

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 83

Winter 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.)

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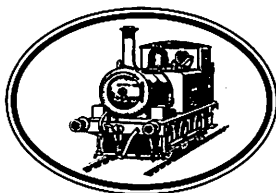
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The Tenterden Terrier



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FRONT COVER

The Heritage Railcar set pauses at Tenterden Town Station alongside No 14 'Charwelton'
(Tenterden Railway Company)

FRONTISPIECE

Greetings from Santa at Tenterden Town Station. 'Santa' trains will run on Saturdays and Sundays from 3rd December until 24th December and also on Thursday/Friday 21st/22nd December.

(Robert Berry)

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Editorial

All in a day's work?

The severe floods which washed out the line at Mill Ditch near to Bodiam in October are a reminder of how vulnerable we are to the forces of nature in the Rother Valley, despite the river protection measures taken in recent years. In fact, the damage could have been far worse, had it come earlier in the operating season or even last winter, when our financial problems were escalating rather than receding. Fortunately, our

river bridges took the strain and the station buildings at Northiam and Bodiam were also unaffected.

The most graphic illustration of flooding on the K& ESR was recorded in February 1916, when locomotive no 8 'Hesperus' and its complete train was de-railed at Padgham curve, also between Northiam and Bodiam. What happened to the passengers on that occasion is not recorded, but the wreck of the Hesperus was quickly retrieved and returned to service with a minimum of publicity. Once again, repairs will be effected without delay and our passengers should not be inconvenienced next season.

Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

Business

Elsewhere in the magazine you will be able to see details of our passenger numbers, and their percentage increase on last year. This has been well documented, and can be attributed to our Bodiam opening, two very successful Thomas events, the latest in September over two weekends where we saw crowded trains, many ancillary activities and things to see, and very satisfied customers going home afterwards.

The catering side of the railway, with the exception of Northiam Tea Room, has seen a very buoyant, and busy, summer. The shop, despite the doom and gloom reports about the National Trust shop and Bodiam Garden Centre stealing our customers has, at the end of September, exceeded the turnover achieved during the whole of 1999.

We are aware of the 'Northiam' effect felt a decade ago when, in the year after our opening to Northiam and increasing passenger numbers, they then fell the following year. We are allowing for this in our budgeting, although we hope, and strive, for a continuation in 2001, of the six figure passenger numbers we will enjoy this year.

We are working to develop the new market areas opened up to us by the extension, for next year. This includes a number of meetings with the Castle at Bodiam to share marketing initiatives, advertising and PR in areas like Battle, Bexhill and Hastings, and solving the 'Bodiam Inheritance' car parking, catering, commercial

activities, all of which we are restricted in our ability to undertake at the moment.

We will spend a lot of money in the closed season, improving the station sites, and adding 'visitor value' to the Kent & East Sussex. These improvements will be designed to make the every day passengers remain here longer by giving them more to see and do, and therefore to spend more in the buffet and shop and, ultimately, to enable us to charge slightly higher fares, as the extras they get to the train journey warrant the higher price.

Hoppers Weekend

On the back of the 'Delivering the Goods' event, a 'Hoppers Weekend' based at Bodiam had been planned. In the event the flood damage to the track forced a change of venue and all that had been planned for Bodiam was switched to Northiam. The people who had been hoppers some years ago and had left their names at Bodiam over the past few weeks were sent a revised leaflet notifying them of the late change and we were pleased that several attended at Northiam.

A small marquee was located on the picnic site and Mr Bruce Law from Beckley displayed his interesting collection of hopping photographs and equipment. This was augmented with photos of 'hoppers specials' from the railway archive collection.

The marquee was a good investment as the

weather over the weekend was distinctly murky with drizzle on Sunday morning. The 'hoppers' enjoyed themselves immensely and were quite emotional at being back at the railway.

To add to the interest, a half-hour film on life as a hop-picker, made on the K&ESR some years ago, was shown continuously in the booking hall and the 'Hopping down to Kent' song (although we were in Sussex), was broadcast over the station public address system as each train arrived.

As a consequence of the publicity for the event, a lady donated a rather rare 'hopping box' for display at Bodiam, which was made by her father over 70 years ago. This is a wheeled box which housed all the household paraphernalia required

for family daily living while on the 'hopping holiday'. A pair of primus stoves used for boiling water have also been donated.

During both days a variety of vintage vehicles, including Scammel 'mechanical horses' and the Shepard Neame steam lorry, made deliveries of hop pockets from Tenterden Town which added interest.

Pam and Sheila Stevens spent the weekend with clip-boards making notes and collecting names and addresses of those who wished to be involved in future events. The tea-room kept the 'inner man' sustained and we were grateful for the hospitality of the Northiam station team. By all accounts it was a very enjoyable weekend in spite of the weather.

Motive Power

There had been concerns at the extra mileage required of the engines this year once we opened to Bodiam. This has proved not to be a problem to date and crews have been making additional checks of engine lubrication which seems to have helped. However the extra miles may well have a long term impact on maintenance that will take time to evaluate.

Steam locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam': The frames are still at Ian Riley

Engineering. Work has yet to start on fabrication of new tanks, although the materials are to hand. Knowle's old regulator valve is being repaired in readiness for re-assembly of the regulator in the boiler.

No 11 'P Class': Work continues to repair this engine which now looks like an engine again. The boiler, lagging and cladding are all in place and painting is well advanced. Consideration is being given to the details of the necessary lining



*Thomas poses at Tenterden Town Station with The Fat Controller and Mrs Kindley, September 2000
(John Liddell)*

out. In the meantime many of the smaller pieces are coming together. The Ashford Area group funded the overhaul of the injectors, which have now been fitted along with the necessary pipework. Other pipework, sanding gear and dampers are all being progressed.

No 12 'Marcia': Slow and steady progress towards restoration continues.

No 14 'Charwelton': Available for traffic though its 10 year boiler lift looms ever closer. In early Summer the front end of the loco was lifted and the front wheelset removed for attention to the axle thrust faces which were loose. One of the boxes was also re-metalled. This job was completed in 3 days.

No 19 'Norwegian': In traffic. Some weak springs on the tender have been changed and the opportunity taken to weigh the wheels and make adjustments to ensure even weight distribution.

No 21 'Wainwright': The repair work to the boiler mentioned in the last edition was completed and the loco returned to service. There have been some relatively minor problems. The driver's side brake cylinder and brake ejector required attention. The brick arch collapsed, again, and this has been remedied by provision of stainless steel support bars for the arch. The supports to the grate warped, allowing the fire to drop into the grate, and thus required a rebuild. Broken springs have also been seen on this engine with the fireman's side centre spring requiring replacement. The loco also returned from a trip to Quainton Road and now faces uphill to Tenterden.

No 22 'Maunsel': A blowby on the regulator has required a couple of attempts before a solution was found. On the second try a split copper joint ring in the main steam pipe was eventually found and replaced.

No 23 'Holman F. Stephens': Work on the 10 yearly overhaul continues. The boiler crown stays have been completed and inspected by the boiler inspector. The boiler was then turned upside down and placed onto the boiler wagon. This allows copper welding repairs to the firebox, replacement of foundation ring rivets, patch screws and soon some replacement stays. The wheelsets have been removed, with the frame placed on accommodation bogies, to allow Non-Destructive Testing and these have been despatched for reprofiling. The frame horn

guides have had attention ready to be cleaned and painted.

No 24 'Rolvenden': In traffic. A scare over the trailing axleboxes running hot proved false but whilst lifted the heat shield on the ashpan was extended.

No 25 'Northiam': In traffic.

No 30 GWR Pannier Tank: The boiler has passed its hydraulic test. However a new smokebox is required. The frames remain in store, properly sheeted up, in one of the Rolvenden sidings.

Diesel locomotives

No 41 Ruston: In traffic as shed pilot at Rolvenden.

No 46 Drewry 03: In traffic.

No 48 Class 14: In traffic though it has had some electrical problems with the starter motor circuit.

No 49 Class 14: In traffic.

Crompton: In traffic.

No 50 BTH Diesel: Work continues at the Carriage and Wagon shed at Tenterden on this engine, when there are gaps in the programme. The loco has been weighed and the springs set up to avoid the previous problems where the loco would occasionally jump off the track. Some electrical work has also been completed recently.

Cranes

10 ton Taylor-Hubbard: In traffic

36 ton Ransom Rapier Breakdown crane: In traffic, mainly used for loco department lifts.

General

There is, as always, a list of items wanted at the shed. Top of the list is rags of any type for cleaning engines, both for service and during maintenance or painting. Office chairs are also wanted, someone must be getting rid of chairs at work somewhere and be able to liberate a couple and leave at the shed. As soon as a new one appears one of the older ones seems to fail. Quite what the shed staff do with them is a mystery. There is always a need for small tools, drills, dies and light fittings, especially fluorescent fittings. If any member can help then please see Lawrence Donaldson at Rolvenden or telephone the shed on 01580 241448.



*36ton crane lifts the frames for No 23 on to the prepared accommodation bogies, 6th August 2000
(John Liddell)*

Rolling Stock

Flats on Wheels

Last time we reported a spate of hot boxes, this time it's flats on wheels. Principal victims have been DBSO No 75 Petros and Maunsell CK No 5618 (K&ESR No 56) although several other vehicles have been affected in varying degrees. Petros has had two spells in the shed, at the height of the season and a mere three weeks apart, the second occasion involving major work to both bogies. No 56 perplexed both the Manager (Clive Lowe) and our 'consultant' (Boris Perkins) by presenting a pattern of wear normally associated with disk brakes! Use of this vehicle is being minimised until spare wheelsets have been fitted – fortunately we have some. The cause of the flats is thought to be a change of oil grade by another department (it might be indiscreet to say which one) leading to a condition closely related to 'leaves on the line'. Eventually some of the affected wheelsets will have to be sent to the 'big' railway for turning, and that doesn't come cheap.

Working Week

Working Week, held between 29 July and 5

August, was once again a success, various people returning from University for the occasion and Dave Miller and Stuart Hiscock again visiting from the Moors Line C&W Department at Pickering. As anticipated, the Woolwich coach featured prominently. Banana Van underframe (K&ESR No 107) was fitted with a straightforward two-plank body similar to that on the adjacent No 111. Both vehicles have been painted (in the case of No 111 repainted) all of which has helped to tidy up the visitor area on the station side of Tenterden yard. The other major project of the week was the re-boarding of Ken Lee's SR 8 Plank Wagon No S11530 (K&ESR No 148). Work proceeded rapidly, although we soon found out how much more material there is in an eight plank body compared with five planks. The new bodywork is now complete and application of the promised 'semi-fictional' industrial livery – for which we have received a generous donation towards the cost – is proceeding. No 148 has been mechanically overhauled and should be in satisfactory condition to work with mixed train formations.

Work Experience Visit

Interfleet Rail Technology students visited for a week before the metaphorical mast during early September. They provided a splendid start to the restoration of LMS Box Van No M515184 (K&ESR No 128) and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Further work is now being undertaken by volunteers and paid staff between other demands on their time.

Pullman Car Barbara (K&ESR No 52)

The car is now back at Tenterden, although remaining on its Maunsell accommodation bogies, the originals still being away at Sellindge.

Maunsell BNO No 4432 (K&ESR No 53)

Structural repairs to the framework are now complete and the next stage of restoration is about to start.

Woolwich Coach (K&ESR No 67)

Work has continued on cleaning the underframe and removing the badly wasted headstocks and other associated steel parts. Volunteers continue to take a prominent role in this project. Frank Kent has played a much appreciated part in the dismantling and Ron Nuttman is supervising the acquisition, preparation and installation of the replacement material. Two members of C&W paid staff have recently been involved – in their own time – in promoting next year's proposed Steam & Country Fair at Northiam. As part of this, they wrote round the Railway's suppliers asking for sponsorship. The first firm to reply was the steel stockholder who had supplied the new parts for No 67. Their letter enclosed a cheque which effectively refunded a large

proportion of what had been spent on the underframe!

L&SWR Ironclad No 79 (K&ESR No 90)

In response to concern regarding the appearance of Wittersham Road yard, this vehicle was cut up during September. The decision to do this was regretted but earlier attempts to relocate the vehicle had proved unsuccessful. A useful haul of spare parts has, nonetheless, been obtained. This work was undertaken by all available C&W staff (paid and volunteer) over two weeks, during one of which the weather was appalling. The Railway has been subject to press comment of late regarding allied issues. It has to be stated that the present Board and C&W management inherited this situation, and an irrecoverable vehicle, following decisions made by their predecessors some years ago. If anyone, on or off the Railway, wishes to discuss the implications in a sensible manner, they are welcome to meet with C&W Manager Clive Lowe or Admin Officer Nick Pallant.

People

We have to report that, due to the Company's financial position, Carriage & Wagon coach builder Ian Anderson has taken redundancy. Ian left the Railway at the end of October and has returned to his other trade as a lorry driver. We wish Ian well and would like to thank him for his services, particularly his work on No 53, since January 1999.

Congratulations to Assistant Carriage Examiner Chris Maple on attaining his Private Pilot's Licence. Guess what the next C&W staff outing might be?

S&T

At Northiam, the track circuiting referred to in the previous issue is now indicated in the signal box, and driving the electric interlocking controls in the relay room; also all five sets of treadles (which detect the movement of trains over them) are now operational in the same way.

A further key stage in the scheme was brought into use on the 24th September with the commissioning of the remaining 5 signals, and a further set of points.

Each direction now boasts an Outer Home signal and an Advanced Starting signal, thus allowing freedom to run-round trains with a train

approaching from an adjacent station. This also spelt the end of the necessity to hold the Up train outside, at the Inner Home signal, until the Down train had arrived in the station. It is now also possible to run a Down train into the Loop, rather than the Main, although with the lack of watering on the Loop this is likely to be a rarity rather than the norm.

The siding points have also been brought into use, along with the ground signals which read over them. The siding points are unusual in that whilst being motor operated, like the rest of the points at Northiam, the 'trap points' are



Interfleet technology students (left), on a one week's training and work experience course, with Rolvenden shed staff (l-r, Adrian Landi, Richard Moffatt, Roy Champion, Lawrence Donaldson, Ben Swan and Richard Crumpling)

driven from the same motor as the main line end by mechanical rodding, thus saving the need for a second point machine as is more usual practice adopted by Railtrack.

Particular mention must be made of Chris Lowry and Boris Perkins, who put in extra days over this period to install the overhead line wiring needed for these outermost signals and treadles.

Mention must also be made of retired railway member Peter Bagg from Bexhill, who although being unable to work on the railway has manufactured a considerable number of machined parts for the department on his lathe at home, including many $\frac{1}{8}$ " pins, and the Northiam – Bodiam train staff.

