

Tenterden Terrier



Number 98

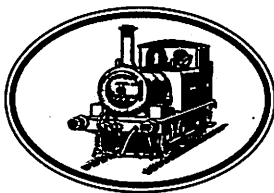
Winter 2005



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY



Tenterden Terrier



Number 98

Winter 2005

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The Tenterden Terrier is published by the Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited three times a year on the third Saturday of March, July and November. Opinions expressed in this journal are, unless otherwise stated, those of the individual contributors and should not be taken as reflecting Company Policy or the views of the Editor
ISSN 0306-2449.

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Printed by Hastings Printing Company Ltd,
St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex.

FRONT COVER

No 19 departs from Northiam with the 14:20 Bodiam to Tenterden train on 25th October 2005 during its last week of service. (Brian Stephenson)

INSIDE FRONT COVER

Heidi Mowforth on the footplate of No 19, 26th August 2005 (John Liddell)

BACK COVER

Essence of a light railway: A lonely 32678 at Northiam, 8th July 2005. (Geoff Silcock)

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Editorial

Balancing the books

Running trains on their own just isn't profitable; last year we lost some £33,000 within our main operating company, before interest and depreciation charges. Fortunately, this was handsomely counterbalanced by a massive £190,000 profit from our commercial activities channelled through Colonel Stephens Railway

Enterprises. Our customers continue to demand more than just a train ride and it is therefore encouraging to see that an expansion of programmes is planned in the diary of special events for 2006. These are designed to boost income from a variety of sources. Children continue to be the mainstay of our business, but transport enthusiasts are catered for with car rallies and special train formations. We are likely to end 2005 with passenger numbers very close to those recorded in 2004, which is a real achievement given the sluggishness of spending in both the high street and on leisure activities.

Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

General Manager's Notes

Record Thomas

September's Thomas event was extremely successful, with ticket/admission turnover at a staggering £63,300 across the weekend. On site catering and the shop again broke September records. An amazing 45% of ticket sales were through Ticketweb, proving the value of making tickets available on line.

Multi-Lingual Leaflets

15,000 of these leaflets, funded through our Inter-Reg activities, were distributed via P&O ferries over a three month period.

Steam Fair

Despite the inclement weather on the second day of the Steam Fair, we provisionally planned to run the event again in the summer of 2006. However, at the time of writing, no applications have been received for the volunteer position of Chairman, to work alongside our Events Co-ordinator. If no applications are received by the publication date of the timetable, the event will be dropped.

Levers Alone

Meridian TV joined us to film a tasting of the first batch of our new beer, brewed by Rother Valley Brewery. They chose to visit us when we were marking the terrorist attacks on London of 7th July as part of the

national 2 minute silence. We achieved two separate pieces of airtime.

"Levers" has been very successful selling over 120 dozen bottles. At least one signalman has been seen purchasing a supply to take home after a heavy day in Tenterden Signal Box. There is no truth to the rumour that next year's brew will be called "Piston Duty".

And Still On Meridian

An additional 21 news slots were achieved by offering a competition prize of an RXD place. This was won by Steve Blackwell. We also featured following a visit to K&ESR by the Meridian Tonight team as part of a series on the Year of the Volunteer. The presenters seemed to have such a good time whilst filming volunteers at work. The friendly atmosphere around the railway came across well.

Summer Shows

We attended the Caring Parent Show, the Eastbourne Airborne Show and the Kent County Show – thanks to all who took part and gave their time to promote the railway. If there are any doubts as to the value of these shows, they should be overcome by a booking for 800 people in May 2007, from an enquiry generated by Dave & Matthew Stubbs.

Record October Passenger Numbers

Our Halloween event was extremely

successful – for the second year in succession. Demand was so great for "Fright Night" trains that we put on an extra train on Saturday night. All but half a carriage was sold, without any specific advertising other than the web site. Next year's event will be even bigger. October saw 4467 passengers, beating the previous best (in 2003) by 6%.

New Shop Manager

With Brian Janes departing from the Shop Manager position we have interviewed for his replacement and just made an offer at the time of going to press.

On Line Shop

Work is nearly complete to get the online shop in operation. At the time of going to press there was just one small obstacle remaining to overcome before going live.

Terrier Event

The Heritage Railway world is excited by the thought of K&ESR's Terrier event for May 6/7 2006.

We currently will have 5 Terriers for the

event and are looking forward to a spectacular weekend.

Engineering Manager

Following Lawrence Donaldson's decision to step down from this role, a successor has been identified. At the time of going to press a formal offer is yet to be made.

Conference Business

Theodora has been the host venue for a few conferences. This is proving to be a useful part of our business. We recently hosted the launch of Lankelma's new road rail vehicle and they have said they will return with their next new vehicle in the spring. The New Year will see the launch of our Corporate Brochure.

Railcar Appeal

2006 will see the launch of an appeal to generate funds for the restoration of our GWR Railcar. Andy Webb and Chris Davis have been working hard on the railcar and a major appeal should raise sufficient funds to complete the job. Steam Railway have expressed an interest in running this appeal for us.

Commercial

Catering

The investment in enlarged catering premises and facilities at Tenderden was certainly proved worthwhile at the September 'Thomas' event. Income broke previous records by a considerable degree: spend per head is up 35% on last year and almost double the 2003 figure! The popularity of the BBQ continues to exceed our hopes and we shall continue to enhance it: we have plans for further ranges of (high margin) products for the February event. During the small January closed period, significant changes are planned for Tenderden buffet. We shall be installing a new counter/servy and kitchen within the extension erected last year. This therefore allows the original floor space to be given over entirely to customer seating. This increase will of course require additional furniture, however the existing, being life expired at 19 years, dictates complete renewal.

Thanks to the generous support of the 300 club, refurbishment of the buffet heating

system is currently underway. A combination boiler has been fitted, providing unlimited hot water and central heating via salvaged period cast iron radiators to the public areas. Thanks are due to Charlie Masterson and James Veitch for their assistance with this project.

The ability to provide impulse purchase of cream teas was regrettably curtailed for much of the peak season by the failure of equipment on the RMB. Despite our best efforts, the replacement parts didn't arrive (from Switzerland) until much of the demand had slipped away.... However we look forward to the return of Shearings Coaches in 2006 providing their welcome influx of custom.

Wealden Pullman

The last scheduled trains have now run with just the Christmas specials and a couple of large charters to finish the season. 2005 has been largely successful with trains, almost without exception, being fully booked. The increase in covers following Theodora's



Children from Chernobyl, Russia, on a visit to the railway, 14th July 2005, with Tenterden Town Mayor Michael Hickmott and Bodiam Station Master, Peter Kyrvin. (John Liddell)

restoration sees income far in advance of previous years. The increase in charter train rates saw a very slight reduction in the number of trains operated, but this was more than compensated by the superior income generated. Bookings for 2006 are buoyant, with enquiries for wedding receptions coming from as far as Australia.

Our venture into the conference market has met with reasonable success, although the effort in removing Pullman armchairs from Theodora (to enable theatre or board style accommodation) is not quickly forgotten, especially when it's raining!

