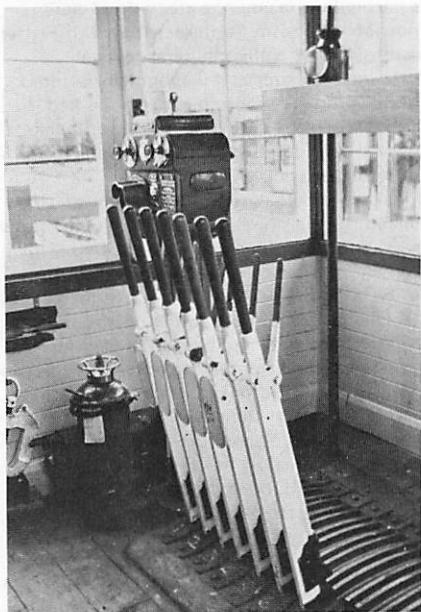
Some readers may be surprised at the idea of signalling the K.&E.S.R. at all, but it is worth remembering that when the railway is fully re-opened, it will be 10 miles in length, and the round trip from Tenterden to Bodiam will take approximately 2 hours. It will therefore be impossible to operate the line in one section if we are to maintain an hourly service, and at least one, and possibly 2 or 3, passing loops will be required. These passing loops must be fully signalled to conform with the Department of the Environment regulations, and it is clearly desirable to signal the terminal stations as well. The S.&T. Department has so far been mainly concerned with signalling the Tenterden area, and work commenced on rebuilding the signal box (originally sited at Chilham) in 1972. Earlier this year, we agreed the form of the signalling for the Tenterden area with the Department of the Environment, and it is the aim of this article to give some idea of the installation that will be made at Tenterden in the next few months.

Although the layout at Tenterden seems very simple, consisting only of a run-round loop, a level crossing, and a few sidings at the north

end of the station, the signalling has presented a number of headaches in the design stages. Basically, the problem arises from the curious track layout adopted by Colonel Stephens, apparently as a standard, as it is very similar at Rolvenden, Northiam, and Bodiam! At all these locations, the points leading into the loop are situated along the short station platform, and are adjacent to a level crossing (Figure 1).

From a signalling point of view, it is difficult to imagine a more inconvenient layout. The position of the level crossing gates not only makes run-round movements awkward, but also means that the level crossing gates have to be interlocked with the signals, thus requiring a length of point rodding to be laid under the road to operate the gate lock. Furthermore, as the tips of the point blades are only about 10 feet from the gate, it is impossible to install the conventional 40 feet lock bar usually fitted along the inside edge of the rail approaching a set of facing points, which prevents the signalman moving the points as a train is approaching them. A track circuit on the approach to the points would be one answer, but the Department of the Environment has agreed that we can omit the lock bar altogether providing that a rule is included in the rule book forbidding the signalman to replace the home signal to danger until the train has passed over and is completely clear of the points. The interlocking of the lever frame then prevents him from moving the points. This relaxation is possible at Tenterden because the points are immediately in front of the signal box, and it is most unlikely that a signalman would attempt to move them whilst a train is standing on them or about to pass over them. Another complication arises from

the position of the points, which occupy about one quarter of the platform length. This means that if the whole length of the platform is to be occupied by a train, the engine must stand on the points close to the gates. A profusion of starting signals, very close to one another, then becomes necessary; one at the crossing gates where a train about to depart will normally stand, an advanced starting signal, about 30 yards along the single line towards Rolvenden, to prevent an unauthorised movement along the single line towards Rolvenden by a train that has shunted across the crossing, and a third signal (or a "STOP" board) situated along the platform at the fouling points (marked "X" on Figure 1) to prevent a movement originating in the yard from fouling the loop points without the signalman's permission. Yet another starting signal (a ground disc signal), must be provided to authorise movements from the loop on to the main line.



View from the Signal Box looking towards Tenterden Platform [Photo Chris Mitchell]

The home signals are rather more conventional. A shunt signal will be situated close to the crossing gates on the Rolvenden side, which will read into either the main line or the loop, to facilitate run round movements. The interlocking will require this signal to be cleared before either of the main home signals can be cleared,

so that a passenger train can never approach it at danger; a small ground signal is adequate. The main home signal will be a two-doll bracket reading into both the platform road and the loop, and will be situated about 250 yards towards Rolvenden from the advanced starter. Generally, a distance of about 440 yards would be required here, but this has been reduced to 250 in view of the 1 in 50 gradient approaching Tenterden, and the very low speeds on the line. Strictly, a bracket is not required, but it has been decided to install one from the outset in case two platform working is ever instituted at Tenterden, in which case it would become essential.

Because of the low speeds on the line and the very steep gradient, the Department of the Environment has agreed that no distant signal is required providing that there is adequate sighting of the home signal. However, if time and labour permit, a fixed distant signal may be installed close to the Cranbrook Road crossing.

Stage II of the scheme will be concerned with the north end of the yard, and a final plan for this has not yet been evolved, chiefly because the next major S.&T. projects will be concerned with the first passing loop. However, in anticipation of some signalling being installed here, we have left a large number of spare levers at the left hand (north) end of the frame, all the Stage I levers being concentrated at the right hand end of the frame, closest to Rolvenden.

A word now on equipment. The lever frame is a Saxby & Farmer 23 lever "Duplex" locking frame which was originally installed in the box at Chilham. It is catch-handle locked, that is, the interlocking is operated by means of the catch handles rather than by the levers themselves. Although this makes the interlocking very strong, it has the disadvantage that each lever has two tappets, resulting in twice as much work in making new interlocking. Work on the new interlocking should be well advanced by the time this article appears. The signal posts to be installed at Tenterden are all ex-S.R. lattice posts with upper quadrant arms (very tedious to restore), whilst the bracket home signal will be a 2-doll balanced bracket with lattice dolls, originally a platform starter at Epsom Downs. Unfortunately, the original lattice main post was too short for use at Tenterden, and a new rail post is under construction, involving some fairly heavy engineering by S.&T. standards. Standard channel rodding and fittings are being used for the gate locks and point connections, and the ground signals will be the standard S.R.

disc type, possibly fitted with miniature arms rather than the more modern disc. The existing "butterfly" type economical facing point lock, now quite a curiosity on passenger lines, will be replaced by a standard F.P.L. and signal detector, as it is rather worn, but it is hoped to preserve at least one of these locks in use somewhere on the line.