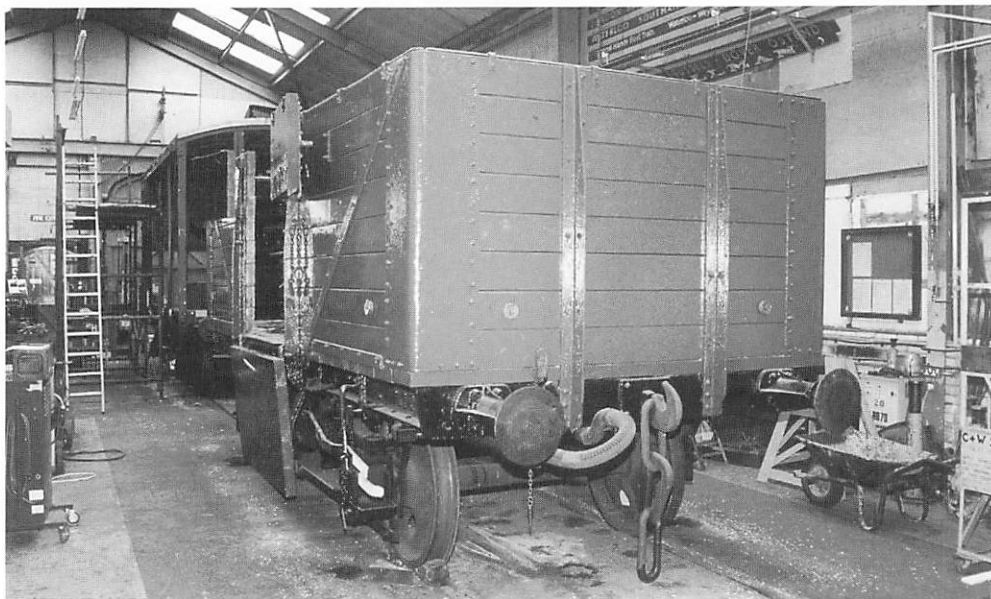
This is an interesting artefact in itself, as for historical correctness, the original was obtained from the museum and a replica built, with modifications only as necessary for today's operation; the siding points at Bodiam do not appear to have been locked by the trainstaff, as is now the case with the points at the level crossing end.

People

Full time S&T Technician Ralph Winser left the

Company in mid October. The completion of the main works at Northiam, coupled with the financial constraints we face at present meant a need to review our staffing arrangements. Ralph was a considerable asset to the Railway. Having spent much of his time in the motor trade, he had fancied a change of direction, and he brought many and varied skills to the Department. We shall miss those skills and his good humour.

In September S&TE Manager Nick Wellington married his (long suffering) partner Karen Roberts (former Wittersham Road Station Agent) who he met on the Railway. The Wedding was held in Hamble, Hampshire, as Karen originates from that area. A number of invited colleagues from both the S&TE and Operating departments made the journey for the service, and subsequent celebrations. The couple then honeymooned at the old railway station at Petworth, where in addition to accommodation in the station itself, there are two finely restored Pullman cars also converted to high quality accommodation. The couple stayed in 'Alicante' and this venue is highly recommended to members.



The O.Edwards & Sons Brewery wagon nears completion in Tenterden C&W shed

(John Liddell)

Operating

2000 has been the busiest season in the Railway's history. We have carried a record number of passengers over 183 consecutive operating days, the longest non-stop period of operation since re-opening. We have also run a record number of charter and special trains, including on September 9th, four charter trains in addition to the normal scheduled service. Thanks to the efforts of the Roster Clerks, Tony Pratt, Laurie Gurr, Keith Brown and Simon Long, and the dedication of all the Operating Department staff, we have covered more trains than ever with volunteer crews. In particular, mention should be made of the Signalmen who have been required to open all four signalboxes on most of the summers operating days. A big thank you to all the staff who have put in a tremendous effort to make this possible.

Inspector, Clive Norman, has worked steadily to pass several Signalmen for the new Signal box at Northiam, which is fitted with equipment that is new to this railway such as electric point motors and their associated safety controls. More Signalmen will be trained to work at Northiam and improve rostering flexibility in the near future. Congratulations to Ian Cooke, the Wittersham Road Station Agent, on his success at

passing out to work Wittersham Road Signalbox on Saturday 14th October. A training course for new Signalmen will be commencing in January 2001.

The severe flooding which hit the South East in mid October and unfortunately closed the Northiam to Bodiam section of the railway meant that timetables had to be worked out to enable the train service to terminate at Northiam. The timetables for the weekend of 14th/15th October were only written during the day before and the Hoppers weekend timetable was completely re-written during the week before the event! Thanks to all the staff who worked hard behind the scenes to ensure that the train service ran smoothly.

Despite the extra mileage the locomotive fleet has been covering, there has been a noticeable improvement in cleaning standards. This is in part due to a change from the traditional use of oil and paraffin to using a car wax on the paintwork. Wax does not attract dirt in the same way and so stays clean longer. The locomotive cleaners have also put in a great deal of work to ensure that the Loco fleet is as clean as possible.

Next years timetable should be completed shortly. A great deal of time, effort, and seemingly endless

meetings goes into compiling a timetable that meets the requirements and resources of all the departments involved.

The Department has put a considerable amount of time and effort into recruiting new staff, including advertisements around station sites and on the Internet, which has proved to be successful. Welcome aboard to all those who have joined us in recent months. If you haven't joined us yet and would like to be involved in the operation of the K&ESR please contact Pete Salmon or Simon Long by phone on 01580 761097 or if you would like to train as a Guard phone Chris Wood on 01580 762346.

Malcolm Webb has been re-appointed as the Guards Inspector, welcome back!

Congratulations to Colin Avey who has recently passed his Guards exam. Simon Long and Pete Salmon have also been passed as Guards, however, as paid staff they will only be covering turns when no other Guard is available. David Lloyd has also been passed for firing duties.

Austerity No 24 has been modified, and now sports a rocking grate and hopper ashpan, which has been well received by footplate staff, grateful to have an easier job of disposal. A thank you to

the Locomotive Department staff that carried out this work and we look forward to the similar modification of the other Austerity locomotives in due course.

The Department's web site has proved popular with over 2500 visitors during the first four months, if you haven't paid us a visit yet you can visit us at www.kesr.fsnet.co.uk to find out the latest news about the operating department.

During early August we had two weeks assistance from Jamie Douglas who joined us on work experience and helped with several of the operating department administration tasks which are vital to the running of the railway.

We intend to carry out a package of improvements to the yard at Rolvenden this winter, if anyone would like to help with some outdoor projects we would be pleased to have your assistance. We would also like to find a volunteer who can use Microsoft Word at home to assist with the ever increasing amount of paperwork we need to deal with. As usual, we would welcome any old rags suitable for cleaning locomotives. If you can help with any of these items please contact Simon Long or Pete Salmon on 01580 761097 or e-mail to operating@kesr.fsnet.co.uk.

Infrastructure

Heritage group

In the last couple of years the 'Tuesday Gang' have done more to preserve and reinstate the line's character and heritage than ever before. It seems fitting therefore that they should now be known as the Heritage Group and as such will continue under the guidance of the Heritage Director and to standards specified in the heritage policy.

The widely acclaimed ambience and authenticity of the Bodiam Station restoration is a direct result of this policy and co-operation between the group and the long established Bodiam team led by John Miller. It is generally agreed that similar standards should be extended to all stations and this will remain the long term aim.

After reopening, group members took a breather for a few weeks before returning to Northiam to modify cattle grids protecting the platform ramps and alter the foot crossing gates to prevent children squeezing beneath them.

Efforts have since been concentrated at Tenterden where Andre Freeman is receiving assistance in improving the appearance and quality of the site. They have now replaced the wooden fence between the road and the station building together with the wicket gate and the fence protecting the platform end and starting signal. The gates and fence from the station to the office block have also received long overdue repairs and a repaint. The oil shed has been repainted externally as has the video and print room. The platform edge has been white lined with more durable material which it is hoped will better withstand the tread of thousands of passengers.

Further improvements have been made to the children's playground, with repairs to the steps, including a new hand rail and also provision of a smart and substantial post and rail fence on the western boundary. Other non railway work has included partial repainting and repairs to the lavatory block, involving the expert replacement

of part of the window louvres by Ron Dunn. Both sets of portable platform steps have been rebuilt and repainted and the picnic benches are presently being cleaned and stained.

A brief change of scenery was enjoyed when the foot boards to Orpins Siding ground frame were replaced, otherwise it is intended to carry on with improvements at Tenterden where the signalbox steps will be replaced and the booking office refurbished in the style of Bodiam under the guidance of Ken Lee.

The group is looking forward to its next major project, Northiam No 2 platform waiting shelter, described in the last *Tenterden Terrier*. We have been unable to agree funding for this from The Friends of Northiam and wonder if an area group could help with the estimated cost of £3000.

Forestry and Conservation

The group would like to thank the Maidstone Area Group for funding the purchase of a mechanical pole saw. This piece of equipment has made the task of pruning overhanging branches much easier than the old manual pole saw which was previously used.

Much work has been carried out between Hexden and Rother bridges, although for quite a large part of the year flooded ditches have prevented us from working here. Much more work is required in this area and we will be continuing, weather permitting, for sometime to come. If you have a spare Sunday and would like to spend it in the countryside with the small Forestry and Conservation group, then please give Peter Thorogood a call on 0208 859 5082 any evening.

Bodiam Station

The goods office is now fitted-out with shelving along the entire length of the 'road-end' wall, and a counter has been constructed – all thanks to John Liddell.

Work continues on the overhaul of two platform benches and a start has been made on rebuilding the post office platform trolley, again largely through the efforts of John Liddell. All this work is privately funded.

On 13th August, a red-flowering hawthorn tree was planted at the end of the picnic area in memory of Peter Broyd, who died in May. About 60 of his railway friends and family gathered for a traditional picnic, to

accompaniment of records on a wind-up gramophone. Apologies are offered for the printing 'glitch' on page 15 of the last issue. The last paragraph of the item concerning Peter should have ended by saying that he assisted with serving coffee in the marquee on opening day, 2nd April.

A few redundant sleepers have been delivered thanks to the Permanent Way department for use in the construction of steps up to the picnic area. These will be to one side of the Huxford toilet block. Help with this job would be appreciated.

The Shell tank wagon badly needs repainting. The vehicle has been parked so that it is clear on all sides for ladder access. The ladders are on site and the paint has been funded, we just need a volunteer(s) to do the job!

Bodiam, along with much of the South-East, was hit by severe flooding over several days in October, but particularly on Thursday 12th. A surge of water swept down the Rother Valley, completely submerging all the low lying land, including much of the track at the mid-point between Northiam and Bodiam. Fortunately Bodiam station itself sits a few feet higher and was untouched by water.

The track has been badly damaged by flood water so the planned 'hoppers' reunion over the 'Delivering the Goods' weekend had to be abandoned at Bodiam and was instead switched to Northiam.

Bodiam is unlikely to see trains again before the 2001 season gets underway, but work will continue there over the winter months.

Museum

Since the last report we have welcomed three new recruits as Museum attendants: Marie Merrill, Michael Darby and Doug Edwards.

The Museum will close for the season at the end of October due to the difficulty in heating the building during the winter months. However, it is planned to take advantage of the closure and dismantle some of the displays to make improvements.

We have a 7mm scale model of Drewry Railcar No 5 to add to the Weston Clevedon & Portishead section and would like to have more models for other sections. If anyone is able to offer their services and can model in 7mm scale or larger to exhibition standards, John Miller

would like to hear from you. Non-working models for static display on plinths are required with as much detail as possible. Preferred subjects are:-

Selsey Tramways 2-4-2T 'Selsey'

'Gazelle' as a 2-2-2T before rebuilding (cabless)

One of the Callington branch Hawthorn Leslie Locomotives

Welsh Highland, Baldwin 4-6-0T no 590

A Burry Port, Avonside 0-6-0ST

Or a Burry Port, Hundswell Clark 0-6-0T

Edge Hill, Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST 'Sankey'

Models in 4mm scale are really too small for display except as part of a diorama – and there

we have difficulties of space. However we do have in stock the locomotives and rolling stock for a 4mm scale diorama of Ashover 'Butts', hopefully to include the 'Where the Rainbow Ends' café. Is there an expert scenic modeller who could do the job at a reasonable price? We are able to reimburse reasonable costs and can credit the model maker in the display.

Finally thanks are due to all those who have donated their unwanted railway books to the Museum. The sale of these keeps the Museum going in terms of replacements lamps and cleaning materials and also helps to fund some new items for display. In this context Brian Janes worked wonders in organising the second-hand book shelves.

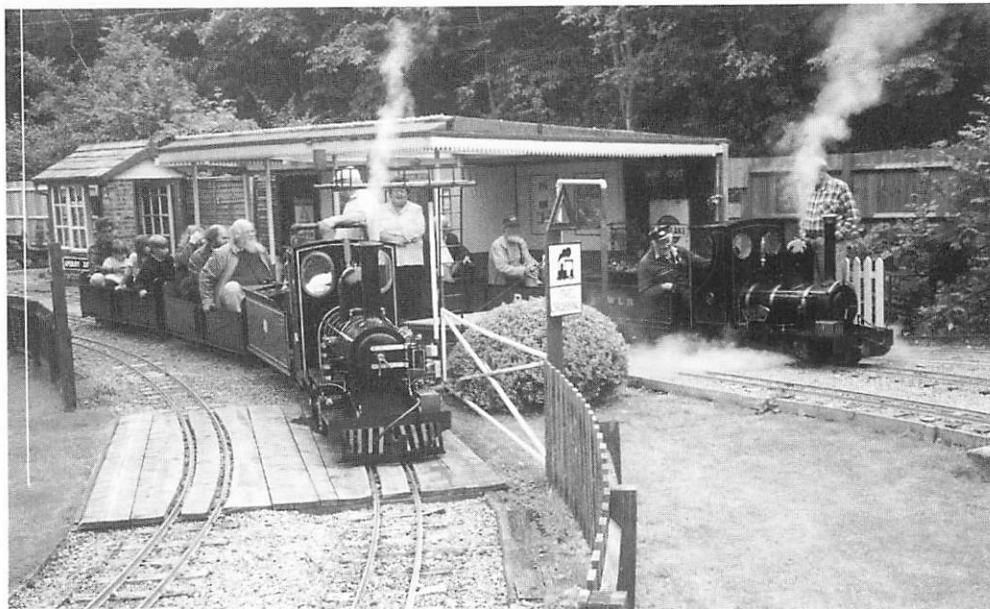
Other Groups

Ashford Area Group

On Sunday 16th July 2000, the group enjoyed another visit to the privately owned Wayside Light Railway at Hunton, created by Lawrence and Sue Martin and their family. This very extensive 7¼" gauge railway has been further extended since our last visit and now gives a journey of around 15 minutes. Frequent trains with the four locomotives in steam ensured

everyone had plenty of rides and the star of the afternoon was the newly completed locomotive No 8, finished in black, on its first passenger carrying duties. This demonstrated the very high standard of locomotive construction in the Wayside workshops.