Shop

In the ancient days of a few decades ago when Communism was the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', (soon shortened to 'dictatorship' in practice) there were 'Great Leap Forwards' when all norms of production were supposedly comfortably exceeded before turning to dust. Well the regime in the shop is a genuine collective effort and our 'Great Leap Forward' in sales this year has certainly not evaporated. We are currently recording sales at 20% up on 2004.

Sales for July were 9% up on last year and for August an almost disappointing 5%. August was certainly an odd month. Some days were well up, others down. Also TTIs, particularly on the Victorian set, have been too busy to sell the all important and very

profitable Guide Book. This arose from the slow speed of the Booking office (and the shop's) PDQ machines - due to the banks inefficient new PIN system- causing queues that were only thinned out by putting cash customers on the train for TTIs to deal with so it can depart on time. They then had no time to sell Guide Books. A good example of the interdependence of all the railway departments- what goes wrong in one area mucks up others too.

September brought much better results. Sales in the Month were 20% up and Thomas also weaved his magic again. Apart from a horrendous, but mercifully brief, downpour on the second Sunday which flooded part of the shop tent good weather blessed the event. Every day surpassed the all time record established in 2004 which has now been broken 9 times this year. Total sales above £24K ensured an increase of 19% over last September's Thomas (itself a 27% increase on the year before). Sales exceeded last year's total sales on the 2nd of October and with Christmas to come...

Enough of statistics, what can we tempt you to buy? Christmas cards are at long last available and are of Tenterden Station train and signal box with the church tower behind. We have held the price at £3.50 for five. Also For Christmas we have all the usual excellent books and calendars as well as other stocking fillers for girls and boys, both young and old.

As a treat for Colonel Stephens fans, Wild Swan publishers have promised that Laurie Cooksey's definitive history of the Selsey Tram will be available for Christmas. Book your copy now; it makes previous books on the System look like fiction.

The special versions of Railway polo shirts and fleeces for volunteers proved very popular and new deliveries now in. Don't miss out. Contact the shop if you would like one.

Brian Janes, after his 5 years as Honorary Shop Manager, moved on to other things in October. No one came forward to volunteer to take over, so the railway has had to revert to paid help. With static passenger numbers the Railway is increasingly dependant on 'Added value' services like shop and catering. With the doubling of shop turnover in recent years the need for volunteers is ever increasing. Can you help?



(l-r) John Clark, Adrian Landi, Lawrence Donaldson in front of 32678 at Rolvenden. (Ian Scarlett)

Motive Power

As usual during the Summer months the requirements to run trains for the railway and holidays by both volunteers and paid staff takes its place to the detriment of progress on restoration work. However routine maintenance continues apace with needs.

Interfleet new trainees spent their usual week in part in the Loco works at Rolvenden. Unfortunately there were fewer persons than usual so work concentrated on a washout exam on the Norwegian and some repairs to the 'Ford' diesel.

However the works have seen a steady stream of work experience pupils from local schools. Working with the South Kent Education Business Partnership this scheme has seen an increasing number of pupils working at Rolvenden each year.

Steam Locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam' (32670): Painting continues on the loco as and when. Air brake pipework has been manufactured. Work on aligning the blastpipe and making a new liner for the air pump shuttle valve actuating cylinders has also been completed.

No 12 'Marcia': Progress of vacuum brake installation has been slower due to summer

holidays but should quicken over the winter months.

Fabrication and installation of train pipe spools and the brackets and clamps securing the train pipe to the frames is on-going. The mounting bracket for the drivers brake valve and ejector have been fabricated and installed. The front and rear hose dummy mounting brackets have been installed. The new front and rear vacuum hoses and couplings have been sourced from Rolvenden Steam Enterprises.

Mac Macintosh has completed the modification of a vacuum brake cylinder to receive the new piston rod seals and is in the process of adapting the hand brake fork end of brake cross shaft to accommodate the movement of the new power brake cylinder.

Terry Harvey has completed the new spectacle rims in the cab back sheet.

No 14 'Charwelton': Boiler repairs continue apace with retubing taking place. This provides James Taylor, the department's apprentice, with suitable training. Rivetting of the foundation ring has also taken place.

No 19 'Norwegian' (376): Now out of service the Norwegian was given a good send off on

22nd October 2005 on the day of the Norwegian Loco Trust AGM. The extent of the required overhaul must now be determined and the locomotive's place in the queue clarified.

No 21 'Wainwright' (DS238): Now out of service after the end of its 10 year boiler life. It awaits examination to determine what is required for its next 10 year overhaul. In reality No 22 has priority.

No 22 'Maunsell' (65): The construction of a new firebox, by outside contractors, is nearing completion and will be subject to appropriate hydraulic test in the near future. Before return of the boiler, work is in hand to manufacture new ashpan hopper doors and runners. Once the boiler is back in the frames the real work to get the loco completed following overhaul can commence.

No 23 'Holman F Stephens': In service

No 25 'Northiam': Work is taking place on the springs and bearings while the tyres are away being turned. The loco will then return to service.

No 30 GWR Pannier (1638): Has been in

service however work is taking place to change its crown stays.

Diesel Locomotives

No. 20 (GWR Railcar): As the Railcar's original valance side panels have suffered badly from the effects of rot and corrosion, new wooden frames are being made for the replacement panels. For the benefit of readers who may not be familiar with the Railcar, these panels provide protection for the engines, transmissions, and radiators.

No 44 'Dover Castle' (Class 08): In service as station pilot at Tenterden.

Class 33 'Ashford': In service. In need of bodywork repairs and this might occur during the winter.

Class 108 DMMU: In service. Was used for the Halloween service at the end of October where a Friday night train had to be repeated on Saturday to accommodate all those wanting to travel.

Cranes

No 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard): In service

No 151 (36T brakedown): In service

Rolling Stock

Carriage & Wagon Working Week at the end of July was the usual reasonable success with up to 14 people being present at various times. Vehicles receiving attention were SE&CR Birdcage Brake Mark 1 TSO No. 63 and the Great Western Railcar.

Coaches

Mark 1's

For several years SK No. 63 has had the dubious distinction of being the scruffiest looking vehicle in the fleet and has spent a great deal of time sitting in the sidings, only to venture forth at times of high demand or when something else failed. A serious effort to put the exterior to rights began in late June. The interior is not being renovated on this occasion but it is proposed to begin the necessary work in 2006. The relatively superficial problems with the paintwork apart, it has proved necessary to strip out No. 1 end completely and repair or replace a number of corroded structural members. Exterior re-skining has provided an interesting challenge, but Shed Supervisor

Alan Brice has proved that this is well within the department's capabilities. Similar but less extensive renewals have been undertaken at No. 2 end. The opportunity has also been taken to remove the BR era corrosion repair 'skirt' at build rail level in order to check the vehicle's integrity in that area. This proved to be surprisingly sound but protective paint was applied before the metalwork was replaced. The roof has now been primed ready for its final coats and priming and filling is underway to the vehicle sides. The work on No. 63 has been given some priority of late and the structural work is being regarded as a prototype for similar work on our other Mark 1's over the coming years. Visitors from other heritage railways have commented that they have exactly the same problems with their own stock. Although changes in regulations have forced the hand of the TOC's, it is interesting to note that the last Mark 1's on the national network are being withdrawn just at the time when we are having to start planning for the long term needs of our own examples.

