

# The Tenterden Terrier



Number 71

Winter 1996



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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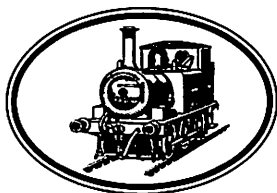
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## Editorial

### Bodiam 2000

Bodiam has always been the ultimate goal of the Tenterden Railway Company and if we are successful in our application for Millennium Funding, it should become a reality. Needless to say, the support of the membership will be vital if we are to achieve this exciting objective, but a key factor in the equation is also the enthusiasm of the Local Authorities. We are mindful of the sensitivity of the area to further development and the importance of the Castle in its present idyllic setting. We are also aware of the problems that residents face with the continued rise in vehicular traffic. Bodiam is arguably our key heritage site – little changed since the railway arrived there. Our plans are designed to fit in the existing landscape and we will avoid new car parks, retail and catering premises. It is our intention, as far as the regulatory authorities will allow, to keep Bodiam station as it has always been. Although the hop fields have gone, the view from the castle will be preserved largely as it was when the trains first arrived there in 1990.

## FRONT COVER AND FRONTISPIECE TIME TRAVELLING

*'P' class 1556 heads the early morning mixed train at Hexden bridge and later passes along the Oxney straight on 31st August 1996. (Mike Esau)*

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# Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

## From the Chairman – Robin Dyce

The 20% upturn in trade is to be welcomed but it has not appeared overnight. Considerable effort has been necessary by every department to ensure that all business opportunities have been grasped and commitments met. It is especially rewarding to note that all advertised services have operated.

Because of all the hard work which has been put into maximising income and reducing expenditure it is hoped that at the year end we can make a significant reduction in our loan to the bank.

However, we cannot sustain this rate of improvement unless more volunteers come forward. A recent meeting with managers showed that there is not a single department which could not do its job more effectively and satisfactorily with more help.

I have made this plea before, the Board has honoured its commitment to you to bring finances under control. Several more years of restraint are necessary to bring finances into the black. This cannot be delivered without more help. If you care for your Railway come and support the other volunteers.

## Passengers

The increase in passenger numbers reported in the Summer editions of the *Tenterden Terrier* and *Rooter* continued through the peak season and into September. By the end of that month, 62,650 passengers had been conveyed, compared to 49,970 last year and 59,334 in 1994 – increases of 25% and 6% respectively.

To cope with the increased business, a number of extra or unusual trains were operated in August. The Victorian train – now running with five historic coaches against three last August – was filled to capacity on some services early in the month and so had to be strengthened for the two weeks either side of the August Bank Holiday when passenger numbers hit their peak. With no other vintage coach available mark 1 TK No. 63 was used, but the Carriage & Wagon programme for 1997 includes Maunsell CK No. 56 which will look less incongruous should it be required. The 1997 timetable will also feature

an extra train per day in order to reduce the peak loadings.

A booking for 130 students from a Hastings language school on Wednesday 28th August on the peak 3.00pm service meant that special arrangements were made to operate a six-coach train to Northiam and back. Locomotive DS238 'Wainwright' handled the estimated 220 ton load unassisted for the entire trip.

On Saturday 31st of August 200 cream teas were served aboard the 3.00pm train to passengers from a cruise ship using the new terminal at Dover. The group, almost all of whom were American, thoroughly enjoyed their trip with us. As the party filled an entire five-coach train an enhanced service was operated for the afternoon in order to convey other passengers.

The first class accommodation, particularly the saloons on the Victorian train and the Maunsell NBO, has also continued to attract a high level of patronage. The Carriage & Wagon department are currently working to improve the condition of the first class facilities in mark 1 CK No. 86 which is currently in the sheds undergoing a repaint. The coach will emerge a bottle green livery similar to that carried by bogie-coaches on the line in the 1930s and '40s. The colour-scheme, lined with cream and black, is extremely smart and should 'weather' rather better than the blood and custard livery which faded very quickly. To date 'Petros' and TO 85 have been outshopped in bottle green and TO 64 is due to receive similar treatment next Spring.

A special bus service linked Northiam Station and Bodiam Castle on Sundays from 29th June until 1st September and special combined tickets offering return steam train travel from Tenterden to Northiam plus a bus to and from Bodiam and admission to the castle was promoted jointly with the National Trust. Over 500 passengers took advantage of the competitively priced inclusive package and it is likely that a similar service will operate in 1997.

## Special Events

Following a modest start with the Steam & Transport Gathering on 14th and 15th June, the Summer's season of special events has

contributed to the year's increase in business. The two 'Friends of Thomas' weekends (21st/22nd June and 20th/21st September) were as popular as ever, attracting around 3,500 and 2,800 passengers respectively. The combination of traditional children's entertainment in the station yard, and 'Thomas' style stories played out in the sidings at Tenterden with a narrator, to keep everyone informed still works extremely well.

Pannier tank No. 1638 – which had been looking rather scruffy, and must be withdrawn for a 10 yearly overhaul next October – was repainted in Great Western livery and, much to the delight of young visitors, played the part of 'Duck' at the September event. The transformation was undertaken by volunteers Pete Salmon and Meg Gooch at the beginning of August. As this was the height of the season, the time the engine was out of service had to be kept to a minimum and the pair completed the repaint and signwriting in just one week! The new colours have attracted many favourable comments from visitors and staff alike.

July's highlight was the Light Railway Gala celebrating the 100th anniversary of the passing of the Light Railways Act. Seven Locomotives were in steam for the event and proceedings commenced with an impressive parade at Tenterden Town Station. Demonstration goods trains, old-time mixed trains and engine changes at Northiam helped add variety to this weekend which was enjoyed by both enthusiasts and family visitors.

### **Marketing**

The passenger figures reported earlier bear witness to the success of this year's marketing strategy which has combined strategic paid-for advertising with an energetic public relations campaign to ensure we achieve the highest possible profile from the budget set.

To help improve our product and plan future marketing campaigns, an extensive passenger survey was carried out in July and August with around 500 groups of visitors responding. The results of this exercise are now being analysed and will be incorporated into next year's planning.

### **Filming**

After a busy start to the year, the level of filming business fell off markedly through the Summer. In some ways, this was no bad thing as the

number of charter trains and the healthy level of passenger traffic meant that resources were stretched without film work.

A group of railway photographers did charter a special mixed train with the P Class at the end of August. A black dome for the engine was borrowed from the Bluebell railway and the engine hauled the Great Eastern Railway six-wheeled coach and a string of open wagons. The wagons were selected from those fitted with continuous vacuum brakes to enable the ensemble to run without a goods brake van – recreating a scene typical of the K&ESR in the 1930s and '40s. A similar recreation is scheduled for the 'Delivering The Goods' weekend on 12th and 13th October.

A flurry of enquiries received in late September and early October would, indicate however, that the line will not be out of the limelight for very long. A short photoshoot was carried out for the Cranbrook Operatic & Dramatic Society on Saturday 5th October and London Weekend Television are due visit on Friday 11th October to film the title sequences for a documentary about horse racing! Not to be outdone, the BBC are due on Tuesday 15th October to film a short piece for the sitcom '2.4 Children' in which a wig is picked up by the hook of a travelling post office – alias the Guard's/luggage compartment of the Class 108 DMMU.

Two of the films shot with K&ESR help last year are about to hit the cinema screens, namely 'Jude' whose crew visited us for a day last autumn and 'The Wind in the Willows' which although filmed at the Bluebell features three vehicles from our Victorian train.

### **Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop**

The new lines of stock introduced earlier in the season and the decision to extend the sale of Guide Books onto the trains have served to increase revenue in the shop. Sales to the end of September were ahead of target. The additional stall erected to cope with crowds at the 'Friends of Thomas' events worked very well but highlights the problems of limited space within the current sales area. During the winter, it is hoped to make some minor changes to the shop layout to improve the display and lighting but a significant increase in sales area will almost certainly have to wait until a new shop is added at Northiam – part of the Bodiam 2000 project.





22nd September 1996; Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine weekend. The Fat Controller and Mrs Kyndly welcome two young visitors to the line and youngsters 'rescue' a dry engine with buckets of water. (Robert Berry)



## **Catering**

The improvements to the range of food in the Station Refreshment Rooms at Tenterden, the Tea Rooms at Northiam and for the on-train trolley service have paid dividends this year with catering revenue significantly ahead of the budgetary targets.

There has been a continued high demand for charter trains throughout the Summer. Our ability to tailor the product to meet the needs of any function or budget has certainly helped sell these prestige services. Menus can (and have) ranged from a simple ploughman's lunch, to a six-course evening meal or from good and wholesome cottage pie to a sophisticated buffet.

Bookings for the scheduled dining trains on Saturday evenings and Sunday lunch times have also been very good and the new Wednesday evening Pullmans operated in the Summer were also well supported.

## **Personnel**

As mentioned earlier, the growth in business put quite a strain on staff resources throughout the Summer. As well as being felt 'at the sharp end' the difficulties were also felt behind the scenes in the Commercial and Administration Office where a backlog of bookings and other work quickly built up.

Tony Griggs, was drafted in as a temporary Commercial Assistant to help through the Summer, and a permanent solution was achieved with the appointment of Cathy Roberts as part-time Commercial and Administration Assistant in September. Cathy is a long standing member of the railway and her in-depth knowledge of the line coupled with her organisational skills will be of great use in her new role.

## **Locomotive**

### **Planning**

Although to most members the summer season busy period is over, work in the Loco department continues apace with a balancing act of catching up on routine maintenance, continuing overhauls and preparations for the winter. To this end an autumn plan has been produced to focus our work load in an agreed and methodical way.

### **Steam Locomotives**

No 3 (Bodiam): The boiler contract work at Israel Newton continues apace with various setting out and making up on the boiler plate

fittings and pressings.

No 8 (Knowle): Steady slow progress this summer has been made on the rebuild. The cab has been fitted on the frames and now awaits riveting. Much work has been carried out setting up the springs. A brand new main steam pipe, which connects the boiler steam supply to the cylinders, has been manufactured, brazed up and installed.

A new sand valve has been procured and the time consuming job of proper fitting to the boiler, 'face to face' with no jointing, completed.

Other projects include fitting of sandboxes and cylinder cock mechanisms.

No 10 (Sutton): Remains on display as static exhibit. Odd parts have been removed as patterns for No 8's rebuild and are now stored safely. The blower valve has recently been overhauled.

No 11 (P Class): This loco continues in service on its latest yearly cycle before being withdrawn next June for a 10 yearly overhaul. This planning will mean that the loco is in service during the Ashford Railway Works 150th anniversary – the place of the locomotive's manufacture. Due to the age of this loco any operational 'slackness' is being kept under close observation by operating and maintenance staff.

No 12 (Marcia): routine movement and greasing carried out this summer whilst the loco is laid up.

No 14 (Charwelton): has been in service this summer. Recently a brass thrust face fell off a trailing axlebox. The loco awaits shed space for lifting and remedial attention later this autumn. Several stays have been changed as identified during the routine examination scheme.

No 19 (Norwegian): In service. Some remedial work on the air system that operates the loco brakes has been necessary and this emphasises the importance of draining daily the moisture from the air receivers. New tender brake block pattern making and procurements are currently in hand.

No 21 (Wainwright): In service. Due a Washout exam and some remedial boiler repairs this Autumn.

No 22 (Maunsell): The overhaul continues steadily despite staff holidays etc. Much work

has been carried out in fitting out the cab and attention to overhauling the brake ejector. The lubrication systems are complete. A new brake valve to operate the steam brake is currently on order.

No 23 (Holman F Stephens): In service this summer but currently under repair with new gunmetal valves presently being fitted. Some delays due to contract machining work problems.

No 24 (Rolvenden): Serviceable following the completion of repairs carried out to No 23. Due a boiler inspection this autumn.

No 25 (Northiam): The overhaul continues on the basis of 'fill in' work. However the wheels are returned from Ian Riley's company at Bury following reprofiling. It is now intended to move the wheels and the frame to allow room for the axlebox repair to No 14.

1638: Serviceable with routine maintenance carried out including retapping the right hand big end bearing. Due a boiler inspection this autumn to prepare for a final year of service before overhaul.

#### ***Diesel Locomotives***

Drewery 03: At Rolvenden for an 'A' exam and remedial repairs to keep loco serviceable as Tenterden shunter.

08 Shunter: Serviceable but due an 'A' exam and anti-freeze checks this autumn.

Ruston: Serviceable as the P.Way shunter at Wittersham Road but due an 'A' exam and anti-freeze checks this autumn.

Class 14 No 48: This loco has had various inspections and checks culminating in a 'run-up' of the engine which was successfully carried out in September. This is a good achievement and now work to determine overhaul activities can be investigated further.

Class 14 No 49: The protracted repainting and lack of help will hopefully be resolved this autumn when the loco enters the workshop to have this work completed. Meanwhile the loco has had an 'A' exam.