Sue Martin organised a superb tea which rounded off an exceedingly enjoyable visit.



Visit of the Ashford Area group to the Wayside Light Railway, 16th July 2000.

(Eric Graves)

Hopping Down in Kent (and East Sussex)

Business Services Co-ordinator, Sandra Marsh, describes one of the more unusual special events this year.

This year has been one of change and experimentation for the Railway, as we adjust to the new commercial and financial realities which face us. We won't get everything right first time, but we do need in particular to rethink some of our special events, which have become rather tired and lacklustre. With this in mind the Special Events Committee, led by John Brice, had a look during the summer at the format of the regular October 'Delivering the Goods' weekend. A success at first, the occasion had rather lost its way, and consisted last year of a display of vintage vehicles at

Tenterden together with some shunting demonstrations and goods trains interspersed with the normal passenger service. Public interest was very limited, and the October weather did little to help the atmosphere.

So what was to be done? Why not give the event some focus by commemorating what was once a staple business of the line – serving the hop farms which were once so numerous nearby? And why not add to that by celebrating the end use of the hops – the real ales which everyone once drank? Other Railways run successful beer festivals, so why not us?

For the historically minded, hop gardens once covered the country parts of Kent and Sussex, with a particular concentration



Bruce Law displays a Hop Bin at Northiam Station, 21st October 2000

(John Liddell)



Hop Pocket being loaded at Northiam for Tenterden, 21st October 2000

(John Liddell)

around the lower end of our line. All the hops for the major Guinness breweries were grown at Bodiam. Up till the late 1950s Bodiam and Northiam stations were very busy each September with hopping traffic. The pickers came in their hundreds from London in special trains of vintage stock, often with a Terrier locomotive on each end for the run up the branch from Robertsbridge. Their families and friends visited them at weekends, also in specially-chartered trains. And the hops themselves left by train for the country's breweries. All of this added up to a major undertaking for the railway and for all the surrounding farms and villages. There is little left today, save for a few small farms and many memories.

So a weekend with a hopping and beer theme was an obvious candidate; it would be part of our heritage and it would appeal to an audience wider than the one we

usually attract. Once the decision was taken (only six weeks prior to the event!) planning could begin. The plans were ambitious, involving the provision of a beer tent at Tenterden by the local branch of the Campaign for Real Ale, hopping displays at Bodiam station, and the transport of hops along the line, with transshipment – via steam crane – from rail to a boat on the Rother at Northiam. A novel feature was to be the start of a register of former hoppers, who would be enabled to reminisce and share their experiences of life in years gone by. Advertising was hurriedly organised to supplement the Delivering the Goods material: to cut costs this mainly took the form of articles placed in local newspapers in the areas the hoppers once came from. Then came the floods! On 12 October the water level rose, severing the line between Northiam and Bodiam and making road access to those two stations all but

impossible. Fortunately the tide receded within a few days, but it became clear that it would be many weeks before trains could reach Bodiam – and the Rother remained so swollen that anything involving boats was right out of the question. So a quick re-think took place, involving a rapidly drawn up emergency timetable and the transfer to Northiam of the planned Bodiam activities, and by the morning of Saturday 21 October things were ready to go.

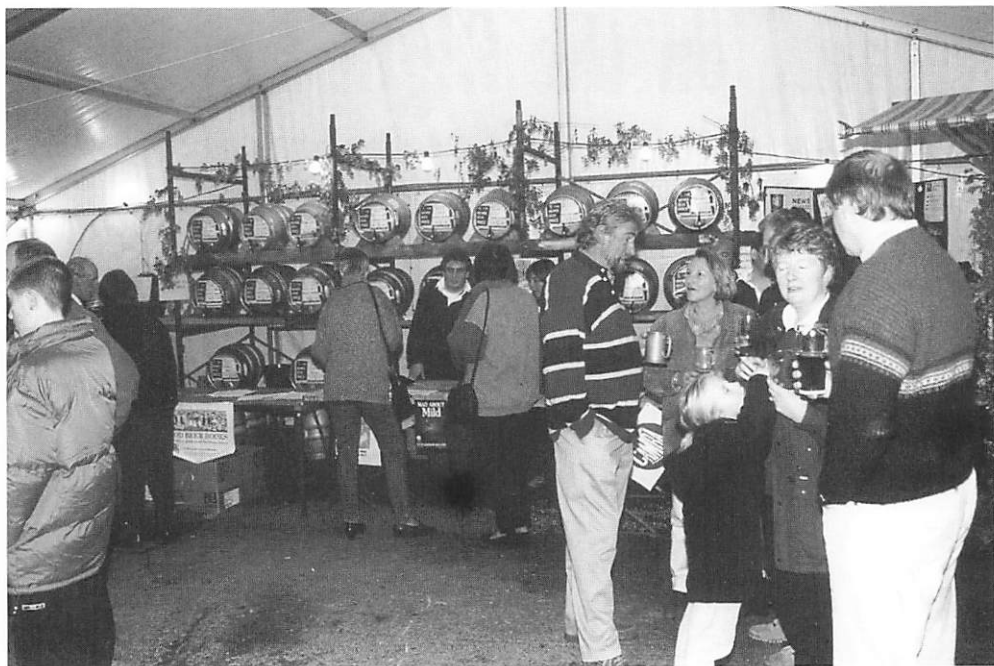
John Miller has contributed separately about the Northiam end in lineside news, so I shall concentrate on the rest of the line. The beer tent at Tenterden was open all weekend, and looked a treat. It was decorated with hops, and offered no less than 20 bitters and milds, all from local micro-breweries. Star of the show probably was a beer – ‘The Railway’ – brewed especially for the occasion by the Rother Valley Brewery of Northiam. Staffed by local CAMRA members, it did reasonable business throughout both days. We had superbly turned out vintage commercial vehicles in profusion, especially on the Sunday: some remained posed around the

station yard and some, including the restored Shepherd Neame steam lorry (complete with load of hop pockets), ventured as far afield as Northiam. The resident steam rollers did their stuff, and the station canopy was draped in hop bines. Additional catering included joints of beef roasting on the newly-acquired spit, and an authentic-looking stall selling garlic bread, soup and hot chestnuts. A few more visitors would have helped (see below) but all those who were there were most appreciative. The Operating Department ran an hourly train service from Tenterden to Northiam, using two sets, from 1100 to 1600. One of the sets ran as a mixed train, consisting of three coaches and a few restored wagons – a very popular combination. Moreover, Sunday saw the introduction into traffic of an open wagon newly painted and lettered for the Obadiah Edwards brewery, a business once located half way up Station Road in Tenterden. This pleased our friend and neighbour Henry Edwards, who comes from the same family! In between the passenger trains a demonstration goods shuttle, hauled by the Norwegian, ran



Scammell and Bedford lorries parked at Northiam, 21st October 2000

(John Liddell)



The beer tent at Tenterden, 21st October 2000

(John Liddell)

between Tenterden and Rolvenden. All this meant that there was a steam engine present at Tenterden throughout both days, and plenty of movement for photographers and other visitors. To cap it all, the Wealden Belle ran as a private charter on the Saturday evening!

Was the event a success? As an experiment, definitely yes. Visitor numbers were disappointing, but this was probably due to the poor weather and the inevitable rushed last-minute publicity for the beer and hopping attractions. The CAMRA team were happy with it as a first visit to a new location for them: they said it always took a few years to build up business and that next time they would give it far more publicity on their channels. There was certainly a positive feel to the whole thing, and a distinctive atmosphere at both stations; there was also a desire to use the weekend as a base to build for the future.

At the time of writing, the wash-up meeting had yet to be held. But a few lessons are already apparent. First, it would be a good idea to shift the event to mid-September, to coincide with the height of the hop-picking season. This would give us more chance of

better weather too. Second, more advance planning (six weeks is really too short!) would enable the Railway and CAMRA properly to sort out the publicity. It would also allow the programming of small cameos such as a re-run of a hop-pickers' train or the transfer of goods from vintage train to vintage road vehicle. Third, a well-advertised hop-pickers' reunion at a definite time and place would be better than this year's idea of people turning up at any time during the weekend. And finally, there are all the little points such as a running commentary over the Tenterden PA system. So, we now have a firm foundation for a special event which is unique to the Kent and East Sussex Railway: it is part of our history and will appeal to a wider range of people than our normal market. The Special Events Committee have a lot to do, but if you come back next September you really should be 'Hopping Down in Kent' (and East Sussex)! Better still, please offer your help to the Committee in order to make this a memorable and successful event in years to come.

Keeping on the Right Lines

Company Accountant, Philip Shaw, reviews progress in our recovery year.

THE TENTERDEN RAILWAY COMPANY GROUP TRADING SUMMARY

	Unaudited		Audited	
	9 months to		12 months to	
	30.09.2000		31.12.1999	
TRAIN OPERATIONS				
<i>Operating income</i>				
Fares (including events)	599,815		424,069	
Sundry income	18,451		6,179	
	<u>618,266</u>		<u>430,248</u>	
<i>Operating expenses</i>				
Direct operating expenses	(219,940)		(319,834)	
Administration expenditure	(130,922)		(238,633)	
Salaries and Wages	(220,285)	(571,147)	(187,822)	(746,289)
	<u>47,119</u>		<u>(316,041)</u>	
Depreciation of fixed assets	(59,500)		(65,851)	
(LOSS) ON TRAIN OPERATIONS	<u>(12,381)</u>		<u>(381,892)</u>	
DONATIONS AND COVENANTS	73,206		23,327	
MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS	54,578		42,280	
TOTAL TENTERDEN RAILWAY COMPANY	<u>115,403</u>		<u>(316,285)</u>	
COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS				
	<i>Income Expenditure</i>		<i>Income Expenditure</i>	
Wealden Belle/Sunday lunches	158,147	(64,421)	93,726	123,990
Buffet and on-train catering	181,270	(52,016)	129,254	67,587
Shop	110,762	(48,300)	62,462	39,186
Railway Experience days			9,658	12,089
Museum			4,829	5,098
Filming			2,142	-
Miscellaneous income			5,025	8,806
	<u>307,096</u>		<u>256,756</u>	
Commercial salaries and wages	(73,751)		(91,201)	
Commercial overheads	(2,022)	(75,773)	(20,980)	(112,181)
TOTAL COL STEPHENS RAILWAY ENTERPRISES	<u>231,323</u>		<u>144,575</u>	
FINANCE COSTS - GROUP	(115,497)		(124,557)	
PROFIT/(LOSS) FOR THE PERIOD - GROUP	<u>231,229</u>		<u>(296,267)</u>	

Following last year's financial fiasco, when the Railway was almost terminally bankrupt, the Board has decided to release regular statements to members in order to keep them fully appraised with the Company's financial fortunes.

Unaudited figures for the nine months to 30th September 2000 show a consolidated profit of £231,229, includes £115403 for The Tenterden Railway Company itself, which encompasses our train operations and membership activities, including subscriptions & donations and £231,323 from Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises, which reflect our commercial operations. From this is deducted finance costs of £115,497 which include interest, bank charges and audit fees.

Members will recall that figures for the six months ended 30th June 2000, previously

circulated, showed a profit of £135,610, so we have more than maintained progress in the third quarter.

Passenger numbers have been exceptionally good and, as the table shows, were 64% up over the corresponding period of last year. This has been the main reason for the rise in fares income, although our commercial activities have also traded strongly. Our strong cash flows have enabled us to pay down the backlog of trade creditors, but we still have tough targets to meet in reducing the overdraft to levels demanded by the bank.

The final quarter of the year will not be anything like as profitable, indeed we are likely to record a loss. Santa bookings are coming in fast (£20,000 raised in advance bookings by the third week in October) but this is now the traditional low season and revenues will not pick up significantly

1999					2000				
	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Average per train	Op Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Average per train	
January	3	15	542	36	6	34	1,019	30	
February	9	39	2,203	56	11	66	11,700	177	
March	7	67	1,110	30	4	12	691	58	
April	15	100	4,919	49	30	178	13,843	78	
May	16	116	9,114	79	31	134	9,832	73	
June	26	137	6,579	48	30	128	8,489	66	
July	31	192	8,207	43	31	181	11,937	66	
August	31	205	12,776	62	31	197	18,773	95	
September	25	136	7,525	55	30	139	13,539	97	
October	15	78	3,273	42	14	73			
November	0	0	0	0	3	17			
December	17	80	9,861	123	10	58			
	<u>195</u>	<u>1,135</u>	<u>66,109</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>1,217</u>	<u>89,823</u>	<u>74</u>	
Pullmans			1,965	(1,373)			1,217	-11%	
Charters			1,035	(769)			1,772	130%	
Sunday Lunches			1,244	(994)			1,218	23%	
Teas			560	(518)					
Privileges			3,899	(2,843)			3246	14%	
			<u>75,040</u>	<u>(59,472)</u>			<u>97,276</u>	<u>64%</u>	
Bookings from									
Tenterden			55,962	Totals to September 1999 ↑					
Rolvenden			0						
Wittersham			0						
Northiam			9,294						
Bodiam			0						
On train			<u>853</u>						
			<u>66,109</u>						

until the early Spring. We shall have to meet the cost of flood damage – estimated to top £30,000, whilst our substantial fixed overheads still have to be met.

The opening to Bodiam has changed the focus of operations quite considerably. We are now a 'destination' railway and a large proportion of passengers use us as a convenient method getting to Bodiam Castle, whereas in the past, a trip to Northiam was a ride on a train to nowhere. Charter traffic continues to expand and there are plenty of untapped opportunities for joint promotions with the National Trust at Bodiam. Levels of expenditure will be kept under close scrutiny in 2001, with capital expenditure being kept approximately in line with depreciation. Some of our resources will be directed to improving the quality of the station sites at Tenterden and Northiam, which are fairly run down in appearance. Bodiam is a shining example of what can be done to present an attractive terminus. We also need to expand our computer systems to incorporate the bookings side of the business, which is presently manually administered. The new accounting systems installed at the beginning of the year are now providing adequate financial information,

which we never had in the past. A revised management structure is now in place, bar the appointment of a catering manager to supervise activities in this area. An announcement is, however, expected shortly.

The year 2000 is likely to be the most profitable in the Company's history, but we are still saddled with loans and overdrafts of well in excess of £1m, which for a Company of our size is unacceptable. Furthermore, the results have been boosted to the tune of £73,206 by the very generous response from the members to our appeal for funds in the early part of the year. It will be noted that the whole of the 'profit' from the Tenterden Railway Company in the nine month period was gulped up by finance costs. Our heavy level of financial gearing leaves us very little room for manoeuvre in the event of a downturn in the economy or any other events that crop up beyond our control. What would have happened if our bridges had been washed away in the floods?