Vintage Coaches

The overhaul of the GER Brake (K&ESR No. 81) continues and, at the time of writing, attention is about to turn to manufacturing new mouldings for one side. Repainting of the roof will also have to begin shortly and, slightly further away, the body sides and ends are to be returned to the post 1919 GER maroon livery the vehicle carried when first restored. In the meanwhile, we have obtained an estimate for re-upholstering of the first class compartments. It is planned to downgrade these to third as this has often happened in practice, the Vintage Train being over-provided with first class.

Work on the SE&CR Birdcage (K&ESR 61) has proceeded steadily. An early task was to complete the repairs to the build rail (started all of 10 years ago). This enabled the body to be bolted back to the underframe during Working Week. The doors are now being replaced following any necessary repairs. Interior work has commenced with the seemingly endless task of removing all the old paintwork. This, as usual, produces numerous layers resembling an archaeological dig. In the guard's compartment the layer proceeds back through the Southern Railway's light green to SE&CR scumbling which turns to treacle when a heat gun is used. It is hoped to repanel the exterior during the autumn. A thorough overhaul of the bogies is in the capable hands of Ron Nuttman and Colin Shenton. No. 2 end bogie is now complete and back in position and work to No. 1 bogie has commenced.

The L&NWR balcony saloon has been

temporarily withdrawn for remounting of the axle bearings. It is intended to return the coach to service by Christmas.

Wagons

We were once again pleased, together with the Locomotive Department, to host the annual week's visit from Interfleet Technology graduate trainees who were at the K&ESR to gain experience of work with heritage vehicles. The trainees undertook further bodywork renewals on the Shark ballast plough brake van and, in the company of some of our own staff, sampled the pleasures of an evening meal on the Pullman. A very appreciative letter of thanks has since been received from Interfleet.

An attempt was made to tender for a Southern Railway 'Queen Mary' bogie brake van. Unfortunately, and despite a seemingly reasonable bid having been made, this was not successful. We appear to have been beaten to it by another heritage railway outside the South East. The proposed purchase of what was reported to be an excellent vehicle was to have been financed from an appeal made amongst the Railway's working membership. A pleasing number of pledges were received and we would like to thank all those who responded for their intended generosity.

The general infrastructure improvements mentioned in previous issues of the Terrier have continued. As one of their exercises, Interfleet undertook a Health & Safety process audit for the carriage shed. They made a number of worthwhile observations which we shall be acting on in the near future.

Infrastructure

Company Secretary's Notes

The 2005 Annual General Meeting, held at Tenterden Town Hall on 8th October 2005, proved to be a routine gathering without great excitements. In fact it was a bit too quiet with only 71 persons attending. This was also reflected in a reduction in the number of proxy votes received compared with previous years. It is to be hoped this indicated a perception of 'steady as we go' and not disenchantment with the democratic process. If it is the latter one can only say that the position will not improve by ignoring it.

The annual report and accounts were accepted and our auditors, Messrs. Day Smith & Hunter, re-appointed for a further year. Results of the Board election were as follows:

Norman Brice – for 203, against 17, 1 abstention (re-elected)

Geoff Crouch – for 214, against 4, 3 abstentions (elected).

Apologies are due for the non-availability of the Town Hall public address system. The problem lay with Tenterden Town Council and not with the K&ESR.

It has been our practice in recent years to hold the AGM at Tenterden on the second Saturday in October. This will not be possible in 2006 as the date coincides with the Tenterden Folk Festival. The AGM has now been scheduled for 16th September 2006.

Forestry & Conservation

In late April/May thinning and tidying was carried out to the approach to Hexden Bridge, Wittersham side.

On Friday 20 May the weed killing of the running line was carried out, by Contract Track Services Limited ("CTS").

Peter Thorogood was invited to accompany the contractors carrying out the spraying operation, which was done by their Network Rail VAB Road/Rail application vehicle. This is basically a specialised Land Rover adapted to carry out numerous spraying operations. It did feel very strange trundling along the track sitting in the cab of a Land Rover and No doubt also to members of the public who may have seen the vehicle through any of the crossing gates.

During the months of June/July work continued near Hexden Bridge consisting of clearing fallen trees, plus any growth near the

running line and under the telegraph wires.

Oxney Straight also received similar attention during the month of July.

Two members of the group also carried out grass/weed cutting operation with strimmers to the grass bank at the back of Wittersham Road station plus Wittersham Bank itself.

The group has now started work to the area between Hexden and Rother Bridges.

The occupational crossing next to Hexden Bridge received serious clearance of all bramble and scrub due to the need to have good site lines for both train drivers and members of the public using the crossing.

The group is concentrating most of its efforts to one side of the track due to the need to replace the boundary fence, which is in a poor condition. Members normally walk out to the work site, but after a hard days graft also try to arrange a stop order, during normal running days, to hitch a lift back to Wittersham Station.

Work will continue in this area for at least several months. As always we are in desperate need of more help, so if you fancy a session of bramble bashing and fire feeding please give Peter Thorogood a ring on 0208 859 5082 (evenings).

People

Brian Janes

Brian retired as Volunteer Shop Manager last October. He took over this demanding job five years ago from Angela Clark-Monks and since then annual turnover has risen by some 85%. It has not been possible to find a volunteer replacement and we are now seeking a paid member of staff to fill the vacancy. In the meantime, Brian is continuing to make most of the decisions until his successor is appointed. He

continues to act as a director of the Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Ltd.

Arthur Penny

It has been brought to our attention that Arthur Penny, one of our early members died earlier this year. Arthur, who was in his nineties, lived in Eastbourne and was one of the original trustees of the fund raising organisation which raised money to purchase the Railway.

Groups

Maidstone Area Group

The Group held its 24th Model Railway Exhibition over the weekend of the 22nd and 23rd October. Unfortunately, despite extensive advertising, this was one of the worst attended functions for many years, as a result, the surplus made is estimated at less

than £300 against last years £1,399.

Next year will be our 25th Exhibition which will be held on the 21st and 22nd of October at the usual venue at New Line Learning Senacre, formally Senacre Technology College, Sutton Road Maidstone. We are hoping to hold one of our largest exhibitions

but if we are unable to increase visitor numbers then this may well be the last exhibition that the Group will organise. Therefore please make a date in your diary now and come along to support the event.

The Group still arranges open evenings which anyone can attend. All the guest speakers give an illustrated talk with the use of either slides or films. The open evenings, which are held on the last Wednesdays of the month, are held at the Tovil Working Mens Club, Tovil Road Maidstone, commencing at 7.30pm. The entrance to the hall, which is on one level, is from the adjacent car park which is free. There is no admission charge, but we do request a donation of £1.50 to help cover our expenses.