At the time of writing, there is still a vast amount of work to be done if we are to meet our target of a working signal installation at Tenterden in 1975. Although one of the largest

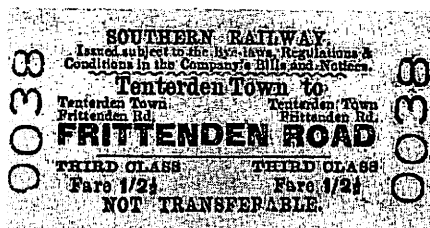
on the railway, the S.&T. Department still requires more working members. We need people who are interested in any aspect of railway signalling, with or without a relevant professional skill, who are prepared to spend the occasional day or weekend helping out. Trainee signalmen and crossing keepers are also required for duties about once every six or ten weeks. If you are interested, why not contact Nick Blake, Dave Yorke, or Ron Collett at Tenterden any weekend, who will be pleased to show you around.

David Yorke

From our Ticket Collection

Under False Colours

Most readers will no doubt know that one of the endearing features of the Old Kent & East Sussex Railway was that it never became part of the Southern Railway system. How, then, one may ask, did the subject of this issue's ticket article come to be printed with the heading "Southern Railway"?



The ticket is, in fact, a rather rare one, as it is of a type which was only issued for a very short period from 1948 onwards, and the reason for its existence is in fact quite simple. When the railways were first nationalised, it was some time before a decision was taken on the future standard design of ticket for the national railway system, and it was therefore decided that for a short time tickets should continue to be printed with the title of the former owning company on them. However, in the case of the very few minor railways included in the nationalised system, it was not considered economic to keep special printing facilities available for their tickets, and so tickets were printed bearing the name of the main line company in whose area the smaller concern was situated.

This particular specimen, a green third class Edmonson card from Tenterden Town to Frittenden, is therefore what collectors refer to as a "posthumous" issue, as it was actually printed after the company whose name it bears had disappeared. In the case of genuine Southern Railway system tickets, the posthumous issues are quite indistinguishable from pre-nationalisation issues, and it is only those produced for the small independent companies such as the K.&E.S.R. which can be identified. This fact is also true for early post-nationalisation Great Western Railway tickets, but in the case of L.N.E.R. and L.M.S. tickets, the posthumous printings can be detected because a decision was taken right at the beginning to adopt the S.R. and G.W.R. style of child ticket, which involved the miniature repeats of the destination stations which can be seen on the subject of this article. These enabled an adult ticket to be cut in half for issue to a child, both destinations still being readable thereafter. The L.M.S. and L.N.E.R. used a different system involving the removal of a "half snip" — a small portion of the ticket carrying adult audit details, and the posthumous tickets of these two companies were modified to include miniature repeats instead of the half snip.

These early post-nationalisation tickets are a particularly rich source of material for ticket enthusiasts, as one can trace several successive stages in the evolution of the earliest British Railways standard tickets, and I hope to illustrate some of these stages in future articles in this series.

Robin Doust

Personalities of the Kent and East Sussex

4: Arthur Harris

Arthur Harris was porter at Tenterden Town Station for over 35 years and now lives in retirement in Tenterden, close to the railway. He is interviewed for this series by Mark Yonge.



*Arthur Harris
at Tenterden
Town Station
in 1919*

M.Y. When did you start life on the K.&E.S.R., Arthur?

A.H. I started work in 1919 as a young lad at Tenterden station. I was under Mr. Taunt, the station master, as a porter/signalman. I was also given relief duties looking after Bodiam and Northiam on some Sundays and holidays.

M.Y. Did you see much of Colonel Stephens?

A.H. The Colonel used to come down two or three times a year, on the royal coach usually, although he would sometimes arrive un-announced on a regular train. He didn't fool us though because we always had advance warning from the previous train. He would stay at the "White Lion" in Tenterden and was good to me and to all employees that worked hard. When he built the corrugated iron bungalows at Rolvenden (nicknamed Tin Town), I lived in one for several years.

M.Y. What are your recollections of traffic on the line?

A.H. I remember the hop pickers trains well, always packed full of Londoners. They were a job to handle but it was good to see the trains full and the platforms so busy. The cheap excursions to Hastings were quite well patronised by local families and the cost was 2/11 return, a change of trains being

made at Robertsbridge. One of my jobs in the 20's was to check all the deliveries of sheep, pigs, cattle and horses. This was quite a task, especially when the Biddenden Fair was on, as all livestock came by rail. That was the one time of the year when Biddenden station was worked to capacity without a break. You had to watch some of those dealers and farmers too, as they were not too fussy about laying claim to other people's stock. I remember one incident well; we had a delivery of wild Welsh horses for a local farmer into Rolvenden station. They ran amok and I had to round them up as no-one else could handle them. That was probably why they always put me on livestock.

M.Y. What do you remember of the horse bus?

A.H. Horse bus? There were two of them, one freight and one passenger. Tom Beech ran the freight cart and Frank Clark the passenger. They were stabled at the top of Station Road on the site where the road is presently widened. The passenger bus operated in the parish of Tenterden until the early 20's, by which time it fell victim to motorised transport.

M.Y. Do you remember the war years?

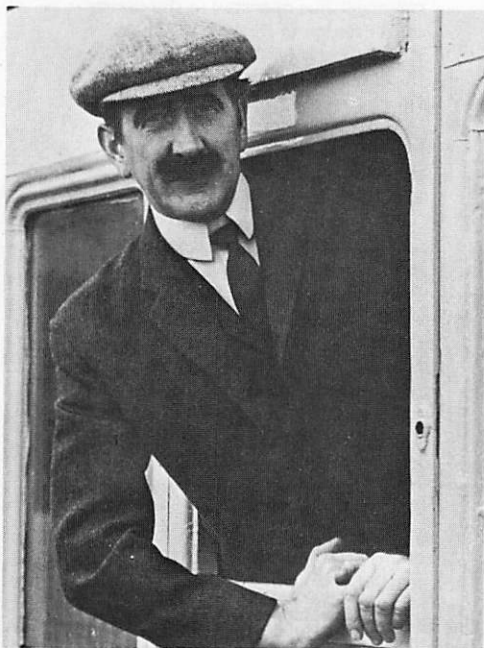
A.H. Very well. The incident that sticks in my mind is the bombing of the tunnel at St. Michaels, Tenterden. Fortunately the tunnel itself was unharmed but I and a small gang were sent out to repair the track near the mouth of the tunnel which had been damaged by shells from a German plane. After the war traffic became very thin and we realised that closure was near. I remember that we had one loyal regular passenger right up to the end; this was Lady Drury who lived in Tenterden and despite the fact that she had a chauffeur driven car, always insisted on using the train and travelling first class. When the line shut for passengers I was employed as a guard on freight duties until I retired in 1955.

Our apologies to Harry Batehup for incorrectly spelling his name in the personality article last time.

