

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 82

Summer 2000



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

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.)

Registered Charity 262481

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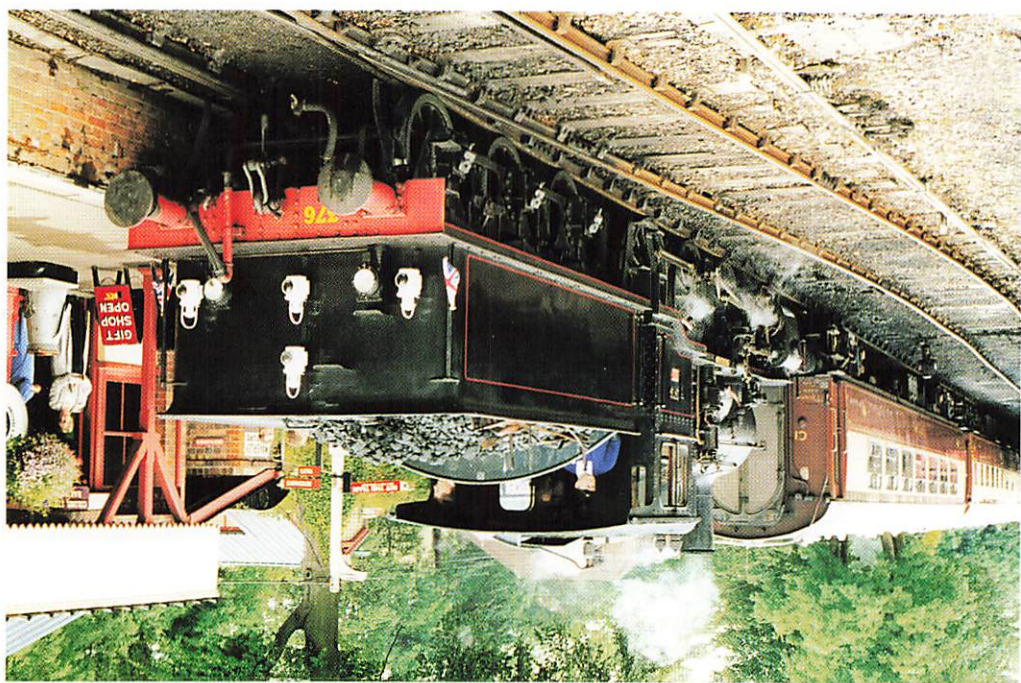
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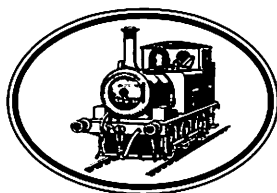
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The Tenterden Terrier



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Summer 2000

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FRONT COVER

HRH The Duke of Gloucester, accompanied by TRC chairman Norman Brice, exchanges a word with Tenterden Town Station Master Harry Hickmott, before boarding the Royal Train.

(Brian Stephenson)

FRONTISPIECE

376 heads the royal train awaiting departure from Tenterden

(Brian Stephenson)

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Editorial

Playing the Game

As we struggle to clear our debts away from the financial fiascos of 1998 and 1999, the omens for 2000 are decidedly upbeat. Passenger numbers are running 78% up and we are now in the enviable position of being a "destination" railway rather than a ride to nowhere. So what should be our priorities? How will we achieve financial stability and avoid the seemingly quinquennial disasters of the past? Firstly, we must settle our

paid staff and working members into the new business structure; secondly, generate cash to provide funds both for investment and working capital through next winter; thirdly, we must direct cash into projects where there is the prospect of a high commercial return. Change may not please everybody, but come it must – our bankers and bond investors will dictate that there is no time left to play trains or indeed politics.

With the next issue we will revert to our normal timetable and *The Tenterden Terrier* will be published on 18th November 2000.

Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

Commercial

Passenger numbers up to the end of June (excluding Wealden Belle and Charters) were 46,167 – no less than a 78% increase on the 25,853 carried in the corresponding period of last year. Our business is, in fact, changing noticeably, with visitors using the railway as a 'destination' route to Bodiam rather than just as

a day out for a ride on a train. This has brought with it certain problems, noticeably overcrowding on the later trains from Bodiam to Tenterden as people return from a day out at the castle. We have also noticed an adverse effect on takings at the shop at Tenterden, as some of our visitors have spent money in the



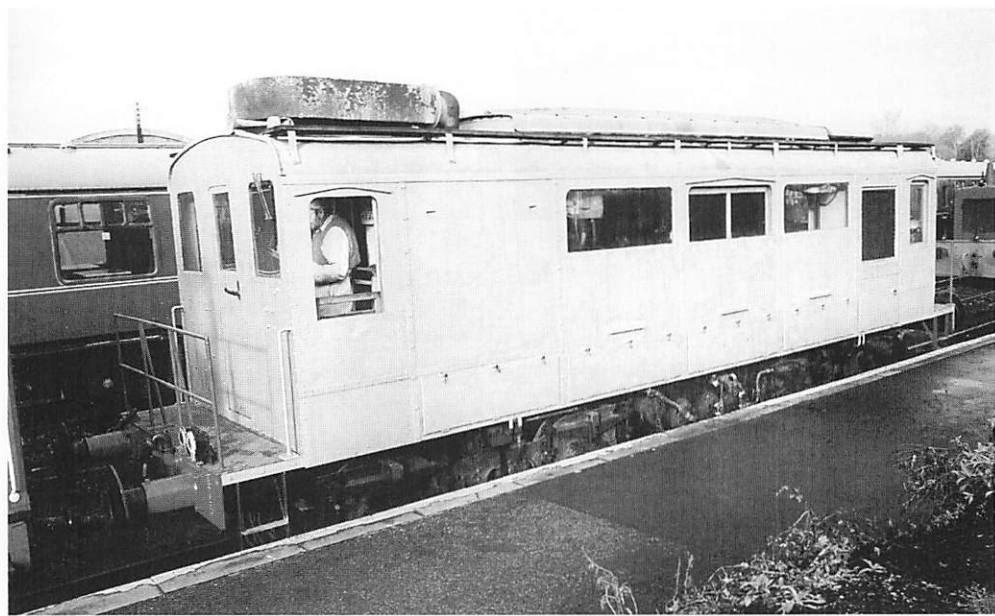
GWR railcar W20W at Lincoln (Central) on 9th October 1952

(Lincolnshire Echo)

National Trust shop at the castle. These matters are being addressed as a matter of urgency.

Bodiam Station itself is undoubtedly our most attractive site, beautifully restored and merging gently into the heritage village of Bodiam itself. We are particularly looking forward to Autumn evenings, when diners on the Wealden Belle will have the unique opportunity to view the castle floodlit – as the train wends its way through the fields to Bodiam Station.

Charter traffic remains buoyant and we are able to promote a wide range of facilities on the trains including wedding receptions, musical attractions, birthday and cocktail parties. We are also looking into the question of providing conference facilities at Tenterden. We have a number of special events planned for the remainder of the year and these are detailed elsewhere in the magazine.



BTH diesel heads brakevan special in Tenterden Platform on diesel day, 16th January 2000

(P G Barnes)

Motive Power

Steam locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam': With the railway's finances under very tight rein, work has slowed to a virtual stop. The frames are still at Ian Riley pending completion of plating to the rear end. The fabrication of the new tanks, a volunteer project, has not yet started despite the materials being available, due to lack of a volunteer with a penchant for large fabrications. Knowle's old regulator valve is being repaired in readiness for reassembly in the boiler.

No 8 'Knowle': repairs to rivets in the firebox were carried out to the boiler inspector's satisfaction and the loco has returned to traffic.

A limited quantity of the special copper material for repairs to boilers (stays and patch screws) will be purchased to prevent the delays encountered here for future repairs.

No 11 'P Class': The tanks were temporarily fitted in order to set out the retaining brackets. The tanks were removed and the brackets fitted to the boiler. The lagging and cladding of the boiler was then completed with painting now underway. Some of the lagging has been donated from No 23 in the current spirit of economy. The side tanks can be then be fitted finally. The final livery has been confirmed as SECR.



Robin Dyce receives the funds from Friends of Northiam, 22nd April 2000 (John Liddell)

No 12 'Marcia': Terry Harvey has fabricated a new ashpan and other parts cleaned and painted as time permits. A start has been made on fitting up and drilling the smokebox.

No 14 'Charwelton': The front end of this engine was recently lifted by the 36ton crane which allowed the front wheelset to be removed for attention to the axlebox thrust faces. The opportunity was taken to re-metal one of the boxes. Thanks to the efforts of Brian West and Paul Hatcher the job was completed, from wheels out to wheels back in again, over a three day period.

No 19 'Norwegian': In service

No 21 'Wainwright': The new tubes have been received and expanded. The job of seal-welding at the firebox tubeplate is well underway.

No 22 'Maunsell': In service

No 23 'Holman F. Stephens': Now that the cladding and lagging have been removed Richard Crumpling has needle-gunned the boiler. This has revealed several broken crown stays which are being removed as time permits. A patch for the top of the smokebox has been prepared for later welding.

No 24 'Rolvenden': The overhaul is now complete and the usual teething troubles have been encountered. These are being resolved as they occur but the engine is settling down in

traffic. The usual team from C&W, Meg Gooch and Alan Brice, lined out the engine. Eccentric clamps have been fitted to counter-act the sideways movement of the eccentrics.

No 25 'Northiam': In traffic but has suffered from a spate of broken springs. Eccentric clamps have also been fitted to this engine.

No 30 GWR Pannier Tank: The frames have been mothballed in the Sewage works siding pending completion of boiler repairs at Chatham Steam when finances allow.

Diesel locomotives

No 20 GWR Railcar: Work continues in its steady way to progress the long term overhaul of this historic vehicle. An historic picture of the railcar has come to light with the railcar at Lincoln (Central) station on a test run to Boston on 9th October 1952 during extensive test runs in Lincolnshire in 1952.

No 41 Ruston: Attention to the compressor along with axle-box keep pads being replaced has seen the loco remain in service.

No 46 Drewry 03: In service

No 48 Class 14: Replacement oilseals and gaskets in the remaining cylinder heads has been completed and the loco returned to traffic by John Houselander ably assisted by John Waddington.

No 49 Class 14: This engine has left the railway for pastures new after being used to donate parts to rebuild another class 14. In the meantime another class 14 has arrived in BR blue and taken the number 49, which was obviously available.

Crompton: In service

No 50 BTH Diesel: Continues to be worked on in slow time at Tenterden by Clive Lowe and Boris Perkins with other assistance as required.

Cranes

John Waddington has made up a jig to weigh the load on each axle spring so that adjustments can be made as necessary. The machining for this was done during recent 'work experience' at Morse Engineering.

10 ton Grafton: laid up for overhaul.

10 ton Taylor-Hubbard: In service.