The programme for the early part of 2006 is:

25th January "Glacier and Bernina Expresses" by Tom Burnham

22nd February "British Steam Scene 1964/1984" by Keith Mapley

29th March "Preserved Railways and other scenes in the UK" by Andy Wood

26th April "Over 25 Years of On Line Videos" by Wilf Watters

31st May "Australian Trams and Trains in the 70's and 80's by Glenn Roofthoof

The Group still receives old newspapers and junk mail at its collection point behind the offices at Tenterden Station. At present the Group receives in excess of £40 per tonne of paper collected. Therefore when you come down to the railway please bring with you as much paper as possible, but not shredded paper, as this blows all over the station site. All the money raised helps to go toward various projects on the Railway, which if it was not for the Group, may never get financed.

Any queries or suggestions, please contact the Group Chairman, Dave Tibbatts, at either the Railway or by telephone on 01580 763736 after 7pm.

Ashford Area Group

Our Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer, Eric Graves passed away in May. His charming personality, energy and organising skills are sadly missed to this day. He set up the group

in the 1970's and has virtually run it single handed for many years. It is on this strong foundation that we intend to continue his work in promoting and supporting the K&ESR in the Ashford area. (see letters to the editor)

Ted Micklam now chairs the group, Keith Mapley is Secretary/Treasurer and we welcome a new committee member Andy Wood who is our Programme Secretary. Other committee members are: Dave Brunger, Bob Cowley and Charles Smith.

Our meetings continue to be well attended. The highlight of the past months was a visit to the Wayside Railway. This had been initiated by Eric and his family encouraged us to continue with the arrangements, to celebrate his love of such railways. This we certainly did with a record number of supporters, family and friends attending. The trains were full all afternoon and only stopped for the scrumptious cream tea! We are indebted to the owners Lawrence and Sue Martin for hosting us. They subsequently donated £1000 to the group. This has considerably enhanced the sum the group has now raised towards the restoration of the second Ashford coach.

We meet at 7.30 pm on the third Wednesday of every month except August at the Ashford Railway Staff Club, Beaver Road TN23 7RR. Considerable investment has been made in these premises since privatisation. If you have not visited one of our meetings recently do so soon.

Our 2006 indoor meeting programme is now firm. The winter meetings are:

Wednesday 21st December 2005 An Amazing Railway Adventure by Donald Wilson. Come and unwind at this veritable feast to the eyes.

Wednesday 18th January 2006 Preserved Railways of France. A digital presentation by a master of his subject.

Wednesday 15th February Recent and Not So Recent Slides by Alan Crotty. Alan's photographs from any decade never fail to astound us.

Wednesday 15th March Railways of Burma - Nigel Menzies, need I say more?

Further details from Ted Micklam 01 233 503999.

See page 16 for details of a visit to the CFBS in April.

Sellindge J94 (68078) group

Progress is being made on a number of areas, notably the frames, the boiler and the crank axle. On the frames much scraping and painting has been done. Work still requires to be carried out in the front motion bay, under and in front of the cylinders.

Repairs to the back buffer beam and the bunker extension angle iron are complete.

A new rear draw hook has been acquired from the Dean Forest Railway. The brake cross shaft has received a new cast iron bush in one of its support brackets. The same bracket has had all the badly worn holes welded up and new ones drilled. The whole assembly will be put together with fitted bolts. The steam brake cylinder has been refurbished and bolted back onto the frames. All the old spring hanger bushes in the frames have been removed. On the boiler much more scale has been removed from the firebox area. Some lumps were as big as a large eating apple. All the stay heads have been tooled down using a pneumatic hammer. This process has also helped to dislodge more scale. Repairs are proceeding as per the boiler inspector's requirements.

The right hand eccentric has been removed from the crank axle for investigation. At first inspection it appears to have been the source of some problems and will require some detailed attention if the movement on the axle is to be stopped.

Bodiam

Hoppers weekend

The weekend, over 10th and 11th September was this year blessed with good weather, especially on the Saturday. There were the usual attractions of local tractors, hop-picking demonstrations and memorabilia, hopping video and displays. Also this year, was a display of English fruit from Paddock Wood mounted on a Model T Ford lorry. On Saturday only, the quarter



Pearlies, Mr and Mrs Weeding, alongside the Ford Model T Lorry during the Hopping Weekend (John Liddell)

scale working models of a Scammell lorry and Foden Steam lorry created a lot of interest.

There was a good turn-out of ex-hoppers, particularly on the Saturday when a coach load arrived at Tenterden and made their way to Bodiam in merry mood, enjoying the facilities of the buffet car on the way. At Bodiam, the 'Lewisham Concerteers' led the camp fire singing with some impromptu solos from the coach party. There was a real party atmosphere and our new 'Levers Alone' beer and 'Hoppers Ale' helped to provide vocal lubrication. On Sunday, the musical entertainment was provided by Alison and Peter, folk singers from Cranbrook.

The beer tent, railway barbeque and Hoppers kitchen all did good business, and the railway shop in the goods office also traded well. The Pearly King and Queen provided a splash of colour and several volunteer members sported suitable period costume.

The event generated 868 train passengers and 190 platform tickets sold (at the gate). It was a very enjoyable weekend and thanks go to all those who helped make it such a success.

Other projects

Work continues on renovating the 38 mile posts before these are put out along the line. At the time of writing, the re-building of a twelfth platform trolley is nearing completion and another platform bench seat

is also underway. The bench seat, completed in the summer, has been given a dedication plate to George Wright (1939-1987) who long standing members will remember as a driver and 'pioneer' at Bodiam.

Tuesday Group

Since the last report for the Summer edition of the *Tenterden Terrier* all of our Tuesdays have been spent on the Northiam Station building and probably will be for the foreseeable future.

Most of the wood, i.e. doors, window surrounds, cills and barge boards, on the east and south sides are in an advanced state of rot. Where possible a patch type of repair has been carried out but to date two of the windows will need completely replacing.

The largest job so far, and by far the most time consuming, has been the necessary burning off of many layers of paint which have become cracked over the years on the corrugated tin.

In order to give the team some slight relief from the tedious job of burning off paint, the picket fence has been extended from the main yard gate to enclose more of the picnic area.

Museum

The Museum closed for the winter at the end of October and will reopen next March.

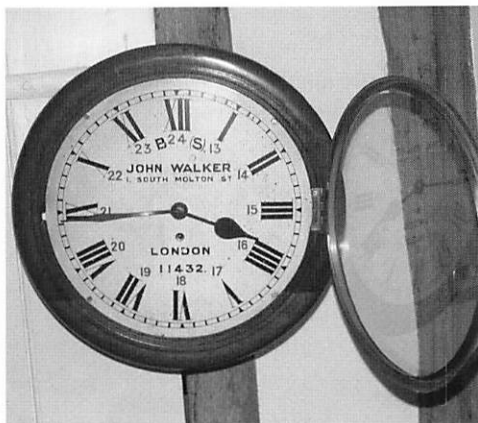
Visitors

The decline in visitor numbers noted in the last edition of the 'Terrier' continued for every month except June and July. For these two months there was a 5.5% increase in numbers, but not enough to bring the annual figure up to last year:

	2004	2005
Visitors - paying	5915	5674
- complimentary (members)	267	262
- Total	6182	5936
Museum days open	157	163

Northiam Station Clock

The clock came up for auction in September and we were successful in our bid for it for the Museum. We are grateful to the Colonel Stephens Society for its substantial donation towards the cost.