#### ***Workshop and Yard work***

Despite the busy summer the installation of the new roller shutter doors has continued. New doors were fitted to the Wittersham Road end of the shed in August. Considerable modifications

were carried out to the structure including new steel work and rewiring to enable this work to take place. Following the fitting of the doors the end of the building was reclad with new terracotta metal cladding which greatly enhances its appearance. The department's grateful thanks goes to the '300 club' for funding this project. There now remains for various attachments, notices etc. to complete this project. In addition sealing arrangements to minimise bird ingress must be completed.

The lubricating oil tank, on the roof of the oil store, was life expired and is being replaced with two new tanks to enable us to double our storage capacity. In addition an oil leak needs repairing on the pipeline of our oil distribution system.

The Loco equipment store was substantially damaged by a crane and repairs took some time to effect, due to other commitments during the main operating season.

Finance has been agreed for an Architect to draw up detailed drawings for the shed extension in the field beside the current shed. This should enable a planning application to be submitted early next year.

The railway managers attended an Emergency Incident seminar recently. This meeting has prompted us to review our arrangements. As a result an inventory check of our Breakdown equipment van has been carried out. Opportunity to check the operation of the jacks was also taken.

#### ***Management systems***

Two independent reviews have taken place this summer. Mr Jeremy Dunn (Engineering Manager) from the Colne Valley Railway examined our arrangements for Steam Locomotive Maintenance. Several actions arising have been costed out. More recently, Derek Dunlavy a former board member and rolling stock director kindly visited to check the department's management system. His findings will be helpful in ensuring the railway's regulatory obligations are properly met.

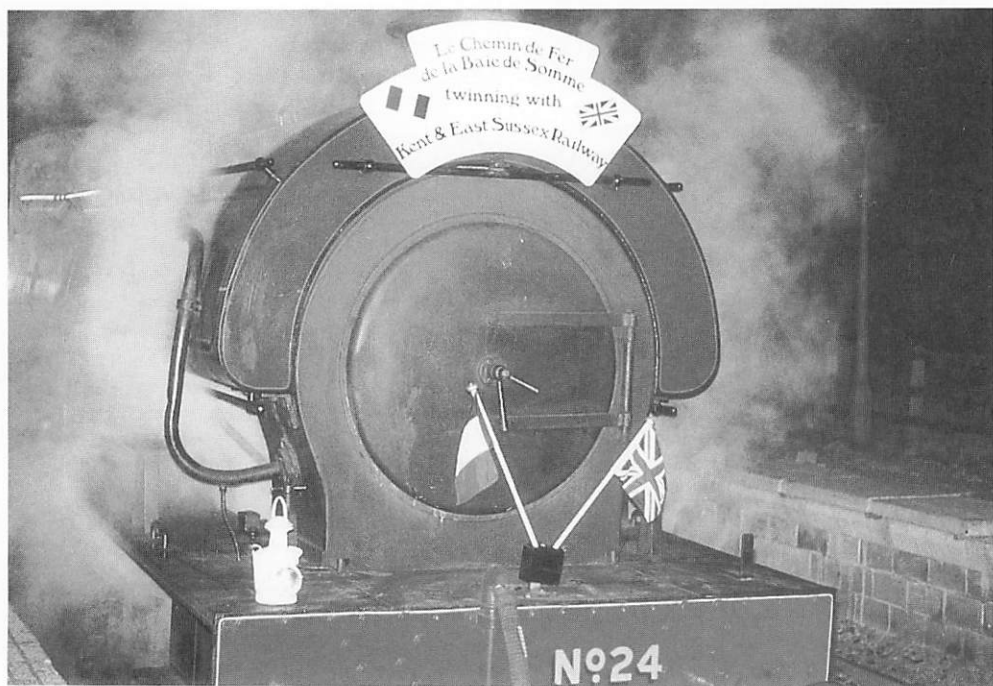
#### ***Recruitment***

Opportunity to revitalise the viewing gallery notice-board with new photographs of our restorations and overhaul work has been undertaken in a bid to interest our visitors in the varied work we do.





*Return visit by CFBS members to the Kent & East Sussex Railway on 12th October 1996;  
 L to R Jean Marc Page (President CFBS), a former CFBS driver, George Koowaree (Mayor of  
 Ashford), Felicity Johnson, Robin Dyce (Chairman K&ESR) (John Liddell)*



### ***Want's list***

The department would be very grateful if anyone could help with provision of the following items or services:

Polyurethane Foam to expand and block the gaps in the workshop – for preventing Starling ingress. Sections of wire netting for the same purpose.

Rags, old sheets and coats to wrap valves etc. on locomotives for frost precautions.

Paint scrapers and brushes

Drill bits up to ½" diameter.

Persons interested in building or electrical work.

Bench vices 4" or 6".

Old type asbestos rope gland packing.

Second hand timber to make step ladders or trestles.

Lockable filing cabinets or cupboards.

### ***Carriage and Wagon***

3-11 August saw a good turnout for C&W's annual working week. The weather was once again glorious but, unlike the two previous years, not too hot.

Despite our original intentions (further work on the SE&CR Birdcage and Maunsell CK No 56) efforts had to be concentrated on the SE&CR six wheeled brake van. Some 'straightforward' jobs had been started on this vehicle but, unfortunately, more work than expected was needed. The brake van is, of course, owned by our friends in the K&ESR Locomotive Trust and they are meeting the cost.

To get at all the build rail, it was necessary to hoist the body off the underframe. Immediately this was accomplished there was a horrendous crash. The floor had fallen out of the vehicle! In some ways that made things easier and with the talent on hand, repairs were well advanced by the end of the week. Extensive renewals have also been made to the balconies and a damaged wheel bearing has been replaced. Once the job is complete the brake van should be fit for a good many more years service.

### ***Mark I's***

TSO NO. 85 re-entered traffic on Wednesday 21st August and was also in use during the following Bank holiday weekend. The final version of the bottle green livery looks quite

splendid. As we write, CK No.86 is in the shed for a tidy up and application of the bottle green livery.

### ***Wagons***

Richard Halliwell recently purchased a ballast plough Shark brake van and this has now arrived on the Railway. A preliminary look over the Shark suggests it should be a most interesting and useful addition to the fleet.

For the charter mixed train on Saturday 31st August, one of the ex-SR seven plank wagons was repainted into SR livery by Geoff Silcock and his photographer friends. Signwriting was undertaken by C&W staff.

### ***Goodbye Maurice***

Maurice Dallen retired from TRC's paid employment on Monday 12th August. His last working day was marked by the customary presentation (a Walkman cassette and radio) plus a card signed by everyone in C&W. The occasion included a trip to Northiam and L&NWR saloon – with eats and drinks provided – plus a footplate ride back to Tenterden. Maurice's skills will be sorely missed but he is threatening to return as a volunteer once he has had a break.

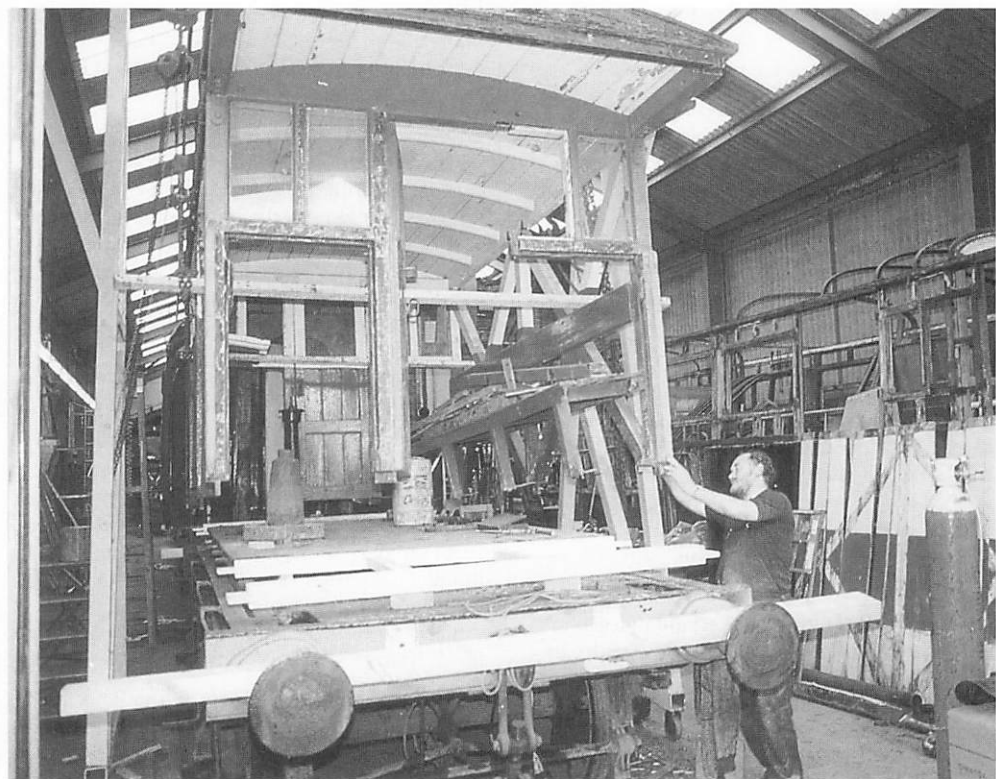
### ***Infrastructure***

A new power circuit is being installed in the carriage shed as part of a programme to upgrade carriage lighting battery charging arrangements.

### ***Permanent Way***

The main Permanent Way Department gang has spent the summer in Northiam Station yard building the new pointwork that will be required for any future extension to Bodiam. This will at the same time reconnect the isolated siding there and will enable the stock to be moved around the station site and will in turn clear the future main line to Bodiam in readiness for it's removal. The work on the track bed reconstruction will therefore be able to start unhindered if, or when, we receive Lottery funding. The staff have also been busy sorting, repairing and loading concrete sleepers in readiness for this year's working week (at Willow Curve) and the winter relay (at Pope's Cottage).

The routine maintenance has not been forgotten including shimming up fishplates, lifting out various small low spots and digging out of several wet beds. The junior P.Way gang have



*SECR six-wheeled Brakevan undergoing extensive restoration in C&W, 8th August 1996.*

*(John Liddell)*

also been doing sterling work at both Tenterden and Rolvenden and on the line between. This gang has welcomed several new younger members and both gangs are always willing to take on more volunteers. Richard Halliwell's recently purchased Shark brakevan (this van is specially fitted with ballast ploughs) will enable us to regulate stone as it is laid. Many thanks to him.

### **Signal & Telecomms Engineering**

The old S&T coach finally closed earlier this year, and the remaining occupants transferred to the new coach, which offers a vast improvement over the old. Further work carried out to date involved completion of the hot water system, installation of a new shower so that staff can enjoy a full wash after a day's work, and internal partitioning to create a combined washroom and toilet, to avoid the need to venture outside during the night, as was the case in the past – not a pleasant prospect during the winter months.

Progress on the workshop has slowed in the meantime, due to the protracted repairs to the 36tonne breakdown crane, which has delayed the grounding of the GUV parcel van, which will form the main workshop. However, it was possible during a working week held in July to take delivery of a 40' aluminium container, (at Wittersham), transport this to Tenterden on one of the bogie bolster wagons, and to crane it into place using the 10tonne Taylor Hubbard crane. This container is located behind the site for the workshop, and is thus screened from view. Work is now well advanced on fitting this out as a stores, and sorting of the stores into this new accommodation is already under way.

Elsewhere on the Tenterden site, the various groups of outdoor lights have been brought under common control, and are now automatically operated when dusk falls, rather than relying on staff to turn them on & off manually each day. Extra lights have been fitted along the dark side of the administration block.



These have been converted to high efficiency lamps where they are in less aesthetically sensitive areas, to reduce running costs.

Also at Tenterden, a new telecomms system, along with an additional BT line, has replaced the old manual switchboard, which had no further capacity for growth, and was not flexible enough to meet current needs and staffing practices. At the same time extra ansaphones have been introduced, so that the phone is always answered outside business hours – rather than customers receiving no reply at all.

Turning to the internal telephone system, Northiam exchange has now been brought into use, mainly as part of the preparations for future extension of the railway, but also to offer additional facilities in the Northiam / Wittersham areas. This has also necessitated some modifications to Rolvenden exchange, which soldiers on in its cramped, unsuitable accommodation.

Work has commenced on overhauling each of the springbox units that control the handpoints in the yards. These have received little attention, save oiling since BR days and are now well overdue for such attention.

### **Operating**

This year's timetable, apart from the usual staffing problems, has run successfully. We have also covered a large number of extra charter trains which has brought extra revenue to the railway.

The improvements implemented at the start of the summer season to the Guards rostering system have proved a considerable success and has meant that we have covered more of our turns without recourse to paid staff. The Guards roster clerk, Maurice Ashby, regretfully tendered his resignation at the end of the summer season due to work commitments. We are very grateful for all his hard work over the years. His place is taken by Sean Uphill.