36 ton Ransom Rapier Breakdown crane: In service.



Bodiam station in disguise as Chidding Hampton for an Evening Standard TV advertisement

(John Liddell)

Rolling Stock

Running Fleet Axle Boxes

We never used to suffer from hot boxes, but since the Bodiam extension opened, a few have got a 'bit on the warm side'. Ever eager to nip trouble in the bud, C&W staff are undertaking a thorough programme of attention to the axle boxes on all revenue earning Mark 1's, Maunsells and vintage carriages. New oiling pads (Armstrong Oilers) are being fitted where necessary from the stock held by the Department and the possibility of the C&W re-metalling bearings is being looked at. The Family saloon, the first casualty reported, received additional attention to its laterally sprung bogies, these being run out and thoroughly examined and re-greased whilst the opportunity permitted. Paid staff and volunteers are taking part in this work.

The long-established firm of Armstrong Oilers is, incidentally, now owned by our friends at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway so when we need a further supply there should be no problem.

Door Locks

Following advice from Dave Sinclair, who in addition to being an ex-BR C&W man helped to found the Department, our lock maintenance

standards have been upgraded. Shop floor work is in the capable hands of fitter John Brice. Admin man Nick Pallant has designed a suitable door lock record keeping system, with user-friendly paper work and an appropriate computer database. There are over 130 door locks in service on the Railway and potentially more than 300.

Pullman Car Barbara (K&ESR No. 52)

Still at Wittersham Road at the time of writing (with the bogies at Sellindge) but it is intended that, by the time this appears in print, our flagship Pullman car should be back in the C&W works at Tenterden. Detailed planning is underway to bring Barbara back into active service.

Maunsell BNO No. 4432 (K&ESR No. 53)

Coachbuilding work to the guard's brake end is now largely complete, the new framework attracting many admiring comments. The new floor has been fitted, damaged and rotted timber to the door frames has been replaced and an area of new roof boarding fitted. In all, about 30 per cent of the vehicles timber components have been renewed. Attention will soon turn to refitting steel panelling to the

exterior and carrying out a complete renewal of the wiring. After that the interior will be renovated and the underframe, bogies and dynamo overhauled.

Woolwich Coach (K&ESR No. 67)

The coach body above build rail level, which was fitted with temporary bracing some time ago, has now been lifted clear using the 10 ton steam crane. The old and badly rotted floor has been broken up and the underframe is being cleaned and de-rusted. Both the steel channel headstocks have to be renewed before construction of the new floor can commence. C&W volunteers are making a substantial contribution towards the restoration of the Woolwich coach, a vehicle many people are anxious to see enter passenger service on the K&ESR - after all it has been here since August 1964. The materials are being financed by a 'generous benefactor' which has relieved the railway of the need to meet the necessary costs.

L&NWR Balcony Saloon (K&ESR No. 82)

After several years of service, and great popularity with the public, the vehicle's

upholstery is showing distinct signs of wear. Plans to replace this had to be shelved due to the financial situation and it has now been agreed that use of the balcony saloon will be kept to a minimum. It will, nonetheless, be available when demand is pressing.

Bogie Overhauls

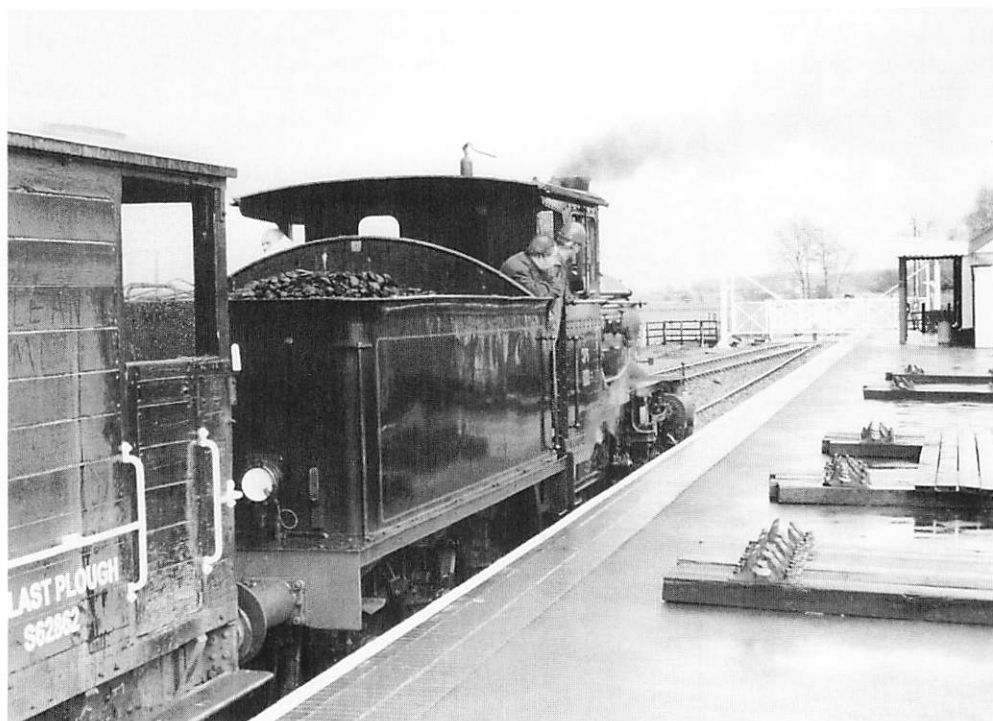
Two of the spare Mark 1 bogies, previously stored at the front of the shed, have now been craned round to the back and dismantled. Cleaning and painting is underway. Little is required in the way of overhaul and the bogies have proved to be a worthwhile purchase.

Wagons & Vans

C&W Working Week was due to take place between 29 July to 5 August and, in addition to progressing the Woolwich Coach, it is intended to work on the following freight vehicles.

Ex-LMS Banana Van underframe (K&ESR No. 107)

Following some years isolated and rather tatty in the visitors' area at Tenterden Town, this underframe is now to be cosmetically restored and a simple open body built on top.



Gauging test run for Norwegian locomotive at Bodiam, 19th November 1999 (Humphrey Atkinson)

2 Plank Wagon K&ESR No. 114

No. 114 forms part of the line of display wagons at the rear of Tenterden platform. The present bodywork was completed several years ago and, to keep the wagon looking presentable, repainting is planned.

Ex-LMS Box Van No. M515184

(K&ESR No. 128)

Used some years ago in a poster campaign for a well known chocolate bar, the van requires attention to its bodywork plus general overhaul of the underframe and running gear. It is, however, most unlikely to reappear in its famous 'Kit Kat' livery.

Ex-SR 8 Plank Wagon No. S11530

(K&ESR No. 148)

This wagon also requires re-boarding and general overhaul. It is planned to use a not entirely fictitious private owners livery with historical connections in the Tenterden area. Watch this space!

Work Experience Visits

We have been providing work experience placements for students from local schools recently. In addition, a party of trainees from Interfleet rail technology consultants at Derby will again be spending a week with C&W during the autumn to experience 'retro-technology'.



*Avondale Environmental Services weedkilling lorry employs its turntable at Tenterden, 8th June 2000
(John Liddell)*

S&T

The first stage of Northiam signalling was brought into use on the morning of the 1st April, in preparation for the opening of the line to Bodiam the following day. Initially, all signals were fixed at danger, and the points wound by

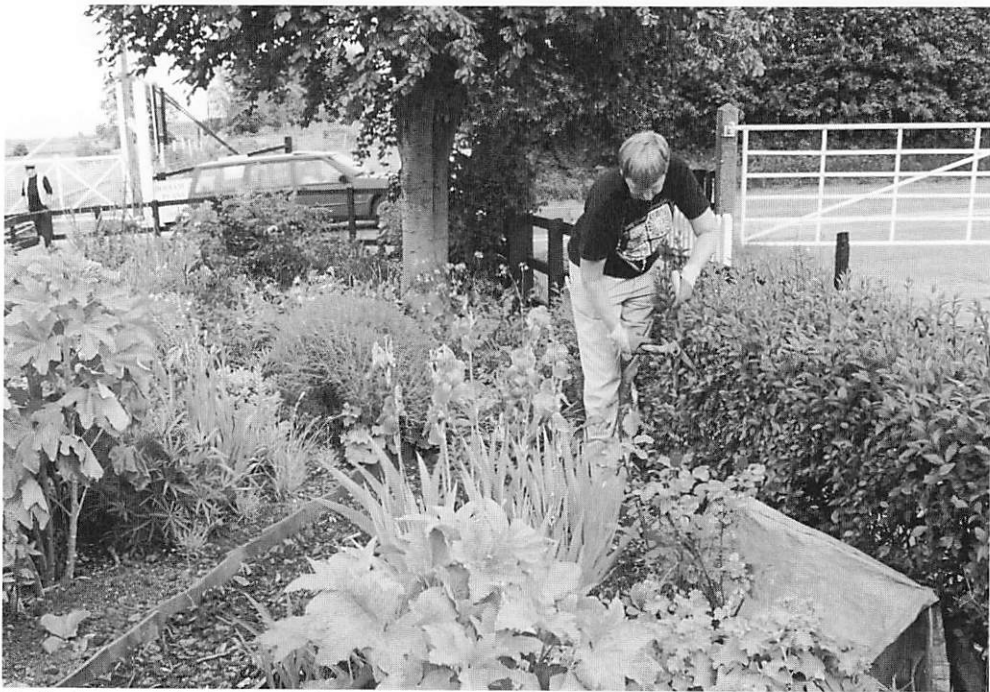
hand, but over the following few days further equipment was finally tested and brought into use controlled from the box itself. This was the result of hard work and long days by many of the staff, but particular mention must be made of

James Palk, James Veitch, and 'Frim' Halliwell who put in many hours during the commissioning week. Wiring of the relay room had progressed as necessary for basic controls on the signals in use. Further design work has now been completed, and the final controls are now being wired by Jamie Douglas and others.

The track circuits are now live and under test, but do not indicate in the box at time of writing, but will follow in the next few weeks. We are grateful to Chris Bassett, a signalling engineer with particular expertise in track circuits for his time in terms of final setting up, testing and training on this aspect. At present there are Inner Home signals and starting signals in both directions (and on both platforms) – a total of 6 signals. The Down Loop starting remains fixed at danger until the remaining work on the wire run is completed. Unlike the other 3 boxes, 'splitting' home signals are not provided but a route indicator shewing a letter such as 'L' (for loop) operates in conjunction with the signal. Northiam is also unusual in that it boasts two crossings under the direct supervision of the box; firstly a 'barrow' crossing outside the box

used by both staff and public to access the up platform, this being fully interlocked with the signals reading over it. Secondly the A28 road crossing – this is also protected by signals but is not yet interlocked with them thus needing a second signalling grade member of staff to work the gates. In the next few months the interlocks will be fitted to the gates and they will revert to operation by station staff or traincrew. A two lever groundframe is provided for this purpose which will add interest to this operation.