The former Northiam station clock which has been acquired for the Museum (Brian Stephenson)

The clock appears to have been made in the middle 1890s and was probably supplied new by Messrs J.P.May, watchmakers and jewellers, (now Messrs White's Jewellers), High Street, Tenterden. J.P.May, who had been in business since the 1860s, were given the contract by Colonel Stephens to supply and maintain the clocks at K&ESR stations.

The clock is an eight day mahogany-cased wall clock, with a good quality brass mechanism and with a fusee movement. It was probably located on the Northiam waiting room wall from 1900, but sometime in the 1920s or 30s, both the pendulum and the original brass bezel were replaced. The word 'May' is painted on the inside of the face and the possible repair number '559' is scratched on the rear plate.

Following nationalisation in 1948, the clock was entered in the old Southern Railway clock register with the serial number 11432, and this number and the letters 'B.R.(S)' were added to the face. The clock remained in situ following the closure of passenger services at the beginning of 1954 and the down-grading of Northiam station to a goods office. Consequent on all goods services being dealt with at Tenterden Town and the closure of the remaining stations, the clock was removed in August 1955 and sent for overhaul to Messrs John Walker, clockmakers of South Molton Street, London, who were contractors to the Southern Region. Incidentally, the Biddenden clock, given the serial number 11431, was sent to John Walker a little earlier.

Walker added the numerals in red for a 24 hour clock, in the process painting out the 'R' of 'B.R.(S)' to make way for the figures '24', and added their name and details to the clock face. The clock was then reissued to Chislehurst Goods Office where it remained in use until withdrawn for disposal. The clock was sold at Collectors Corner in 1995 and in 1996 was valued at £780 by D.R.Parr, railway clock specialist.

The clock has been shown to the present proprietor of White's Jewellers who feels that the face may have been repainted once, if not twice, in its lifetime. Originally, it probably had the name J.P.May on the face along with the initials 'K&ESR' (or even 'RVR'). The original clock from Rolvenden Locomotive Depot by which engines were dispatched off shed, also in the collection of the Museum, has the initials 'K&ESR' on the face and several internal repair dates from 1911 onwards, all signed by J.P.May.

The new clock should be on display and working when the Museum reopens for the 2006 season but it will have to be well secured as railway clocks are notoriously susceptible to theft.

Gardening

During the summer, sadly, Tony and Gar Pearson finally "retired" from nurturing the pots at Rolvenden. They have kept the tubs looking attractive all year round and thanks go to them for their support during the short time I have been involved with the Railway's gardens. Gar is still supporting by providing new lavender plants and bulbs for the gardens.

Following the alteration to the points at Tenterden Phil Wood, with the help of his young lads under Social Services care, has cleared the bed next to the Signal Box and this will be fully planted during the winter.

During July and August, due to other commitments, I have been unable to spend as much time at the Railway as I had hoped. Much of my time has been spent at Northiam attempting to clear the garden in the picnic area and turning it once again into a pleasant area for our passengers to sit. This should be completed by the end of October.

During November work will be done at Wittersham Road in order to tidy it before the Santa Specials.

At this time of year many of you will be digging up and splitting your perennials. Will you please think of the Railway as it will make it so much easier to keep the gardens looking attractive if they can be filled with perennials which will look after themselves during the flowering season. Any surplus plants can be left at Tenterden provided you let the office or me know.

If there is anyone out there who would like to spend a few hours weeding and tidying the gardens at the Railway, please telephone me Veronica Hopker at 01303 862811.

News from the CFBS

Philip Pacey

I was at St Valery from 6th to 19th July, spending the first six days as a 'benevole' and sleeping in one of the dormitories at the depot. The only other resident happened to be an attractive young lady, the CFBS's only female fireman. (Some readers will have met Cecile; she was one of the party from the CFBS which visited the K.& E.S.R. in February). I was given various odd jobs to do, involving rust removal and/or application of paint, and then on my final day, Monday 11th, I was invited to make a start on restoring the brakedown crane; Guy Lain and Thierry Lefebvre went to a lot of trouble to shunt it into the depot – I was surprised that it moved as easily as it did. I recall taking a photograph of it, rusty and neglected, on my first visit in 1992. I put in a long day's work to try to achieve significant progress and, as they say, 'pour encourager les autres'.

Sunday 10th July was the occasion of the annual Fête de la Gare at Cayeux. I was assigned to assist fellow 'benevole' Pierre Didelot with the draisine, which we took to Cayeux under grey clouds. Happily the sun broke through, and the rest of the day was sunny and warm. We gave rides to members of the public, up and down the station forecourt when a train was in the station, and on the loop around the station when it was not. Part of my role was to warn passengers not to touch the very hot, unprotected metal casing of the radiator. In

addition I often had to clear a path through the crowds and ensure that nobody (and no dogs – there were lots of these) was run over. The Haine St Pierre hauled passenger trains between Cayeux and Lanchères, in one case including an open wagon containing the local band. Musical offerings were varied and spirited, including a couple who performed splendidly on highland bagpipes. Pierre and I allowed ourselves a lunch break at a nearby café which apparently only opens once a year, the interior décor and contents of which seems not have changed since the 1950s. For me, the journey back with Pierre on the draine, following the steam train – looking out for any lineside fires – was a wonderful finale to a glorious day, not least because I had the task of running ahead at the not-yet-automated crossings and waving a red flag to stop any traffic (of which there was all too little).

On Sunday 17th July a bogie on the second coach of the train from Le Crottoy derailed on the first point at the entry to the quay at St Valery. By this time my wife had arrived, we were staying in St Valery, and on this particular day we were walking in the countryside, so I did not witness any of this. My informant tells me that one of the diesel locos was summoned from the depot and drew back the rest of the coaches to the station; meanwhile the derailed coach was re-railed using a JCB-type machine, presumably the one based at the depot which appears to belong to the CFBS and certainly has many uses. (For example, it assisted with the moving of the breakdown crane referred to above). The offending coach was then replaced with a spare.

During this period in July, regular services were being worked by either the Haine St Pierre or the Buffaud from St Valery, and by the Cail which was based at Le Crottoy. The new boiler for the Corpet 2-6-0T arrived some time ago; work is proceeding on this locomotive, which will return to service for next April's steam festival. The little Corpet 0-4-0T ('La Verte') has had its boiler successfully tested and is being retubed by SECAT at Le Mans.

In addition to the regular services, summer Sundays (3rd July – 4th September) have

again seen a diesel-hauled train going to Noyelles to meet SNCF/TER special trains bringing day visitors to St Valery from Paris, Creil, Amiens and Abbeville, and from Laon, St Quentin, Tergnier, Amiens and Abbeville. The CFBS train departed from Noyelles at 10.45; the day visitors returned to Noyelles on the 16.15 and 17.30 timetabled departures from St Valery.

The evening dining trains have again been a big success; one ran on a not very pleasant evening while I was staying at the depot (sunsets are not guaranteed); all are fully booked.