75 Years of the Rother Valley Light Railway



[Photo Kentish Express]



[Photo Kentish Express]

On 22 March 1975, a ceremony was held at Rolvenden to commemorate the opening of the Rother Valley section between Robertsbridge and Rolvenden (then known as Tenterden) on 2 April 1900. Speeches were made by "Sir Myles Fenton", Chairman of the Rother Valley Light Railway Company, "Mr H.F. Stephens", Engineer and Managing Director and His Worship, The Mayor of Tenterden. The party, all attired in late Victorian dress, travelled on a special train between Rolvenden and the present limit of operation, returning to Tenterden Town station after the speeches for refreshments and to view an exhibition of historical photographs of the Railway.



[Photo Kent & East Sussex Courier]



[Photo Sussex Express]

Firing - Kent & East Sussex Style

Simon Green learns to fire and discovers the characters of some of our locomotives



Watering No. 19 [Photo Chris Mitchell]

It is, surely, the excitement of the steam engine which draws us all to work on the Kent & East Sussex. My main work with the Company is in administration, but I have always had the hankering to enjoy the challenge of footplate work, cast away everyday responsibilities and discover new experiences. So it came about that, at the end of 1973, I applied for footplate work and became one of six recruits to start training early in 1974.

My first trip was on USA No. 22 "Maunsell" and on the first day I just "rode" to watch the fireman at work and give a hand now and then. At that time everyone found the USA a difficult locomotive when ascending Tenterden Bank. It is not a free steaming engine and the driver has to be content with a slow but steady slog whilst the fireman must avoid heavy firing when the loco is working hard. These lessons took time to learn and for the first few months, it was not uncommon to see No. 22 come to a standstill a hundred yards from Tenterden Town Station as boiler pressure fell below 100 psi and the vacuum ejector could no longer prevent the brakes from coming on. I was to get to know No. 22 well over the next few months and soon was taking turns with the trained firemen. On a busy Sunday I would fire for two or three journeys, which constitutes one of the two shifts worked by the crews on Sundays. The morning crew lights up soon after 7.00am — an unpleasant task as smoke billows back into the cab until there is enough steam to operate the

blower. Whilst steam is being raised, much effort goes into cleaning and polishing the paint and brasswork. By 10.30 the engine moves "off shed" (an inappropriate expression on our line as locomotives are not allowed in the shed with a fire in them) and couples up to the two coaches berthed at Rolvenden. A good fireman makes coupling look easy, but I found it a real trial at first. Surprisingly, the most difficult job was connecting the vacuum hoses; that is, until much later, when I learnt the joys of struggling with steam heating hoses!

On arrival at Tenterden some shunting is usually required but by 11.30am everything is ready for the first train of the day. It is usual to leave Tenterden with a fairly small fire and with room in the boiler to use the injectors if there is a risk of "blowing off". From Tenterden to the present limit of operation and back to Rolvenden the fire is gradually built up so that there is a good strong base for the climb up the bank. Most firemen like to fill the back of No. 22's firebox nearly to the firehole leaving a thin fire at the front until the last moment in an effort to stop steam being wasted through the safety valves. By the time the train is due to leave Rolvenden the boiler must be filled with water, because using the injectors before the train arrives at Tenterden may lead to a disastrous loss of pressure. As Rolvenden is left behind, many firemen rake the bend of the fire, although others look on such a practice with scorn. One of the most interesting aspects of learning to fire is the completely different techniques successfully employed by different firemen. Some start with quite a thin fire and fire all the way up the bank — but "little and often" is always the rule. After the initial acceleration, the driver will soon notch back the gear lever and the main valve of the regulator will usually be only just cracked open. Rash use of steam will waste all the fireman's efforts and the train will soon grind to a halt. It is with some relief when we arrive at Tenterden, putting the jack (injector) on, since by now the boiler will be nearly empty.

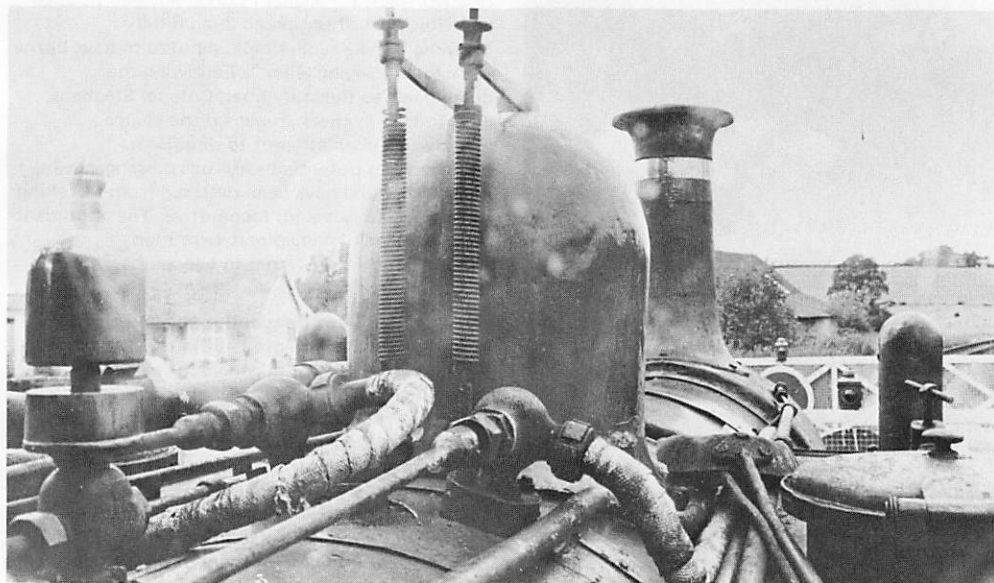
Now, the engine must be watered (and maybe coaled as well) before running round for the next train. The afternoon crew takes over at Rolvenden at 2.40pm and the firemen may first have to contend with the results of his predecessor's incompetence — it's always a handy excuse anyway! Although the morning crew has had the job of lighting up, the afternoon crew may have to operate four trains rather than two and also has

the task of cleaning the grate and smokebox and oiling the motion before leaving the locomotive at the end of the day. By August, I was impatient to find out if the "Saturdays only" firemen were right to claim that the Terriers are the most difficult locos to fire. At the end of the month I had my first trip on No. 3 "Bodiam" and apart from learning to touch my toes I found it a relatively easy job after No. 22. Now I know why there are "Saturdays only" firemen! Throughout the first half of 1974, No. 19, the Norwegian Mogul, had been out of service for retubing and the enginemmen were eagerly awaiting its return. After a few days use it became apparent that No. 19 was an even better machine than we had hoped for, but I had to wait a bit longer for my chance. It came in the autumn when a fireman was needed for a mid-week film contract and what a chance it was. The film company wanted plenty of action and needed many "takes" to get just the right pictures for merely 2 seconds of TV screen time! With three coaches, Driver Colin Edwards and I worked the engine hard from Rolvenden to Cranbrook Road level crossing more than fifteen times. Compared to any other engine on the line, No. 19 is a joy to fire, with room to work, reliable injectors and a forgiving nature. Starting with little more than glowing clinker I found it possible to produce a blue white inferno after only a few minutes firing. With two coaches No. 19 is almost as economic as a Terrier and yet on

at least one occasion it has handled four coaches with ease. However, with its light axle loading and great power it has a tendency to slip on damp rails and occasionally hand sanding is necessary on the final gradient of 1 in 36 immediately prior to entering Tenterden Station.