All points are motor operated, along with some of the signals, both due to the constraints of the size of lever frame, but also to make the box suitable for older members of staff who are less able to work heavy pulls. The telecomms side of the department has not been forgotten, but work has naturally had to take a lower profile at present. An additional circuit has been brought into use between Rolvenden & Tenterden over the electronic 'carrier' system (a heritage technology item in its own right) in preparation for a major reconfiguration of the system later this year.



*Sheila Stevens tends the beautifully maintained gardens in full bloom at Bodiam station
30th May 2000*

(John Liddell)



Crowds of passengers throng Bodiam platform, 30th May 2000

(John Liddell)

Operating

On April 2nd the extension to Bodiam finally opened. The first few months of operation have revealed very few problems. Operating staff have adapted well to the extra mileage and ensured that the service has run extremely smoothly, apart from a few minor delays at Northiam due to teething problems with the new signalling system. Without doubt the P.W. Department have made a superb job of the track which rides extremely well, the Operating Department look forward to the rest of the railway being brought up to the same standard!

Unfortunately several of the larger locomotives have been unavailable for traffic during the early part of the season, mainly due to overhaul and re-tube work being put on hold over the winter period. The use of smaller loco's has meant a significant increase in the amount of shunting of coaching stock to maximise the seats available whilst keeping within the prescribed loads for the smaller engines. Our thanks to all those that have assisted with this work.

The shortage of locomotives has also meant that Class 33 D6570 has been in use on a few

passenger turns including it's first working ever with the Wealden Belle set. Class 14 D9525 was also been pressed into service a couple of times. Using diesel traction on passenger trains has given an opportunity to maintain the competence of diesel Drivers who rarely get the chance to drive passenger trains. After several years of service D9525 left the line on June 23rd and another class 14 – 14029 arrived to take it's place on the same low loader.

Congratulations to Graham Barklem, Richard Bradford and Paul Beale who have all recently passed their firing exams. Paul Beale also passed for firing on the Isle of White Steam Railway a few days earlier, well done Paul. James Veitch, Steve Armstrong, David Lloyd and Richard Moffatt have recently passed for firelighting duties.

Good progress has been made with the Basic Railway Safety training; most of the railway's staff have now passed the exam successfully. Our thanks to Alan Feltham who has put a great deal of time and effort in to running courses for all the commercial, platform, TTIs and Wealden Belle staff.

During June, visiting French student Sabrina Mirat re-typed several rules exams and the class 03-diesel manual. This was a particularly useful task that has enabled all the operating exams to be stored on computer for easy access and modification. This was all accomplished despite Sabrina declaring the Operating Managers computer "too dirty"!

Steam Driver Brian Heyes is currently recovering from an operation; we wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him at the railway soon.

The Operating Department has also become the first department on the Railway to have its own web site, why not pay us a visit at www.kesr.fsnet.co.uk to find out the latest news first.

The Operating department always welcomes new volunteers, if you would like to become a Guard, Signaller or work on the footplate please contact Simon Long or Pete Salmon on 01580 761097 or contact us via e-mail at operating@kesr.fsnet.co.uk we look forward to hearing from you!

Infrastructure

Rolvenden Station

The on-going work to tidy and re-paint the station progresses well and the effects are becoming visible. The next major task is to paint the level crossing gates and remove the years of rust that have built up. Obtaining the paint, cost effectively, may also be an issue.

Northiam Station

There has been a complete change to the station since opening to Bodiam. The former spate of activities that occurred during the engine run-round have been replaced by a short stay to take on water before moving on to Bodiam. Thus the station has become much quieter with trains staying for very short times. The role of the station has thus changed and the scope for fund raising along with it. Takings from the buffet have dropped substantially.

The Friends of Northiam have ceased to be a formal body mainly due to health, age and other commitments. Over the nine years to the end of December 1999 the friends had raised over £30,000. Most of the money has been used for station improvements and replacements. In all 20 separate projects have been funded. The remaining money, £3,500, was presented to Robin Dyce, as the then Chairman of Company, on 21st April by Jim Durrant, Chairman of the Friends, in order to help ease the financial problems. It is hoped that many of the Friends will stay on as station staff and maintain their vital role.

Bodiam Station

Fitting out of the building has continued and the ticket office now has a fixed clerk's table and lamp. The original large notice board has been

remade into two smaller boards, one piece fitted in the ticket office and the other in the waiting room. John Liddell has also made a mobile rack for the train destination finger boards, which may be parked in the waiting room or outside depending on the weather.

A few people have asked why we use the room designations of 'goods office', 'waiting room' and 'ticket office' rather than the more conventional parcels store, booking hall and booking office. The answer is that the current descriptions are taken from the original 1899 station plans and so were thought appropriate.

The painting of the staff room has just about been completed and a great deal of time has been spent on getting the station grounds looking smart and tidy for the royal opening. It is hoped to have the picnic site, behind the cattle dock, ready for use later this summer.

A start has been made on restoring a second platform bench, and now that the official opening is over, work can commence on finishing the goods office.

A porters sack barrow and a post office trolley made in Ashford have been donated, both of which need some repairs and repainting.

A surprising number of passengers have stated that they are making a nostalgic trip to Bodiam to remind them of their hop picking days. There have even been suggestions of a hop-pickers reunion, so station staff have been asked to note names and addresses of visitors who show an interest in the idea.

Museum

Development of the museum has unfortunately

had to take a back seat just recently as some of the regular team have had to turn their energies towards Bodiam.

We have lost three from the attendants roster since last year (two to other work on the railway), and gained one, and we are now particularly short of attendants at weekends. So if any one feels a little past their sell-by-date in other work, there is probably a place for you at the Museum! The roster is maintained by Richard Wall, tel: 01580 766997.

Final figures for last year show a total of 6477 visitors, of which 541 were complimentary, a drop of 588 on the total for the previous year. Admission charges brought in £6,148 (down £682 on 1998), and £2,233 was paid into the shop (down £469 on 1998). The trend this year, to the end of May, showed a slight downturn in visitor numbers, but virtually the same income as the previous year.

Sales of second-hand books remain buoyant and all the routine maintenance expenses are covered from this source. Back numbers of *The Tenterden Terrier* are available at the museum, or by mail order, at £1.00 per copy (£1.50 including postage) although some difficult

to find very early issues will cost more. Write to John Miller for details.

One very good side effect of the visit of the Duke of Gloucester, is that we had the carpets cleaned. A very good job was done by Heath Croft of Hawkhurst and the carpets now look like new. A plea to footplate crews and others working in oily conditions is to remove footwear before going into the museum – it can take an hour to remove the footprints left behind.

Lastly the museum now has a web-site thanks to Trevor Powell and Brian Janes, which is www.hfstephens.fsnet.co.uk and this is obviously creating some interest by the number of 'hits'.

Forestry and Conservation

The annual weed killing run occurred on 8th June 2000 with a multi-purpose road-rail vehicle from Avondale Environmental Services. The vehicle passed over the whole line during a day when service trains were running as well. Close co-operation between the signalmen and the crews was necessary to see the job completed within the time allocated. The effectiveness of the work has been readily apparent to anybody viewing the trackbed.



Truly the farmers line! Bodiam level crossing, 30th March 2000

(John Liddell)

People

Management structure

Since the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* Robin Dyce has resigned as Chairman and has been replaced by Norman Brice. The new management structure is shown on the inside front cover. It was anticipated that all new appointments would be announced or confirmed by the end of July.

David Stratton becomes Managing Director in place of Graham Bridge, who had to resign for family reasons which are not directly related to railway matters. Richard Moffat and Barry Holmes have been appointed Resources Managers and report directly to the Managing Director, who has overall responsibility for the engineering and operating side of the railway and Health and Safety matters, insofar as they concern the Safety Case throughout the Railway.

All commercial and administrative officers report through the Business Manager who reports directly to the Board.

We are delighted to announce that John Snell, former General Manager of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, has joined the board of our subsidiary company, Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises. John has spent virtually all of his working life in railway management and is a qualified barrister. He will be advising the railway on a variety of matters.

Simon Marsh is acting as Volunteer Liaison Officer but would like to relinquish the role as soon as possible due to business commitments.

The board has set up two specialist committees – Finance and Sales & Marketing to advise on matters relating to these activities.

THE K&ESR 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

HAVE YOU JOINED THE 300 CLUB YET?

To join, phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman on 01580 880378 for an application form.

February 00 Tenterden Buffet

1st	Sandra Marsh	(232)	£60.00
2nd	A F Moore	(146)	£40.00
3rd	P A Hobbs	(043)	£30.00
4th	James Veitch	(617)	£25.00
5th	James Veitch	(617)	£20.00
6th	Sarah Vince	(607)	£15.00
7th	Joan Williams	(319)	£10.00
8th	James Veitch	(617)	£5.00

March 00 Tenterden Buffet

1st	Sylvia Wenden	(201)	£80.00
2nd	Stephen Miles	(593)	£70.00
3rd	Philip Mackay	(569)	£60.00
4th	S E Shelton	(222)	£40.00
5th	Janet Harding	(564)	£30.00
6th	Boris Perkins	(113)	£20.00
7th	Frim Halliwell	(027)	£15.00
8th	Mark Stuchbury	(024)	£10.00
9th	E Chandler	(278)	£5.00

April 00 Wealden Belle

1st	Sarah Vince	(607)	£60.00
2nd	D E W Taylor	(354)	£40.00
3rd	P S Jarvis	(451)	£30.00
4th	Lancelet B Tyler	(367)	£25.00
5th	Wilf Watters	(602)	£20.00
6th	N Swinburne	(589)	£15.00
7th	M J Andrews	(549)	£10.00
8th	John Baker	(149)	£5.00

May 00 Wealden Belle

1st	Swales Parry	(572)	£60.00
2nd	John Whitcombe	(429)	£40.00
3rd	Tim Spatford	(517)	£30.00
4th	Mrs S Colwell	(489)	£25.00
5th	Peter Wilson	(228)	£20.00
6th	F J W Garner	(494)	£15.00
7th	Mrs S A Hukins	(351)	£10.00
8th	D Fisher	(556)	£5.00

Registered with Ashford Borough Council, under Section 5, Schedule 1 of the Lotteries & Amusements Act, 1976

Peter Broyd

We regret to report the death of Peter Broyd who died on 23rd May 2000 after a short illness. He was aged just 43 years. Peter was an enthusiast for on-train catering and first came to Tenterden about 20 years ago as a customer on the 'Wealden Pullman', as it was then known. He was surprised to find that all the staff were volunteers and promptly joined us, eventually becoming Pullman Manager.