New legislation from the Health and Safety Executive introduced this year requires us to train all of our staff to work safely on or about the track and carry identity cards when on duty. The Basic Railway Safety Scheme, as it has been christened, is being put together for implementation next year. A major, and long overdue, revamp of the rule book is in progress for reissue to staff early next year.

We have a shortage of operating staff. If you are interested in becoming a Driver, Guard or Signaller please contact Simon Long, Line Manager, c/o Tenterden Station.

### **Forestry and Conservation**

During the summer period work has concentrated on fire control, mainly in two areas, the grass banks near the bungalow at Cranbrook Road crossing and three visits to the banks and verges on Wittersham bank near to the crops. At each of these sites the areas were cut, raked thoroughly and then controlled burning was carried out. The raking operation is time consuming but was felt necessary to control the burning. Without it the burning becomes so fierce that the fire is in danger of becoming uncontrolled and hence dangerous.

At Tenterden Station work has been carried out to the bank near the Pullman siding to remove small saplings to enable electric cables to be installed. As usual various small scale clearances have been necessary to clear sight lines for signals and for overhanging branches which may touch trains.

Like most other departments on the Railway the department still has one main problem, namely lack of power (volunteers). If you would like to spend a day down on the track side with a friendly group of souls, please give Peter Thorogood a ring on 0181 859 5082. Do not forget that the whole family can be involved.

### **Membership**

At the time of writing (end September) 286 new members have been enrolled since 1st January. This is a welcome improvement on both 1994 and 1995 when, for the same period, comparative figures were 243 and 216 respectively. The bad news is that about 310 members have not renewed their subscription and their names will shortly be deleted from the membership record. However, with three months still to go before the end of the year, it looks likely that the overall slide in numbers of the previous four years has been arrested and a net gain should be recorded. Having said that it is difficult (and not a little unwise!) to make forecasts regarding membership numbers; watch this space in the next issue.

It appears that the inclusion of membership application forms in the current timetable has helped recruitment but what about the appeal launched earlier this year for the Railway's

existing members to play their part and endeavour to enrol an additional member (or members) during 1996? Just seven successful introductions were made (yes seven out of nearly 3000 members) and four of those were from one person! There is still time to act; December is the closing date. Don't forget that the names of those effecting successful introductions will be entered into a draw for two Wealden Pullman tickets.

Finally my grateful thanks go to the membership team for their support, dedication and hard work during the year not forgetting the magazine 'envelope stuffing' team and the participants in the hand delivery scheme which has already saved the Railway hundreds of pounds in postage. Here's to a successful 1997!

### Museum

Since the last report, the Museum, though incomplete, has opened. Up to mid-October, the

Museum has been open on 34 days; with 1712 paying visitors and 363 complimentary tickets issued to TRC members. Admission charges of £1,022 have been collected and paid into Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises.

Nearly two-thirds of the display area has been built and work will continue during the winter months. A very useful grant from Ashford Borough Council's heritage fund is anticipated and this will help with the cost of materials.

During October, the Chairman of Kent County Council and the Mayor of Ashford both visited the Museum. On the 13th, the Museum played host to our friends from the Baie de Somme, where they were given drinks and a buffet lunch.

The Museum will close to the public at the end of October and re-open at the beginning of March. Experience shows that most visits occur during late afternoon, so the core opening hours in 1997 will be 1pm to 5pm, with expanded



*A corner of the new Colonel Stephens Museum showing the Selsey Tramway and Surveying instrument displays (right) and Rye and Camber Tramway and Sheppey Light Railway display cases.*  
7th September 1996

*(John Liddell)*

hours on busy days. Anyone who is able to offer the occasional afternoon to act as a Museum attendant is asked to contact John Miller on 01580 765350.

### **News from the CFBS – Philip Pacey**

I have been asked, as an active member of the CFBS, to provide regular bulletins for the Tenterden Terrier. I shall be happy to oblige. However I should explain that I only manage to visit the CFBS once each year, usually for a week in July, so there may often be times when K&ESR members recently returned from France (which is after all on your doorstep) are better informed than I am. Therefore I would suggest that this should be an open column, to which others may contribute besides myself.

First, may I draw attention to a couple of particularly unfortunate errors (among others which matter less) in my article on the CFBS in 'The Terrier No 70'. The Buffaud and Robatel locomotive 'Béton-Bazoches', is of course an 0-6-2T, not an 0-6-0T. While that mistake found its way into my text after it had left me, I am entirely responsible for another inaccuracy for which a vivid imagination is to blame. My reference to 'a long tree-lined tunnel' behind St Valéry is metaphorical rather than factual: there is no tunnel, strictly speaking, but the summer foliage does meet above the line to create a tunnel of sorts! Thirdly, the 'Réseau des Mains de Mer' (sic) on page 41, which I suppose could be translated as the network, or railway, 'of the hands of the sea', should read 'Réseau des Bains de Mer', the 'sea-bathers railway'. Finally, though not an error as such, it may be worth noting that the 'e' in 'St Valéry' appears more and more frequently these days without the acute accent. I wonder if any reader can throw light on this?

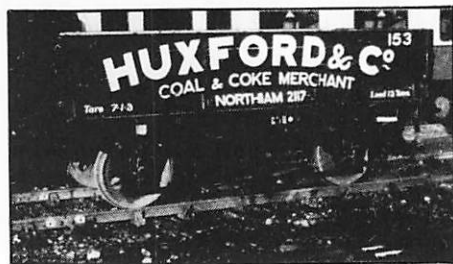
When I was last at St Valéry last July, my self-appointed task was to scrape clean the motion on the Cail locomotive. This took the best part of four days, thanks to a considerable accumulation of grease, dirt, and paint, the latter no doubt dating from when the loco was a static exhibit in the United States. I was privileged to fire Corpet Louvet No.1 on a test run on July 13th, prior to its return to service following installation of a new piston. The Michelin railcar, which many of you saw in April, was, to my surprise and

delight, still in the depot at St Valéry canal, having had its brakes renovated, but I was only just in time: it returned to the railway museum at Mulhouse at the end of July. I gather that it recorded a speed of 80kph on the section of newly relaid track between St Valéry and Lanchères.

The K&ESR participation in the 'Fête de la Vapeur' was much appreciated. In Voie étroite, Alain Paillard reports that 'Nos amis anglais du K&ESR étaient en costume d'époque; leur 030T 'Southern' effectuait des navettes sur la voie 13 en gare, pour la plus grande joie des amateurs'. ('Amateurs', in French, are 'enthusiasts'). How many of those present were persuaded that the name of the loco is 'Southern', I wonder? The CFBS's own newsletter, Ch'thor train, has a two page article, 'Le Départ de la Petite Anglaise', by Geoffrey Nickson, describing the journey of your '030 tender' - curiously, 'tender' is French for tank engine. (I'm sure readers of the Terrier do not need to be told that 0-6-0 becomes 030 across the channel). On the back cover there is a photo of Robin Dyce looking startled in the act of signing the Twinning Agreement.

The visit of the staff and members from the CFBS, to the K&ESR, coincided with an event weekend during which demonstration goods trains were run along with a rally of classic Austin cars from the 1940s and '50s. Our visitors were treated to dinner on the Wealden Pullman on Saturday evening and on Sunday a reception and buffet lunch were provided in the new Colonel Stephens Museum. The visitors were particularly complimentary of the displays now being established.

A final postscript to my article. Although I would still recommend the Folkestone-Boulogne route to Noyelles and the Baie de Somme to anybody not in a hurry, I have now tried and tested the Eurostar alternative which enables me to reach St Valéry within a day. (Previously I could complete the return journey but not the outward journey without an overnight break.) Be warned that by no means all Eurostar trains stop at Calais Fréthun; nor do all of the Calais-Boulogne-Noyelles-Amiens-Paris trains, but there is a bus from Fréthun which stops at Calais Ville.



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# The Runaway Train Came over the Hill and She Blew!

Former K&ESR fireman, Monty Baker describes a hair-raising experience on the footplate, 60 years ago.

It was Biddenden Fair day 1936 and No 4, the ex ESWR 0330 class locomotive, was in use as normal; we needed the strongest loco we had, to move the large numbers of empty cattle trucks that needed to be brought up Frittenden Bank between Headcorn and Biddenden for loading as the sales proceeded. Of course, the yard and loop had already been filled to capacity over the preceeding days in readiness.

Driver Nelson Wood and I were working the normal service. I had cleaned and banked up the fire on No 8 after finishing our morning shift, which had commenced at 6.00am and finished at 2.00pm. We were waiting to catch the bus home for a meal and then return at 4.00pm for the second half of the split shift, when the Rolvenden Station Agent ran out to say that we were to proceed to Biddenden as No 4 had developed a leaking tube and was having difficulty steaming.

Charlie Turner, our fitter, came with us, complete with tapered tube plugs and long plug irons to reach across the firebox and push into the leaking tube end. Heavy blows on the the end of the rod fixed the plug in. If the leak was not too excessive and the tube at the smoke box end was not obstructed by the blast pipe, it was known that another tapered plug could be belted in and the smoke- box door shut as quickly as possible. Until the tube could be replaced, the fire- box door would be opened and closed with alacrity when firing, and pressure reduced greatly when cleaning the fire and smoke box. This would continue until the next boiler wash out, when the tube would be replaced.

It was at these times that the Southern Railway helped out, loaning a Terrier or a P class, depending on availability. In the meantime, we improvised as we were expected to do by Head Office. Health and

Safety were words never mentioned before nationalisation in 1948.

Needless to say our arrival was most welcome. We did a trip to Headcorn with no problems and managed some empties back. Inspector Beer, a Southern man from Ashford was always in charge of cattle loading, on Biddenden and Tenterden Fair Days. He quoted the price to the farmer, probably a shade on the high side initially to allow for haggling. All his work was done on the Fair ground, and the Cattle Loading Dock.

Inspector Beer was a staunch Chapel man, and Lay Preacher, despite his unfortunate name. His poor ears were subjected to the most foul language of the Cattle drovers, as they loaded the wagons. He touted among the farmers, many of whom he had dealt with for years. The Railway took most of the long distance traffic. The lorries were becoming more numerous, but preferred the shorter runs. His paperwork was then sent across to the Station Office to have consignment notes, and truck labels prepared by our own Station Agents and Clerks. However, I digress; we had got our last train of Cattle made up and were preparing to leave when Inspector Beer said he had a few more trucks. Nelson agreed, saying that it was all down hill anyway, and we had to get back to Tenterden to work the 5pm to Headcorn, so the more we took now the better, as time was running out. I cannot remember exactly just how many cattle trucks we had behind us, but it was nearer thirty than twenty. There was only a screw-down handbrake on No 8, so we crept to the top of Frittenden Bank so that I could get down and pin down about half a dozen or so wagon brakes. Unfortunately we had crept a bit too far!

I had managed to pin down a few when I



realised the speed was increasing, and Nelson whistled for me to get back on board. Not being a great athlete, I came close to doing the four minute mile long before Roger Bannister, and on ballast at that. Nelson and I both put all our strength into the handbrake, to no avail. In no time we were now half way down the bank doing a fair impression of a fast fitted goods with our brake blocks glowing red and feeling softer as we were now able to screw the hand brake up a little more. We were getting thrown about the footplate, and concerned whether Bill Paine the Station Agent at Frittenden Road could match our speed and get down the cinder path from his office to the level crossing with his red flag to stop any traffic.

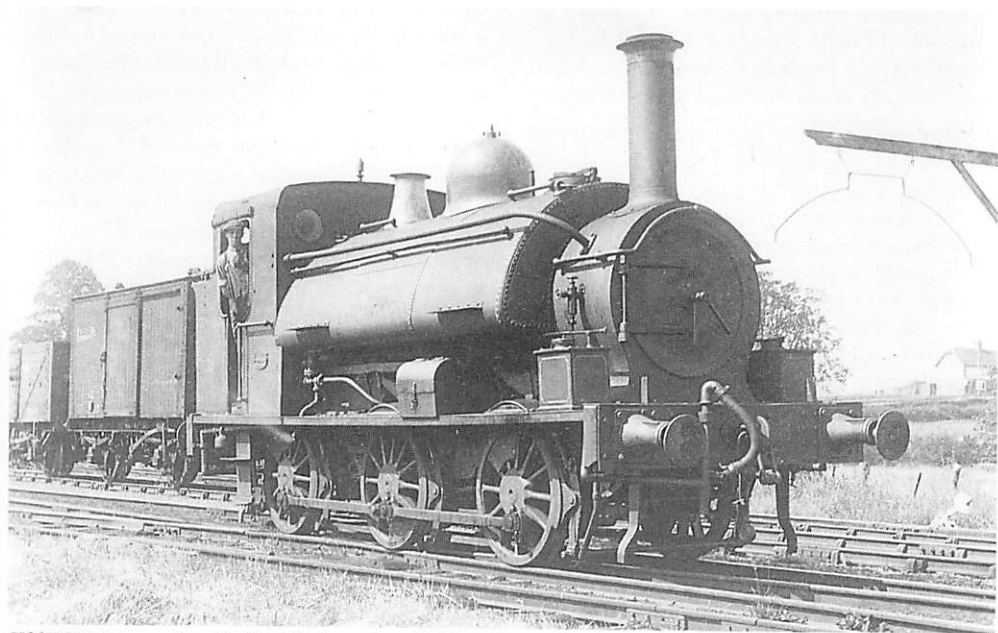
Bill made it and told us later that the shaking up those cattle got had affected their digestive systems. As the slatted sided wagons flashed past him at shoulder level, his cap, face, and uniform no longer passed the Daz clean test. Those cattle were not alone, Nelson and I were experiencing a similar feeling.