Earlier this summer, on 15th May, the CFBS carried some 200 people with bicycles who were taking part in a 'Baicyclette' event, and on 19th June, to support the 'Transbaie' (a mass walk across the bay), the CFBS operated a shuttle service from a temporary car park outside St Valery (near the scrap heap beside the Cayeux line) to St Valery Ville. It is estimated that some 7,000 people were carried.

Also in May, during the weekend of 26th-30th, the CFBS participated in the centenary of the CF des Côtes du Nord, taking the Buffaud to Langueux where it was steamed alongside the resident Corpet Louvet 0-6-0T.

Work is proceeding on the major project of replacing the barrier between the lock and the harbour to allow a greater outflow of water at time of flood. During July, two large cranes were on site, and a very large hole had been made; the bottom was being lined with concrete. A temporary bridge is in place for the railway and pedestrians, but not for motor vehicles. This bridge was supposed to have been installed for the start of the CFBS's season, but installation was delayed. Between 26th March and 7th April, trains bound for Noyelles started at St Valery Canal, where a tent was erected to serve as booking office and waiting room; coaches ferried intending passengers to and from St Valery. The temporary bridge was tested by the Buffaud and the Haine St Pierre locos on 7th April. A new, permanent bridge is to be installed in November.

It is expected that the CFBS will be permitted to extend the track on the quay at St Valery in the direction of the tourist information office. This will allow longer trains than at present. Longer trains are needed to accommodate growing numbers of passengers; hence the acquisition of the ex-BOB carriages. In July the first of these to be adapted for use on the CFBS (B 236) was in the depot, and a team of 'benevoles', possibly more than were strictly necessary, almost completed the task of spraying the body with white undercoat on Saturday 9th July. Rebuilt 'Somme' coach 10302 entered service on 2nd April, and work has begun on rebuilding another 'Somme' coach, 10308. On my first day in the depot I slapped some black paint onto the undercarriage of Swiss fourgon Df422 while it was over the inspection pit having its vacuum brakes adjusted, before it was whisked away to be put into service for the carriage of bicycles in place of ex-Yverdon-St. Croix voiture BD27 which is in need of attention.

The CFBS has been given a 'voiture de cantonnement' and some wagons, presumably standard gauge, from the

SNCF depot at Lens.

The former buffet, an integral part of the station buildings at Noyelles, has been assigned to the CFBS for use as a museum. Renovation is to begin soon - but hopefully during the autumn and winter in order not to disturb the house martins who regularly build nests in its windows. They were very much in evidence this July (as were some marks in the new hard landscaping where a loco had overrun the turntable! I know who it was but I'm not telling!)

Forthcoming events: Trains du Père Noël will run on 3rd and 4th December, from St Valery, and 17th and 18th December, from Le Crotoy. The long awaited Fête de la Vapeur takes place on 22nd-23rd April; planning is proceeding apace. One idea that has been put forward is the possibility of a special train from Calais for people travelling from England. The Fête will be the occasion of the return to service of our much loved Corpet 2-6-0T, and it is expected that it will also be the occasion of the opening (or at least, the completion of renovation) of the former buffet at Noyelles.

THE K&ES 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

May 2005 - drawn - Pullman

1st	Wilf Watters	No. 603	£60.00
2nd	Colin Roe	No. 479	£40.00
3rd	Lynda Shepherd	No. 185	£30.00
4th	A Edge	No. 221	£25.00
5th	Mrs Anne Justice	No. 167	£20.00
6th	Jean Clark	No. 378	£10.00

July 2005 - drawn - Pullman

1st	Mr F Turner	No. 066	£60.00
2nd	Suzanne Ward	No. 004	£40.00
3rd	T J Atkins	No. 550	£30.00
4th	D K L Morgan	No. 057	£25.00
5th	P A Hobbs	No. 059	£20.00
6th	Carol Mitchell	No. 075	£10.00

June 2005 - drawn - Pullman

1st	Derek Drage	No. 539	£80.00
2nd	I M Brittenden	No. 218	£60.00
3rd	Peter Roberts	No. 077	£50.00
4th	Jen Webb	No. 145	£30.00
5th	Faye Spratling	No. 111	£20.00
6th	M Keable	No. 317	£15.00
7th	Chris McNaughton	No. 324	£10.00

August 2005 - drawn - Pullman

1st	Keith Howell	No. 534	£60.00
2nd	Paul Gurley	No. 559	£40.00
3rd	Richard Stannard	No. 040	£30.00
4th	Peter Smith	No. 366	£25.00
5th	Mrs J M Jones	No. 567	£20.00
6th	Terry Gibbons	No. 306	£10.00

To join the 300 club, Phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman on 01424 441645 for an application form.

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

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN 2006

FEBRUARY

11, 12, 18, 19 Thomas The Tank Engine
13-17 Childrens Fun Week (half term)

MARCH

18, 19 Open Weekend (volunteer recruitment)
25, 26 Spring Opening Event with Bodiam castle

APRIL

1 All Fools Day (some surprises)
8, 9 Grandparents Weekend (with discounted tickets)
22 Ashford Group Coach Trip to CFBS steam Fete. details from
Keith Mapley on 01303 269138 (Before 21st Dec please)
23 St George's Day (the best of English)

MAY

6, 7 Terrier Locomotive Weekend (5 Terriers are planned)
13, 14 Country Music Weekend
22-25 Artists Week (local artists invited to paint to be
followed by an exhibition in August)
27 May Childrens Fun Week (to 2nd June)

JUNE

10, 11, 17, 18 Thomas The Tank Engine
24-30 Victorian Week (with local schools)

JULY

1, 2 Family History Days
8, 9 Branch Line Weekend (special train formations)
22, 23 Steam & Country Fair
29, 30 MG Car Rally

AUGUST

19, 20 Art Exhibition - local artists

SEPTEMBER

9, 10 Hoppers Weekend
16 Company AGM - Tenterden Town Hall
23, 24, 30, 31 Thomas The Tank Engine Weekend

OCTOBER

7, 8 Tenterden Folk Festival
14, 15 Austin Cars Counties Rally
21-29 Childrens FunWeek/ Halloween

NOVEMBER

5, 6 Diesel Weekend

DECEMBER

From 2nd Santa Specials

Timetabling – An Art or a Science?

General Manager, Graham Baldwin,
Outlines our timetable and events plans for 2006

Going through the process of organising the timetable for 2006 has been an interesting experience. I was glad to have had the benefit of seeing the railway's operations for nearly a year, as the timetable committee worked its way through the year ahead.

There are some key observations. We need to be running on days that are school holidays. This especially includes Bank Holidays. We must be a first choice destination for mums and dads (or grandparents) with bored children on their hands.

Having set the rule above, we had to consider Homewood School's holidays, but we cannot set a timetable around one school's unique approach to setting terms. I personally find it quite extraordinary that the County Education Office defines term dates for all to follow, but one "state" school is allowed to ignore that. I know a lot of parents with children at Homewood and other schools share that frustration. Ironically it means we have additional volunteer resource available, but the potential visitor numbers do not justify the expense of running trains.