Peter introduced a number of improvements, particularly in menu planning. Kitchen

equipment and training of waiting staff. His organising ability was evident when we catered for large numbers from marquees at the large field events held in the 1980's and early 1990's. He had, eventually, to take a less active part because of the demands of his own catering business, but he still did occasional waiting turns.

Peter also helped with lineside clearance at Bodiam and more recently as a museum attendant. His last jobs on the railway were to clean, seal and polish the linoleum floors in Bodiam station building and to assist with

Other Groups

Our French Connection –

News from the CFBS by Philip Pacey

This year's Fête de la vapeur on April 14th and 15th was a great success despite mixed and sometimes hostile weather. The Saturday, when events focussed on Cayeux, was cold, windy and wet, and as if that wasn't enough to contend with, the CFBS also had to put up with sabotage from a militant minority of local hunters, who have been disrupting various events to protest against proposed changes to the law governing the hunting season. On Saturday morning a rail was removed between Noyelles and St Valery; I gather that some warning was given, and the site was marked by a large notice announcing 'Danger, chasseurs en colère' ('Danger, angry hunters'). The rail was quickly relaid. In the afternoon a number of hunters, whistling and imitating bird calls, burst into the ceremony at Cayeux which was held to inaugurate upgraded forecourt of Cayeux station. (After the CFBS's Haine St Pierre 2-6-0T loco had been driven through a 'tricolore' ribbon, not once but twice, the second time for the benefit of the Président du Conseil Général who arrived, the ceremony continued indoors because of the inclement weather). I'm told that the lady Mayor dealt with the intruders in peremptory fashion. Having travelled to Cayeux in the morning, on foot from St Valery to Lanchères, and thence to Cayeux in the visiting ex-SNCF draisine from SABA, I had planned to stay to witness the ceremony, but was forced to retire to our lodgings suffering from the extreme cold and an upset stomach. I should perhaps make it clear that the hunters don't have a grudge against the CFBS, and relations between the two groups are

normally very cordial.

Saturday's official events had commenced with a cavalcade of various resident and visiting motive power, from St Valery to Cayeux, including a freight train hauled by Corpet Louvet No 1 Aisne. In nine years of visiting the railway, this was the first time I had seen steam on the Cayeux line. Now that the entire track has been brought up to standard, let us hope that steam traction will be a regular feature. The upgrading of the Cayeux station area is also very much to be welcomed; work had commenced at the eleventh hour, so it was not surprising that much remained unfinished, but enough had been done to justify the formal inauguration and to show how very much smarter the station environs were to be.

On the Sunday the hub of activities was Noyelles, with three steam-hauled specials on the main line bringing additional visitors from Paris, Le Havre, and St Quentin. The morning was bright and sunny; we enjoyed the ride to Noyelles although I was still feeling far from well, and thereafter I spent most of the day in a marquee at the Oakwood Press stand, signing copies of my new book about the railways of the Baie de Somme. Stepping out every now and again, I was impressed, as were many other English visitors, by the way in which the crowds of visitors were allowed to wander at will over the tracks – including the main line – with trains whistling to clear a way through. And yet there were no accidents, no injuries, not a single fatality. In action on the metre gauge lines were four CFBS locos, together with ex-Côtes de Nord Corpet 0-6-0T from MTVS and the SABA

draisine (the latter substituting for the rubber-tyred Michelin which could not attend on this occasion), while the replica 'Marc Seguin' puffed up and down on a standard gauge siding. Unfortunately the clouds gathered and descended during the afternoon, and it was raining again by the time the main line steam trains departed. The Le Havre train left behind its locomotive, Pacific G558, while the other two trains were coupled together to produce a double-headed spectacular behind North British-built 2-8-0s C231 and C314. This made a fitting climax to a splendid weekend. What a shame that the K&ESR were not able to bring a locomotive over on this occasion. Sadly, I missed the model railway exhibition, in the old salt warehouse at St Valéry; nor did I get to Le Crotoy, where a horse-drawn tram was to be found. A number of pictures of the steam festival can now be seen on the CFBS Web site (<http://www.chemin-fer-baie-somme.asso.fr>)

Of course, the steam festival had been preceded by another busy winter and much planning and preparation. As expected, the Buffaud & Robatel 0-6-2T Beton-Bazoches was back in action. One of the two ex-Buis les Baronnie coaches (no. 5) had been beautifully restored.

Track relaying had taken place at Cayeux and at Lanchères, making use of 30kg rails recovered in November from a former industrial branch line at Flixecourt. A Matisa bourreuse, converted from standard to metre gauge, visited the CFBS for trials prior to export, and was put to use on the relatively newly ballasted section of the line near Hurt. The rebuilding of the locomotive shed at Le Crotoy was not finished, having begun only at the end of February, but was well advanced and has been completed subsequently.

For a second successive year, the CFBS is to host a theatrical performance. On July 9th a train leaving Cayeux at 20.30 will take the audience to Lanchères for the first Act, returning to Cayeux for Act Two. Tickets are available from the Tourist Information Office at Cayeux. I'm also very pleased to see that once again the SNCF, with the Conseil Régional de Picardie, is laying on special trains on Sundays and holidays in July and August, to bring day visitors to Noyelles (with Le Tréport as an alternative destination); this year the CFBS will provide a special train to take them on to Le Crotoy. Trains leave Creil at 7.29 and St Quentin at 8.08, connecting at Amiens with a 9.17 to Noyelles. Departure from Noyelles is scheduled for 18.23.



*Thierry Lefebvre prepares Haine St Pierre No 15, while Philip Pacey repairs a wagon on the CFBS
(Ian Tate)*

Special Events in 2000

Steam Back to the Sixties

Sunday 27th and Monday 28th August

Relive the 1960's on the Kent and East Sussex Railway with steam trains and the diesels that replaced them hauling carriages of the era. At Tenterden station there will be a live band playing sounds of the sixties with a display of cars from the era. Discounts are available to anyone dressed in a sixties style!

The event will run over the Sunday and Monday of the August Bank Holiday with trains from 10:30 onwards.

Day Out with Thomas

16/17th and 23/24th September

Gates open at 10.00 for a fun day out with Thomas the Tank engine and his friends, bringing to life the stories of the Rev W Awdry. Devious Diesel, Sir Topham Hatt – the Fat Controller and Mrs Kindley will all add to the scene. Face painting for children, bouncy castle and clowns all add to the event.

Advance booking recommended
01580-766428 © Britt Allcroft (Thomas) Ltd

Tenterden Folk Festival

7th and 8th October

Come and see Tenterden when musicians and dancers perform around the town at a variety of times and places. The railway will provide its service of traditional trains to occupy any spare moments and Morris dancers will be in attendance at the station.

Austin Counties Car Rally

14th and 15th October

The Austin Counties Car Club will be holding a rally at Tenterden Station. Come and see the variety of vehicles on show at this annual remembrance of post war motoring.

Delivering the Goods

21st and 22nd October

In between the ordinary passenger service will be a steady stream of goods trains and other rarely seen vehicles recreating what was the real life blood of railways in the first part of the last century. The Kent & East Sussex speciality mixed train will also run during the day.

Other non-railway vehicles, will also be present to complete the atmosphere.

Santa Specials

Weekends from the beginning of December

Also 21st and 22nd December

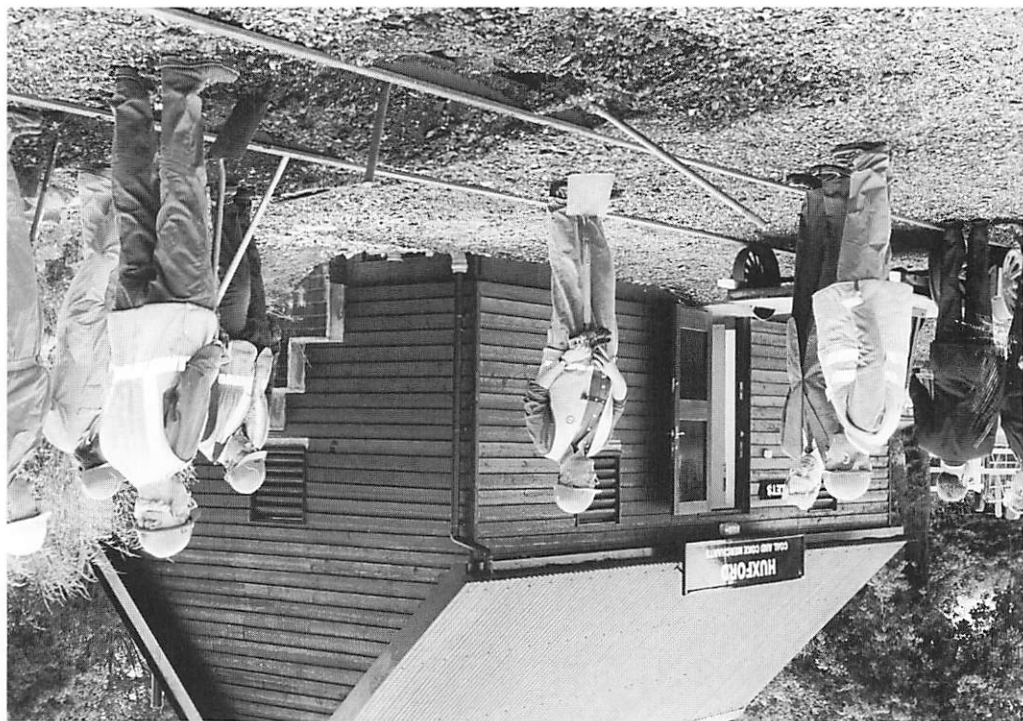
Meet Father Christmas and his band of pixie helpers as they meet and greet with presents for all the children. Sherry and mince pies are provided for the adults. These very popular trains will run frequently during the day and various activities will be present at Tenterden station to entertain as you wait for your train.

Advance booking essential –
01580 766428

Royal Visit

*Photographed by
Brian Stephenson*





Royal Visit

On Wednesday 5th July, His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester. KG, GCVO, made his second visit to the Kent & East Sussex Railway. His first, on 4th June 1990, was to open Northiam Station, and on this occasion, he was to officially open Bodiam Station.

The day had started with drizzle and, although the weather had cleared somewhat by the time of the Duke's arrival by car at 12:15pm, it was to remain dull and overcast for the remainder of the day.

At Tenterden Town station, the Duke was welcomed to Kent by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Kingsdown KG, who presented the Town Mayor of Tenterden, Cllr Jill Kirk and Mr Kirk, and the Chairman of the Tenterden Railway Company, Norman Brice. Norman then escorted His Royal Highness for the remainder of the visit.

First call was to the Museum, where at the

entrance, main board members Bob Forsythe, David Stratton and Graham Bridge and CSRE director, John Snell, were presented, followed by David Morgan, Chairman, Heritage Railway Association, Jean-Marc Page, President of our twinned railway in France, the CFBS, and Mrs Felicity Edwards, wife of the Museum Landlord.