Another locomotive to enter service in the latter half of 1974 was No. 23, one of our three Hunslet "Austerity" 0-6-0 saddle tanks, the most powerful class of locomotives on the line. No. 23 is a virtually new machine with less than 25,000 miles logged by its former owners, the Army and despite its similar shunting function, has a very different character to No. 22. It steams well, runs smoothly and is solid and untemperamental, but it does not present the challenge of the USA and in many ways it is dull by comparison.

In the early days after re-opening, Manning Wardle No. 17 "Arthur" was a familiar sight at the rear end of trains hauled by Terrier No. 10 "Sutton". A spirited performer, "Arthur" is somewhat limited in power and is used mainly for works trains. Firing No. 17 is an experience I await with interest — how does it steam? Is there really room in the cab for a crew as well as the dominating firebox? What little quirks shall I find? Steam engines are very individual creatures subject to constantly changing moods and it is perhaps their individuality that draws us to them from all our various walks of life.



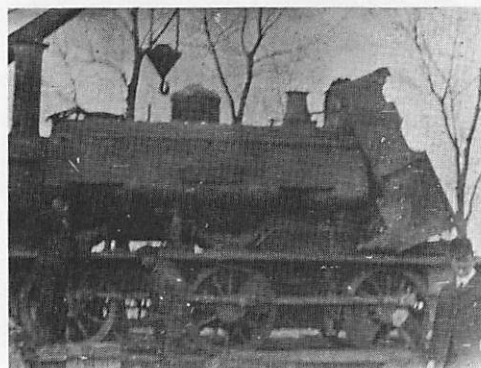
The View from the Footplate [Photo Chris Mitchell]

Evidence in Camera

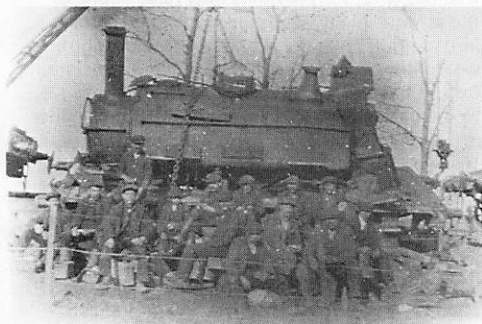
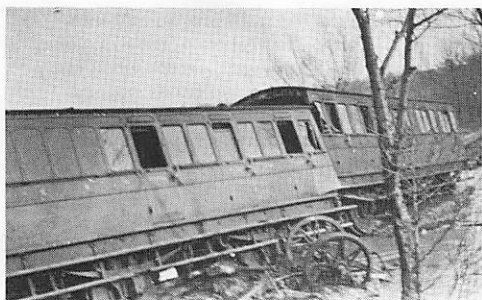
The wreck of the Hesperus



One of the favourite stories concerning the early days of the Kent & East Sussex is that which seems to have first appeared in print in Mr Lawson Finch's history of the Railway in 1948 and revolves round a spectacular derailment on flooded track at Padgham Curve between Bodiam and Northiam of engine no 8, an 0-6-0 Manning Wardle saddle tank, reputed to have borne the name "Ringing Rock". Following the derailment, so the story goes, Colonel Stephens, with tongue in cheek, renamed the engine "Hesperus" in an attempt to disguise its identity from potentially nervous passengers who might otherwise have been deterred from travelling behind such a wayward locomotive. The redundant "Ringing Rock" nameplates were then surreptitiously transferred to a locomotive on the Selsey Tramway.



The story has been frequently repeated and until recently has been accepted as the truth. However, a remarkable series of photographs has come to light which conclusively prove the facts to be different. The pictures are believed to have been taken by Mr Austen, on Colonel Stephen's instructions, and were contained in an ancient Kodak wallet which bears the Colonel's signature and also houses the original negatives taken on a now obsolete film size measuring $4\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{1}{2}''$. Unfortunately, the pictures are of a very poor quality, but thanks to some excellent restoration work by member, David Matthews, they do show



Note. Former Kent & East Sussex employee, the late Mr Bert Sharp, recalled the accident in a press interview in 1961. "I had to collect Colonel Stephens from the nearest station and take him by hand cart to the accident. He gave

amongst shots of the badly damaged and overturned rolling stock and washed out track bed, details of the derailed engine. In one picture (top) it is just possible to discern the name "Hesperus". As it happens, she does look rather a wreck, with the cab smashed forward and the dome cover missing, but, in fact, she was quickly repaired and soon returned to traffic.

The accident is recorded as having occurred in February 1916, two years after no 8 was purchased second-hand from the Great Western Railway and it is believed that the "Ringing Rock" nameplates were attached when it was delivered. The engine was originally built for the North Pembroke & Fishguard Railway and was acquired by the Great Western when that railway was absorbed in 1899. The Colonel's love of Greek mythology may well have decreed the change of name for the locomotive on its arrival at Rolvenden, but perhaps his eye for economy prevailed in the end if, as the legend goes, the "Ringing Rock" nameplates found a new and perhaps more appropriate home on the Sussex coast.

Robin Doust

[Photographs W.H. Austen collection]

me one of his huge cigars to smoke and although I felt very ill, I had to go on working the handle, otherwise he would never have got there." The Colonel can be seen in the right hand corner of the photograph at the bottom of page 16 - Ed.

The Station

This thinly disguised account of the Kent & East Sussex Railway in the nineteen twenties appeared in "A Parcel of Kent" by F.J. Harvey Darton, published by Nisbet & Co. in 1924.

.....