So, we are on the mend and trading well, but we must exert extreme vigilance on costs throughout 2001 if we are really to learn from the lessons of the past.

Mill Ditch Washout

Peter Barber evaluates the problems we face to restore the line following the recent October floods.

During the serious floods of 12/13 October, the railway had two wash outs around Mill Ditch, and several small ballast shifts on the same curve. Both of these were around 15m long and 1.5m deep with the spoil being deposited on the field. The speed of the flood was incredible, reportedly rising 600mm in under half an hour, and to higher levels than have been recorded before. This left over 1 mile of track under water up to a depth of 1.6m; we were lucky to get away with so little damage. The floods exceeded the Environment Agency probability of a once in a 100 year flood.

The washout 200m on the Northiam side of Mill Ditch was caused by sheer weight of water and a

blocked cross drain. This made the railway formation act as a dam holding the water back until it ran over the top, eroding the formation. The second washout was at Mill Ditch. Mill Ditch has had flood banks constructed to the same pattern as the Rother, to contain the flood water when it backs up from the Rother into Mill Ditch. At the time that this work was being done, the railway was dormant and balance pipes were put under the railway and the banks extended to run parallel to the track over the ditch. During the storms the majority of the rain fell on the up stream side. When the Rother burst its banks the largest volume of water came from Bodiam direction. With Mill Ditch acting

effectively as a dam, the railway was the lowest point. With the difference in level being some 600mm, there was a strong flow of water running from the Bodiam flood plain to the Northiam one and the sheer weight of water blasted away a section of track formation. The embankment, as originally constructed, contains a layer of beach ballast. Once the water got into this, the structure would have disintegrated under the forces very quickly. The minor ballast shifts were caused by the strong currents flowing through the surface ballast.

During the first inspection on 15th October we were presented with two pieces of track suspended over large pools of water and dipping with a stick revealed the true extent of the damage. This was four days after the storms and still the track was only just passable with wellington boots. Not everyone made it back with dry boots. As the valley flood protection scheme is designed to keep the water out, it also stops the water draining off the flood plain. The majority of the water has to be pumped over the flood banks and into the Rother, which is a slow task with the vast expanses of water held. With the onset of winter, the breaches have to be filled as quickly as possible to reduce the damage to the compacted base of the embankment. Currently the alluvial clay is compacted and stable, but if the frost is allowed to act on this, the clay will turn into a mud hole. The sides will also fall in, increasing the area to be filled and straining the rail ends and potentially bending the rail.

The minor ballast shifts are easy to rectify, the uncontaminated ballast will be pulled back, topped up where necessary and then tamped and aligned. Some of the shoulder ballast has been lost on other sections and this will be topped up as necessary. The main problem with the two large washouts is that the eroded spoil is now saturated and unsuitable to reform the embankment. Fill will have to be imported to the site to reform the structure, and it will have to be a stone granular fill that will not 'pudding up'.

Firstly, the suspended track will have to be removed for safe working and free access. With the washout furthest from Mill Ditch, two 600 mm spun concrete cross-drains will be installed

to act as balance pipes. This will reduce the potential damage if we get another severe flood. The embankment will then be reformed with the granular fill compacted in 100mm layers. This layer will be wrapped with a sheet of geo-grid to hold it together which will give greater strength against any future flood water currents. On top of this layer the track ballast and permanent way will be replaced, then tamped and aligned.

The charm of the railway is the fact that it winds its way along the bottom of the Rother valley, but this has its drawbacks. The low embankments were designed to reduce the original costs, and even though we have raised the embankments by 400mm, in extreme conditions we are at risk. It is a testament to all those involved in the reconstruction of the line that so little damage happened during these extreme conditions. A report will be sent to the Environmental Agency and during the ongoing improvements to the flood defences, provision will be made to reduce the fast movement of flood water across the valley floor.

Company Chairman, Norman Brice, writes:

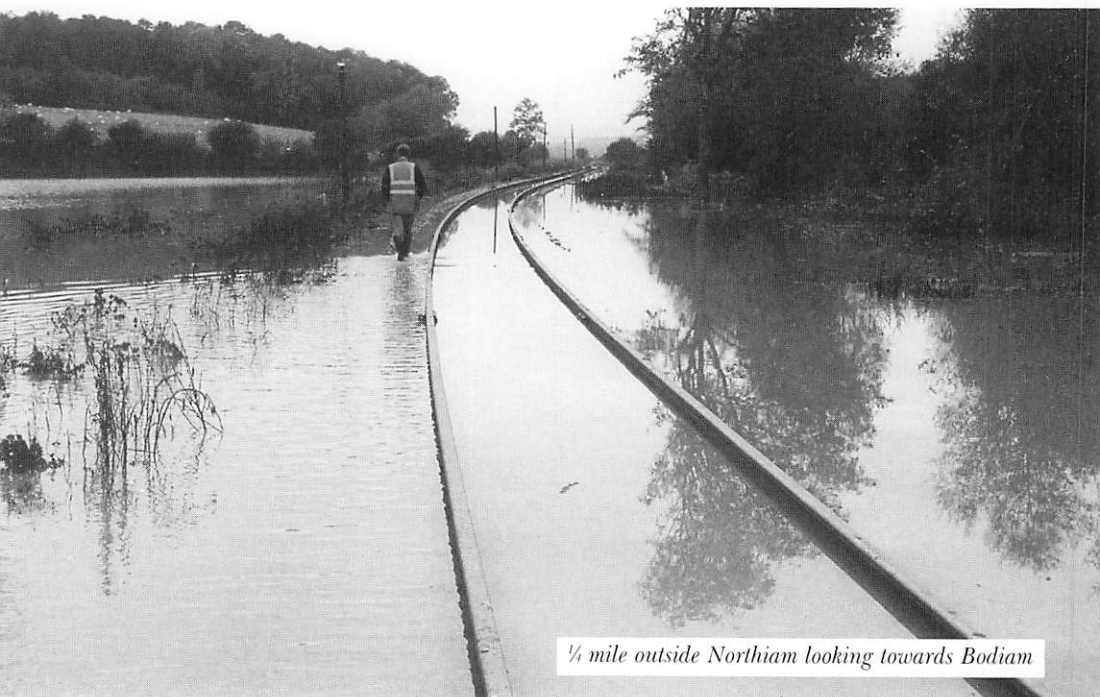
Those of us old enough to remember main line steam may also recall the late Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan. When interviewed by a young reporter who asked him what troubled him most, Macmillan replied "Events dear boy, events". I can understand how he felt.

After a spectacularly successful year which saw us opening to Bodiam, a Royal Visit, two very successful 'Thomas' events and other special days, which resulted in our carrying more passengers up to the end of August 2000 as in the whole of 1999 (see separate article), 'events' over which we have no control have intervened.

We are very fortunate that Bodiam Extension Project Manager, Peter Barber, has agreed to return to employment with the company to supervise the repairs. It is envisaged that the work will be completed by late November and the work has been provisionally costed at around £25,000, which will be funded from existing resources. The bulk of the labour will be provided by volunteers supplemented by some specialist plant operators.

I would like to conclude by thanking every member of staff who has worked so hard over the summer to make the year as successful as it has turned out.

Flooding Down the Line



¼ mile outside Northiam looking towards Bodiam

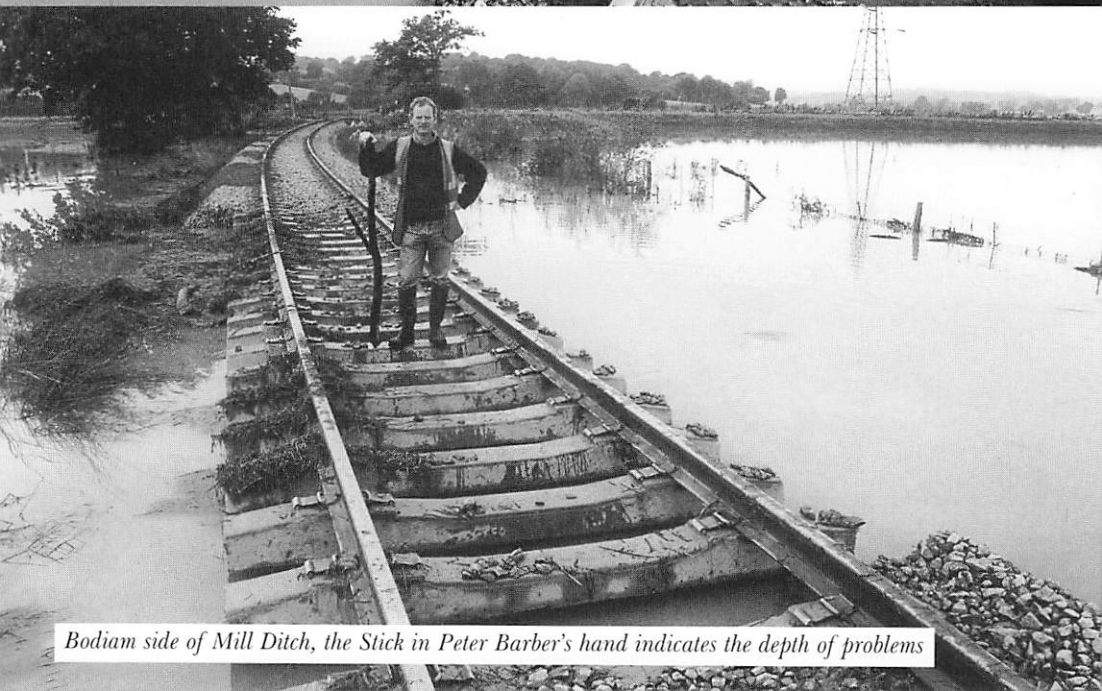


Northiam side of Mill Ditch

*Photographed by John Liddell
on 15th October 2000*



Dixler Straight



Bodiam side of Mill Ditch, the Stick in Peter Barber's hand indicates the depth of problems

Hawthorn Leslie and all new!

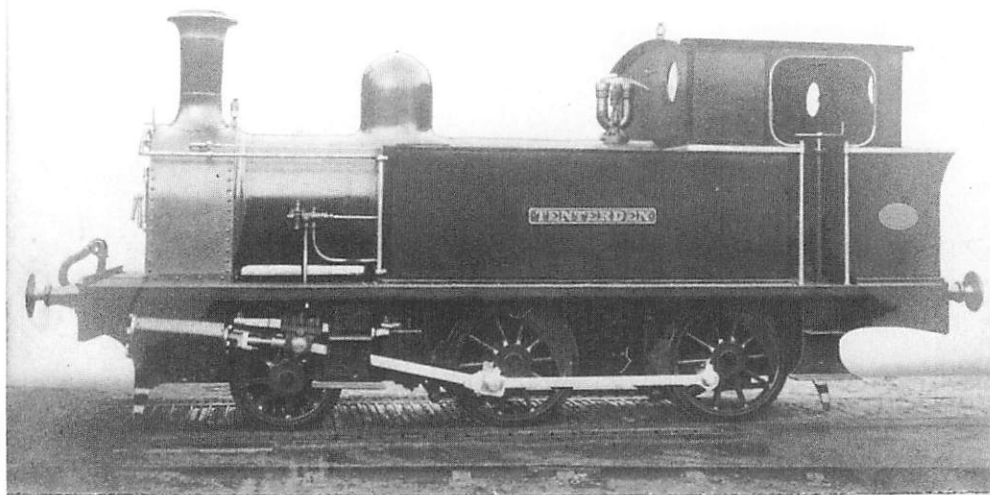
Museum attendant, Brian Janes, looks at the products of this famous locomotive builder supplied to Colonel Stephens

Holman Fred Stephens set himself up in the 1890s as an engineer and manager of the complete light railway as evolved by the theorists that so infested late Victorian life. In their eyes a light railway was not an assemblage of second-hand mainline equipment of dubious merit but of fit for purpose, new material. In Stephens' first independent venture, the Rye & Camber, this policy was successfully pursued. In his second venture, the Selsey Tramway, he was less successful but he tackled the provision of an ideal standard gauge light railway locomotive. In 1897 Peckett & Sons of Bristol, produced to Stephens' specification the perfect theoretical light railway locomotive, the 2-4-2T Selsey. Purpose designed but largely built up from standard Peckett components, Selsey was immediately successful on the light loads of the tramway. Capital was short however and she remained unique but Stephens retained a fatherly

pride in her and a photo always hung in his office.

For his next venture in locomotive design for the Rother Valley Railway (later Kent & East Sussex Railway) Stephens again aimed at the best theoretical locomotive but turned to another builder, R & W Hawthorn, Leslie & Co Ltd of Newcastle upon Tyne. The reasons for this change of builder are, in the absence of hard evidence, open to some speculation. They may however be found in the company policies of the builders concerned. Peckett's had been established in 1881 but was building only an average of 11 locomotives a year in the early 1890s. From 1897 however they grew rapidly with the provision of new facilities and production and marketing policy "specialisation and standardisation" rather on the lines of "you can have any colour provided it's black". The market in small light railway

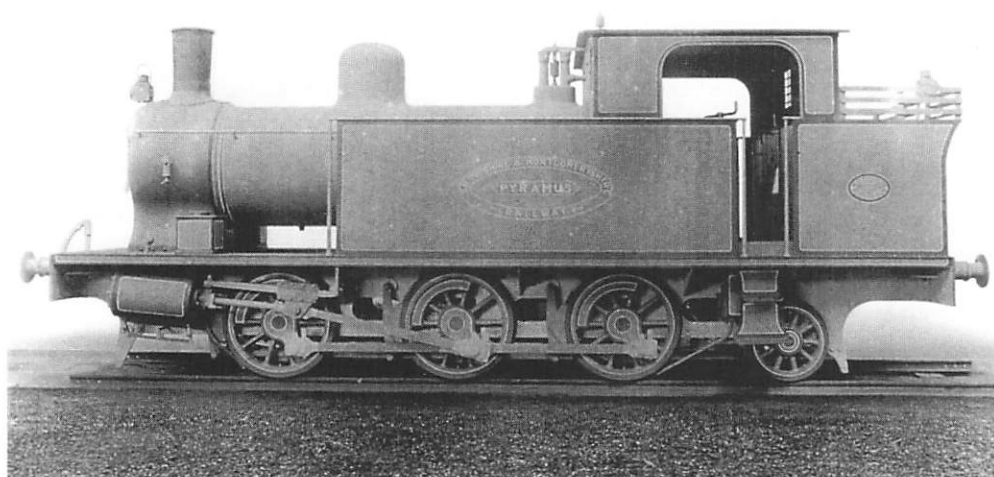
R & W. HAWTHORN, ENGINEERS, NEWCASTLE ON TYNE.