Inside the museum, Philip Shaw was presented in his capacity as Hon. Curator for the day. He then conducted the Royal party, which included the Duke's Private Secretary and Lord Kingsdown, around the Museum. Time was of course limited, but the Duke expressed interest in the history of the Ford back-to-back railbuses.

The next stop was at the Carriage and Wagon repair shed where Clive Lowe, manager, was presented. In his tour of the shed, the Duke saw Alan Brice working on the doors of Pullman car 'Barbara', John Brice attending



HRH The Duke of Gloucester on the occasion of his first visit to the railway when he formally opened the extension to Northiam on 4th June 1990. On this occasion he was accompanied by the then Lord Lieutenant, Rear Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson and TRC chairman and director David Stratton.

(Courier Newspapers)

to the door locks of the SE&CR family saloon and he stopped to speak to John Weller who was attending to the steam and vacuum pipes on the District coach.

The Royal party then went to the platform where Geoff Garrett was duty station master. The 'Wealden Belle' set was boarded for the journey to Bodiam, which departed at 12:50pm. The leading engine, No 376 'Norwegian', with Messrs Willes and Stuchbury on the footplate, sported a royal headcode of four white lamps, while at the rear of three carriages was No 14 'Charwelton'. Peter Salmon travelled on the leading engine as rostered Inspector.

The Royal party was joined by Lord Kingsdown, David Morgan, Philip Shaw, Jean-Marc Page and the board members. All travelled in car 69 where, under the supervision of Andre Freeman, a light lunch of sea trout and salmon with Béarnaise sauce and vegetables, followed by raspberry crème brûlée or fresh fruit was served. To drink was a local sparkling wine, Epoch, Brut NV, from Tenterden Vineyards.

Meanwhile Bodiam had been a hive of activity from about 10:30am, with the arrival of the first guests expected at about 1:15pm. There were two public trains before the arrival of the Royal Train so some preparations were, of necessity, 'last minute'. The wet conditions from the overnight rain did not help with keeping floors clean. It had also been decided to serve coffee and biscuits from the staff window to staff and guests and this was ably carried out by Sheila Stevens, Daphne Lindsay and Jayne Lewis. John Miller and Pam Stevens managed to clean and prepare the toilets against very adverse conditions! John Liddell was in charge of flag-poles – the Royal Standard being brought by car from Tenterden by Tim Leigh and Sandra Marsh.

Gwyn Gwyn-Williams, as duty station master, had John Morrey on level crossing gates, Alec Carter on platform duties and Peter Kynvin controlling access to the yard gates. Doug Lindsay was 'chief greeter' and responsible for seeing that all the guests knew their positions around the station. Finally, at about 1:35pm we heard a distant whistle and could see the train exhaust about 1½ miles away.

The Royal train arrived at Bodiam at 1:40pm and the Duke alighted opposite the running-in board. He was welcomed to East Sussex by the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Phyllida Stewart-

Roberts, who then presented:

Mr Andrew Stewart-Roberts

High Sheriff of East Sussex,
Mr William de Salis and Mrs de Salis

Chairman, East Sussex County Council,
Cllr. Richard Stevens

Chairman, Rother District Council,
Cllr Nick Ramus and Mrs Ramus

Chief Executive, Rother District Council,
Mr David Powell

Chief Constable of Sussex,
Mr Paul Whitehouse

Clerk to the Lieutenancy, Lt Col Tony Feek

Paul Whitehouse is, of course, also a K&ESR volunteer signalman.

Following these formal presentations, Norman Brice resumed his role of escorting the Duke around the Station. Under the platform canopy, the chairmen of the three Sussex parish councils through which the railway runs were presented:

Cllr. Alastair Neill, Ewhurst

Cllr. Geoffrey Goodsell, Bodiam

Cllr. Peter Hayman, Northiam

Peter Barber had set off for Bodiam at 4.00am from his current work on the Welsh Highland Railway, another ex-Colonel Stephens line which is being rebuilt, to be presented to the Duke as the project manager for the Bodiam extension. He was presented in the goods office, where John Liddell and John Miller had prepared a display of photographs which depicted Bodiam station historically, derelict, under preservation and restored.

The next stop was the waiting room where John Miller, station agent was presented. Some interest was shown in the railway's leaflets, before the Duke went to the ticket hatch, where he commented on how smart the staff looked in uniform and he was issued with a combined rail and castle ticket by booking clerk Ken Dow. Now it was time for the speeches.

The Museum dais was again used and was decorated with colourful tubs of flowers by Pam and Sheila Stevens. Norman Brice, as Chairman, welcomed His Royal Highness and the other distinguished guests and said, "Today is the culmination of 30 years of

imagination and hard work to finally reach our destination of Bodiam Station". He referred to the environmental benefits to the Rother Valley, of visitors to the Castle travelling by rail and to the contribution to tourism and economic growth that the railway makes to the district. Norman also acknowledged the generous support of many donors, both public and private. He continued, "But above all the project could not have been achieved without our staff, volunteer and paid – the volunteer effort has been enormous, with at least 50,000 hours of free labour". He then invited His Royal Highness to say a few words and to unveil a commemorative plaque.

Speaking without notes, the Duke began by expressing his pleasure at arriving in Sussex from Kent "using your splendid railway", and opening a further station on the line. He congratulated the company on "collecting all these funds from the lottery and elsewhere", and also congratulated those that had had the foresight to respond to the railway's plans.

"This is not just a commercial venture, but an invitation to enthusiasts to run a real adult railway company – though, no doubt, many have Hornby Dublo in their attics as well", he said. The Duke referred to the success of the railway in attracting the numbers of passengers necessary to pay for its survival. He continued, "In this beautiful valley, you are able to steam up and down giving many thousands of people an opportunity to get involved in their steam heritage. They are able to feel, see, hear and smell what steam engines are about. At the same time, they now have, because of the extension, a destination which adds an extra dimension to the experience and to see the heritage from four or five hundred years earlier".

The Duke continued, "So congratulations on raising funds and maintaining the railway, keeping it going through good times and bad, and with the hope that in the years ahead, you may be able to extend a little further and connect once again with the main line".

Then, with a firm tug on the tassel, the curtains parted to reveal the commemorative brass plaque.

The Duke was then escorted to the cattle dock siding, where Brian Muston had resumed his role as Permanent Way Manager for the day, and had a party hard at work 'jacking and packing'. All four, Paul Rand, Peter Hemsley,

Geoff Crouch and Adrian Kennedy had worked on the Bodiam Extension and the Duke chatted generally for a while.

Unusually for these occasions, the programme was running 10 minutes early, so the Duke was invited to take a short footplate ride on 'Charwelton'. This he did, in company with Lord Kingsdown and driver Paul Wilson and Fireman Stephen Bennett. The train formation proceeded towards Northiam for a few hundred yards, waiting only for the traffic to clear from the level crossing, before returning to the platform.

Now it was 2:15pm and time for departure and formal leave was taken in the station forecourt. The Duke left by car to round off his trip with a visit to Bodiam Castle – just like so many other visitors this year.

John Miller



His Royal Highness signs the visitors book at Bodiam station on 5th July 2000

(Brian Stephenson)

Biddenden Memories

Tom Standen recalls his early days, and the characters he met, when he lived near Biddenden Station.



Mannering Farm 1931 – Joe the pony and his Sunday trap with (l-r) author aged 10, Grandfather, Mrs Archer (friend of the family) and Uncle Harry.
(Author's collection)

I was eight years old, in 1930, when my family moved from Horsmonden to Biddenden – and the reason for the move? Grandfather, a blacksmith at the time, was anxious to take up farming, and had rented a fruit holding at Mannering Farm, on the northern outskirts of Biddenden. We lived at 5, Curteis Corner, one of six cottages just beyond the Headcorn side of Biddenden Station.

My father, Tom, possessing a gifted knowledge of orchard fruit decided to lend a hand at Mannering Farm in his spare time. How he found that time puzzles me, for he was employed by the late Mr. H Gordon Jones to oversee orchards on two farms in Biddenden, Randolphs and Little Randolphs.

One could say that my father was a tenant of the K&ESR by way of renting a vegetable allotment situated between Biddenden's sidings

and a footpath leading to the station platform. The peppercorn rent was, I believe, one whole shilling a year!

It was a forelock touching era, when a ten year old lad was mindful of his elders, including all employees of the K&ESR at the time. My seniors were addressed as Mr. and Mrs., but for purpose of these recollections they will be recalled in a cosier fashion, more suited to my old friends of yesteryear. So who better to start this narrative with than stationmaster Alfred Bourne.

Alf, well respected by all, from his guv'nor Mr. W H Austen, down to the lowliest employee, ran his station with great efficiency. Sadly he had lost an arm in World War One, but the lack of an appendage did not deter him from undertaking a daily routine which a two-limbed chappie might have found tiresome at the best

of times. For instance, I marvelled at his ability to roll a cigarette one-handed – the nimble dexterity of Alf's five digits accomplishing many other tasks, including coupling a pair of wagons in the sidings when shunting was in progress. And that single arm could hoist a 56 pound weight head high in one deft movement – all this had to be seen to be believed.

Alf's busiest time of the year was coping with Biddenden Fair, when an 'all hands on deck' routine was demanded, as livestock from the adjacent field were hustled into cattle-wagons for transportation far and wide. Fortunately, Biddenden's two platforms allowed Alf to juggle his normal everyday schedules between the hullabaloo of Fair Day traffic. Incidentally, Alf and his staff were participating in an annual event held since Elizabethan times, always on the first Monday and Tuesday in November, for sheep and cattle respectively.

It was a time when a few schoolboys played truant to act as junior drovers. I much valued the pocket-money that came my way, including Alf's generous donations for running his errands during an exacting Fair Day timetable. Indeed, looking back, I suppose I was Alf's youngest employee!

One amusing Fair Day incident comes to mind here, when a 'Terrier' class engine was committed to haul a line of cattle-wagons from Headcorn to Biddenden. Alas, Frittenden Bank was too much for the little engine, leading to a rearward free-wheel return to Headcorn where luckily, a Southern Railway 4-6-0 Class 'D' loco came to the rescue by way of a rearward shove until the line levelled near Biddenden station. After this the 'D' class returned to Headcorn. My next character thought this locomotive was much too weighty for his loveable line!

William 'Pizney' Beach lived in a semi-detached cottage adjacent to Biddenden's level-crossing. William was a lengthman (his terminology) in charge of the track maintenance between Frittenden Road and Whitfield Crossing (midway between Biddenden and High Halden Road stations).