Nelson had already pushed the reversing

lever forward (we were travelling bunker first). He was holding on to the whistle chain, when the reversing lever catch came out of the rack and the lever shot over and pinned him to the bunker as we hurtled over the level crossing. I managed to hold on to him and push the lever forward a little to release him as we crossed over the Frittenden Yard points. How we stayed on the road I do not know. We rolled all over the place. Coal flew off the bunker. Our teacans shot out of the tray and off the footplate along with the coal hammer, luckily Nelson was laid across the fire shovel or that would have gone too.

The brake had slackened a bit and I managed to screw it on a bit more, and Whistle for the next crossing. Our speed was slackening now, and the thought of us leaping over that sleeper laid across the headshunt at Headcorn, and demolishing the Main line signal box slowly diminished. In fact it was to be a recurring nightmare for several months afterwards.

Nelson got to his feet holding his ribs, writhing in pain. We had passed the last crossing before the Dairy and I was advised



*K&ESR Locomotive No 8 at Rolvenden, 1935. The author is on the footplate.*

*(Col. Stephens Historical Archive)*

to apply steam to take up the couplings and keep us rolling into the Station.

I uncoupled, and ran into the platform while the Southern Guard, and Loco came over the transfer road and the Porters got Nelson onto a trolley and across the main line to the Booking Office where the Southern Stationmaster, trained in First Aid, strapped him up for dispatch by taxi to Ashford Hospital.

A phone call to Frittenden Road got Bill Paine to cycle to the first crossing from Headcorn and meet me with No. 8, when I returned, to be lookout over the crossings. In the meantime I went to the water crane, filled up, oiled round, checking how much thread was left on the handbrake. The boxes were quite hot, the brake blocks still smoking and a lovely blue colour. I made the fire up and set off to meet Bill and his bike.

Arriving at Frittenden Road I dropped off Bill and went solo up to Biddenden, picked up a Platelayer who had experience of firing, drove on to Tenterden, then coupled on the back of the 4.30pm to Robertsbridge (as far as Rolvenden) with the rejuvenated No 4 now in charge. Coaled and watered at Rolvenden we went back to Headcorn at 5pm with Charlie Turner driving. I had only driven in yards and shed roads, this had been my initiation at 17 years of age.

Nelson was back in a few days and with two broken ribs was only able to stand in the corner of the cab. There was no sick pay, and we had to rely on Slate Club Payments, which was a pittance. Even when ill, as long as we could be present, we all covered for one another's jobs. It was a very hard 12 hour split shift doing both driving, firing, and the hand brake while Nelson sat in the Guard's van. During shunting, I once roped off trucks when our Guard had a bad leg.

At this time we were paid per day 8/- (40p) for Firemen, and 10/- (50p) for Drivers, irrespective of the hours. We worked 6 days a week, but could enhance our earnings on the Sundays by unloading a 8-9 ton truck of loco coal and stacking it neatly on the coal stage for 4/6 (22½p). Drivers took turns washing out on Sundays.

Finally, a few facts on the locomotives themselves. Nos. 2,3,4,8 only had handbrakes; no firehole baffle plates, and the majority of the time during the 1930s no brick arches. Of the locos we loaned, the Terriers had Westinghouse brakes, the P Class, and 0395 Class tender engines had steam brakes, also were complete with brick arches and baffle plates; a treat to work on.

The boiler pressure of 2,3,4,8 was 120lbs against 150lbs or more on the loaned locos. No 8 was adaptable by the fact that behind the Great Western safety valve cover were two different valves, one was a locked valve set at 130lbs. the other a Salter balance with the lever and brass spring casing inside the cab set at 120lbs. A Driver who shall be nameless, hung a piece of broken rail chair on this, covered by his coat, to help us up the gradients. At least it proved the other one worked.

Double heading was not allowed on the K&ESR, yet early in the last war we ran the 0395 Class No. 3440 with a total weight, engine and tender of 69 tons 5 cwt. the full length of the line whereas two Terriers double heading would have had a combined weight of only 54 tons 6 cwt. We did numerous trips with defence material, the Police calling us out at all hours. We once sat at Headcorn for 30 hours expecting a train load of barbed wire to take through to Robertsbridge but it got delayed through bombing. I swear that some military loads traversed the K&ESR several times before they got to a definite destination. If opportunity arose on these nocturnal trips in the Blackout, we would coal up from any truck of house coal we could get alongside; it did wonders peppering up the Tilmanstone Colliery rubbish. We classed it as the Coal Merchants' donation to the War Effort.

Sadly No 8 developed a crack about six inches long down the curve on the outside of the firebox by the Fireman's feet after the strain of this speeding. Boots and the bottom foot or so of overalls were in a constant cloud of steam, which froze as soon as one alighted in winter. It ran like this until it was scrapped. It always surprised us how the Boiler Inspector passed it.

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# Light Railway Time Travelling

With winter in prospect Geoff Silcock looks back to recent times when the season and indeed decades combined on the Kent and East Sussex Railway again.

"It is a pleasant thought about running the Mixed again, with P class No 1556 in a 1930's aura this time..." Yours truly in *The Tenterden Terrier* Spring 1994, describing the Sentimental Journeys 1950's Mixed of Winter 1993. "These things happen... because these things happen." Ethel Merman – Warner Brothers film 'Its a Mad Mad Mad Mad World' – 1963.

The latter quote was brought to mind whilst on top of the boiler and side tanks of 0-6-0T No 1556 at dusk in near torrential rain on the 30th August at Rolvenden shed, whilst levering the pristine dome off, to locate a weather worn one in its place. Although cast in print by those closing remarks in *The Tenterden Terrier*, it was a resurgence in fund raising for the K&ESR Terrier Trust that became the genesis of another "What if this time" to Graham Hukins, the Commercial Manager in July. This was to emulate a 1930's mixed train on another Sentimental Journeys charter, with any excess funds to accrue to the Terrier Trust in consequence.

Photographic Charters have increased by leaps and bounds since the heady days of 'The Birdcage that sang for its supper' in the late Autumn of 1993. Highlighted by a succession of evocative images in the contemporary railway press, it may now be argued that these have become an art-form in their own right, even acquiring an umbrella association and fixtures secretary so that dates do not clash, with many photographers in several charter lists.

So with the mornings and evenings drawing in by the week, and with weekday holiday dates at a premium, Saturday 31st August was chosen for our mid-summer soiree, which would occur either side of the intensive K&ESR timetable for that day. Once this date had been agreed, a plan of campaign was put into action, to make the complete train just that little bit more authentic for its patrons. The starring role of the locomotive was not in doubt, as the resident P class had worked the line in the 1930s to cover motive power

shortages. The South Eastern and Chatham 'Birdcage' coach from 1993 resides in the Carriage and Wagon centre of woodworking excellence at Tenterden, though it is unavailable just at present for charter work. Even though I was completely smitten with the London & North-Western Inspection saloon in K&ESR Victorian train set, the Great Eastern Brake/ 1st-3rd No 197 was to become the basis of the mixed train in prospect.

The two 5 plank wagons in private owner livery residing in Wittersham Road Sidings were a valuable addition to the project, having connections with the 1930s local scene. Indeed Huxford & Co still trade from Northiam Railway Yard, with their lorries a colourful sight around country lanes in the vicinity. Then there was the Southern general Merchandise wagon – again. As we had painted it into BR livery for the 1950s mixed in 1993 it seemed somehow appropriate to repaint it back into Southern Railway livery for a 1930s mixed in 1996. It was also important that the wagons were vacuum fitted, so that an authentic mixed could run without a brakevan, as it transpired that by the 1930's the railway did not possess one in working condition. The August Bank Holiday Saturday just a week away from the event was chosen for the 8-plank repaint, and it took just a few hours to go over what had been so lovingly covered just 3 years ago.

In the meantime John Miller, at the Colonel Stephens Museum now an adjunct to the C&W works at Tenterden, had located one of the original tail board signs used by the railway in its heyday. A replica was especially made for our event by Andy Fielder of the C&W department. Part of the Bank Holiday Monday was spent on the Bluebell Railway, aiding the removal of a large artefact – the black dome of fellow P class No 1178. It was this that was exchanged in the torrential down pour on the evening of the 30th August. Then everything was in place for the next day's activities.

The nocturnal 5 am scene at Rolvenden was

hardly serene, for as well as our 0-6-0T No 1556, both 'Duck' 0-6-0PT 1638 and Norwegian 2-6-0 were being gently brought around from their overnight slumber for the full day ahead. In the dark shadows nearby the Great Eastern Brake No 197 awaited the dawn courtesy of 'Mystical Megs Magical Sign-Writing' of a few days before. By ten to six we were buffered up and away from the sodium city of Rolvenden Yard and heading away south-east.

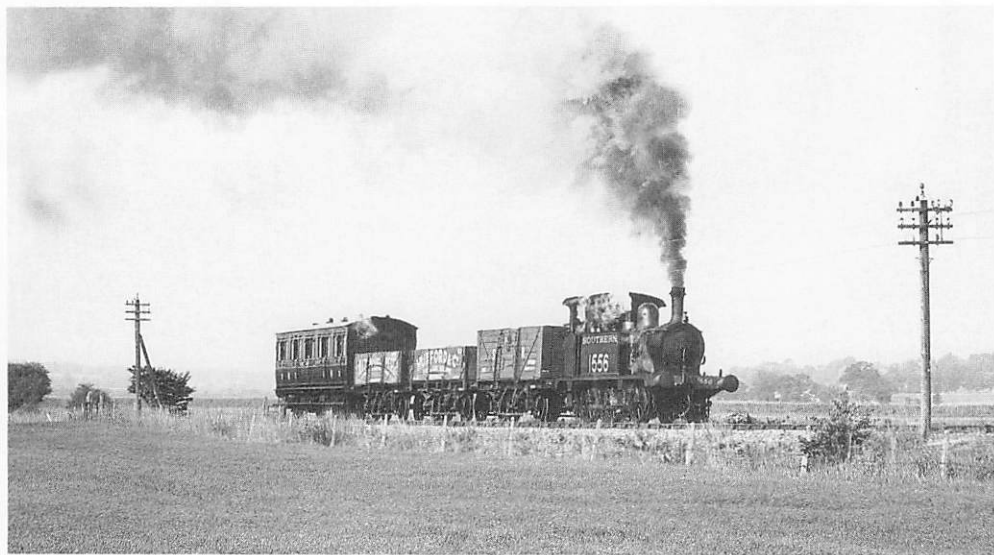
As the smudged grey and cerise day-break began to colour the sky from the south-east we drew into the loop at Wittersham Road, where the two 5-plankers soon slid past us to join our 60 year old load. With civilisation left behind at Wittersham Road Signalbox we entered the strange no-mans land of night and day, for as the sun came up over the marshes of Dr Syn, the ebbing moon still seemed to illuminate us as we sailed westwards now with our steam trail just catching the faintest breath of wind.

Then, all too soon, the present and sanctuary in the form of Northiam Level Crossing Gates and Station loomed out from the mist remaining and we ran in to meet our assembled throng for the day's activities, with results it was surely worth going back 60 years for. In retrospect the weather was very kind. Indeed the sun virtually shone that morning

from day-break until we finished our last photo-session at Orpins Curve and headed back to Tenterden and a late breakfast. It was as if it was made to order, for our tickets did have 31st August '36 stamped on them, and as I've written of the Kent and East Sussex railway on more than one occasion now... at such times how could it be otherwise... and that's where I leave my story for now.

In conclusion I'd like to thank my sentimental journey colleagues Tim Stephens, Steve King and Steve Nakonecny for giving up their Bank Holiday Saturday to (re)paint the 8-plank, plus Roger Cruse and Mike Esau for procuring and transporting No 1178's dome from the Bluebell Railway. On the K&ESR Railway especial thanks to Gerry Siviour of the Terrier Trust for the liaison, to Graham Hukins for putting it all together, to Chris Cheney, Andy Fielder and 'Mystical Megs Magical Sign-Writing' in the Carriage and Wagon, to Simon Long in the Locomotive Department with drivers Peter Wensley and Charlie Masterson on 1556 itself, and finally to Operations where David Campbell saw it all run with scarcely a hitch.

And the next time-span to create... who can foretell the past, present and future of our time-travelling on the Kent and East Sussex Railway.