Linked inextricably to school terms is volunteer availability. We found this year that with so many teachers amongst our volunteers we could not staff an all steam service outside of school holidays. Whilst we were struggling to crew an all steam service, we had diesel drivers sitting at home twiddling their thumbs. Lesson learned, we have returned mid weeks in July to a mixed service, until the schools break up. Realism rules. Weekends in the summer need to be steam however.

There is no doubt that most of our visitors come for a steam journey, but it appears that a good percentage are happy to ride the line, and mix their journey. Some too are pleased to see diesels. We have decided to timetable the "Ford" diesel for a few days in 2006. This will give an interesting contrast using a vehicle with a unique history, and coupled with the Vintage Set hopefully will be an added attraction.

The consistent operation of the vintage set worked well this year. It looks fantastic doesn't

it? I look forward to adding the Birdcage for some more capacity.

Perhaps the above are the art rules. The science side is the analysis of performance, but rules are all influenced by the Weather. In the off peak periods, Tuesday numbers were generally poor. I have listened to various opinions, and if we can transfer 75% of the Tuesday visitors to Wednesdays or Thursdays we will be much more efficient in terms of both our operating costs and our use of volunteer resources.

We have decided therefore to operate Railway Experience Days (RXDs) on Tuesdays. We have had an excellent year in 2005 for these and Footplate Tasters. We must build on our reputation. These are much more profitable days for us and they do not deplete our volunteer resource in the same way.

The all-steam service in July this year also pushed the Loco Department to the edge. They are all to be congratulated on keeping the wheels rolling. Better though to maximise the use of our smaller locos and bring in a guest class 5 rather than hammer our fleet. There were just too many days when The Yank and Norwegian were the only choice.

We will reduce our potential exposure by using a guest locomotive during July and August. The budget will run to about 20 steaming days.

We looked too at starting our first train later in the morning. We have to consider the requirements of tourists who want something to do before lunch, those who want to spend a couple of hours at Bodiam, and those who want a complete day out.

Whilst we ran the dreaded "Blue" timetable in July the 11.20 departure was too full. The ideal first departure time might well be 11am but if the first departure goes back 20 minutes so does the 3.30 and then we lose Coach parties and volunteers who use public transport miss their last buses from Tenterden.

At risk of lacking innovation, we have left the 10.40am as the first departure from Tenterden. The length of the line, need for water stops, and designated passing points ultimately defines what we do.

This, however, does not sort out Northiam! We give that station an unsatisfactory service, but the teams that work there and at Bodiam at least get a shorter working day. If money were no object, I would like to see the DMU start from Northiam early, or it being run down from Tenterden at 10am. Perhaps we will try this during the summer of 2007?

Its back to the arts for event management. The art is having them at the best time.

With Easter moving back in the calendar, we will start 2006 mid March with a recruitment open day and then a joint start of season event with Bodiam Castle. Whilst Bodiam itself opens a couple of weeks earlier we have picked the official national trust opening weekend. I would have liked to start our season earlier but the P Way window is important, at a time when weather conditions are (supposed to be) more favourable.

I have had a "little fiddle" with scheduling for Days Out With Thomas. We agreed with The Bluebell to move June events to avoid a clash and I have pushed the September event back a week to give us the chance for a breather after running full steam during August. It might also allow Mum & Dad to get another pay packet in after the summer hols.

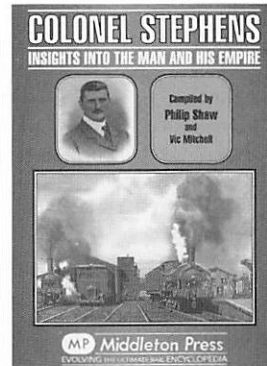
The 2006 Timetable also sees some new events, which will be all steam. In May we will have a Terrier weekend (5 terriers scheduled at the time of writing) and in July a Victorian week aimed primarily at the schools market. In April we will celebrate St Georges Day with a best of all things English including the Steam Engine. A full steam service to Headcorn and Robertsbridge might be advertised on April 1st.

And finally a few words about the blue timetable. This has some benefits. It is certainly less demanding on crews, and although it has one too large a gap in services, it does give us the option to run all steam with a large and a small steam loco. We will therefore try it in the winter when customers will expect to be able to enjoy a steam train ride, but when the steam raiser and crew will enjoy an extra 40 minutes in bed. It must not be used again at a time when we should be offering more, rather than less.

So is it an art or a science? More likely a combination of the two. We have been quite efficient in the process this year, and I would like to see a similar approach to 2007, adjusting to lessons learned, and seeking to improve our service to our customers.

Book Review

Colonel Stephens, Insights Into the Man and His Empire. Compiled by Philip Shaw and Vic Mitchell. Middleton Press. £18.95. ISBN 1 904474 62 4.



Once-upon-a-time there was a stereotypical eccentric English Colonel who built rickety little railways between Arcadia and Somewhere-Over-the-Rainbow. On the other hand, there was Holman F. Stephens, Engineer and Territorial Army

Lieutenant-Colonel, who ran a group of minor railway companies. The gap between these two perceptions has bedevilled serious study of the Stephens lines since at least World War 2. Over the past 30 years, however, the 'Ealing Comedy' view of this subject has, thankfully, been replaced by an altogether more historical approach. Much of the credit for this more mature appraisal must go to the authors of numerous articles which have appeared in the *Tenterden Terrier* during the same period.

All but one of this book's chapters were first published in the *Terrier*, the earliest having appeared in 1975 and the most recent in 2005. They have not been reprinted in publishing order but rearranged either to illustrate episodes in Stephens' life or enlarge on a topic relevant to his activities. As *Tenterden Terrier* editor Philip Shaw points out in his introduction, this does not 'represent a complete biography' but does 'provide a good introduction to Stephens, the man and the railways with which he was associated'. This approach also enables readers, should they so wish, to cherry-pick which section they wish to read without having to be familiar with the entire preceding book. A continuous story nonetheless emerges and some care does seem to have been taken to select articles which avoid too much overlap of information.

Colonel Stephens, Insights Into the Man and

His Empire, features contributions from 12 different authors, no less than 21 of the 31 topics being the work of just three hands, Tom Burnham (9), Stephen Garrett (7) and Philip Shaw (5). The earliest article (although appearing part way through the book) features the late H.C. Casserley's memories of the Selsey Tramway. That eminent railway photographer was, of course, among those who discovered and recorded the Stephens lines during the inter-war years. We owe a debt to these people - who doubtless never set out to give a misleading impression. Nevertheless, their photographs are of a period when the railways, often set in areas of great natural charm, had ceased to be prosperous but retained their individuality and contrasted markedly with the then new homogeneity of the 'Big Four'. Such photos seem to have played a significant part in the growth of the legends which grew up about Stephens' 'empire' of ramshackle railways that had been poorly built and badly run as opposed to the contemporary view, up to nearly the end of Stephens' life, that they were economically built and well run.