William, I recall, smoked a home-made cherry pipe which he lit with a gargantuan petrol lighter. You could sniff out William by the petrol fumes issuing from his workaday herring-bone tweed jacket. If ever a loco's

itinerant chimney-stack spark had settled on that jacket, I fear William would have suffered a flammable demise!

Although no trains ran on Sundays, William's devotion to his beloved section resulted in his pump trolley setting out on an inspection run on Sundays, mostly between Biddenden and Frittenden, but occasionally between Biddenden and Whitfield crossing. William's only son, Walter, a fellow schoolboy (sadly killed in Greece during 1941) often accompanied his dad on Sunday inspections and I was sometimes invited aboard the trolley which meant being absent from Sunday School!

The Biddenden/Whitfield trip was uninteresting for a lad, but the run down Frittenden Bank was a joyful, wheel hissing, hair streaming experience. Our uphill return demanded much from young muscles, for I am certain William's effort when we were aboard left much to be desired!

I well remember one occasion when William was anxious to inspect what he described as "canky bits o' rail" near Frittenden Road, which I discovered meant loose chair blocks and fishplate bolts needing attention with a hefty spanner and sledge hammer. I recall thinking the old wooden sleepers were well beyond their train-bearing life until this short section was replaced with concrete sleepers, which considerably eased William's mind. William usually set a timespan of two hours before returning to Biddenden – time enough for Walter and I to be off on a red squirrel search in a nearby copse – for just to glimpse 'tufty' was a boy's delight. The grey squirrel was already being classed as vermin, due to its ousting of the more handsome red variety. Usually, it was a local poacher 'Brusher' Hopkins who told us the whereabouts of "they red 'uns with the tufted ears."

And now to 'Old Bob' – Robert Collison was a neighbour of mine, both residing within a stone's throw of Biddenden Station.

Bob had been a regular soldier in the royal East Kent Regiment (the Buffs). After leaving the service he helped with the construction of the K&ESR track between Headcorn and High Halden Road during the years 1904-5. Apart from informing me his labour was "hard graft", Bob divulged a humorous anecdote relating to the K&ESR soon after its completion. Truthful

or not, his words need an airing.

Soon after the line was taking traffic, a decision was made to install an experimental gated crossing at Biddenden with attendant keeper. It seems that an American Tourist driving a vintage Bentley became rather irritated when his progress was halted by one gate swinging halfway across the road, the other in a similar position over the track.

After leaning heavily on the klaxon, a bleary eyed crossing keeper appeared, whereupon the Bentley's driver demanded: "Why are your gates only half open?" Came the brusque retort: "Well zir, I'm 'alf expecting a train." True or not, that tale bears a similarity with the K&ESR of my boyhood – as the following incident illustrates.

It was mid-summer with a scorching sun when I arrived at the station after school. Alf, wiping his brow, was in a tetchy mood. "Was he not feeling well?" I enquired. Came the irritable reply: "I think we've lost a train somewhere." Some thirty minutes later, a distant whistle indicated the train's tardy approach. At the station, a noisy blow of surplus steam allowed

Alf to remonstrate with a grinning duo on the footplate. "What's the delay all about then?"

Alf gave ear to the following reply: "A rail was buckled 'tween Halden Road and Whitfield, so me and Packham doused it with water from a pond afore we could move on." Perhaps a schoolboy should not have heard the ensuing banter – just let me add that I learnt the odd expletive or two!

Now from one station-master to another – Bill Paine. Bill lived in a cottage near Ibornden Farm adjacent to the Biddenden-Frittenden Boundary – a convenient location for Bill as he was within walking distance of Frittenden Road where he was in charge.

Passengers were few and far between except during the hop-picking season. For local wags the legend of 'Frittenden Treacle Mines' had long been in existence, but curiosity overcame a few London pickers. I am pleased to report that Bill continued to hoodwink a few seasonal visitors – the reason why certain strangers from the Metropolis were seen carrying sundry containers around the area!



Biddenden station, from the road, note the Station Master's bungalow on the left.

(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

Letter to the Editor

The Tenterden Terrier

Sir – I write as a recently joined member of The Kent & East Sussex Railway Society and hope that the following comments etc. may be of interest.

Firstly I am a little surprised that you do not give a telephone number in The Magazine. Most other preserved railways do so as it would be probably useful for late news, corrections, etc. particularly from those who may be unable to visit Tenterden.

The contents of the two magazines I have received are interesting but, in the current financial circumstances of The Railway, I am also surprised at the amount of space given to historical articles: 16½ pages out of the 46 in the last edition. The articles were informative but are not directly helpful in keeping in touch with armchair members or in helping The Railway's finances.

East Grinstead

Alan Lawrence

Historical articles have always been a feature of The Tenterden Terrier and usually account for about one third of the content. The opportunity is taken, whenever possible, to link the past with the present as was the case with the Monty Baker article in the last issue. The Kent & East Sussex is a line with a very considerable heritage, arguably unique in voluntary preservation and it is important that this should be kept alive and documented through the pages of the house journal.

The financial position was dealt with in Tim Leigh's newsletter, included as a separate item with the last mailing. Further updates will be made from time to time. The Tenterden Terrier does include an annual appraisal of the accounts of the Tenterden Railway Company and the 1999 figures included with this mailing will be reviewed in the next issue. Finally, my telephone number is now shown on page 3, although I would prefer written contributions if at all possible – Ed

Continued from P25

Just before I left the village school at Biddenden, Bill was promoted (his choice of words) to Wittersham Road. As he said; "the extra few bob came in handy, but well deserved considering an eighteen mile bike ride there and back six days a week." In mitigation though, on the odd occasion, I would catch sight of Bill and his bike in the guard's compartment as they passed through Biddenden.

Being such a regular visitor to Biddenden Station – especially for two whole weeks when convalescing from mumps, I once had the opportunity of spotting Mr W.H.Austen chatting to Alf Bourne. I was not privy to their conversation, but judging from Mr. Austen's body language I feel sure he was on a business trip!

To my final K&ESR personality worthy of mention at Biddenden. I was about thirteen years old when Alf Bourne retired and Ernie Bye took his place. Alf had never stood on ceremony and wore the traditional workman's flat-cap of the period. Not so Ernie Bye, he managed to beg-borrow-or-steal a more

authentic 'fit for running a railway' head-piece from, it is said, a Southern Railway source. Ernie required the largest cap size available, whereas the cap he wore on duty might have suited a midget – poor Ernie, every time he bent down his cap fell off!

It is said of the period of my narrative 'them's were the bad old days' – not so say I. For I am sure any lad between ten and eleven years old today would have given a year's pocket money for the pleasures that came my way on the jolly old K&ESR – including the free rides to Headcorn and back on the Ford set of rail cars. They were known locally by a variety of eminent names such as 'Janus and Rolvenden' – 'Push me & Pull me' – The primrose Special' – or 'The Bluebell Express'.

With such memories rising from the mists of time, I must end by wishing the K&ESR and its merry men (and ladies!) every good wish for the future – especially for the Bodiam extension – or 'Bodgem' as the local vernacular put it in 1930!

Our First Enthusiast Visit

The newly opened Rother Valley Railway became the object of enthusiasts' curiosity and interest almost as soon as it opened, and of course has remained so throughout the ensuing century.

In 1900 there were far fewer sources of information for the railway amateur than we enjoy today. One of these was the *Railway Magazine*, still happily with us, and this duly carried a description of the RVR in its July 1900 number. The author of the article was Victor L. Whitechurch, whose by-line often appeared in the magazine's early volumes, and who was a noteworthy character in his own right, as we shall see later.

Whitechurch's visit was arranged through the good offices of H.F. Stephens, who is thanked for "much information, and a very pleasant little run on the 'Northiam'", although his name is misquoted as 'Stephenson', an egregious error for any journalist. Stephens, says Whitechurch, "will always be glad to give information to anyone interested in 'rural tramroads'". Whitechurch illustrated his article with photographs of his own taking, and advised his readers to travel over the line, not simply because of its railway interest but also for the landscape through which it ran.

"The Rother Valley," he observed, "is one of the most charming bits of East Sussex pastoral scenery, with a touch of Kent thrown in. Broad, green pasture lands and woodlands, quaint little hamlets, a fine old castle, and a meandering stream, all greet the eye of the passenger. It is a truly 'out of the way' spot. Until this railway was opened, Tenterden was strangely isolated for a town of 4,000 people, and that boasts of a Mayor and Corporation, a steam fire-engine, and a rare old tradition.

"There are three stations en route – Bodiam, near which stands the celebrated castle of that name, Northiam, and Wittersham Road. The road is a single one, but double through Northiam Station, so as to allow trains to pass there. The permanent-way is strong and well ballasted, and though at present the Board of Trade have limited the speed of the trains to 15 miles per hour, there is no cause to prevent their speed being increased to 25 miles shortly. The largest engineering work on the line is the bridge

over the Rother, from Sussex to Kent, which has a span of 66ft.

"It will be seen that this miniature line contains quite a variety of railway work. The stations are platformed with neat corrugated-iron buildings. Tenterden and Northiam are protected by semaphore signals worked from a ground frame. The only signal cabin on the line is at Robertsbridge, where the trains have access to the down South Eastern platform, the working in and out and signalling being controlled by seven levers. Telephonic communication between all stations is provided along the line.

"The engine sheds, etc., of the railway are at Tenterden, and here let me describe the locomotive and rolling stock of the company. They may be summed up as follows: Two engines, six passenger coaches, two brake vans, and ten trucks. The locomotives are small, four-coupled side tank engines, named 'Northiam' and 'Tenterden' respectively. These engines are exceedingly powerful for their size, often hauling a load of thirty trucks over the line when there is much through goods traffic from the South Eastern Railway.

"The six coaches are divided into two firsts and four thirds, and are of polished teak, running on four wheels. The first-class coaches are divided into two compartments, with a door in between, one compartment being for smoking. They are very roomy, as they only have seats running along the sides; but, of course, there are not many first-class passengers on the line. They have seating accommodation for twenty-eight. The third-class coaches have a passage down the centre, and light, backed seats on either side, with accommodation for thirty-two passengers. An ordinary passenger train is made up of two thirds and one first, with a brake van. These brake vans are designed for use either on passenger or goods trains.

"There are no ticket-issuing offices at present. Tickets are sold on the train by the 'guard,' who enters the carriages on the journey. The service of passenger trains is very good, there being six each way per day, and two on Sundays, besides an extra train every fortnight for the convenience of those attending the Robertsbridge auction stock



Canon V L Whitechurch

market. Although the line runs through a comparatively remote part of the country, it, nevertheless, serves a district of 16,000 inhabitants.

"There is a considerable amount of goods traffic, and South Eastern and Chatham goods stock circulates freely through the little system. There are no 'through rates,' but the company works like carriers, and so economical is the management that already it has been found that about a shilling a train mile covers all expenses. The line has been found to be a great boon to the farmers and dairies in the neighbourhood.