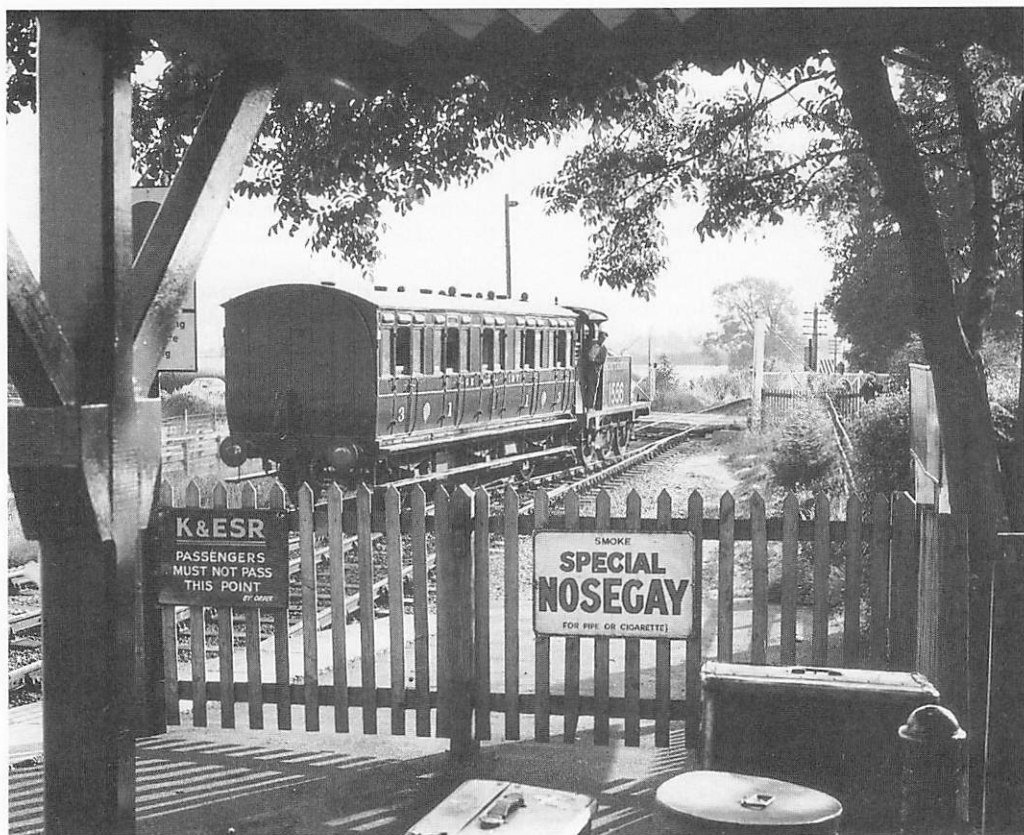
*(Mike Esau)*



# Travelling in Time

*Photographed by Mike Esau on 31 August 1966*





# Navigating the Medway

We normally think of Colonel Stephens in terms of railway engineering. But in the years before he became established as a leading expert on light railways, he was employed as a civil engineering consultant by several other bodies. One was the Cranbrook District Water Company, and another was the Upper Medway Navigation, of which he was Engineer from 1896 to 1900.

The Medway had long been navigable to Maidstone and indeed was tidal as far as Farleigh in the days before Allington Lock was built. Beyond Maidstone it was a different story, as boats were obstructed not merely by the natural hazards but by weirs and other obstacles constructed by mill owners. Better transport was certainly needed; the Wealden roads were notorious and there is a well-known account of timber from the woods around Tonbridge taking two years to reach the dockyard at Chatham, as even teams of draught oxen were unable to shift the heavy logs in the bottomless quagmire which the roads became in winter. Despite this obvious need, vested interests proved strong, and it was not until 1740 that an Act of Parliament was obtained by the Company of Proprietors of the Navigation of the River Medway allowing it to improve the river from Maidstone (the Company's boundary was below the bridge until 1907, then at College Gardens) as far as Forest Row. Locks were built and navigation commenced as far as Tonbridge in 1741, although the powers for the portion from Tonbridge to Forest Row lapsed. The Company acquired a virtual monopoly of transport in this part of the Medway Valley, and was for a period extremely profitable. Unlike most canal and river navigation companies, the Upper Medway Company did not simply provide a route for other users, but itself engaged not just in the carriage of goods but even in selling coal, creosote and other commodities. This gave it little incentive to improve the state of the river, as improvement would merely have encouraged competitors by enabling more barges to pass. Indeed, it took the Company nearly 100 years to provide a proper towpath for the full length of the river

to enable the barges to be hauled by horses rather than gangs of men. While slow to improve the river, the Company was always quick to engage in litigation, with millers, with the local highway authorities or, in the 1820s, with the Penshurst Navigation Company, which had been formed to extend the navigation from Tonbridge to Penshurst, but succeeded in completing only a couple of miles to the gunpowder mills at Ramhurst, near Leigh.

The Company's high-handed approach was all very well so long as it had a monopoly, but in 1842 the South Eastern Railway reached Tonbridge and Paddock Wood (or Maidstone Road as it was then known), and in 1844 extended a branch parallel to the Upper Medway to Maidstone. The Company at first attempted to turn the situation to its own advantage by building a connecting railway from its Tonbridge Wharf to the SER at Paddock Wood and establishing coal depots at several stations. However, the SER refused to allow the Medway Company's steam locomotives to run over the main line tracks. This rendered the enterprise uneconomic, and the brief excursion into railways ceased in 1847. After this, the fortunes of the Upper Medway declined steadily for several decades; the last year in which a dividend was paid was 1890, and in 1892 another Act of Parliament reorganised the Company as the Medway (Upper) Navigation Company, and also empowered it to build and own steam tugs and barges.

The problems faced by the Upper Medway Navigation at this period are reflected in some of the Company's surviving returns to the Board of Trade. No more than a bare minimum of maintenance had been carried out for fifty years, and, more fundamentally, the locks on the Upper Medway were big enough only for 60 ton barges, not the 120 ton sailing barges which were common at that time on the Lower Medway, the Thames and around the estuary. The Company itself had a small fleet of 60 ton barges, as did one or two local customers who carried their own goods, but most of the independently-owned barges –

known as 'bye-traders' – were able to reach no further than Tovil, paying tolls to the Company for the use of a mere three quarters of a mile of the Navigation. In 1888, of the total of 54,722 tons of cargo carried on the Upper Medway, only 21,561 tons were carried in the Company's barges, while bye-traders accounted for 33,161 tons.

One of the main traffics at this period was coal, which the Company landed at its wharves at Yalding, Branbridges and Tonbridge to be carted for sale to customers as far away as Hildenborough. Otherwise, the largest and most influential customer was the company William Arnold & Sons of East Peckham, which received roadstone and other building materials at Branbridges wharf and which was represented on the Company's board of directors by George and Walter Arnold. Maylam & Co., agricultural merchants of Tonbridge, and the gunpowder manufacturers Curtiss & Harvey, whose barges

flew a red flag to warn of their cargo, were also important shippers.

By December 1895, the reorganised company was again in financial difficulties, and the directors had to cut wages and discharge some of the men. However, they evidently felt that their need for professional advice on engineering was unavoidable, for at the same meeting they agreed to employ H.F. Stephens for twelve months, at an annual fee of £50.

In April of the following year William Stow, the manager of the Navigation, wrote to Stephens setting out his duties. He was to have "charge of William Hodge the foreman, Hickmott the blacksmith, and all other labour employed on the river, except such labour as may be engaged in the weighing, sale and delivery of coals". The terms proved acceptable, and Stephens attended the board meeting in June to be introduced to the directors.

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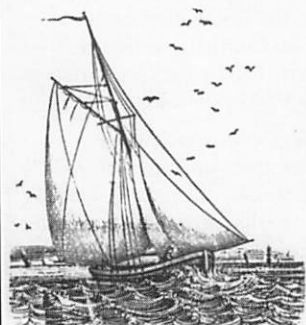
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*Advertisement from a Kent Directory of 1890.*

In addition to the maintenance and improvement of the waterway, the Upper Medway directors were concerned at this time with the introduction of steam propulsion to supplement the horse-drawn barges, and this may have been one reason why Stephens, who had had experience at the Neasden Works of the Metropolitan Railway as well as his training as a civil engineer, was considered suitable for the post. At the directors' request, Stephens had brought details of several steam tugs with him to the board meeting in June 1896, but this line was not followed up, and thoughts turned to a steam barge. Two approaches were pursued – conversion and new construction. The existing barge to be converted was the 'William and Elizabeth', for which Stephens was authorised to obtain a boiler in January 1897. One was eventually acquired from a Mr Jones of Rye – presumably E.P.S. Jones of the Rother Ironworks, with whom Stephens had recently had dealings in connection with the Rye and Camber Tramway. By June 1897, the 'William and Elizabeth' was out of dock with the engine and boiler in position, and in November she was far enough advanced to make a trial trip under steam. However, in May 1898 she was one of several Upper Medway barges reported to have been laid up on account of a decline in cargoes.

The other project of the board's Steam Barge Committee was a purpose-built vessel, the 'Pioneer'. Contrary to her name, she was not in fact the first steam barge on the Upper Medway; this honour belonged to the 'William Arnold', which was built for William Arnold & Sons. The 'William Arnold' made a trial trip at Southampton, where she had been built, on 21 May 1897, and on Saturday 5 June 1897 she arrived at Branbridges wharf after an eventful maiden voyage, in the course of which the chain of her steering gear became stretched, with the result that she collided with a wooden barge at Aylesford.

Construction of the Company's own steam barge 'Pioneer' at Napier's yard in Southampton was in progress by January 1897, and she made her trial trip on Friday 16 July – this was witnessed by three of the directors, although Stephens himself was not present. She left Southampton on 19 July and reached London on 22 July, having suffered

minor damage on the way. She was officially handed over to the Company the next day, and loading with 62 tons of flour, corn and sugar began. Manned by Captain Jupp and Meopham, the engineer, she completed her first trip to Tonbridge on 30 July, despite slight delays caused by shoals and restricted clearances under bridges in some places.

An annoying problem with the 'Pioneer' was that the Board of Trade discovered that the crew's bunks were slightly shorter than the regulation 6 feet. Much correspondence ensued, even including a statutory declaration by Jupp and Meopham to the effect that they were entirely satisfied with their accommodation, but this was to no avail, and eventually the bunks had to be altered. Meanwhile, the 'Pioneer' settled down to regular and modestly profitable working between the London Docks and Tonbridge, with only occasional delays caused by winter fogs in the Thames or shoals in the Upper Medway. In 1898, the board agreed to offer the 'Pioneer' for sale, in order to replace her with a new steam barge to carry 120 tons (but only up the Medway as far as Maidstone) and four steel lighters. However, the price they wanted for her was not forthcoming, and she was still in service when Stephens left the Company in 1900.

Other craft owned by the Navigation included a number of horse-drawn wooden barges in various states of repair (Stephens reported difficulty in engaging shipwrights) and an inspection punt, the 'Tovil', which could be hired for private excursions at 3 guineas a day. In 1898, steam dredging apparatus was ordered from Messrs. Rose, Downs and Thomson of Hull for installation on an existing barge. The Company ordered at least two steel lighters in 1899 – they were named 'Spray' and, rather less poetically, 'Rat'.

Of course, Stephens's responsibilities encompassed more than just the Company's barges. Dredging shoals, alleviating flooding and repairing towpaths were tasks requiring repeated attention, especially in view of the parlous state of the finances. Stephens was instructed to advise on various possible developments, most of which failed to come to fruition, like the plan for a private telephone wire along the Navigation which was mooted in 1897. One request from the board which



## Undercliff and Bridge, Maidstone



*The start of navigation, just above Maidstone bridge*

*(Valentines Carbotone series postcard)*

must have required tactful handling was to advise on a bridge over the Medway planned by the proposed Hadlow Light Railway – Stephens was also the engineer of the railway company and William Stow, manager of the Navigation Company was the Hadlow Light Railway's secretary.

It is not clear how much of Stephens's time was occupied by the affairs of the Upper Medway Navigation – he had several other irons in the fire at this time but it was evidently enough for the hard-pressed directors to double his remuneration to £100 annually from May 1897. Possibly that year's annual survey trip in the 'Tovil', which Stephens had attended and which found the river, surprisingly enough, "in a fair state of repair", was responsible.

However, 1898 saw a further deterioration in the Company's position. Although the total tonnage was considerably higher than it had been ten years before at 187,064 tons, the amount carried by the Company's own barges had fallen to only 13,714 tons. The remaining 173,350 tons was carried by bye-traders, and

as we have seen, practically all of this went no further than the factories at Tovil, yielding a meagre £775 in tolls to the Upper Medway. The carrying business was operated at a loss of £866, so even though only £732 was spent on maintenance, there was a net loss for the year of £307.