The Station is the place which links the Old World and the New. It is a scene of daily miracles. Fish appear there wonderfully from some distant sea outside our orbit. Newspapers are found at intervals, purveyed by the ever-widening service of the descendants of Old Morality. (Indeed, it is most suitable: for W.H. Smith was for a brief time Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and this is a Limb of the Ports.) Famous steamship companies, devotees

of the great god Publicity, tell you all about South America and the kingdoms that lie east of the sun and west of the moon, and ask you to go there — as if you *could* leave a station which is a flower-garden. Dead swine, swathed, protrude trotters like a baby's blood-stained hand as they lie on the platform among the flies. You are adjured to buy "Bakeoma" or some marvellous device for making that beastly fabric, a batter pudding. An immense number of bees sing in an immense number of hollyhocks and sweet williams. Sweet williams, hollyhocks — I ask the abusers of our poetic character to pause and think.

As by law commanded, the planter of those and other good plain English flowers has to exhibit his name on a board as "toll-collector"; and

so back to the days of railway speculation, when Hudson gave Thackeray a chance. The toll-collector is much more interested in his flowers than in his tickets, which indeed are very difficult to obtain. If you have not got one, the guard — so far as I have seen, he is The Guard: the only one on the line¹ — climbs along the footboard as the train is moving at the dangerous pace of ten miles an hour, and gives you one. He is like the Guard in *Alice*. You get a ticket sooner or later, but you never know when nor where: nor even how.

My Station is peculiar, because it has two platforms, and its name in large letters on each. Most of the others are more modest, and have only one platform (with a shed-attachment) and a nameplate concealed as well as possible. You must know the line, to be sure of getting out at the right station, especially after dark (but there is only one train after dark), because the lighting arrangements are simple to the verge of non-existence. And sometimes they "stop to set down by request", and if you lose count, and they do this unexpectedly, you may meet disaster. You see, nearly all the stations, though quite rightly they have an inn close by, are anything over a mile from the remote village which gives each its name.

The toll-collector finds bindweed a great nuisance; though its beautiful large bells add lustre to his pretty garden. That indefatigable weed *will* climb over the derelict train in the siding. We have *two* sidings, and this old dead train lives in one of them. However, Mr Q—— is angrier about his garden than about his train; for no one will ever use that train again. I suppose the poor forlorn ghost will fall to pieces in due time, and the rails rust away, and the eternal life of green things master it all. It is a greasy shadow, once a train, splendid and admirable to all beholders. The roof-line of the carriage already sags: the cushions (not many nor fat: our fathers were of harder stock than George M. Pullman) are full of holes; their entrails protrude. Some day a new Schliemann or Evans will discourse upon the vestiges.

Neither the siding nor the platform adjoining it seems to be used.² It is a kindly

thought to let the old train sink quietly into its coma of death. The real train, the living one, uses a single line all the way, except when (as so often) it shunts to pick up goods wagons. Half an hour at one station is almost normal, because this is a rich farming district, and if you cannot always get your goods from outside, you want to send your own away.

The Train makes an incredible noise. The engine is small and low, and has a funnel contemporaneous with (and, inverted, not unlike) the square bowler hat of thirty years ago. It also has what so few trains now have — one of those large, highly-polished brass excrescences in its middle, like the dome of St. Paul's: but we do not polish much here; we have not time. Still, it has this umbilical projection so dear to me at the age when I wanted to be an engine-driver. The Train clanks and pants and fusses. Its best fuss is its whistle. It whistles for two or three minutes continuously before approaching a level crossing, the gates of which (if there are any, and there are not always) have been carefully shut by hand a long five minutes before its arrival. There is a level crossing about every four hundred yards. I leave it to mathematicians to compute from these data (a) the mean speed of the train; (b) the total duration of noise in a journey of twenty miles.

But the precaution is right, and no doubt is provided for in some sonorous Act of His Majesty's Lord and Commons in Parliament assembled — those Acts which the farmer to-day hates and distrusts so viciously. At any rate, though my railway has been in existence thirty or more years (as its rolling-stock testifies), the train is still a novelty to our winged and four-footed brothers. You emerge from trees upon a flat level of the Marsh, and three-score sheep, which formerly had pied the wide expanse like flakes of snow, run like frightened rabbits; or a covey of partridges will vanish, squawking; or a flight of rooks or gulls (the rook is the bird for colour in that ineffable light of the marshlands) soar and circle before they resetttle; or a brown ungainly bullock will caper off and look round suspiciously with his wild, bloodshot, staring eyes; or even a docile mare will kick up her heels at this so strange apparition. You may see wilder things: a buzzard, perchance, with its solemn flight, or one of the greater gulls, or the little chirping reed-warbler; or just a secret cat. Once I saw three herons rise in one field. But to all the train is a sudden monster.

¹ A second example has since been observed.

² Yes. In an ecstasy of joy I used it soon after I wrote those words: I jumped from one platform, climbed on to the other, and caught a Train: but of that Train I speak hereafter.

It is a kind monster. It progresses not save upon leave given. At every station the Staff — THE Staff, all of it — pulls a gaily-pointed red or blue lever. He has usually to cross the perilous track to do it, but he dares and does it; and a signal five yards away falls dutifully. The crossing gates are laboriously closed, and the motorists (thank God!) held up. About a quarter of an hour later the prodigious screech of the engine is heard, some distance off; and, at last, emerges from its lovely narrow avenue of trees — the Train. "Ha, ha!" he cries, as it were the horse in the Book of Job. He snorteth. He clanks, as if he were pawing his iron heels upon the grass-grown rails. But he is still under licence. A mysterious loop of metal has to be given to the Staff, who in return goes into a privy den and finds an enormous mace, which must have cost pounds and pounds of gold when there was gold (our railway is as old as that). It is a sort of blacksmith's hammer, with a noble head, on which are cut in brass the words, "GO ON TO BOTHENDEN". At that the enchanter who had cast a spell upon the train to make it stop at my Station is dismayed, and vanishes in a cloud of smoke. So does the train, after shunting as much as possible. Of course the engine-driver has to have a long conversation with the stationmaster and the Staff; but then we all do that ourselves. And limp fish have to be flumped on to the platform, and the intolerable music of milk-cans ventilated. Also more swine to be bundled out. (Do you remember that appalling Swine-Man in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Mr. Wells's extraordinary nightmare? Now Mr. H.G. Wells is of Kent.) Still, *marchons, enfants de la Patrie* — after a time.

It is when you are *in* the train that you know what the Station is: a permanent thing, a landing-stage, in an enchanted country — the England of all men's adoration. Green, green, and rich and old. Most of the time, on the single line of rails, you are shut in closely by osiers or low-growing ash trees. It is a green thought in a green shade, my railway. And it is English.