"The staff of employees on this little railway is as follows: One platelayer per mile, two station men at Northiam and Tenterden, two station lads at Bodiam and Wittersham Road, two drivers, two cleaners, two guards, one gate-man, and one gate-woman. But the Rother Valley Railway system is by no means yet complete. Several important developments are in contemplation. Already an extension of 10½ miles has been sanctioned, which will be as follows: Tenterden Town, Rolvenden, Benenden, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook Town, and Cranbrook Station.

"In addition to this there is a proposed 'East Sussex' branch of 9 miles, which will leave the 'main line' at Northiam and proceed, via Beckley and Peasemars, to Rye. If this line is constructed, the 'Rother Valley' will develop into quite a unique little system of its own.

"Altogether, the neighbourhood is a very picturesque one, and the little railway exceedingly well appointed and interesting."

Victor Lorenzo Whitechurch, the author of this article, was born at Norham, near Berwick-on-Tweed, on 12 March 1868, making him a close contemporary of Holman F. Stephens, who was born in October of that year. His father, Rev William F. Whitechurch (1832-1899) was from a farming family of Halton in south Cambridgeshire. He went to school in Ipswich, and then went up to St John's College, Cambridge, and on his graduation in 1865 he entered the Church of England. In his mid-thirties he married Matilda Cornwall, half-Spanish, though born in Sussex, who was some fifteen years younger than himself. Victor Whitechurch treated refugees and exiles with particular sympathy in his writing, and his mother's family background may have contributed to this attitude.

Whether it was only his slightly unconventional marriage that blighted William Whitechurch's career in the Church is unclear, but during his ministry of more than forty years, he never rose above the status of curate, and seldom stayed more than a few years in any one parish. Matilda Whitechurch evidently tired of this peripatetic existence, and settled with her son Victor in Chichester, far from any of her husband's curacies, while he found lodgings as best he could in the parish where he was serving. William Whitechurch was eventually able to retire and join his wife, who had moved to Clapton, Middlesex, after Victor left home, and he died there in 1899.

Perhaps this life involved young Victor in a good deal of travelling and nurtured his life-long interest in railways. He records that in the summer of 1877 he first "visited Cromer and fell in love with 'Poppyland'" – apparently while on holiday in north Norfolk. He may also have been influenced by his uncle Walter Whitechurch, who gave up his farm to join the railway, where he eventually became a superintendent.

Victor Whitechurch attended Chichester Grammar School, and then followed his father into the Church by training under Canon Josiah Teulon at Chichester Theological College, where he helped to start a short-lived magazine entitled *The Chronicle of St George*. He inclined towards a liberal High Church outlook, and was reckoned to be an attractive preacher. His first post was as curate of Aston Clinton, near Aylesbury, in 1891 – his father was curate of Olney in the same county at the same time. From 1894 to 1896, he was curate of All Souls Church, in Station Road, Harlesden, then a growing suburb of North London, where he will have found plenty of railway interest. He wrote that he had "frequently taken a ticket from Willesden to Brondesbury and found myself strictly forbidden to perform the journey by the Irish Mail". The parishioners will have included a good few railwaymen, and Whitechurch's writing generally portrayed "the rank and file of the great railway army" sympathetically. Unusually for the period, he even tried to take a fair-minded view of strikers.

Seeking ways to supplement his curate's stipend, Whitechurch combined his hobby of writing with his interest in railways, and started to have short stories, mostly with a railway setting, published in the *Strand Magazine*. This was then at the height of its popularity, with regular appearances by

Arthur Conan Doyle and other popular writers of the period. In 1895 it published 'Stopping an Execution' by Whitechurch, and a number of others followed over the next few years. His work also appeared in the Strand's imitators, including Harmsworth's, Pearson's and the Royal Magazine. Another line was a series of humorous articles in the Boy's Own Paper.

In several of Whitechurch's detective stories, the mystery was unmasked by Thorpe Hazell, "a slight, delicate-looking man with pale face and refined features, light red hair and dreamy blue eyes", who was a "book collector and railway enthusiast, a gentleman of independent means, whose knowledge of book editions and bindings was only equalled by his grasp of railway detail". Thorpe Hazell was also a strict vegetarian and practised physical exercises at regular intervals, whether it was convenient or not, traits which no doubt appeared far more eccentric a century ago than they do today.

In 1896 Whitechurch returned to the Chilterns with a promotion to senior curate at St Luke's, Maidenhead, and on the strength of this he was able to marry Florence, the daughter of E.T. Partridge of Kingston-upon-Thames. Florence Partridge was herself an artist, and illustrated some of her husband's work.

Whitechurch was a regular contributor to the Railway Magazine from its first number in July 1897. In each of the first three issues an adventure story with a railway background appeared, each featuring the dashing revolutionary, Captain Ivan Koravitch. In September 1897 his first non-fiction article, 'Twenty-four Hours at a Railway Junction', appeared, telling the story of Willesden Junction and its railwaymen, some of whom would have been his parishioners at Harlesden. In October there was an article on the state-run Belgian railways, "compiled from rough notes taken during a lounging holiday in Belgium this year", which country had also served as the setting for the previous month's Koravitch yarn. From this time, Whitechurch's contributions to the Railway Magazine comprised mainly, although not exclusively, factual reports, while he remained a prolific writer of fiction for magazines for the general reader, which no doubt paid better. The railway companies evidently saw his articles as good publicity, and the London & North Western Railway provided facilities for a visit to the Wolverton carriage works and a ride on the

American Special boat express from Euston to the dockside at Liverpool. He also described visits to companies supplying railways, such as Kynoch's detonator factory in Birmingham and the Victoria sawmills at Bath.

Another article of particular interest to readers of the Tenterden Terrier appeared in the April 1898 number of the Railway Magazine, under the heading of "Light Railways". Whitechurch "happened to be spending a few days in the quaint old city" of Chichester, and, "hearing so many jocular remarks" about the recently opened Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway, he described "the 'great run to the South' afforded by it" in an article illustrated with photographs by Dr E.H. Buckell.

The tone is light-hearted, and full rein is given to the dramatic possibilities of the small boy who was employed to pump water into the tank at Hunston, and the farmer who waved a red flag to halt the train as it passed his house, so that he could board it. Arrival at Selsey was forty minutes late, and Whitechurch remarks that "in the first few weeks of running I am told that the Company did not state the arrival times of trains. I am rather surprised that they do so now. It is an overbold stroke of policy."

Whitechurch's first detective novel, 'The Course of Justice', appeared in 1903, followed in 1904 by the first of a series of tales from clerical life, 'The Canon in Residence'. In 1904 he became vicar of Blewbury, in Berkshire, and the couple's only child, Bertha, was born there later that year. Bertha Whitechurch was artistically inclined, like her mother. She later married Philip James (1901-1974), librarian of the Victoria & Albert Museum, in 1926.

Blewbury's nearest station was Upton on the former Didcot to Newbury branch of the Great Western, which was the setting for a Thorpe Hazell short story, 'Sir Gilbert Murrell's Picture'. This was unusual as Whitechurch generally invented fictitious railway companies and locations for his mysteries. Blewbury gave Whitechurch the opportunity to pursue his writing, including 'Off the Main Road', a humorous novel of village life, published in 1911, while 'Thrilling Stories of the Railway', a collection of nine Thorpe Hazell and six other short stories appeared in 1912 (the latter was reprinted in 1977, as 'Stories of the Railway', with a forward by Bryan Morgan). His other interests at this period included amateur conjuring, and

producing and acting in local productions of Shakespeare.

In 1913, Whitechurch left Blewbury and spent a year as Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford and secretary of the Church of England Missionary Society for the diocese, before becoming Vicar of Aylesbury and Chaplain to the Royal Bucks Hospital. His responsibilities became considerably more onerous, particularly with the outbreak of the Great War, and there was a marked decrease in his literary output. A romantic novel, 'Three Summers', published in 1915, and a monograph on 'Parochial Processions: Their Value and Organisation', in 1917, seem to have been his only publications during this period. Appointment as Rural Dean of Aylesbury in 1919 and as a member of the Church Assembly in 1922 must have added to his burden.

In 1923, Whitechurch left Aylesbury to become Vicar of Hartwell-with-Stone, two villages to the west of the town. This evidently gave him more time for his writing (usually in long sessions in the morning), and fifteen books in a variety of genres appeared over the next ten years, among them 'The Adventures of Captain Ivan Koravitch' (1925), a collection of short stories some of which

had been first published in the Railway Magazine. However, in general railways featured less prominently in his work, and he was perhaps less inspired by the more utilitarian railway scene of the Grouping era.

Whitechurch became an Honorary Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, although the fact that he could not stand music of any variety must have restricted his role "in quires and places where they sing". He retired in 1931 to a house appropriately named 'The Halt' at Bognor, not far from his boyhood haunts in Sussex, where he continued to write. His output included a chapter contributed to 'The Floating Admiral', a 'round-robin' novel written jointly by the members of the Detection Club, a shadowy society formed by a group of well-known crime writers of that period.

Victor Whitechurch was, however, unable to enjoy his retirement for long, as he died in a nursing home at Buxton on 26 May 1933 aged 65, survived by his widow and daughter.

Tom Burnham

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A New Waiting Shelter for Northiam Station

The original plans for Bodiam 2000 included provision of a general purpose building on platform two at Northiam. It was decided to perpetuate the stations of the Headcorn Extension by constructing a replica of the still extant High Halden Road building. The idea was to provide an externally complete shell which could be internally developed according to Commercial department requirements following experience of running to Bodiam. It was eventually realised that this option was too expensive and more recently it has been agreed that a simpler structure should be provided as soon as possible, as waiting on this platform in winter is likely to be a chilling and probably soaking experience.

Going back nearly a decade it was intended to re-erect the redundant up-side shelter from Headcorn SE&CR and it was duly dismantled and stored at Northiam and Tenterden. In the passage of time some components were mislaid and poor storage put paid to the rest when wet rot set in, so another lesson in the impracticality of re-using worn out buildings was learnt.

The structure now proposed is similar to the Headcorn shelter but shares features with the former K&ESR building that once stood immediately beside it. Like both buildings it is a simple mono-pitch structure, but in typical K&ESR style it is clad in corrugated iron with narrow cantilevered awning. However, as with the South Eastern shelter it will have a doorless opening to the front and fixed benches round three walls. Side windows in traditional K&ESR style will afford views in both directions along the curved platforms.

The sketches have been drawn by Heritage Group activist Humphrey Atkinson, our unsung architect, who was also responsible for the first Northiam proposal, Bodiam lavatory building, repairs and conversion of the original Bodiam station building and a planned, but as yet unrealised, extension to Tenterden buffet.