The board's response included the disposal of their coal sales business to William Stow, together with the wharves at Tonbridge, Branbridges and Yalding, which were leased to him for ten years. Mr Stow of course had to resign his post as manager. He was not replaced, and William Hodge the foreman took over his duties as secretary to the board – a step backwards as far as historians are concerned, as Hodge's handwriting was much less legible!

At this gloomy point in the Company's history, Stephens displayed commendable, if ill-founded, faith in its future success by buying 150 of its shares from the estate of the late H. Naismith. The price he paid is not recorded, but it surely cannot have been high.

There was a small measure of progress in

1899, as the steam dredger had been put into operation by May, although it was evidently not a complete answer, as William Arnold & Sons were again complaining about shoals in November.

However, financial realities were still pressing, and at the directors' meeting in June 1900 it was resolved that when the engineer's term of office expired on 29 September 1900 his services must be dispensed with.

Following Stephens's departure, the affairs of the Company went from bad to worse, and in July 1904 the receivers were called in after the failure of a final attempt to raise fresh capital for modernisation. Maintenance of the banks and lock gates was now virtually non-existent, and in the winter of 1909-10, East Farleigh lock collapsed, closing the river to navigation for three months. In response to local concern over flooding, the Kent County Council then promoted the Upper Medway Navigation and Conservancy Act, which received the Royal Assent on 2 June 1911. The Act established a public body, the Upper Medway Navigation

and Conservancy Board, which would take over the Upper Medway and everything connected with it from the old Company, pay off the mortgages, and carry out a programme of improvements including removing three of the existing locks, completely rebuilding the other ten, and dredging the river to a depth of seven feet. The cost was estimated at £40,000, of which the Rochester Bridge Trustees agreed to pay half. There was a smaller contribution from the Lower Medway Navigation Company, and the rest was funded by loans, some guaranteed by the local authorities and some from the government.

Unfortunately, the works did not proceed according to plan. The new locks were found to have been poorly designed, with inadequate foundations and used a novel design of lock gate (made up of cast iron segments bolted together and worked by rack gearing) which proved quite unsatisfactory. The contractor had underestimated the cost and was in financial difficulties, and there was inadequate engineering supervision and inspection, with the result that poor workmanship stayed

Farleigh Lock, Maidstone



*A horse drawn barge ascending Farleigh Lock, the collapse of which precipitated the demise of the Navigation Company. The up home signal of East Farleigh station can be seen on the left.*

*(Valentines Carbotone series postcard)*

undetected. Finally, unusually severe floods in the winter of 1912-13 delayed the work still more. The Conservancy Board took over the unfinished works and completed them by direct labour (using a bucket dredger purchased from the contractor) and the locks were rebuilt with conventional greenheart timber gates, but the final cost rose to £93,000. The Upper Medway was reopened on 1 September 1915 by the steam tug 'Keston' towing the 75 foot barge 'Beaver', and on 11 October its full length was navigated by barges carrying 130 tons. Commercial traffic never again reached significant levels and indeed the last toll-paying barge to Tonbridge was in 1927 and to Yalding and Branbridges in 1928. However, pleasure boating has increased steadily over the years and of course the Medway's vital contribution to land drainage has been kept up.

The Conservancy Board's functions were transferred to the River Medway Catchment Board on 1 April 1934, since which date several further reorganisations have taken

place. Today, the Upper Medway is maintained for navigation and drainage by the Environment Agency.

H.F. Stephens's contribution to the Upper Medway Navigation was by no means an important one. He was its engineer for only four years out of its history of more than 250 years - and four years when it was, so to speak, at its lowest ebb. But the Upper Medway episode did have a significant effect on Stephens's later career.

Perhaps most importantly, it provided him with a connection with Tonbridge, which no doubt resulted in the establishment of his legendary offices at Salford Terrace in that town.

Much of the information in this article is from the Company's minute books and other records at the Medway Heritage Centre, while details of the reconstruction are from Board of Trade files at the Public Record Office.

Thanks are due to both for the provision of facilities.

**Tom Burnham**

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## Book Review

*Festiniog In The Fifties*, by Vic Mitchell and Allan Garraway. Published by Middleton Press, price £10.95. Hard covers. 96 pages incorporating 120 photographs and detailed captions.

Middleton Press books always represent excellent value for money and this latest volume is no exception. The Authors have both been long associated with the revival of the Festiniog Railway and most of the photographs have never been published before. Inevitably, because many have come from amateur sources at a time when cameras were less sophisticated, the quality of reproduction is variable.

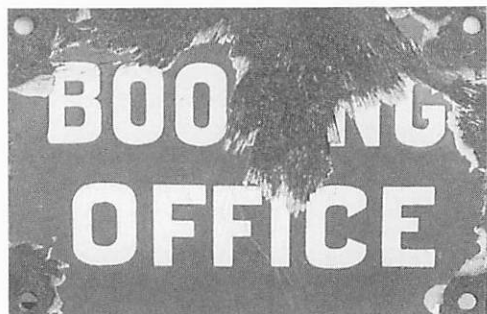
The attractiveness of the book is enhanced by including so many pictures with human interest, although positive identification of more of the personalities involved would have been an added bonus. There is an excellent map, drawn in 1957, which spans

a full two pages and shows how other lines in the area linked into the Festiniog system. However, the interesting diagram, drawn up in 1979, which attempts to clarify the complex events which led to the acquisition of the old company by Alan Pegler, has suffered from being condensed into too small an area. Reproductions of Festiniog timetables from the years 1955 to 1958 now seem curiously dated in layout.

This is a book which is both original in concept and interesting in content. The Stephens connection is a little remote - nowhere does Robert Evans appear; but Festiniog Society founder member, Leonard Heath Humphreys does, and he can claim a similar distinction (with Robin Doust and a few others) in the early revival plans for the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

**P.D.S.**

# A Relic from 'The Potts'



In 1963 and 1964, my family spent summer holidays at Shrewsbury in a rented flat high above the Severn, looking across to The Quarry, where we had a grandstand view of the firework display which was the finale of the famous flower show. On warm summer nights, the clinking of buffers and the occasional whistle could be heard from the shunting yards near the station. Our route to the town centre was over Kingsland Bridge, with its toll of one penny for pedestrians, but as often as not I would head in another direction, along Longden Coleham to the grassy knoll overlooking the turntable at the back of the locomotive sheds.

Shrewsbury had been selected for our holidays as a centre for visiting countryside and ancient buildings, but as a youthful railway enthusiast I quickly appreciated its value as a centre for railways as well. We had arrived from Paddington via Birmingham Snow Hill and Wolverhampton Low Level, and I was soon able to travel on other lines and services which have now vanished: the Severn Valley line to Bewdley (regularly worked by 2-6-2T No. 41207 with two corridor coaches of Great Western design), the former Cambrian Railways line from Whitchurch to Welshpool, and the route of the 'Inter City' express to Chester and Birkenhead Woodside.

By the time of our second visit, Shrewsbury shed had been transferred from the Western to the London Midland Region, and signs of the decline of steam were becoming all too obvious. The present-day

scene was beginning to pall, and I decided to turn my attention to the past. I had already read something of the history of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and had seen its weedgrown trackbed from trains on the Welshpool line, so made my way out to Meole Brace to see what relics might survive.

Climbing down to track level, I found the site of the track, according to my notes, "largely covered with grass, although the 'ballast' (cinders) is evident" and the impression of the sleepers was visible in places. The front supports of the timber platform were largely missing and the buildings had been badly damaged by vandals, while a garage and shed had been erected since closure. There were "the remains of a wooden hut, presumably the booking office" and "an old goods van at the Shrewsbury end of the platform. One end is in fair condition, and there is only



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one plank missing from the roof. The floor is also intact, but only some of the main supports remain of the other side. It has no numberplate, and is painted a dark ochre." Also on the site were two yellow and blue enamelled iron advertising signs for 'Veno's Cough Cure, 11½d and 1/3d' and an iron notice board with the remnants of a notice signed by H.F. Stephens. The only portable relic I was able to find was a small green enamelled iron sign with the words 'Booking Office' in white letters, which has now been deposited with the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum.

Progressing along the trackbed towards Shrewsbury, I found the single platform at Shrewsbury West, beneath the bridge carrying the A40 road over the railways, still in good condition. The girders of the bridge carrying the S&M over the railway to Hereford were still in place, but those of the bridge over the Severn Valley line had been removed, leaving only the brick abutments. Knowing that the passenger service to Bewdley had been withdrawn, I ventured down on to the metals, and walked up alongside the spur which connected the

Severn Valley line to the Abbey Foregate station of the S&M. The track was in reasonable repair, although the ballast was little better than earth and the occasional key was missing. At that time, the Abbey Foregate station yard was still in use as an oil storage depot served by occasional goods trains, and most of the buildings remained, together with a crane, a water tower and a water tank, although several of the sidings had been lifted. So I emerged on to Abbey Foregate and walked home, carrying the booking office sign as a souvenir of my first investigation of one of Colonel Stephens' railways.

**Tom Burnham**

#### *Postscript:*

*The Colonel Stephens Railway Museum has recently acquired a diamond bridge plate from Melverley, Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, embossed S&M Railway Company, Shrewsbury. Removed from the site by Shropshire County Council, this is one of only two inscribed cast iron signs from this line known to survive. The bridge plate will be put on display in the museum shortly.*



*The sign at Melverly Road Bridge, 20 July 1949*

*(B K Cope)*



# Letters to the Editor

## No Bananas

Sir – I was reading *Steam Railway* September 1996 and there was a letter from a Peter Middleton asking the question about the TV drama 'No Bananas'. Did the preserved railway (i.e. the Kent and East Sussex Railway) know the period the drama was being set i.e. the locomotive built after 1948.

Is there any input from the railway, on historical accuracy, to the BBC or is it just a money raising exercise? If we had said the locomotive or rolling stock was incorrect for the period would we have lost the film contract?

Ashford, Kent

Graham Williams

*Commercial Manager, Graham Hukins, replies: The contract to use the Ivatt was arranged before I was appointed Commercial Manager. I do not know what the BBC were advised. However they were aware it carried a 1950's livery and went to the trouble of covering the 'British Railways' within the lion and wheel logo. The arrangements for subsequent episodes used the 'P' class and Maunsell coaches in their correct 1930's livery.*

*I have been told by members, who served in the war, that the series was historically inaccurate on a number of military facts and uniforms – I watched the series and did not notice these inaccuracies, nor did they detract from my enjoyment of the programme. Equally, while we as Railway enthusiasts know the locomotive was not accurate, I am sure most viewers will have accepted an old-fashioned steam train and thought no more of it – after all the train scenes were incidental to the story.*

## The Rooter

Sir – We members are frequently reminded of our railway's debts and loans which are costing £1000 per week to service. Surely one economy would be to discontinue publication of *The Rooter*.

So often *The Rooter* duplicates information given in *The Terrier* under Lineside News, a feature of *The Terrier* which gives far more comprehensive news to members of what is going on than is available to members of other preservation societies. With publication of *The Terrier* three times a year I submit that to have a

newsletter in addition is a completely unnecessary expense.

Sheffield Park, West Sussex.

B W Howe

*Commercial Manager, Graham Hukins, replies: The format of the Rooter has already changed to a smaller and cheaper publication produced in-house with only the actual printing let out. It is intended to use it for specific campaigns to attract members interest in things of no relevance to the Terrier.*

## Diesels Again

Sir – May I be allowed to say a few words in reply to the letter from A Brookhouse in the *Tenterden Terrier* issue No.68 who feels that it is unproductive to offer visitors a ride in a train powered or hauled by diesel.

If it is true that people are coming to K&ESR for a ride in a steam train then they are obviously coming for the wrong reason. As far as I know it has always been the intention, right from the start, to preserve the Kent & East Sussex Railway and not steam traction on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. The former operators of the railway would (and to a certain extent did) use any form of traction which was practical and it is this variety which gave the line its unique attraction and if the current operators felt it economic to add electric traction as well I certainly would not complain. I accept that there are certain people who seem to have some form of addiction to steam traction despite its many drawbacks, but, for the most part, their enjoyment is, in the main, gained from viewing the locomotive, with or without its train of carriages, externally; in other words from a place which generates maximum visual pleasure to them, but with little or no revenue to the operator. Apart from platform ticket revenue the mainstay of coaching revenue comes from fares and once a passenger has paid his/her fare and sat inside a carriage and senses the fact that the carriage is moving, does it really matter whether the instrument responsible for that motion is a steam loco, a diesel loco, an electric loco or even a horse?