But is it? I sometimes wonder, because an eminent citizen of the United States (no doubt for a consideration) has bestowed upon it a motor-train. In this you sit — you cannot stand: it gives you a feeling of growing, like Alice's; but you have no miraculous cake to assuage your growth — in this you sit by the driver and see all the works. You see (with envy) his excellent can of hot soup, made, I think, with

milk added — it smells so good; but made in the first instance by another American. You see his basket of odds and ends carefully hung on the speedometer, rendering it useless. If you are lucky, you see beforehand when he is going to let out a terrific screech. You see him vanishing into dim offices upon strange errands; and sometimes when he comes back he is a different man — there are two drivers.

We have also a water cistern — a large pot-bellied thing on a tall post, with a trunk like an elephant's. And to go back to Mr. Wells of Kent, I always suspect this cistern of having suggested his Martians to him. I have not seen it in use: our engines (who all have local place-names) seem to have gone dry. But its inert, heavy shape hints at a dreadful activity if water is really wanted. It might come hopping or striding after you with its twenty-foot trunk stretching out slimly. . . .

It is a singular thing, this toy railway, with its forgotten and dying devices. There is no station on it but has a lost thought in it: a shed, a truck, a lump of metal that once meant something and now means nothing. It may continue: it has escaped amalgamation and control, and I hope prospers. You cannot book through to it from London. But as I go from the station into my rustling green avenue, and see nothing but greenness, and smell sweet scents of hops or hay, or wet earth, and (if I am in the Ford train) look ahead on the track covered with grass and flowers, I wonder. Which will win? The vegetable grass that I can cut down and kill and give to the brute beasts (that perish too), or the iron that folk in the north have put down for my convenience? Once (long before Yorkshire and Lancashire discovered coal) most of the iron in England was smelted where the hops grow now. To-morrow?

Yet we are all driven to this station, sooner or later. Perpetual motion urges us, Heaven knows why, in this self-sufficing parcel of Kent, this island within an island. And so driven, we are bidden to "book through, so as to save time". We are told, in largest letters, who are "the greatest grocers in the world" (a horrible thought to one whose ancestors put "the polite Grocers of the Strand" into a book about London trades). We see that "Pure India Tea — Broken Pekoe" can be procured of a certain agent, and we are reminded of the Maestro Jimson, and of Satan outshining the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind. And here on the platform, waiting for an owner, is a wireless outfit. My little station broadcasts the world.

Memories of the Selsey Tramway

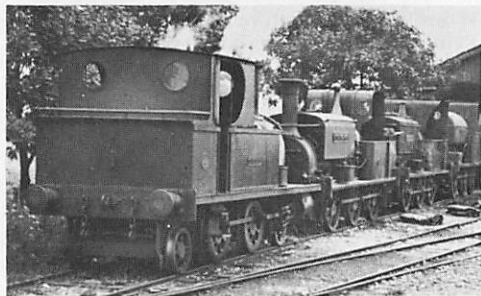
Photographs by the Author

My first acquaintance of the Colonel Stephens railways was with the Kent & East Sussex, now no less than half a century ago, on 29 August 1925 to be exact. I had never seen anything quite like it before, and even today that visit remains one of the most vivid recollections of a lifetime of exploration of the railways of Great Britain and Ireland. Anyway, it started off an enthusiasm which made excursions to other similar concerns essential, particularly those of the Colonel Stephens group, which proved to be among the most fascinating of all.

This gentleman was not only General Manager and general factotum of the K.&E.S.R., East Kent, Selsey, W.C.&P.R., and Shropshire & Montgomery, but as his headed notepaper, emanating from his address at Tonbridge, (of which I have still some specimens in the form of letters of authority to visit his various railways) indicated, he appeared to claim some sort of interest, probably as a consulting engineer, in several other lines. These included the Rye & Camber, Snailbeach District, Ashover, the Festiniog and Welsh Highland and even the recently constructed North Devon & Cornwall Junction, which was in effect a new branch of the Southern Railway.

I paid my first visit to the Selsey on 16 July 1927, but initially this turned out to be something of a disappointment, as on my arrival at Chichester behind B2X class 4-4-0 No B205, I found in the adjacent Selsey station not the vintage loco and ancient carriage I had hoped for, but a very disagreeable Ford railcar (this had also happened on the occasion of my first visit to the K.&E.S.R., very offputting but compensated by the wonderful array of stuff which I found at Rolvenden).

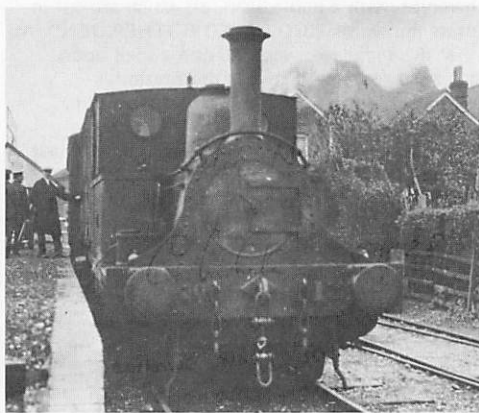
On arrival at Selsey I also found that the shed there was large enough to accommodate all the



Selsey Engine Shed — 16 July 1927

five working engines, and the only one outside, which I found lying derelict, hidden in a yard at the back, was a withdrawn 0-4-2ST No 3 Hesperus, built by Neilson & Co. in 1871, which Colonel Stephens, as was his customary practice, had obtained secondhand (or rather third in this case) in 1912 from the Plymouth Devonport & South Western Junction Railway. It worked on the Selsey until 1924, and was still in the yard at the time of my second visit, late in 1928, but was broken up about 1930.

However on that first occasion there was an engine which had been at work that day, and which still had a little steam left in her. This was No 1 Selsey, a 2-4-2T, rather an odd type for this sort of railway, which had come new from Peckett to the railway when it was first opened in 1897.

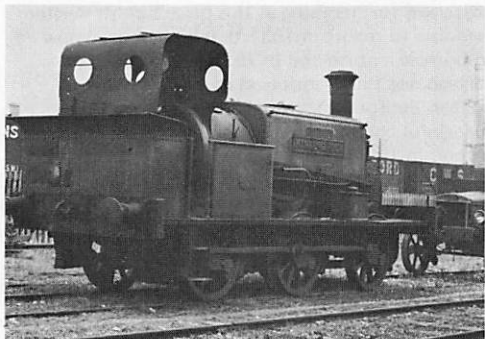


Locomotive No. 1 "Selsey" at Chichester — 5 November 1928

This was very rare with Colonel Stephens railways; most of his engines were obtained in whatever bargain basement he could locate which had anything for sale which might be useful, generally from the main line railways, usually the LSWR, LB&SCR, or SE&CR.