There is no finance allocated to this project at present but it is hoped to cover the cost from a substantial sum recently donated to the company

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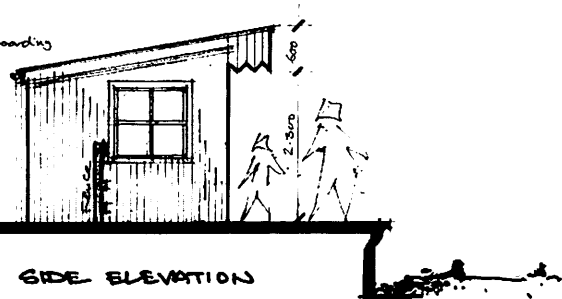
by the Friends of Northiam, from which it is entirely fitting that their station should benefit. Construction will be carried out by the Heritage

Group though it is unlikely completion can be expected before mid 2001.

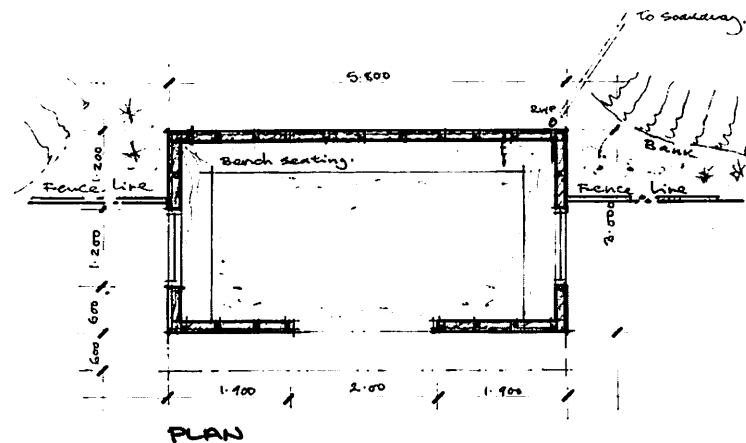
Peter Davis



FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



PLAN

Roof: 10° pitch. Corrugated metal sheet painted black
Canopy ex. 125 x 26 soft wood vertical boarding.

Walls: Ex 100 x 60 soft wood framing clad with corrugated metal sheet painted OGC B3

Windows: Fixed light softwood frames with K&E standard architraves Painted O/C 39.

floor: 80mm granular fill p 100mm concrete with tapered tie
foundations: compact ground. flat concrete sleeper ring foundation.

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Scale : 1:50 Drawn HGA

April 2000

Book Reviews

"A pictorial Record of British Railways Standard Steam Locomotives" by Edward Talbot, published by Oxford Publishing Co. (Ian Allan), price £19.99. Hard back, large size format. ISBN 0-86093-158-7.

A new impression of a book first published in 1982. It reviews all twelve of the standard classes introduced under British Railways from 1951. The book is in two parts. Part I has line drawings and close-up black and white photographs of each class, followed by appendices giving details on tenders, liveries, engine numbers and names, proposed designs and preserved locomotives. The smaller Part II has a selection of photographs showing the classes in service. The re-production of photographs is variable, most are good, but in some, the detail is lost in dark shadow. Probably, a useful book for the serious modeller or student of the period..

EJRM

"Flying Scotsman" by Peter Nicholson, published by Ian Allan Publishing, price £12.99, soft covers, 112 pages, smaller page size (17 x 23.5cm), ISBN 0-7110-2744-7

This is effectively a biography of "The World's Most Travelled Steam Locomotive", as the cover refers to LNER no. 4472. From its birth in 1923, the engine's adventures at the British Empire Exhibition; its mainline service; as a film star; during rebuilds and livery changes; and for the past 40 years in preservation, including visits to America and Australia, are chronicled. The book is very readable, with good coloured and black and white photographs and its issue coincides with the recent re-entry into service of this most famous of locomotives.

EJRM

"An Illustrated History of West Country China Clay Trains" by John Vaughan, published by Oxford Publishing Co., price £19.99, hard covers, large page format, ISBN 0-86093-543-4

This is a revised edition of a book first published in 1987, containing over 250

well-reproduced black and white photographs with extended captions. It covers the carriage of china clay by rail, mainly in Cornwall where the industry is centred. The carriage of ball clay is not covered, which explains why the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light, a Colonel Stephens line, is excluded. This also illustrates the specialist nature of the book. Recommended to those with an interest in rail freight history or in Cornwall.

EJRM

"British Railway Goods Wagons in Colour" by Robert Hendry, published by Midland Publishing Ltd (a division of Ian Allan Publishing), price £14.99, soft covers, large page format, ISBN 1-85780-094-X

Described as being for the modeller and historian, the book has over 200 colour illustrations of goods stock of various types in the British Railways period. There are Appendices covering locomotive headcodes; a painting guide for stock conveying dangerous goods; and drawings of selected goods vehicles, as well as a very useful glossary of terms. The colour reproduction of the photographs is very good and the book should be of interest to the serious modeller.

EJRM

The Westerham Valley Railway by David Gould, published by the Oakwood Press, price £8.95. Soft covers, 128 pages with many photographs and scale drawings. ISBN 0 85361 515 2.

Forty years ago, the easiest route from Sidcup to Westerham was by the 410 bus from Bromley, so it was no doubt as a concession to myself that on one family excursion we travelled by train, changing at Dunton Green. The push-and-pull sets converted from SE&CR steam railmotors were still in service on the Westerham branch, and I attempted to photograph the interior of one of the carriages with an ancient Kodak box camera. A couple of years later the line was closed, a preservation society was formed, and I became a very junior and inactive member. Unfortunately the Association's ambitions were thwarted by the County Council's plans for road building, and it amalgamated with the group trying to save the K&ESR,

which then seemed an even more quixotic venture. I wonder how many other former members of the WVRa still belong to the TRC?

David Gould has completely re-written his 25-year-old history of the Westerham Valley Railway and added much new material from further research to produce what is undoubtedly the definitive history of the branch. Personalities are given prominence, from the local squire, William Tipping, who was the chief promoter of the WVR, to the railwaymen who served it over the years, and the youthful optimists of the preservation movement, and there are also comprehensive details of rolling stock and train services. A large collection of photographs includes the three types of steam railcar that worked on the Westerham branch (among them the elusive Peebles car), and there are scale drawings of the principal structures at Westerham station. Railway modellers will perhaps be inspired to re-create the branch in miniature, while for others the book will be a souvenir of a classic country branch line, now lost beneath the tarmac of the M25 motorway.

TGB

"Railways of the Baie de Somme" by Philip Pacey and others, published by The Oakwood Press, soft back, with 176 pages and A5 format, price £11.95, ISBN 0-85361-554-3

The CFBS started life as the Réseau des Bains de Mer, (the Sea Bathers Railway). The two branches from Noyelles, north and south of the bay, first opened in 1887, and the author gives a full account of the historical context leading to their construction. The lines were part of the Réseau de la Somme, a network of local lines which covered the Department of the Somme, but which were not necessarily physically linked.

The author has divided the account into logical periods and it is well illustrated. There are a host of sketch maps, some of which, the reviewer found difficult to follow. Indeed, it is a complicated story compared to British railway histories, but the author does well to make this such a good read. As the author says, in his introduction, this is not the definitive history of the CFBS, that will have to await further researches by a

French author, but it is as full as we need at present.

The two sections of the Sea Bathers Railway closed in 1969 and 1972. The CFBS was formed in 1970 as a preservation group, to take over the running of the two lines, and articles in previous issues of The Tenterden Terrier have given accounts of the twinning with the K&ESR.

As the author gives a stock list of locomotives of the whole Réseau de la Somme network, a table showing the opening and closure dates of the various branches would have completed the story.

The reviewer's only complaint is directed towards the publisher who will insist on using the wretched system "perfect binding", so that it is impossible to keep the book open to read without the spine. Otherwise, highly recommended.

EJRM

"Kent Narrow gauge" (Narrow gauge Branch Line Series) by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith, published by Middleton Press, hard covers, 96 pages, mainly photographs with captions, price £12.95, ISBN 1-901706-45-

This recent book from the prolific Middleton Press certainly fills a gap in publications covering the railways of Kent. It is perhaps quite surprising to find how many narrow gauge railways the county supported.

The book divides these lines into four types: industrial, of which there are 11 covered; military, of which there are 4; pleasure, with 7 lines and lastly main line, with the obvious single example, the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch. The latter is also covered by the earlier publication titled 'Romneyrail'.

The usual Middleton format is followed, with reproduction maps, (some of which are not easy to read), and good quality photographs grouped according to location where there is any significant length of line. Some of the lines listed are so obscure. They are represented by just one illustration. An interesting book to 'look-up' rather than read. Recommended.

EJRM

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The carriages wind slowly o'er the lea.
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But first I make another pot of tea.

A lonely Signaller, I view the scene
So tranquil 'neath the sun's declining rays,
And ask myself, what can this vista mean?
Has this old station e'er seen better days?

Was there a time when sweating rustics brought
Their wagon-loads of fragrant hops and hay,
And milk and cattle which the townsfolk sought
Were loaded on to trains and borne away?

Did country folk walk here from near and far
To catch the train, in which they put their trust?
These days their rude descendants go by car,
And most walk only when they really must.

True, locals still to London go by train
From Headcorn, or from Ashford it may be
They go by Eurostar beneath the main
To Brussels, Lille Europe or gay Paris.

But many years ago destruction's hand
Laid waste the northern section of our track
So Headcorn we can't reach, and buildings stand
Where once the slow mixed trains ran up and back

And politicians rashly put an end
To our connection with the Hastings line.
Such attitudes are hard to comprehend –
No wonder public transport's in decline!

The Station building here was swept away,
And weeds engulfed the platform's sad remains
But preservation brought reopening day
With crowds, Distinguished Guest and public trains!

This followed many months of labour grim
By teams of people striving to prepare
The platform, station building, garden trim,
The loop line, signalbox and crossing there
But maybe all their efforts were in vain:
The booking office door stays locked and barred
Most operating days, when there's a train
The crossing gates are opened by the Guard.

Whenever passing moves are needed though,
The signalbox is open all day long.
You might think passengers would come and go
Using the platform here, but you'd be wrong.

Some people park their cars just to observe
The passage of the trains, then drive away;
Some think the picnic area will serve
To add enjoyment to their leisured day.

Though they could buy their tickets on the way
They seem to see no reason why they should.
"We love your railway," they might say,
"And if you don't change anything that's good!"

But any kind of visitor is rare,
Except for sundry animals and birds.
The sounds of chorused nature fill the air,
More beautiful than any human words

Could brick and concrete be preferred to green?
Do people for the countryside not care?
The flora and the fauna go unseen,
Wasting their sweetness on the desert air.

Far from the madding crowd the station sleeps
Waiting for passengers who never come.
Each signaller a lonely vigil keeps
Beside the little road to Wittersham.

Alastair Forbes

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