Littlehampton, West Sussex. Norman Langridge

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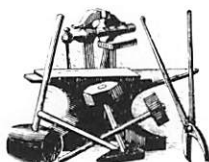
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# Bodiam 2000

**Duncan Buchanan – Project Leader for the current extension plans – outlines the status of the project and the membership's involvement.**

As all members will be aware, one major objective of the Tenterden Railway Company is to extend rail services to Bodiam. Various studies have taken place since we extended to Northiam and much data has been amassed to support any planning. As I outlined at the AGM, and in the last Rooter, this process is underway based wholly on the premise of lottery funding – specifically Millennium funding. I hardly need remind members of the debt incurred in getting to Northiam and how close we came to finding out how far our indebtedness could go, or not as the case almost became. That we have recovered significantly from the worst of that position means only that we must never get into it again. Hence the need for grant funding, if we are to extend in any reasonable timescale. In addition to Millennium funding we have looked, and continue to look, at other ways of getting further funding. However few of them seem to provide more than 50% of the total, or often 50% of that part of the total they are interested in promoting.

However to get funding a clear idea of what we want to build must first be found. After talking with the relevant managers, board members and some other interested parties within the railway, various costings and options were generated. This included extensions to Rolvenden shed, carriage storage facilities at Rolvenden, C&W extension at Tenterden and various commercial improvements. After a process of consultation these were reduced to a single plan which will only extend the railway from Northiam to Bodiam. This was perceived to be a single clear project achievable in the Millennium timescale and, most importantly, at around the level of funding we are likely to be able to obtain.

Equally important is the need to produce a business plan to assure any funding agency that the money will be well spent. The income projection was based around our main operating season (i.e. there will be only marginal impact on Santa Specials and Pullmans). The assumptions are, hopefully, pessimistic and are summarised in the accompanying table.

Therefore the good news is that, after we open

to Bodiam, we can make money to invest in the rest of the railway infrastructure, if we have limited debt to service. We are therefore self sustaining after the Millennium grant. But there are consequences. Firstly there will be 25,000 extra passengers a year which translates to 26 per train on average. If we allow for busy days, this means trains of around 4 Mark 1 coaches long or the equivalent in vintage coaches, especially since the catering revenue assumes the continued use of the on-train catering vehicles.

Thus at Bodiam the platform must be extended with the yard point being moved further away from the station, though still on the straight. A run-round loop contained within our land boundary will be as long as possible. We want to prevent cars from using the site, simply to try and preserve the station as much as possible, and not put up any buildings which means relying totally on the car park, toilets and so on at the castle. This is a sensitive issue with the local councils and we must accommodate their comments positively since we need their support for our grant applications.

At Northiam the station must be completed, especially No 2 platform. In order to meet the revenue projections a bookshop is needed. Most importantly maximum use must be made of the car park to encourage people to park and ride to the castle. This will not only help us but most importantly may reduce traffic to the castle and help encourage local support especially in Bodiam village, which suffers too much already from traffic.

In order to accommodate the expected traffic, signalling of the Northiam Station area will be required. It is only possible to run an hourly service without it. A 45 minute service between Northiam and Bodiam will be possible with signalling. In addition it will then be possible to run shuttle trains during off peak times. It will be a key part of the project planning to ensure that the installation of the signalling, which always results in some disruption, does not interfere with the construction of the extension – which itself may require significant movements



*Bodiam Castle, October 1996*

*(John Liddell)*

from Wittersham to Northiam.

In the Winter 1989 edition of the *The Tenterden Terrier* (No.50) while the railway basked in the glow of the Challenge Anneka weekend and the free advertising of 11 million television viewers seeing the railway, John Miller outlined some key points in respect of the station site at Bodiam. The article is well worth reading again. It is as true today as it was seven years ago. I believe that the best possible compromise has been found. It might cost a little more to produce something worthwhile but that seems a price very much worthwhile paying.

Having generated a baseline case many other activities then started. Firstly discussions started with the local authorities, the open day held for them in June being the starting point. This was quickly followed by discussions with our Parish Council neighbours. We have talked to Bodiam, Ewhurst and Northiam Parish Councils. We have allayed some of their fears and begun a dialogue with them. Like any local community they are worried about the changes that the railway will bring. The valley, especially at

Bodiam Castle, has changed since we last held Steam at Bodiam weekends. 15 years on many have forgotten what happened. Some remembered the additional traffic problems the railway created. We have had to do much to counter this and assure people that we need to create Park and Ride from Tenterden and Northiam as our goal. The addition of passengers at Bodiam, whilst we will not turn them away, is not where we can gain most. If people visit the castle then it is better we are part of the experience rather than an add-on. If people make a day out to visit the castle and the railway it might well extend the operating day rather than put more traffic on the already full trains during early afternoon. These discussions continue and will eventually have to deal with the re-construction at Bodiam station when the trackwork will be sorted out and the platform rebuilt.

Unfortunately the parish councils, though their support is important to the Millennium application, have little money and cannot be expected to significantly contribute to our costs.

The District and County councils are a different matter. One of the main problems here is credibility. In Kent we have established ourselves over many years and we are viewed as a significant and professional force in bringing tourists and visitors to Tenterden.

Simply because the extension of the Railway will be wholly within East Sussex there is a perception that the benefits might accrue to Bodiam rather than the Tenterden end of the line. East Sussex on the other hand see this the other way round in that they might have to suffer to bring Tenterden additional visitors, probably because the Railway still appears to be Tenterden focused. This, very crudely, is a problem of perceptions and is usually easily resolved by pointing out the incongruity of both statements. In addition Kent and Ashford Borough Council are very enthusiastic but are hamstrung by the fact that all the work is in East Sussex and cannot therefore financially help us. Their support, though, is vital again for the lottery application. Members will perhaps begin to see how important the dialogue process is in getting support and local acceptance.

The first stage of the Millennium application went in on time. This we duly passed, since it was largely a registration check. Only by failing on certain very basic criteria could we have failed. It would only be fair to point out that there were bids for £7 Billion of funds when there is only £150 Million available and that around 40% of all applicants were rejected at stage one of this third and final round of bidding. Success at stage one is only a small step on the way. The second stage must be submitted by November 11th. This stage requires us to detail more about the project and provide more financial details. All this must be done within 20 pages so at the most an overview is the best possible. Especially important is how we present the application so that we can be seen in the most favourable light for later on in the process. From stage 2 we can be rejected, which we believe to be an unlikely outcome, or long-listed. If we are long listed we are then subject to detailed scrutiny of our plans and costings before the project can be put forward for the final decision of the Millennium Commission.

Assuming that we get to the final stage I perceive that it will become a 'beauty' contest. Each of the potential projects is paraded with other schemes and the Millennium Commission will select the

best available of a given type or in a given area. The Commission are required to distribute money evenly around the country. With a limited fund this means that, although we might have a viable and worthwhile project, somebody else might have a better one, or one costing less, in the same geographical area. Hence they would win the Commission's support. Until we have a letter confirming a grant we can take nothing for granted.

Obviously to improve our chances we are doing everything possible to get support from as many local authorities, individuals of influence (e.g. MPs and MEPs) and other bodies (e.g. The National Trust) as we can. The support from the within the Railway is perhaps taken for granted recently, when we have spent so much time telling everybody else how good the railway is and how safe an investment we would be. The biggest element required from the membership will be fund raising. To get to Northiam we raised a Bond issue. This is currently the favoured approach though other schemes will be looked at. The most important thing is for members to be aware that once the Commission gives the go ahead we will be looking for money in one form or another very quickly to enable the project to proceed. If you are likely to have funds available in the second quarter of 1997 then please keep them available for the big request then. If not then can you start filling a very large piggy bank ready for that time! Given that we raised £164,000 for Northiam the thinking is that we should be able to raise at least £200,000 this time, indeed the target is £250,000. Though this sounds a lot we must remember that this is the last big push to complete the track for the railway and it is unlikely that another opportunity will exist to contribute towards the railway with such an obvious outcome. This then is what it is hoped that the membership will do as their part of the extension project. For technical reasons we cannot start a bond issue until we know the outcome of the lottery application. However expressions of interest will be sought long beforehand to justify our claim that we can raise the money. It will be vital that you respond to this in a very positive manner.

The volunteers on the other hand will be expected to do much more. One of the twists in the grant process is the subject of notional input. It has been recognised that volunteer

organisations can put in large contributions which are difficult to cost. Agreed rates are now used for volunteer input and this can go against the 50% that we must find, to match the Millennium contribution. Therefore your labour is worth something very valuable to the project quite apart from the actual physical achievement.

Lastly from the membership comes one final, but vital, form of help possible. We have always been very short of help from professionals. Within the membership are individuals who could help. Of especial value would be those with civil engineering experience or quantity surveying.

Whilst many do not have the time to commit themselves very deeply there are certain aspects of the job where a couple of weekend days helping the team to prepare or review tender documents, bills of quantities etc. would be worth far more than money alone. Remember that unless the project is viewed by the Millennium Commission as the most beautiful we can always run the risk of failing to obtain a grant at the last hurdle. Please do contact me, via Tenterden Station if you can help in any way or you would simply like to discuss the possibility.

## Revenue effect (at current fare levels)

### Existing Passengers

50% of Tenterden – Northiam ride on to Bodiam	£17,000
75% of Northiam – Tenterden passengers lost to Bodiam	(£9,000)
25% of Northiam – Tenterden passengers ride for round trip	<u>£2,000</u>
Net gain fares revenue	£10,000

**Castle Visitors** – additional passengers to/from castle based on 225,000 visitors annually, with 175,000 on our operating days.

5% travel from/to Tenterden	£37,000
10% travel from/to Northiam	£45,000
1% are new to the Castle and Railway	<u>£11,000</u>
Fares revenue gained from Castle visitors	<u>£93,000</u>
Total Net fares revenue gain	£103,000
Cost of running additional mileage @ £10/train mile	<u>(£67,000)</u>
Net surplus on operating a Northiam/Bodiam service	£36,000
additional net revenue from shop	£10,000
additional net revenue from catering	£12,000
Total annual surplus generated from Bodiam 2000	£58,000



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### June 96

#### Drawn - C&W Dept

1st	Roy Ellis	(303)	£60.00
2nd	Frank Lambert	(386)	£45.00
3rd	Colin Avey	(118)	£35.00
4th	Sue Campbell	(164)	£30.00
5th	Margaret Howard	(091)	£20.00
6th	H Nightingale	(359)	£15.00
7th	Helena Wither	(265)	£10.00
8th	Doris Garman	(160)	£5.00

### July 96

#### Drawn - Rolvenden Mess Room

1st	R Lukehurst	(217)	£40.00
2nd	Vic Grigg	(320)	£30.00
3rd	Kay Dickson	(101)	£20.00
4th	Peter Landon	(323)	£15.00
5th	Mrs P J Culvert	(399)	£10.00
6th	Robin Tinsley	(222)	£5.00

### August 96

#### Drawn - Northiam Station

1st	Bob Clifford	(211)	£40.00
2nd	Miss C M Harris	(014)	£30.00
3rd	Maggie Remnant	(248)	£20.00
4th	E C Moore	(194)	£15.00
5th	Angela Clark-Monks	(084)	£10.00
6th	Di Siviour	(109)	£5.00

### September 96

#### Drawn - Rolvenden

1st	D R Heald	(059)	£60.00
2nd	Miss P Stevens	(213)	£45.00
3rd	C D Ware	(202)	£35.00
4th	A D Brooker	(292)	£30.00
5th	Helena Wither	(265)	£20.00
6th	E L Stockdale	(138)	£15.00
7th	Bob Clifford	(015)	£10.00
8th	Mike Artlett	(289)	£5.00

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# Seventy-five Years Ago on the Kent & East Sussex

As the Editor asked, "Why 1921?". Well, 1896 has already been covered and by 1946 the Kent & East Sussex was but a pale shadow of its former self. If further justification is required then, judging from the pages of the *Kent Messenger & Maidstone Telegraph*, it was literally a good year – the sort of year that we've been having recently with "Warmest January For Eighty Years" headlines. There was a record number of entries at the Tenterden Fair in May with over 8,000 sheep in attendance. Frittenden held its first Athletic Sports in June and Biddenden beat Frittenden in the tug of war. While the rest of Kent was looking to the erection of war memorials as a means of providing honest work for unemployed servicemen Tenterden's own scheme of breaking stones for road mending foundered on the inability of the authorities to find any out-of-work ex-soldiers in the town.

For the Kent & East Sussex Railway it was a good year too. The directors were able to rejoice at the ending of government control which had begun shortly after the outbreak of war in 1914 and which Colonel Stephens had frequently criticised for raising wages and other expenses to mainline standards – in November 1920 the Company's return to the Light Railways Investigation Committee had complained, "Without any consultation with this Company Main Line standards have been inflicted upon it with almost ludicrous results in many cases as might be expected". Whether government control was actually such a bad thing for the line can be debated long and hard but the £1581 final payment that accompanied its ending was certainly welcome. It may go some way to explain why 1921 was the last year in which the Railway was able to declare a dividend of 2¼%. The following year's dividend was only 1%.



Biddenden Station, circa 1921

(Col. Stephens Historical Archive)

**KENT AND EAST SUSSEX (LIGHT) RAILWAY.**

(CONNECTING WITH S. E. &amp; C. RAILWAY AT ROBERTSBRIDGE AND HEADCORN.)