*Rother Valley (Light) Railway.
4' 8½" Gauge.*

*H.F. Stephens
Engineer. 1899.*

*Locomotive No 1 'Tenterden' from a framed photograph in Col Stephens' office
(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)*



Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway No 5 'Pyramus'

(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

locomotives showed no signs of maturing and it was probably a wise management decision to concentrate on standard industrial shunting tanks, a policy that was to prove very profitable and successful.

Hawthorn Leslie by contrast had a tradition of locomotive building stretching back to the early days of railways. From 1870 however their Forth Bank Works in Newcastle had become only part of a wider, predominantly shipbuilding, company. The decision of mainline companies, particularly the North Eastern Railway to build their own caused large mainline locomotive orders to disappear from 1875. Hawthorn Leslie thereafter survived on single and small batch production utilising "a body of particularly high class and loyal workmen whom we did not want to turn adrift". Charles Edward Straker, a partner and director from 1876 followed this sentimental and unprofitable approach, as he appeared simply to enjoy managing a locomotive works amongst his many other duties. Following Straker's death in harness in 1933 the locomotive business passed to a new joint venture with their erstwhile neighbours, Robert Stephenson, and the new venture Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns (RSH) concentrated on more profitable standard products. By the mid-1890s Forth Bank

Works was at very low ebb producing only some 10 to 15 locomotives a year. Stephens' orders for one-off locomotives would have been received with open arms.

Whatever reasons for the choice of builder, Stephens' relationship with Hawthorn Leslie was to prove long lasting. For the next 15 years, when Stephens had the money for new engines he turned to Hawthorn Leslie. The resultant products throw an interesting light on Stephens' strengths and weaknesses as a specifier of motive power for light railways.

The Rother Valley Railway 2-4-0Ts

With the construction in 1899 of Tenterden and Northiam by Hawthorn Leslie the use of engine builders' standard components was again very evident. They were directly comparable in capacity to its builder's smaller industrial shunters. Well known examples of such engines were Ironsides built in 1890 for Southampton Docks and passing into BR ownership; Met built in 1909 and kept in preservation on the KESR for a time and Bonny Prince Charlie, built by RSH in 1949 for Corralls, and now preserved at Didcot. Important changes were however made for the little 2-4-0Ts, for they had a smaller diameter but longer boiler, smaller wheels and single slide bars to

accommodate the necessary leading truck. The omission of the trailing wheel and consequent loss of coal capacity relative to Selsey was an interesting development. Perhaps this was a move to enhance haulage capacity as steam engines tend to "sit back" on starting and if driving wheels are at the back adhesion improves. Certainly both of these engines had a reputation for excellent haulage for their very modest size. But it was not without cost. Bunkers of only 1 ton capacity for a 20-mile plus round trip must have tested the fireman's skill.

In service the engines suffered from bearing and wheel problems, no doubt a legacy of their industrial heritage, and perhaps steaming problems, for their original chimneys were replaced in 1910 by the stovepipes then in vogue with Stephens. Perhaps because of the wheel problem Tenterden's wheels were replaced in 1904 by larger 4 ft diameter ones. Tenterden seems to have spent most of her existence on the duties for which she was designed but did very little work from 1930 and probably none after 1936. She was finally sold for scrap in 1941. Northiam had a much more adventurous life. She was used on the East Kent railway from September 1912 to 1914 and then travelled in 1918 to the WC&P where it worked until 1921. She then returned to the East Kent Railway and remained until 1930. Back on the KESR she reverted to her original work, probably largely filling in for failed railcars and was last recorded working on 22 August 1938 before being scrapped with her sister in 1941. However she had one immortal moment in 1937 when she starred as Gladstone in the film 'Oh, Mr Porter' made on the Basingstoke & Alton Light Railway.

Hecate

There has been endless speculation for the precise reason behind the production of this locomotive. The real surprise was in its sheer size compared with what went before. An 0-8-0T with very large driving wheels that were flangeless in the centre was rare. Eight coupled tanks were most unusual in British practice and off the mainline only three other British engines had this wheel arrangement, all in the Lancashire coalfields. Even on the mainline only one or two odd examples had been built by 1904 when Hecate was produced. The two popular theories are that the locomotive was

designed either for the failed KESR Maidstone extension or for through working to Tonbridge. If either of these is correct, then surely the thinking was fundamentally flawed. Not only was the engine over large but coal capacity was insufficient for the length of run. 0-8-0Ts by their nature are heavy haul sloggers and with the loads found on a rural light railway and ruling gradients of 1 in 50 a 6-coupled locomotive would surely have been sufficient. Hecate's weight was not over heavy for the KESR's extension but her flangeless wheels on lightly maintained tracks were surely asking for trouble. As a light railway engine Hecate was a total failure. In the author's opinion this was not due to its weight but because of its rigidity and inflexibility as a traffic machine. Hecate really had to wait for the sale to the Southern Railway and the heavy shunting duties there in order to come into her own.

The design origins of Hecate's components are also interesting. Hawthorn Leslie had acquired the goodwill, designs and patents of another Tyneside builder, Chapman & Furneaux (formerly Black Hawthorne & Co), in 1902. Hecate reflects many of the design characteristics of their heavy shunter (including the copper-capped chimney). These shunters were a very successful addition to the Hawthorn Leslie range and continued to be produced with variations to the very end of steam production by RSH. Several have been preserved.

Arriving on the KESR in April 1905 for the opening of the Headcorn extension in May, Hecate was rapidly found to lack work and unsuitable for the track. At periods of exceptionally heavy traffic, such as the Biddenden Cattle Fairs, her haulage capacity clearly outweighed her other disadvantages. In April 1910 the arrival of Ilfracombe Goods No 7 Rother marginalised her further but in August 1915 however Hecate found a full time job. She was despatched on hire to the East Kent Railway assisting in construction of some of the track and Tilmanstone Colliery Yard. Thereafter she was retained for working coal trains to Shepherdswell but by October 1919 heavy repairs were necessary and she returned to her slumbers on the KESR.

When Stephens died in 1931, his successor, W H Austen, faced with the railway's bankruptcy and shortage of motive power

did a deal with the Southern Railway and Hecate was exchanged for two carriages, a Beattie saddle tank and a spare boiler. After prolonged repairs at Ashford Works Hecate finally left the works in September 1933 as Southern Railway No 949. After limited use at Tonbridge and Guildford en route, Hecate reached Nine Elms and took up work in the goods yard together with several G6 0-6-0Ts. Here, with 2 regular crews, she became known affectionately as 'Old Hiccups' because of her faltering exhaust. Her usefulness was such however that when her boiler failed in November 1939 she was fitted with a spare boiler from a Brighton D tank with a specially lengthened barrel. Resuming her duties she remained gainfully employed around Nine Elms until a collision with a King Arthur class 4-6-0 damaged her leading main frame. She was then withdrawn and scrapped in March 1950.

The PDSWJR 0-6-2Ts

Perhaps the lessons of rigidity and coal capacity had been learnt for Stephens' next essay was two tanks as large as Hecate but with more flexibility and increased coal capacity. The PDSWJR Callington Branch has fierce gradients and curves and these relatively big 0-6-2Ts were specified in 1907. Earl of Mount Edgcombe and Lord St Leven were largely made up of the same standard components as Hecate, indeed in many respects they were identical but with the addition of a Belpaire firebox. However they could bend and they did not have flangeless drivers to derail. They were a great and continuing success.

The most important innovation on these engines was the use of a trailing truck. The total adhesion of Hecate might have been abandoned but in practice 6 wheels proved adequate adhesion on several miles of 1-in-38/39 incline on the branch. The flexibility of the trailing truck proved essential on the twisting former narrow gauge line. The other innovation on these engines was the Belpaire firebox. Unusual in the UK at this period the high first cost of this boiler told against light railway principles and is difficult to understand. Nevertheless such boilers had recently been specified for Indian Railways by the locomotive industry's standards body (BESA) and Hawthorn Leslie would have been familiar with these specifications. The 0-6-2Ts boilers in fact closely resemble those of the BESA standard

metre gauge 4-6-0.

The engines were smartly turned out in Stephens' customary dark blue with copper cap chimney, dome covers and safety valve bases. For most of the time as PDSWJR engines they ran without numbers. Taken over by the London South Western Railway in 1922 as Nos 757 and 758, the Southern Railway in 1923 and British Railways in 1948 when they became 30757 and 30758, they continued to work on the Callington Branch largely on goods services but quite often substituting on passenger trains. The arrival of Ivatt 2-6-2Ts in September 1952 made them redundant on the Callington Branch but they worked intermittently in the Plymouth area until moving to Eastleigh in mid-1956. Lord St Leven hardly worked again but the Earl acted as shed and works pilot until withdrawn at the end of 1957.

Surprisingly Stephens never again used this successful design possibly because the engines could deal with heavier loads than were normally found on his light railways. However the design was used again by others and also considered for substantial construction by the Southern Railway

One can only speculate about any possible Stephens' influence in military engineering railway circles immediately prior to WW1 but in 1914 the Royal Engineers took delivery of an 0-6-2T Sir John French for the Woolmer Instructional Military Railway (later Longmoor Military Railway). This was a near complete copy of Stephens' two engines except that for instructional purposes the military specified outside valve gear and the coal capacity was sensibly increased to 2½ tons. Again successful and popular, it was followed by a larger clone in 1938. With RSH building only standard designs the railway turned to Bagnalls who built the engine Kitchener. This was a larger engine modified with piston valves, round topped boiler and standard Bagnall features but was clearly modelled on the earlier machines.

Following successful trials of Lord St Leven on Stephens newly built Torrington to Halwill line in August 1926 there was a firm proposal to build 6 further engines (but with superheaters). Southern Railway parsimony on new steam engines killed the proposal and the adequate but unspectacular rebuild of Stroudley's E1 to E1R 0-6-2Ts sufficed.



Bere Alston & Callington Light Railway No 3 "A.S.Harris" (Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

The 0-6-0Ts

The third engine provided for the PDSWJR in 1907 was a perfectly standard Hawthorn Leslie product; one of their 0-6-0Ts with 16" cylinders. Named A S Harris it was reputed to be for passenger use. Although no doubt cheaper than the 0-6-2Ts it is not clear why a smaller wheeled lighter engine could be considered necessary for this task. In practice the larger engines were frequently on passenger service and the 0-6-0T was often the shunter at Callington fulfilling the same role as its industrial sisters.

A S Harris continued to undertake the duties for which it had been built becoming LSWR No 756 in 1922 and passing to the Southern Railway who finally replaced her on the branch in June 1929 with an 02 0-4-4T. Thereafter she led a peripatetic existence. She was tried on Wenford Bridge Mineral Line and various times shunted at Winchester, Eastleigh, Stewarts Lane, Fratton, Bournemouth, Brighton, Tonbridge, Folkestone and Dover. Her only prolonged stay was from 1931 to 1939 as Nine Elms shed pilot. Finally the prospect of a renewed firebox caused her to be condemned in August 1951.

In 1913 the East Kent Railway ordered 2 similar but larger tanks for its use, one being

officially photographed as EKR Gabrielle. However shortage of money caused the order to be cancelled and the engines were subsequently sold elsewhere. Works No 3026, probably Gabrielle, was sold in May 1914 at a bargain price of £1500 to the Wemyss Private Railway in Fife as their No 15 but for some reason lay in store until early 1918. It then commenced work in the sidings at the associated Wellesley Colliery, Methil passing with the colliery to the NCB in 1947 as Fife & Clackmannan No 29 before reverting to No 15 when the new East Fife NCB area was created in 1952. She outlasted the colliery, finally ceasing work in 1970 and going for scrap in 1972. The second locomotive was delivered on 25 November 1914 to civil engineering contractors, Sir John Jackson Ltd. They named her Northumbria and employed her on the construction of military camps and railways on Salisbury Plain until she passed to the War Department probably in 1916 and was transferred to the Kimmel Park Military Camp Railway near Rhyl. At the end of the war she was sold to the Ebbw Vale Steel Iron & Coal Co as their No 36, passing to Richard Thomas & Co at Scunthorpe in 1936. There she lasted until 1965.

Further orders for 0-6-0T's might have

flowed from Stephens reconstruction of the Burry Port and Gwendraeth Valley Railway. His advice is thought to have been sought on the types of locomotive that would be suitable for use on the reconstructed line. He was not however the locomotive engineer so although the specification was influenced by experiences with A S Harris orders were placed with Hudswell, Clarke and Co of Leeds. The resultant engines were their supplier's standard type (very similar to Hawthorn Leslie 's) and were successful and long-lived.

The Shropshire & Montgomeryshire 0-6-2Ts

Although many people have commented on Hecate and its oddities these locomotives were even odder. They throw up real questions about Stephens' eccentricity or even competence as a locomotive engineer particularly following as they did the very successful PDSWJR engines.

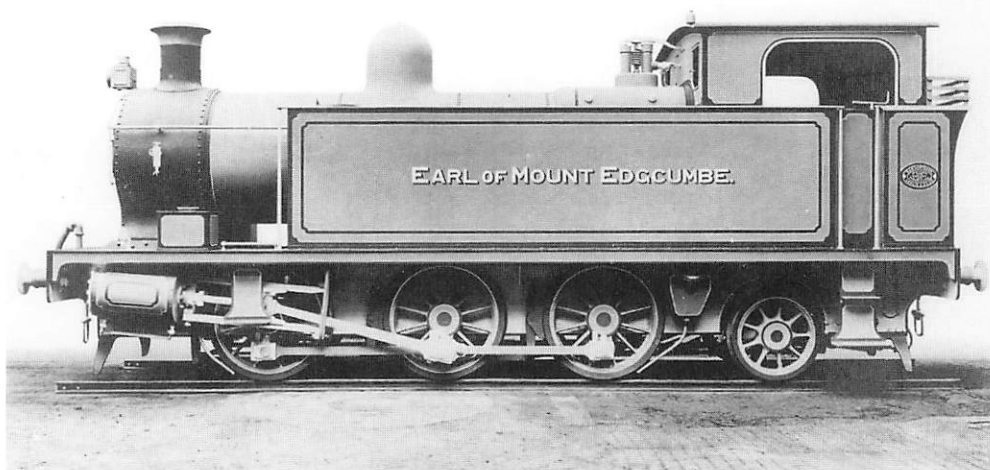
Thisbe and Pyramus were built in 1911 for the newly rebuilt Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, apparently as their principal engines. Once again, standard components were used but they were completely different to the earlier 0-6-2Ts and Hecate. They can only be described as very odd engines. The boiler, cylinders and driving wheels were directly comparable to the Hawthorn Leslie small 0-6-0T. They had however attached a huge coalbunker supported by a rigid extension of the frames with a trailing wheel with very limited side play. To cap it all, water supply was reduced to below that of the Hawthorn Leslie standard 0-6-0Ts. Finally their appearance was not improved by Stephens' speciality of the period, a stovepipe chimney.