Fortunately there was a co-operative driver (or possibly fireman) still around, who with a little monetary inducement agreed to get up enough steam to pull all of the engines out of the shed for photography, four of which are visible in the illustration. These are, in order, Selsey, No 5 Ringing Rock (Manning Wardle 1883), obtained from McAlpine in 1917, No 2 Sidlesham, a veteran of 1861, built by Manning Wardle, and obtained

in 1907 from Hawthorn Leslie, who had somehow acquired the engine and rebuilt it, and No 3 (formerly 4) Chichester, built by Hudswell Clarke in 1903, and used in 1924 in connection with the construction of Wembley Exhibition, afterwards acquired by Colonel Stephens.



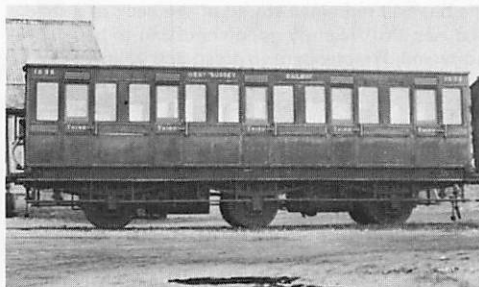
"Ringing Rock" at Chichester — 17 March 1935

The reason for renumbering when Chichester took No 3 from Hesperus was to avoid confusion with the fifth engine, a Manning Wardle 0-6-OST of 1866, which had been transferred in 1924 from another Colonel Stephens line, the Shropshire & Montgomery, where it had been known as No 4 Morous. It still retained its S&M identity on the Selsey until it was scrapped, along with the other surviving engines, when the line was closed in January 1935. Sidlesham and Chichester had by then already gone, in 1932.

In November 1928 I had to go to hospital for an operation, as a result of which I went to the Isle of Wight for a period of convalescence. Being midwinter it was hardly the time for recuperating on the beach in the sunshine, so after a few days travelling around on the island's railways I began to make a few excursions to the mainland, and one turned up hopefully at Chichester, this time to be rewarded by the sight of Selsey with a couple of coaches and a van. A very pleasant amble over the flat countryside of the Selsey promontory made a very satisfactory day's excursion.

I never saw the line working again, but paid a final visit by car on 17 March 1935, soon after its closure, at which time everything was still more or less intact. Ringing Rock was standing in the yard at Chichester, Selsey and Morous in the shed at Selsey, whilst outside were a couple of quite recently acquired coaches from the Southern Railway, old LC&DR six wheelers, still with their

SR numbers, 1636 and 3639, but bearing the legend "West Sussex Railway", the later title which the railway had adopted. It had been incorporated as the "Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway", usually known colloquially as the "Selsey" or "Selsey Tramway".



L.C.&D.R. 6-wheeled coach at Selsey — 17 March 1935

The number of surviving enthusiasts who remember this little railway, of a kind now extinct apart from preservation projects, is inevitably declining over the years, and I count it as my good fortune to be one of those who are still around.

H.C. Casserley

Continued from Page 7.

as now with longer journey times when the line is extended to the Newmill Bridge.

During 1976 we shall plan further expansion in the light of the current financial situation. This will allow for continuity after we reach Wittersham Road. The section from Wittersham Road to Northiam will involve major expenditure on bridges over the Hexden and Rother channels. Given the enthusiasm and determination that we have shown so far, our target date for reaching Wittersham Road is realistic, always providing that the finance is available. It is important, therefore, that we strive to maximise our income and to keep our operating costs to a minimum. In this way we will ensure that we have as large a surplus as possible to finance our expansion plans.

Absent Friends

1 – The Horse Bus

Among the more surprising assets acquired by British Railways when it took over the Kent & East Sussex Railway in 1948 was the horse bus shown here. Although out of use for many years the bus had remained stored at the back of a shed and was in a sufficiently good condition to be preserved. Resplendent in green and yellow, the bus will be amongst the exhibits at the York National Railway Museum when it opens this year.

The bus was built at the W.J. Mercer Carriageworks in Tenterden and carried six passengers inside and four on the driver's seat. According to the Railway's Annual Reports the bus was acquired by the Kent and East Sussex in 1916 which may indicate that it was purchased second-hand since it seems unlikely that horse buses would still be being built at this late date.

The bus remained in use carrying passengers and parcels to and from Tenterden Town Station until 1923. Amongst the more notable passengers known to have been carried were Dame Ellen Terry and the Rt. Hon. A. Balfour. The driver was Mr Clark and he is thought to have been given permission by Colonel Stephens to go on using the bus on his own account when the Railway had no further use for it.

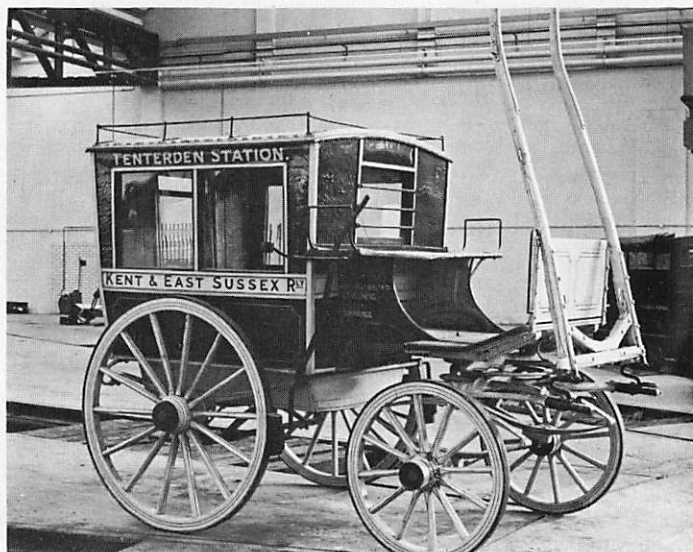
In addition to the horse bus the Railway also ran two horse-drawn carts but seems to have had difficulty obtaining horses for them. From 1925 to 1928 it was possible to hire a horse from

Eastern Command for the princely sum of £15 p.a. but by 1930 this arrangement must have come to an end for Mr Austen as Acting Manager was directed to buy a suitable horse for £30. No horse was forthcoming at this price but Mr Austen was able to report in 1931 that he had been able to borrow a horse and in 1935 the problem of cartage was finally resolved by the purchase of a 2 ton Bedford lorry for £242 which proved successful enough to justify the purchase of a second in 1937.

Only the horse bus now survives of this small fleet of road vehicles and although York is some distance from Tenterden it is good to know that the bus escaped the fate of the horse-drawn fire engine owned by the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway which was broken up at Swindon when it fell into the hands of the less enlightened authorities in that region.