	WEEK DAYS.												SUNDAYS (Christmas Day and Good Friday.)	
	a.m.	a.m.	Seta. only	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.	Not Seta.
London (Charing Cross.... dep.	6.20	9.5												
Cannon Street.....	5.25	9.13												
London Bridge.....	7.50	10.30												
Tonbridge.....	7.19	10.45												
Tonbridge Wells.....	7.51	11.0												
Hastings.....	8.18	11.40												
Robertsbridge (S.E. & C.R.)	8.21	11.40												
Junction Rd. (for Hawkhurst)	8.21	11.40												
Bodiam (for Stapletores)	8.21	11.40												
Northiam (Beckley & Sandhurst)	8.21	11.40												
Wittersham Road.....	8.21	11.40												
Rolvenden.....	8.21	11.40												
Tenterden Town.....	8.21	11.40												
Tenterden St. Michael's.....	8.21	11.40												
High Halden Road.....	8.21	11.40												
Biddenden.....	8.21	11.40												
Frittenden Road.....	8.21	11.40												
Headcorn Junc. (K. & E.S.B.)	8.21	11.40												
Ashford.....	8.21	11.40												
Tonbridge.....	8.21	11.40												
London Bridge.....	8.21	11.40												
Cannon Street.....	8.21	11.40												
Charing Cross.....	8.21	11.40												

**NOTES.**

B—Stops by Signal to set down or pick up Passengers.

K—Stops to set down Passengers only.

LL—London Bridge (Low Level).

t—Notice to be given to the Guard of the Train at Ashford.

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H. F. STEPHENS,  
Managing Director.

1921 was unusual for the Kent & East Sussex in that the whole of the Railway's existing locomotive stock was present during the year – if only for a fortnight. Locomotive No.4 "Hecate", the Hawthorn Leslie 0-8-0T built in 1904, had been away on hire to the East Kent Railway since November 1916 but returned to the line on 5th August. The Railway's other absentee, No.2 "Northiam", a 2-4-0T built by Hawthorn Leslie in 1899 for the opening of the line, had been away on hire to the Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway but returned briefly to Rolvenden on 22nd August only to set off again on 10th September for a lengthy period of service on the East Kent Railway. As locomotives Nos.3 "Bodiam", 5 "Rolvenden", 7 "Rother" and 8 "Hesperus" had all received significant overhauls since 1919 (one of the better aspects of government control ) and

No.9 "Juno" was actually undergoing a major overhaul during 1921 it is unlikely that the Kent & East Sussex ever had such a complete fleet of locomotives at its disposal as it did in 1921.

It is possible that 1921 was the year in which the Kent & East Sussex made its first experiment with internal combustion. There is an intriguing expenditure of £161-10s-6d on the rolling stock capital account during the year but no corresponding increase in locomotives, carriages or waggons to explain this. It was certainly about this time that the Railway converted a Wolseley-Siddeley motor car into a petrol railmotor but without further confirmation it cannot be definitely said that this was the source of the expenditure. Certainly the Railway was not minded to motorise its own road services the horse bus continued to ply its way around Tenterden

with traditional four-hoof power.

Business on the line was still respectable even though figures were beginning to fall. The line issued 1522 1st class tickets, 65,816 3rd class tickets and 8 3rd class season tickets. Unfortunately the annual statistics only gave details of goods traffic originating on the line, a censorship which had begun during the war and which was in its last year. Merchandise came to 7661 tons, coal was 30 tons, other minerals accounted for 227 tons, and livestock carried amounted to 4318 beasts. Obviously not all the exhibits at the Tenterden Fair had travelled by train!

Although trains had long ceased to run on Sundays the Kent & East Sussex was providing a respectable service during the rest of the week. A perusal of the Summer timetable (reproduced here) shows that the first train of the day left Tenterden Town at 07.06 to arrive at Robertsbridge at 07.53 from where Cannon Street could be reached at 09.49. The train left Robertsbridge at 08.18 arriving at Headcorn at 09.26 which it left at 10.02 and arrived back at Robertsbridge at 11.24. The

next departure was at 11.40 and reached Headcorn at 13.40 after a layover at Tenterden Town from 12.25 to 13.00. Headcorn was then left at 14.08 with a Robertsbridge arrival at 15.28. From this time of day different timetables operated depending whether it was Saturday, Wednesday, or another weekday. The 'normal' service saw an additional train departing Rolvenden at 15.50 to arrive at Headcorn at 16.25, leaving Headcorn at 16.35, arriving at Robertsbridge at 18.00, leaving Robertsbridge at 18.33 and terminating at Tenterden Town at 19.15. Meanwhile the train that had arrived at Robertsbridge at 15.28 left again at 16.12 arriving at Headcorn at 17.35, leaving Headcorn at 18.05 and terminating at Rolvenden at 18.40. On Wednesdays the same service ran except that the 18.05 Headcorn departure laid over at Tenterden Town from 18.35 to 19.05 before proceeding to arrive at Robertsbridge at 19.45 thence departing at 20.12 to terminate at Tenterden Town at 20.50. On Saturdays the second set of train services beginning with the 15.50 Rolvenden



*The chassis of the Wolseley Siddeley railbus at Rolvenden, probably 1921*

*(Col. Stephens Historical Archive)*

departure did not run. Instead the 15.28 Robertsbridge arrival departed there at 16.05 to arrive at Headcorn at 17.28, running from Headcorn at 17.39 to arrive at Robertsbridge at 18.43, leaving at 19.05 to pause at Tenterden Town at 19.45 before continuing at 20.35 to arrive at Headcorn at 21.10 with a final run leaving Headcorn at 21.32 to terminate at Rolvenden at 22.05. Meanwhile the Wednesday addition to the weekday timetable also ran on Saturday evenings as a second train in its own right. When two trains were running they seem to have been timed to cross at Tenterden Town on this timetable but a new timetable issued in November with slight changes in timings appears to have had trains crossing at Rolvenden on Wednesday evenings.

To summarise the confusing array of times given above, the residents of Tenterden had a choice of four return trips to Robertsbridge and another four return trips to Headcorn on a normal weekday with a fifth return trip to Robertsbridge on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The significant difference between Saturday and Wednesday was that Saturday had one less afternoon service in exchange for the late evening service denied to other days.

I began by saying that 1921 was a good year. It was not, returning to the pages of the *Kent Messenger*, a good year for everyone. Tenterden witnessed the first prosecution for drunkenness in the town since 1915. Readers would have been chilled by the story of a case of anthrax contracted in Sidcup from an imported shaving brush. There was the usual ration of suicides which were frequently explained at the Coroner's Court as the result of the deceased's wartime experiences. A national coalminers' strike began in April and led to reduced services on the South Eastern & Chatham Railway. There is no reference to reduced services on the Kent & East Sussex though the final total of recorded train miles run, 68,956, was 3,741 miles less than the previous year.

Two incidents involving the Kent & East Sussex did reach the attention of the *Kent Messenger*. On the 1st October it was reported that the South Eastern & Chatham Railway had been fined for conveying sheep

from Tenterden to Gravesend in coal trucks. There were 287 sheep in 6 coal trucks and it appeared that the journey had resulted in the death of a number of the sheep. The report included the following passage: "Mr Goldsmith asked if the trucks in this instance were of the kind usually used for the conveyance of animals. On this line they are. They have got cattle wagons but I never use them." By this date the two Great Eastern Railway cattle wagons purchased in 1901 and two of North Eastern Railway origin purchased in 1904 were presumably not acceptable for traffic on main line tracks though No.13, one of the North Eastern pair, had been overhauled and given a new roof as recently as 1919.

On the 5th November the *Kent Messenger* published a report under the headline 'EMBEZZLEMENT AT BIDDENDEN'. George Gooch, the Biddenden station master since 1918, had appeared before the Cranbrook Magistrates charged with embezzling £8 from the Railway. Gooch had been advised by his counsel to plead guilty and throw himself upon the mercy of the magistrates as, in his counsel's opinion, "Considering the amount of work he had to do at the station, the trouble was more the result of negligence than a criminal offence." Explaining his situation Gooch said that he had to work from 8.00 a.m. until the evening. His main occupation was to record all the wagons in and out - about 130 came in each month and 125 went out (presumably he only recorded loaded wagons). Additionally he kept the postage book but it appears that he had never had time to send this up and he had paid postage out of his own pocket though his wages only amounted to £2-15s-0d a week. He had ended up in a muddle as a result of which money paid in to him could not be accounted for. His counsel argued, "The amounts withdrawn by him were not so much as the postage owing to him. He did not wilfully defraud the Company". Unfortunately rural magistrates of the period did not have a reputation for leniency and Gooch, who had already lost his job and had two children to support, was fined £25 with the alternative of three months hard labour. Whether he was able

to find the money to pay the fine was not reported. To be fair to the Railway, for whom Colonel Langham appeared at the trial, it had not been their choice to prosecute and evidence was given that Gooch had been a good workman and had a previous good character.

This then is a taste of the Kent & East Sussex in 1921. Whilst we can recreate the buildings of the period and the movement of locomotives, carriages and wagons it will never be possible to recreate the whole experience of travelling or working on the line as it was then. However, it was also a period when tuberculosis was common, dentistry painful, and daily life was much more regulated by the climate and the hours of daylight available. On reflection I'm not sure that I would want to recreate the entire 1921 experience; there's a lot to be said for enjoying history in the comfort of the present!

**Stephen Garrett**

*Right: The enterprise of Colonel Stephens from The Railway Magazine, 1921.*

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*'Hecate' at Rolvenden shortly after her return from the East Kent Light Railway. She had little work to do as she was too heavy to run west of Rolvenden.*  
(Author's Collection)



# An Update on the Terrier Trust

by Gerald Siviour, Secretary & Treasurer



*Terriers 32636 and 32678 on the 5.14pm Bexhill West to Bodiam empty stock working, 23rd September 1956*

*(Colin Hogg)*

Fourteen months have passed since the formation of the Terrier Trust, whose aim is to do everything possible to ensure that the situation never arises again where the Kent and East Sussex Railway has no working ex-LBSCR Terrier. At this moment there are three of these engines, which played such an important part in the history of our railway, based on the line but none have been in steam for over two years. Excellent progress is being made in putting this right.

The Trust's main aim is to see the return to service of BR No 32670, the engine which first came to the line in 1901 as Rother Valley Railway No 3 Bodiam. Since 1985 it has been derelict, the boiler beyond repair and the railway unable to finance a new one. However, at the end of 1995 the Terrier Trust was set up, initially to help raise the £30,000 cost of a new boiler, which was then ordered from Israel Newton of Bradford. Fund raising has gone extremely well and £12,000 has now been contributed by the Trust's 56 members with generous support from others.

It was soon realised, however, that the first priority should be to secure beyond any doubt the future of the engine on the K&ESR. Since 1964 it has been the property of Messrs Ron and Vic Whele of Brighton, who purchased it from BR for use on K&ESR, the railway agreeing to maintain it in working order – something we obviously failed to do. The brothers were prepared to sell and early in October 1996 an agreement was reached whereby a cheque for £20,000 (£12,000 from the Trust and £8,000 from TRC) would be paid to them in early November, along with an agreement to pay a further £10,000 in March 1997. Ownership of the unrestored engine would pass to the Terrier Trust, opening up the possibility of raising further funds from outside sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. Such money is not available for the restoration of privately owned items.

The TRC has meanwhile agreed to finance the whole cost of the new boiler, due for delivery on 1998. The restored locomotive

will thus be jointly owned between them and the Trust and an agreement has been signed that it is for use in perpetuity on the K&ESR. No move away, however short term, would be possible without the full agreement of both parties.

The Trust's next task is to raise money to complete the purchase and restoration of 'Bodiam'. Although we will be looking at outside funding so are many other groups and we must rely essentially on our own efforts. We have progressed much faster than was thought possible when the Trust was launched and there is now a real possibility that our most historic engine could be in steam again around the time that the line to Bodiam reopens. The publicity value of the surviving engine from Colonel Stephens days actively participating in the reopening day celebrations hardly needs stating. If you have not already donated money to make this possible, please consider doing so now either by way of a single payment or by periodic contributions through a bank or building society.

Appropriate forms can be obtained by writing to me a 6, Barnfield, Ox Lane, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6NH. (Telephone 01580 764990)

There is another way in which you may be able to help. Another Terrier, BR No 32678 (LBSCR 'Knowle') is under restoration at Rolvenden, the main obstacle to progress being a shortage of people to work on it. What is needed is a small band of volunteers to work regularly under the supervision of the workshop staff. Lack of skills is no problem as good training will be provided. If you can spare a day a week or a day a fortnight or whatever suits you, please write to me or get in touch with Adrian Landi, the project manager.

The return to service of 'Knowle' will also assist the restoration of 'Bodiam' because of its great potential for use on fund raising photographers charter trains. A recent special using the P class pulling a 1930s style mixed train raised over £200 and an appropriately liveried Terrier would have even greater appeal.

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