These engines are often cited as failures on the grounds of excessive weight and although they had a heavier axle load than the very light Terriers and Ilfracombe Goods, they were in fact comparatively light engines and should have had no problems on the SMR. They were however obviously very rigid and their trailing wheel arrangement was very likely defective leading to at least one serious derailment. They were also probably deficient in water capacity for travelling the 20 miles from Shrewsbury to Llanymynech. All in all they were a sorry failure and were rapidly sold to the government a desperate buyer in World War I.

The service history of these two engines is cloaked in a certain amount of mystery. On the SMR they did not as one might expect of the newest engines, haul the opening train and are barely mentioned in the introductory article written by that notable enthusiast, T R Perkins, for the *Railway Magazine*. Perhaps they were already having trouble with the newly laid track. The next few years' service are equally unclear. They must have worked quite a number of trains for, until a second Ilfracombe Goods arrived on hire in May 1914, there would have been little alternative. A potentially very serious derailment on the Severn Viaduct that nearly pitched Thisbe into the river might have signalled the end. Quite when the tanks left the railway is uncertain. Many printed sources say the government bought them in 1914 but the government did not generally call up spare locomotives until 1916. Further Thisbe appears to have arrived on the Woolmer Instructional Military Railway at Longmoor late in 1916 after a short period of service with Pyramus on the Kinnel Park Camp Railway. However, the second SMR Ilfracombe Goods had received Pyramus' name and number by 17 May 1915 so that engine had probably been sold or laid aside by then. A third Ilfracombe Goods appeared on hire in March 1916 and in due course took Thisbe's name and number.

Thisbe kept her name with the Military was renumbered as Military Camp Railways' No 84 and was quietly tolerated at Longmoor until 1930, being broken up around 1931. Pyramus was sold out of WD service after the war, possibly in 1922, to James Clements of Cardiff as their No 34 but moved on to the Nunnery Coal Company (later National Coal Board) at Sheffield. She was sensibly converted back to the 0-6-0T she should have been originally for otherwise she would not have survived rough industrial tracks. She was scrapped in April 1962. A long-lived tribute to her components, if not Stephens' design quirks.

With the abortive order for the EKR and the drastic changes in economic circumstances during and following the First World War the link with Hawthorn Leslie was broken, never to be resumed. Stephens was only ever able to order one more new locomotive, the WC&P's No 5 in 1919. This was a Manning Wardle industrial saddle tank of their



Bere Alston & Callington Light Railway No 4 'Earl of Mount Edgcumbe'
(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

standard type which was much favoured by light railways because of their reliability, tolerance of poor track and toughness. Even here Stephens dabbled. His now favoured stovepipe appeared and disc wheels were specified evidently to improve adhesive weight. These led to troubles with hot boxes no doubt due to restricted airflow through the wheels.

Stephens was not a locomotive designer but specified types, leaving most of the details to the builder. After his initial essays with small engines he does not seem to fully understand the need for proper track performance on a light railway and in Hecate, Thisbe and Pyramus he produced white elephants. His choice of Hawthorn Leslie as builder was sound and their standard components gave long-lived and reliable mechanical performance. This collaboration reached a high point in the PDSWJR 0-6-2T's Earl of Mount Edgcumbe and Lord St Leven. These were excellent engines in every way. They served their original purpose for nearly 50 years until supplanted by perhaps the ultimate branch line engine the Ivatt 2-6-2T's. Tribute indeed.

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The Feeding of the 145,000

An anniversary remembered

It is now sixty years since the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk, one of the decisive events of the Second World War and still one of the most evocative. In this operation, Headcorn station – Headcorn Junction as it was always called by the Kent & East Sussex Railway – and the people of Headcorn and the neighbouring villages played an important part.

As the Channel ports of Belgium and France fell one by one to the German blitzkrieg of May 1940, some British troops and equipment had already been withdrawn, and between 20 May and the early hours of 27 May, 55 special troop trains were run by the Southern Railway from south-eastern ports carrying more than 24,000 soldiers. The situation continued to worsen, and on Sunday 26 May the order was given for Operation Dynamo, with the aim of rescuing as many as possible of the British and Allied troops encircled by the enemy at the French port of Dunkirk.

No fewer than 220 naval vessels and 650 other craft took part in the evacuation, gallantly sticking to their task in the face of heavy air attacks. Most of the Southern Railway's cross-Channel steamers went to Dunkirk, and some were lost or damaged, with casualties among their crews also.

But the job was not over when the exhausted soldiers reached English soil. They now had to be transported to camps in all parts of the country, and this task proved to be far greater than anyone could have dared hope. At the beginning of Operation Dynamo it was expected that twenty to thirty thousand men might be brought back, but by the end of the evacuation on 4 June, no fewer than 335,000 had been transported. All four main-line companies contributed to a pool of 186 trains (nearly 2000 vehicles) – 55 trains from the Southern, 47 from the LNER, 44 from the LMS and 40 from the Great Western – but most of the locomotives were from the Southern Railway, and as the *Railway Magazine* commented at the time, "their brightness and cleanliness contributed not a little cheer to the scene".

By dawn on 27 May, the procession of trains had begun. As it was not known at which ports the ships would arrive, no written instructions could be issued, and the whole of the working was organised by telephone from hurriedly established control offices. In fact, Dover despatched the most trains, 327, with a further 259 running from Sheerness, Margate, Ramsgate and Folkestone. It was very fortunate that the line between Dover and Folkestone, which had been closed several times during the previous winter because of chalk falls, had been fully reopened on 21 April. The traffic reached a peak on Friday 31 May and Saturday 1 June, when 107 and 110 trains respectively were run.

Most of the trains ran via Redhill to avoid the London area, and regular services were suspended on the Tonbridge-Redhill and Redhill-Reading lines. Trains had to reverse at Redhill, which was the scene of frenetic activity, with many trains turned round in four minutes or less. In addition to the uncertainty as to the port of disembarkation, the military authorities had often not determined a train's destination when it set off and drivers had to be told to go on to Redhill and expect further orders there.

After the first couple of days, trains were stopped alternately at Headcorn and Paddock Wood for refreshments, both these stations having loops where a through train could overtake a stationary one (see *The Tenderden Terrier* for Spring 1981 for details of the development of the track layout at Headcorn). While this practice certainly made the life of the operating department easier, this article celebrates Headcorn's achievement of feeding no less than 145,000 troops, most of them exhausted, dispirited and filthy, and some wrapped in blankets after losing their uniforms getting away from the beaches. The regular staff was no more than a stationmaster and two porters, and so the extra work was done by the Army and local people.

The Royal Army Supply Corps provided food and some forty soldiers. A single field kitchen was sent at first, but eventually no less than fifteen were lined up outside the station. Volunteer helpers included fifty ladies mobilised by the WI, among them the mother of TRC



Headcorn Up platform with the train of LNER corridor stock and evacuated troops (Kent Messenger)

member Doug Lindsay who then lived in Ulcombe. These ladies worked eight-hour shifts for nine days and nights in a thatched barn on the south side of the High Street (since demolished). Twelve or fifteen at a time would cut sandwiches until one lady declared she never wanted to eat a sandwich again. Headcorn resident Laurie Woodcock was at that time working as an errand boy for the village baker's while awaiting call-up, and was allowed to assist in the afternoons, sometimes staying all night. His job was to shell hard-boiled eggs cooked by the RASC, which were then chopped up to fill sandwiches.

According to 'War on the Line', the official history of the Southern Railway in the Second World War, the troops were also given jellied veal, sardines, cheese, oranges and apples. "Hard-boiled eggs were reckoned in thousands; so were meat pies and rolls and sausages. Five thousand of each of these last three delicacies appeared at Headcorn one evening, and by the next evening they 'were not, translated unaware'." Tea and coffee were also produced in gallons by the RASC's field kitchens.

At times trains were stopping every eight minutes, and the RASC had to work fast to make sure that everyone got something to eat and drink, even if some were so exhausted that they

could take no more than a bite of a sandwich and a mouthful of tea. Drinks were handed into the trains in tin cans, and when time was up there was a shout of "Sling them out". Tins clattered on to the platform, and soldiers and volunteers alike fell to washing them and preparing for the next train.

The photograph (courtesy of the *Kent Messenger*) shows a train of LNER corridor stock halted at the up platform, as refreshments are handed to its occupants. Boxes, baskets and churns litter the platform. Most of the lamp posts and other obstructions (though not the nearest lamp post) have been given the white stripes which were intended to make them more easily seen in the black-out. The K&ESR platform is just visible at the far right; writing in the Spring 2000 *Tenterden Terrier*, Monty Baker recalled K&ESR train crews lending a hand during their layovers at Headcorn Junction.

Thanks are due to Mr L. Woodcock of Headcorn for sharing his memories of 1940. Other details are taken from 'War on the Line' (published by the Southern Railway in 1946 and reprinted in 1984 by Middleton Press), and from a surprisingly detailed (in view of the activities of the censor) article in the July 1940 issue of the *Railway Magazine*.

Tom Burnham

Membership Matters

Chairman, Norman Brice, looks at Membership trends in light of the recent subscription rise.

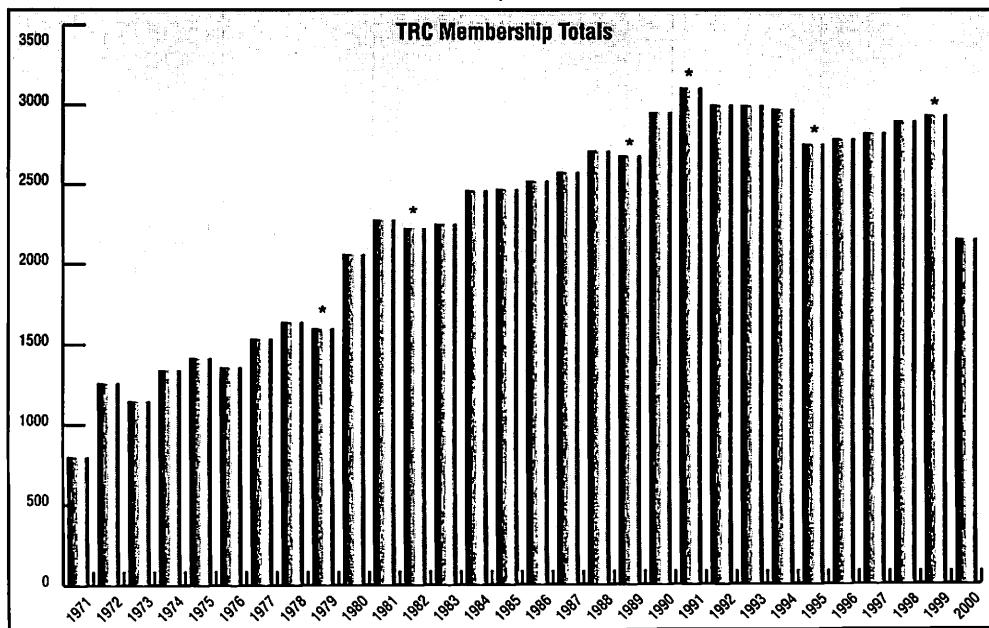
The accompanying bar chart shows the number of members since 1971. For this chart, membership includes all categories. Every time there has been an increase in membership subscription, indicated by a star on the chart, there has been a corresponding hiccough in membership numbers. The only exception to this was 1991 when we were in a period of unprecedented numbers of new members and renewal rates stayed consistently high at 90%. Over three years from 1989, we saw more than 1,000 new members, which created the all-time high of over 3100 members.

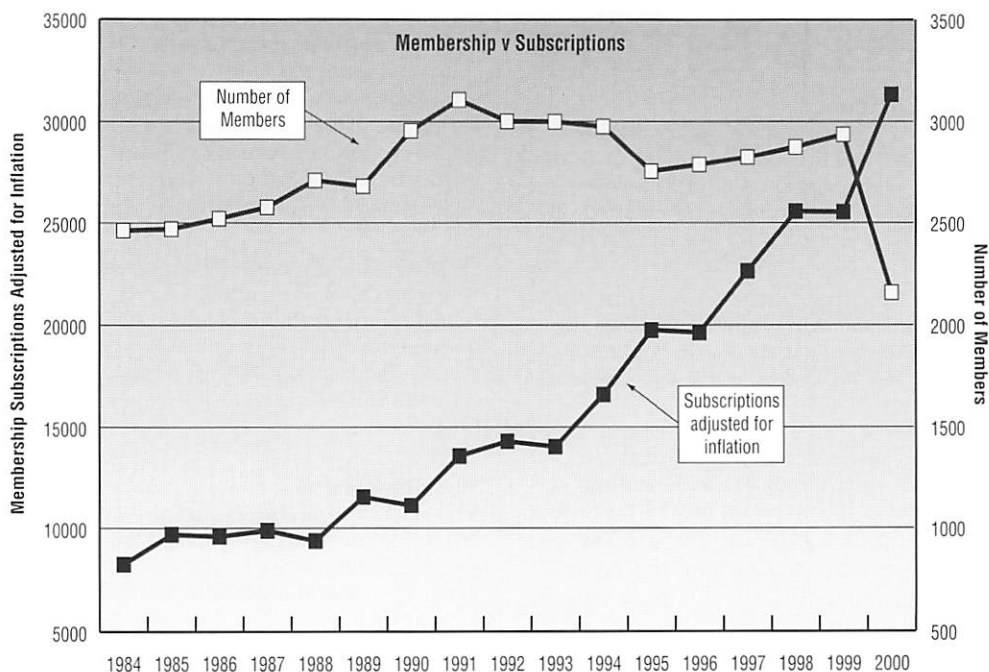
Although the 2000 figures are incomplete, it is obvious there is going to be a reduction in overall numbers by around a quarter. Given that there have been 271 new members joining, this gives a renewal rate of 64%, the poorest ever. The breakdown of membership by category shows a substantial increase in life members from 233 to 344. 33 were new members and the rest have converted from other categories. Since life

membership subscriptions are now counted in the year they are taken out this is a one-off effect and in future years there will be no further benefit to revenue.

The subscription income for 2000 is up by over £11,000 to £54,000, compared with 1999, so the increase in income has more than compensated for the reduction in members. The contribution of the membership to the railway continues to be real and meaningful. The new subscriptions reflect the enhanced value of membership benefits that come with a 50% increase in length of the line. Apart from adjustment to the life membership rates for next year (already announced), the membership rates should be held for some years, thus allowing a recovery in membership numbers.