Stephen Garrett

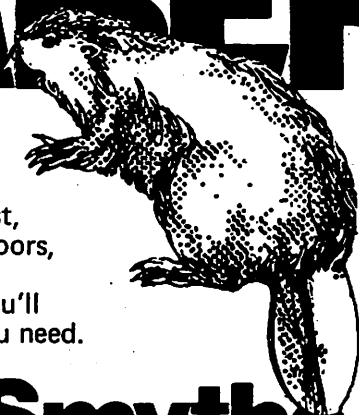
Note. Included in the railway archives is a poster advertising an omnibus service, which ran from the post office at Tenterden to Rolvenden Station, connecting with all trains. The service commenced on 2 April 1900 and was operated by R&J Bennett & Co. Does any reader know if this was, in fact, the same horse bus?—Ed.



*Photo Courtesy
the
National Railway
Museum*

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Letters to the Editor

Tenterden Terrier No. 6

Sir — Relative to the article "Preservation and Conservation" in your Spring issue; a Terrier with a stovepipe chimney in the Nineteen Forties? Surely, Mr. Eric Tonks means No. 2678 had a *Drummond* chimney? The only one of this class known to me which did have an Adams stovepipe was L.S.W.R. No. 735 (ex-L.B.&S.C.R. [6] 68 "Clapham") from 1920, whilst working the Lee-on-Solent branch. Incidentally, this engine worked on all three sections of the S.R., finishing up until withdrawal in 1936 as Ashford Works shunter.

Commenting upon the article "Evidence in Camera", I do not think that a wagon in pre-Grouping livery can be cited as evidence of any date prior to the very early Thirties. Until then, this was a fairly common sight, so that the photo concerned could perhaps also have been taken in 1927? Incidentally, the Railways Act 1921 became effective in the South of England from January 1st 1923, and not in 1922 as stated in the text, though of course things had been happening elsewhere, especially to the "Lanky", in the latter year.

After Grouping the repainting of wagonry had a very low priority, especially with the L.M.S.; even coaches lingered on for a long while in their old colours.

Welwyn Garden City, Herts. Arthur LI Lambert

Wolseley-Siddeley Railbus

Sir — I thought that your readers might like to see the enclosed photograph of the railbus body in use as a lineside hut on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire railway. The photograph was taken by Mr. J.J. Davis on 21st September 1958 at a point near Kinnerley on the Criggion branch.

Is it still there?
Basingstoke, Hants.

John Morgan



Preservation and Conservation

Sir — Following Eric Tonks' interesting article in the last edition of the "Terrier" I feel I must write to reassure him that the Clearance Branch is well aware of the need for conservation and that we are not trying to create a "bare and featureless" railway. For the information of Mr. Tonks, and that of your other readers, perhaps I may be allowed space to explain our aims.

There are two main considerations in mind when we set out on clearance, i.e. operational and passenger requirements. Firstly, there is the operational need to have a clean weed-free track bed from which rainwater drains easily. There must be no overhanging trees to scratch the paintwork of engines or coaches, and no vegetation obscuring the vision of driver or guard where this could prove hazardous. We remove or prune trees which are fouling the telephone line, and try to keep an access to the boundary fence. We also aim to keep the drainage channels clear of fallen branches and dead vegetation. I might add that adjoining landowners have cause to complain if our trees overhang their arable land.

Secondly, if we are to rely on passenger receipts for the bulk of our income we must consider what will please our passengers. The enthusiast will want to hang out of the window with his camera, the tourist will want to look at the countryside — both will want to see everything, but not get hit around the head from a stray branch. A tree-less desert would, of course, be equally unattractive to the passenger, so the aim is to landscape the strips of land either side of the track, conserving as many trees and wildflowers as possible.

A considerable amount of clearance has recently taken place between the present limit of operation and Newmill Channel bridge but we have been careful to leave as many trees as is practicable, which include oak, silver birch, hawthorn, willow and alder. When this section is added to the public run, observant passengers may also see foxgloves, white and pink dogroses, primroses, bluebells, forget-me-nots, gorse and the wild varieties of honeysuckle and clematis. A lady member of clearance has transplanted primroses to a position where they are more easily seen by passengers, and we have even left some bramble where it is less likely to spread back to the track.

Most of the poplars mentioned by Mr. Tonks have long since gone, although there are still a few

opposite Rolvenden platform. There is still plenty of willow(!) but the trouble with our particular variety is that it tends to be shallow rooting, very fast growing and has an unfortunate tendency to lean over when fully grown. I think the time will come when we shall have to have a tree planting programme to replace the more unsuitable specimens in situ. I agree that there are some ugly tree stumps but these are gradually being removed.

Although primarily in the business of railway preservation I hope I have reassured everyone that we also realise our responsibilities towards countryside conservation.
Rye, Sussex.

John Miller

A locoman remembers

Sir — Now that the K.&E.S.R. has been operating twelve months with passenger services, members can look back over the past year and reflect on the various workings, which may have brought back memories of bygone days.

One such day for me was June 1st 1974. At 7.00am three engines were at Rolvenden loco

department, ready for duty. Class AIX No. 3 "Bodiam", AIX No. 10 "Sutton" and No. 17 "Arthur" were coupled together and sent to Tenterden in the morning sunlight to commence the day's timetable. I recall that in my engine cleaning and early firing days at Three Bridges it was common practice to couple three or four locomotives together, to be sent on to East Grinstead. The engine types used were often two I3's, and IIX and an E5 or E4. One of the I3's would go on to Forest Row to work an "up" Victoria (or was it London Bridge? — it is thirty three years since I first shovelled my way over these metals). The other I3 would start from East Grinstead "High Level" for another "up" London, both trains running via Oxted. The IIX (good looking non-superheated tanks these) started from East Grinstead "Low Level" and worked the "down" Brighton, via Horsted Keynes and the "Bluebell" railway. The E5 or E4 would work a goods train and shunt all stations to Tunbridge Wells West.

With the revival of the K.&E.S.R., for me, at least, nostalgia has turned full circle to reality once more.

Hove, Sussex.

N.C. Denty

From the Railway Archives



This comic postcard, published by The Cynicus Publishing Co. Ltd., Tayport, Fife, was on sale in the Tenterden area at least 60 years ago. The "train" is crudely tinted in red and fawn, the figures in blue and the foreground in green. An identical card marked "Our Local Express Tenterden to Robertsbridge" was also available. One of our members is of the opinion that similar postcards (with merely different captions)

were issued by the same company for sale in the vicinity of other light railways which had acquired a degree of notoriety in view of their leisurely pace. Can any reader confirm that this was the case?

(Black and white reproductions of this postcard will be on sale at Tenterden Town Station shortly.)

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