The biggest single expense of the membership is the magazine and other mailings. The costs here vary but there has been an overall reduction in the percentage of the subscriptions used to provide a magazine and other mailings. This used to be around 50%, but is now down to around 20%. Thus the members can fairly point out that their pounds provide real, and increasing, support for the railway.





Book Reviews

Freight wagons and loads in service on the Great Western Railway and British Rail, Western Region by J.H. Russell published by Oxford Publishing Company (Ian Allan) price £29.99. Hard back large style format. ISBN 0-86093-155-2

First published in 1981, this photographic study has been in much demand from modellers of GWR subjects, both pre and post nationalisation. There are 350 illustrations, many of which are 'works' photographs reproduced in stark relief from the backgrounds from which they have been taken. The detail and clarity is generally very good. Narrative is confined to captioning of the photographs themselves and an index to the figures, by subject, is contained at the back. Information on this highly specialised subject is hard to come by from established sources and the small, but significant number of enthusiasts from the present generation will welcome its re-appearance.

PDS

Cornish Riviera Express: A view from the past, by Stephen Austin published by Ian Allan, price £15.99.

Hard back and laminated, 112 pages.
ISBN 0-7110-2723-4

This latest title in 'A view from the past' series utilises photographs from the Ian Allan Library, incorporating the collections of The Locomotive Publishing Co, Locomotive & General Railway Photographs and Real Photographs. The contents are divided into four sections; the story, the setting, the players and the action. The London to Penzance express service, with a through coach to Falmouth, commenced running on 1st July 1904 in time for the holiday season. It ran non-stop to Plymouth, the journey to Penzance taking some seven hours. Originally known as 'The Cornishman', the title 'Cornish Riviera Express' was adopted in 1906. By 1923, the formation included coaches terminating at Weymouth, Minehead, Ilfracombe, Exeter, Kingsbridge, Plymouth, Falmouth, St Ives and Penzance.

This book is not a complete history of the Express, it stops short during the mid-1950s and there are no photographs of dieselisation in the early 1960s. This is a pity, as a more comprehensive study would have filled a noticeable gap in the documentation of an otherwise fascinating subject.

PDS

Letters to the Editor

Royal Engines

Sir – May I point out an odd co-incidence with regard to the Royal opening of Bodiam Station. Twice within a month, former industrial locomotives have been used on Royal trains – and both have run on the K&ESR.

On 8th June, the Queen travelled on the Bodmin & Wenford Railway. One of the engines used was their No 56 'Ugly'. As K&ESR No 26, this same engine saw service here from 1976 to 1980. It was renumbered 29 in 1980 to make way for another 'Austerity' engine, but was withdrawn the same year with leaking tubes, never to run again on the K&ESR.

On 5th July, K&ESR No 14 'Charwelton' was used on our Royal Train, indeed the Duke of Gloucester had a footplate ride on this engine. In 1982, No 25 'Northiam' was used on the Queen Mother's train, but this had military origins.

Tenterden

John Miller

'Monty'

Sir – On the infrequent London bound journeys of my childhood, a curious independent railway might be glimpsed behind the Up platform of Headcorn station. One red-letter day our own train stopped long enough to allow us a vision of a train of antique coaches of a faded brown hue, headed by an extraordinary saddle-tank loco with a large brass dome. First hand experience of this mysterious undertaking had to await May or June 1937, when my father and I worked out that a connection could be made at Robertsbridge by changing trains at Folkstone, Ashford and Hastings, though our return from Tenterden would have to be made by bus as far as Ashford.

We were the only passengers for the one coach K&ESR train, which set off after collecting some seven or eight wagons from the yard. The sun shone and the scent of new-mown hay was in the air as we trundled through a countryside offering much to engage our interest, the train pausing now and then to detach a wagon or

two. At Northiam the loco ran round in order to perform some more extensive shunting, after which the crew adjourned for a lunch break. Arriving at Rolvenden Road, the prospect of another extended stopover persuaded us to walk up into the town where, after suitable refreshment, we found time to visit the Town Station before our bus left.

Only now have I learned the identity of the young fireman who appears in my snapshot, taken that day and reproduced on page 35 of issue 81 of *The Tenterden Terrier*. Thank you, Monty, for your contribution to a memorable excursion.
Elham Gordon Young

Signalling matters

Sir – A feature of *The Tenterden Terrier* is the amount of detailed information given to members about the work of the different departments of the Railway and the current state of the locomotives, a feature which could well be copied by other preserved railways. Your Summer 2000 issue as usual contains a wealth of interesting information.

I am tempted to make two comments, one on C&W and the other on S&T, as follows:- C&W pages 8 & 9, – The work proposed on wagons and vans is no doubt desirable, but is it really necessary at a time of financial stringency? These vehicles contribute nothing to the revenue earning capacity of the railway. One would have thought the energy and enthusiasm of volunteer workers could be channelled into work on the revenue earning stock.

S&T page 10, – The description of the new signalling arrangements at Northiam is interesting, but I cannot help an expression of surprise that the Railway Inspectorate has approved the siting of the signalbox at the opposite end of the station to the level crossing over a busy trunk road the A28. One would have thought that in the interests of both safety and the convenience of station working the signalbox should be adjoining the level crossing with the signalman responsible for opening and closing the gates and operating the signals protecting them. I expect on most days when trains are running, especially midweek, there will only be one volunteer

looking after the booking office and the station. Presumably the booking office has to be locked for security reasons every time he leaves it to operate the gates, a great inconvenience for him and for intending passengers. The provision of the new signalbox in the right place would have made station work so much easier and more convenient.

Of all the level crossings at stations in East Sussex that I can think of, in every case the box adjoined the crossing: Plumpton, Cooksbridge, Berwick, Barcombe Mills, Isfield, Uckfield, Rye and at Appledore in Kent.

The article does not make it clear to a layman what the 2-lever ground frame at the crossing controls, nor how the signalman in his box at the opposite end of the platform knows when the gates are locked across the road so that he can pull of the signals protecting the crossing.
Uckfield B.Howe

The 2 lever ground frame slots the signals that read across the crossing. This means the signals do not come off until both the signalman and the gate keeper have pulled the relevant levers. The ground frame will eventually only be capable of operation after the gates have been detected closed across the road. Once the ground frame is operated the gates themselves will be incapable of being opened until the ground frame, and thus the signals, are again at danger. This innovation, for the K&ESR, is a requirement of the operating department. – Duncan Buchanan

Terrier content

Sir – In reply to Alan Lawrence's criticism about the number of historical items in the *Terrier* and the implication that you should concentrate more on articles "which are directly helpful in keeping in touch with armchair members or in helping The Railway's finances" (issue 82) surely the Chairman's letters this year have kept us reasonably well informed about our financial problems and the reports in 'Lineside News' at the beginning of every *Tenterden Terrier* should keep him up to date with other matters.

The historical items are frequently fascinating and add depth and perspective

to our knowledge of the railway we love. I certainly enjoy reading them. We have an excellent, well balanced magazine and it is not difficult to see why it is an award winning one. Thank you. Please don't change it.

Horsmonden

Tony May

Westerham Valley Railway

Sir – When I first read TGB's review of the Westerham Valley railway in *Tenterden Terrier* No 80, I did not get around to replying positively to his question about whether there were any other members of the WVRA who still belong to the TRC. Now that the request has been repeated in issue 82 I have realised it must be serious and have put pen to paper (or ink to jet) and admit that there is at least one 'out there'. Yes I too remember the days of the WVRA, cycling down from Orpington at regular intervals, not so much to help as to absorb the atmosphere of a rural branch terminus. Prior to closure in 1961 my journeys on the railway were restricted to an annual trip every Christmas Eve. The excuse was to keep an excited child from under his parent's feet; but in fact I remember the trip was more looked forward to than the forced jollity of the next day: funny the reasons for getting interested in railway preservation!

I still have a copy of the *Farmer's Line* (for the youngsters: the fore-runner of *The Tenterden Terrier* which has only been going since Spring 1973) of March 1966 welcoming the WVRA members to the Kent & East Sussex Railway Association. The Association had been formed in January 1966 when the WVRA combined with the then Kent & East Sussex Preservation Society. I even still have the Westerham Flyer, the WVRA newsletter and the blue enamel lapel badge (with Invicta, the horse not the Canterbury and Whitstable loco, as the motif).

Derby

Vince Morris

Wandering Wagons

One of the curious aspects of the history of the Kent & East Sussex Railway's small fleet of goods rolling stock was that on at least two occasions wagons were sent on loan to other railways under the management of Colonel Stephens. The loan of wagons 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10 to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway from 1927 to 1929 is well documented but unfortunately none of the wagons seem to have been photographed in use on that line. By way of contrast, until recently the only evidence that Kent & East Sussex wagons travelled to the East Kent Railway was the appearance of two wagons clearly lettered KENT & EAST SUSSEX RLY in the background of an undated view of the East Kent's locomotive No 6 at Shepherdswell. Since locomotive No 6, an ex-S.E.C.R. 'O' Class 0-6-0, was not acquired until May 1923 we had a date before which the photograph could not have been taken but no indication of how much later it might have been.

Fortunately the East Kent Railway's Truck & Sheet Book for the period 12th April to 29th May 1923 has now come to light and gives clear evidence of the Kent & East Sussex wagons' presence. The Truck & Sheet Book is a record of all wagons arriving and departing each day. It should also record the arrival and departure of

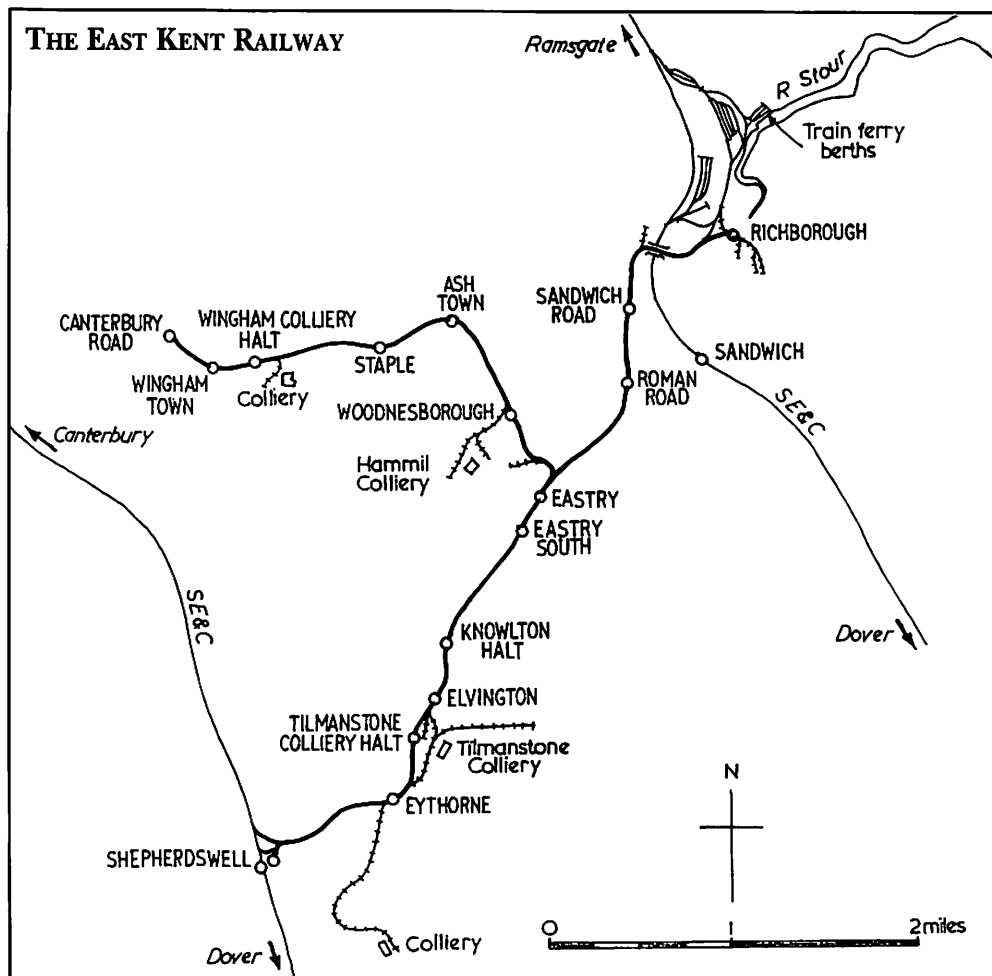
'sheets', the large tarpaulins used to cover open goods wagons and a valuable commodity in themselves, but these do not appear to have been recorded by the East Kent. Ordinarily each station would have its own Truck & Sheet Book but that used by the East Kent covers the whole line. The Book itself is one issued by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway but as no others seem to have survived to compare it with it is impossible to say whether this was usual practice on the East Kent.

The first record of the Kent & East Sussex wagons is on 28th April when wagons 6, 7, 9 and 3 are noted as moving empty from Shepherdswell to Tilmanstone, the only active colliery on the East Kent. They were the only wagons to go to Tilmanstone that day although 12 South Eastern & Chatham, one North Eastern and one Great Northern departed loaded with coal. On the 4th May the Kent & East Sussex wagons ran loaded with coal from Tilmanstone via Eythorne to Ash Road accompanied by Tilmanstone Colliery wagons 107, 120, 105, 112 and 117 and East Kent wagons 8, 6, 9, 11 and 1. This would have been a long train for this section of line at the time. Ash Road, later to be opened to passengers as Sandwich Road, consisted of a passing loop on the northern side



Tilmanstone colliery c1923. Wagons from at least 7 main line companies are represented, Tilmanstone colliery No 120 is second from the left in the foreground. (Stephen Garrett Collection)

THE EAST KENT RAILWAY



of the Sandwich to Ash main road and was the centre of operations for one or more local coal merchants.

The East Kent wagons and three of the Tilmanstone Colliery wagons returned empty to Tilmanstone on 7th May but the Kent & East Sussex wagons with Tilmanstone Colliery wagons 120 and 107 did not return until the next day. From then on these six wagons appear to have become inseparable running together to Ash Road again on 10th May, returning to Tilmanstone on 15th May and repeating the operation on the 18th and 23rd May. There is no further mention of the Kent & East Sussex wagons before the book ran out of space on 29th May although there is a mention of Kent & East Sussex Nos 6, 9 and 3 standing under load at the

Landsales Wharf at Tilmanstone Colliery at the end of business on the 16th May. The Landsales Wharf was a siding from which coal was sold to local purchasers at the Colliery itself. Since the wagons had returned empty from Ash Road the previous day they must have been pressed into use for internal traffic at the Colliery.

It seems likely that the East Kent borrowed the Kent & East Sussex wagons to make up for shortages in its own stock which was largely made up of secondhand vehicles inherited from the contractors who had carried out the original construction. During the 1920s many of these wagons were rebuilt so it is probable that the Kent & East Sussex wagons were required while this rebuilding took place.

Curiously, wagons 6, 7, 9 and 3 were not the only vehicles to make the trip from Kent & East Sussex metals to the East Kent. On 25th May Thomas & Spencer No 142 arrived from Robertsbridge with a load of coal for the Wingham Engineering Company who had their own siding off the East Kent at Wingham. Where the coal had originated is a mystery but it is interesting to note that despite the presence of Tilmanstone Colliery there was a steady flow of coal to stations on the East Kent from all over the country. Quite a lot of this would be brought in the private owners wagons of the collieries concerned. Examples noted in the Book were Nostell Colliery, Maltby, Bestwood and Bargoed. Other private owner wagons noted included examples from C.W.S., Cory Bros, Union Salt and Hallett, one of whose wagons seems to have been 'borrowed' for internal working on the East Kent during early May.

It is interesting that the Book records the wagons by their pre-Grouping owners' initials. Throughout its pages only No 94834 of the L.M. & S represents the then new railway companies, if one discounts the Great Western whose initials continued unchanged. Almost every corner of the country seems to have sent wagons to the East Kent with the Hull & Barnsley, North Staffordshire, Caledonian, Rhondda & Swansea Bay, Furness, Great North of Scotland, Cheshire Lines Committee and Glasgow & South Western being amongst the more unusual visitors.

How long the Kent & East Sussex wagons remained on the East Kent remains unknown. Obviously they were back in time for 7 and 9 to make the 1927 trip to Shropshire but beyond that cannot yet be told.

Stephen Garrett

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5th	Richard Potter	(313)	£30.00
6th	Claire Stuchbury	(025)	£20.00
7th	Robert Gorham	(210)	£15.00
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9th	Dave Slack	(272)	£5.00

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Thirty Years Ago

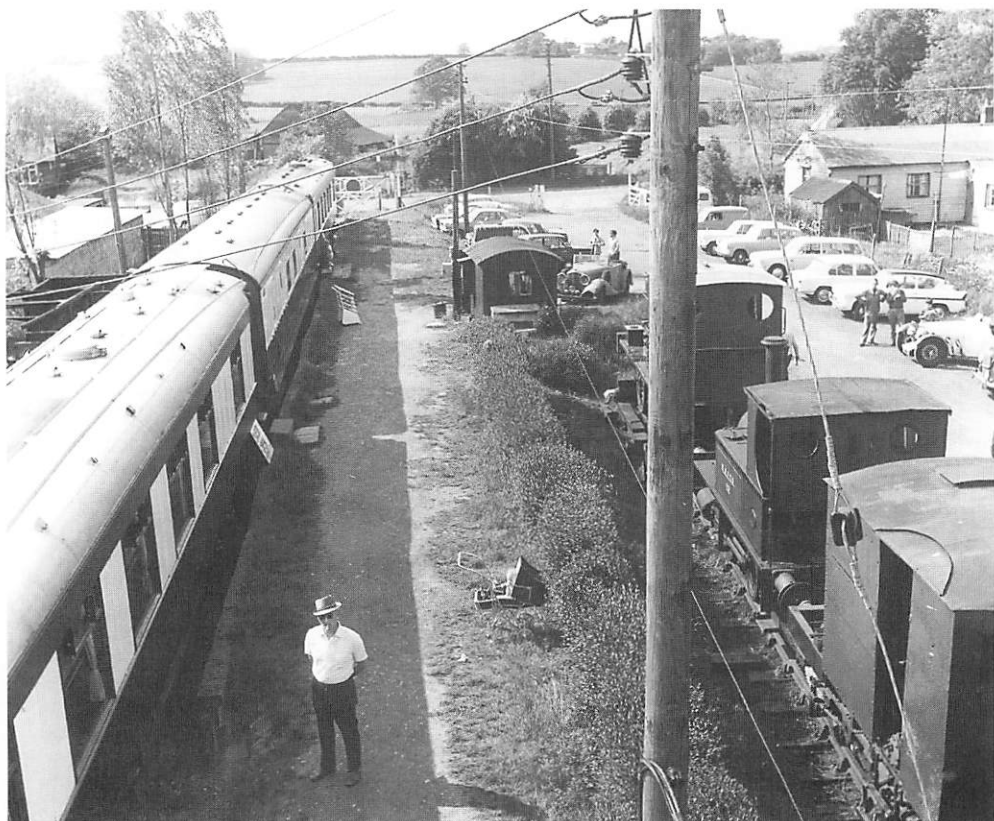
Simon Marsh recalls the days of his youth as a volunteer on the railway

I first saw the Railway in December 1970, at the age of 13. It was a very different place then: it had lain dormant for a number of years and re-opening was but a distant dream. Nick Pallant's book, available from the shop, gives more detail and goes into the personalities and politics of the time, but these are a few memories of how it seemed to me.

Tenterden Town station was, apart from the piggery (of which more below) a place of long silences. The platform was low, and only half its present length. Some indication of this can be gained by the newly planted shrubs in front of the Pullman Dock – these mark the site of the

old mess coach which was then actually off the end of the platform ramp. Behind the platform the coal yard – serving the domestic needs of the town – was still (just) in operation and regularly attended by what seemed to me to be two very old gentlemen indeed. In the long siding were two small locomotives: 'Met', a green 0-4-0ST (which surprisingly steamed down the bank and back one snowy day a year or so later – I still have the photographs); and 'Minnie', a smart red 0-6-0ST with dumb, wooden buffers. Both have long since left for pastures new.

The station building was divided into three rooms: a workshop for the embryonic S&T



The Pullman Car Shop and Buffet at Rolvenden in 1972. Note visitors parked in yard in what was then the main reception area (Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

Department; a rather run-down museum, which contained a large non-working model of Tenterden; and the Society's office. Lavatory facilities were confined to the rainwater-flushed Gents' at the far end.

Across the tracks was the pig farm. At least two of the Nissen huts were full of squealing pigs, and the site of the carriage shed was occupied by sleeper-built bins knee-deep in pig manure. The smell, and the sound, had to be experienced to be believed – especially in summer, when complaints from local residents were frequent.

The track layout was rather less extensive than it is now, and largely overgrown. And that was it: no signalbox, no buffet, no sidings full of stock, no crowds of visitors, no trains, no nothing. Just atmosphere. The whole site seemed to be awaiting some kind of magic wand.

Rolvenden was different too, but it always seemed to have a lot more activity. The only substantial building then was the water tower, which had a tiny workshop in its base and towered above everything else. The platform was a small grassy bank crowned by a corrugated iron lamp hut, and visitors' cars were parked on what is now the site of the locomotive works. A few old van bodies completed the fixtures: proper engineering facilities and hard standing were very much in the future. The line's locomotive and carriage stock was stored in the open; and the two Pullman cars, *Theodora* and *Barbara*, were parked in the rudimentary platform to serve as a buffet and shop respectively. One of the Maunsell BSOs stood between them, to provide extra seating for those wishing to eat. Finally, there was the prefabricated bungalow, now used as sleeping accommodation for volunteers; this was then a private house, inhabited by Charlie Kentsley, a retired driver, and his wife. They had the only GPO telephone in the area. Its number was Rolvenden 448.

Rolvenden may have looked shabby in those days: but there were always visitors at weekends, and you could always hear the sound of people working. It was clearly the hub of the line.

The other stations appeared to my young eyes to be virtually untouched. Wittersham Road was a short grassy bank by an ungated level crossing, with a siding behind it. And Northiam and Bodiam were tumbledown buildings on short concrete-faced platforms. There was an engine

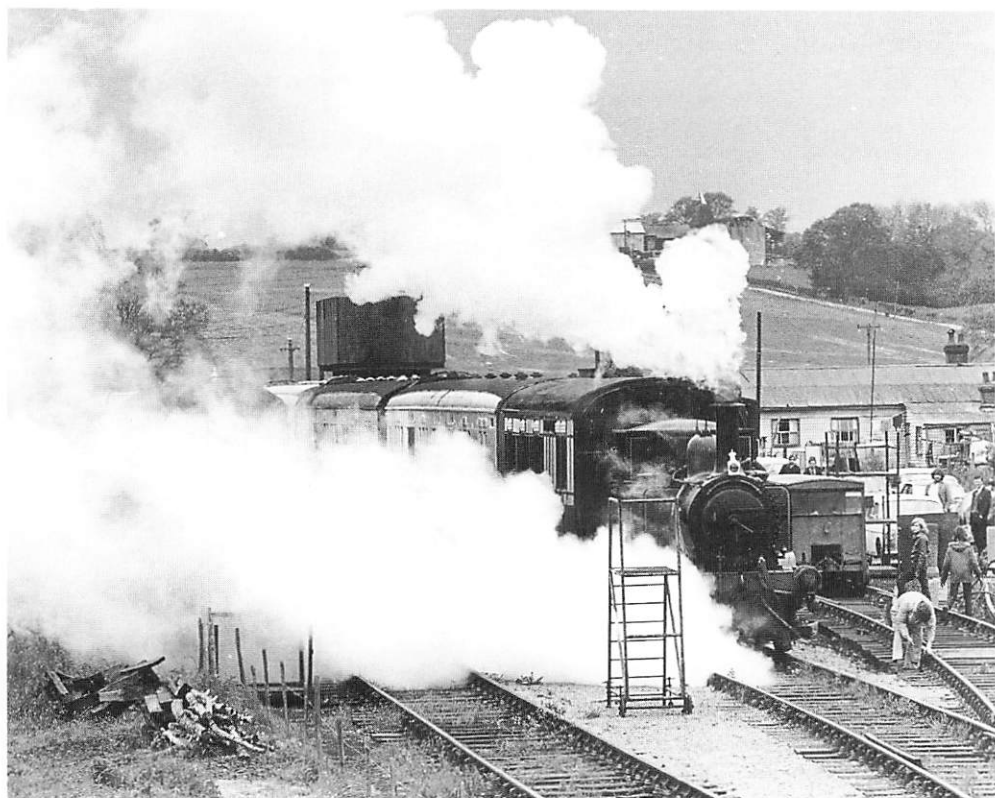
at Bodiam – 'Westminster', a derelict 0-6-0ST which had once worked at a quarry north of Oxford.

All the stations were of course linked by the permanent way; but this was rusty, overgrown, and punctuated by frequent rotten sleepers. And naturally most of the bridges were unsafe for traffic – not that it mattered since in those days all movement on the line was officially banned by the Ministry of Transport. But there was an internal telephone system which functioned most of the time, and hand-powered trolleys did emerge from Tenterden and Rolvenden to convey working parties to remote spots in the middle of nowhere.

It wasn't the railway we know today, and it is amazing how much has been achieved in the thirty years since, but to a boy of 13 it was a whole new world waiting to be discovered.

In those days I lived in Maidstone, and often used to catch a Sunday morning bus to Rolvenden (how times have changed). I can't remember the fare, but I think it was the pre-decimal equivalent of around 12p for a single journey. My first regular job was in the Pullman shop, which was really quite impressively stocked for the period. I can recall a wide range of souvenirs, colour slides, a stockbook, and bits and pieces of small-scale railwayana. And we had some quite nifty printed paper bags to put it all in, too. Decimalisation in February 1971 was a bit of a bore – everything had to be re-priced!

Towards the end of 1971 came an important job – the recovery from Chilham, between Ashford and Canterbury West, of what is now the signalbox at Tenterden. Built in 1892, it had been unused since 1969 and purchased for the KESR. The task took at least two weekends. First, the box and lever frame were dismantled and moved across the main line to be handy for road access. As an indication of how much things have changed, remember that this was an electrified line, and that there were trains every half hour or so! I suppose we must have had a BR lookout man, but I can't recall it. The final weekend saw the actual recovery to Tenterden. A lorry was hired from a firm near Maidstone, and a couple of us youngsters scrounged a lift to Chilham in the cab. With the aid of the lorry's hydraulic crane, the lever frame and the salvageable timbers, window frames etc were loaded, taken back to Tenterden and carefully stored. There was also something in it for me.



*No 10 'Sutton' sets off for a training trip amidst a hive of activity at Rolvenden, 1972. Note top of water tower in centre background
(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)*

The old wooden station building, goods shed and cattle dock were being demolished at the same time, and poking around the ruins during the lunch break I uncovered an enamel sign, over six feet long, with the lettering 'South Eastern and Chatham Railway'. I still have it, although it took a bit of getting home on the bus!

Within a very few years the signalbox had been re-erected in its present location at Tenterden – I was heavily involved in that project too. From the re-opening of the first section of line in February 1974 it was used as a base to supervise passenger train operations, and early in 1976 it was fully recommissioned. It still controls all movements today, nearly 25 years later.

There were plenty of other trips off site in the early 1970s. A few stick out in the memory. On a frosty day just before Christmas 1972 a group went to Herne Bay, to dismantle and remove from the closed signalbox a London, Chatham

and Dover Railway lever frame. For some reason it had just been restored by BR, and it was in near-perfect condition. Sadly, although we got it back to Tenterden and it was partially reassembled, it never found a use; I believe that it has now disappeared.

And in (I think) 1973 there were the trips to Barcombe Mills, on the closed Lewes-Uckfield line in Sussex. The object was to dig up, pull over, and transport to the KESR some redundant signal posts for use in the new installation at Tenterden. This was particularly hard work, since the posts had very heavy bases sunk some four feet into the clay – and in those days all the digging was done by hand! The occasion of the uprooting of one of them was captured for posterity and can be seen in the first of Online's Kent and East Sussex videos.

What else from the early 1970s, before the re-opening? Still on the signalbox theme, there is the story of Robertsbridge 'A', the unique timber

cabin which once controlled the KES trains at the far end of the line. This was re-erected at Tenderden, more or less in front of the top Nissen hut, and for some while was used as auxiliary messing and sleeping accommodation. It should have been preserved still – it would have made an ideal small sales kiosk or the like. But, sadly, it was destroyed when the Tenderden sidings were remodelled in the early 1980s.

And there were the special events at Rolvenden. Some, before the Ministry prohibition order was lifted, simply consisted of engines in static steam and blowing their whistles. Others were combined with crew training, or were built round commemorations such as 'Bodiam's' centenary in 1972. They were small by today's

standards, but it was surprising just how much (including car parking) could be packed into the cramped Rolvenden site. It was, of course then a treat for a young teenager to see anything in steam, and if it moved it was a bonus!

These, then, are some personal recollections from my first few years on the line, before we were running passenger trains. They are hazy; I was of a tender age; and others still around will remember far more. It's a different place now, and – rightly – it has had to grow and keep pace with the world. I remain very actively involved in today's Railway; but sometimes it is nice to stop and look back.



Tenderden Signal Box after reconstruction during the winter of 1972/73, but before commissioning in 1975/76

(Chris Mitchell)

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