These 31 reprinted articles, preceded as chapter one by Stephens' own *curricula vitae* of 1918, cover a laterally thought-through range of topics. There are of course, accounts of the railways themselves; whether managed from Tonbridge as part of the 'fifth group', operated by main line companies or proposed but never built. Details need not be repeated here; they are likely to be known, at least in part, by readers and, where there may be a gap in one's knowledge, be prepared to be amazed at the energy of the creative man that was Holman Stephens. Allied topics include the development of the back-to-back railbuses (a significant contribution to railway technology - their descendants are today's dmu's) the career of the contractor William Rigby and the organisation of Stephens' HQ at 23 Salford Terrace. W. H. Austen, Stephens' effective deputy, also receives the coverage which is his much deserved due. A human aspect is also given to the story by the chapters dealing with Stevens' childhood and family background, his service with the Territorial Army and the sad account of his declining years.

With so many writers involved the text is inevitably presented in a variety of styles. The reference book approach is represented by the academically excellent work of the

prolific Mr. Burnham who nonetheless includes the occasional stylistic flourish. His vision of a ghostly 3 SUB unit rattling along the route of the never-built Southern Heights Light Railway was memorable in the original article and I was glad to see it reproduced in the book. Equally well-researched but more literary presentation is exemplified in the contributions of, among others, Stephen Garrett, Philip Shaw and Brian Janes. A number of the authors have used the very solid primary sources to be found in both the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden and the National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) at Kew. The book in fact concludes with a short description of the Colonel Stephens Museum plus several photographs of that well worth visiting establishment. The oral history tradition is to be found in Charles Klapper's (mis-spelt 'Clapper' in the book) account of a 1920's visit to Salford Terrace and Monty Baker's reminiscences of the K&ESR Railmotors. When first published, the latter was particularly well received by present day volunteers and staff because it seemed to be about a railway, if not its operating practices, with which they could readily identify - not something remote and abstract.

Coming from a publisher more usually associated with photo albums (the project was Vic Mitchell's idea) the photographic content is adequate and proportionate and the reproduction quite satisfactory considering the age of most of the originals. I am told that the photograph on page 76 is not as stated of K&ESR Ford set No. 2 but of the West Sussex Railway's Ford set at Tenterden Town.

Colonel Stephens is not to everyone's taste - even if passionate about, for example, the K&ESR - although a number of the contributors have a well-known enthusiasm for the man as well as his railways. But love him or loathe him, this book is well worth reading because, in the main, it objectively informs both sides of the debate. Research continues and perhaps we may see a second, enlarged, edition. Brian Janes' recent article on how Stephens kept his railways out of the Grouping would be a worthwhile addition. The contents are also not incapable of being edited together, with additional information, linking passages and comment, into that presently unattained 'complete biography'.

NP

32678 in Profile



Photographed by Geoff Silcock on 5th July 2005

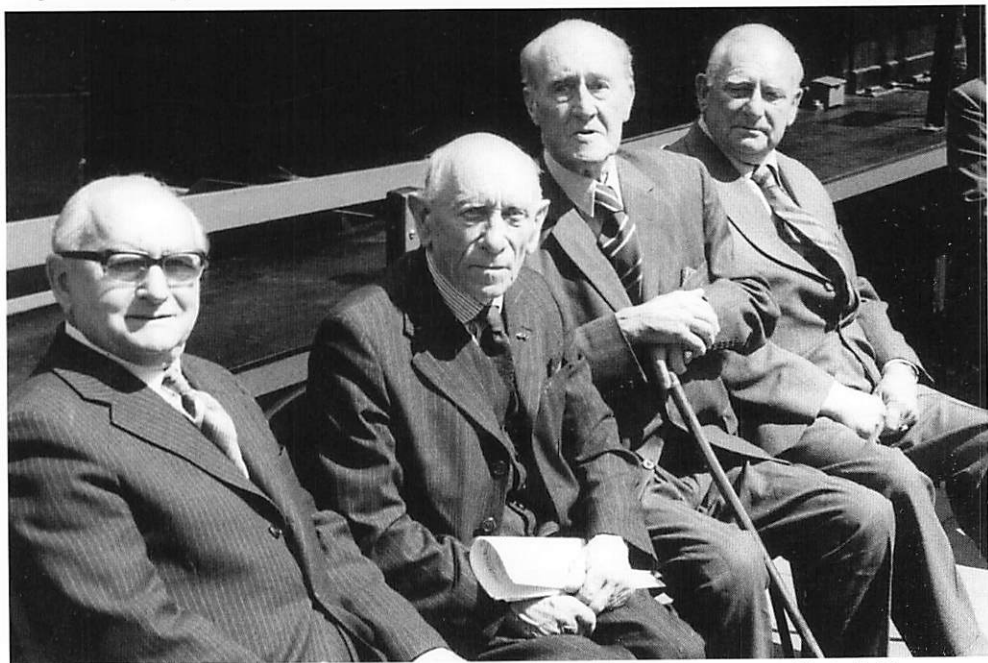


THIRTY FIVE YEARS AT SALFORD TERRACE

James Arthur Iggulden was Colonel Stephens' Chief Clerk and principal "Indoor Assistant" for most of the 35 years that he worked at 23, Salford Terrace, Tonbridge. Before he died in February 1979, he compiled some notes on what life was like at the famous light railway offices. Arthur Iggulden's reminiscences are now being published for the first time and have been edited for the *Tenterden Terrier* by Philip Shaw.

My family originated from Cranbrook where they lived at Pricklegate Farm and where for many generations they had been butchers in Stone Street. In 1897, soon after their marriage, my parents moved to Vale Road in Tonbridge, and my father worked for Waghorn, butchers in the High Street. I was born in 1899 and attended St Stephens school. In March 1914, I was ready to look for a job and heard that a Mr Stephens had applied to the school for an

apprentice in the drawing office. I duly put my name forward and was given the job at the princely wage of five shillings (25p) a week. My duties were, in fact, rather more general than had been indicated, but things were to change rapidly as a result of the outbreak of war five months later, when an existing member of the staff went off to join the armed forces. Major Stephens (as he was then) asked me to become involved with the book keeping of his civil engineering practice and in order that I should be suitably trained paid for me to take a course in accountancy. From then, I never looked back and in due course I assumed the role of Chief Clerk and Colonel Stephens' (as he became after 1916) principal "indoor assistant". This meant that I spent most of my time at headquarters rather than at the various railway locations. From the early 1920's I also took over the administration of Stephens' personal finances, which had



Salford Terrace Office staff reunion at Tenterden Town Station, 16th June 1978. (L-R) Archie Judd, Tommy Edwards, Arthur Iggulden, William Austen Jnr (Brian Stephenson)



H. F. Stephens attended the ninth congress of the International Railway Association in Rome, which opened on 18th April 1922. The proceedings concluded with a visit to Genoa and an official luncheon on 3rd May at which Mr Frank Tatlow, General Manager of the Midland Railway (marked with a cross) made a speech on behalf of the British delegates. H. F. Stephens can be seen in the middle row, third from the right. The identity of the lady on his arm has not been identified. (Railway Gazette)

become somewhat neglected over the years and obtained for him a refund of tax of more than £1000. He was very grateful for this and presented me with a bond for £100 in recognition.

When I arrived at 23, Salford Terrace, I found that W.H. Austen, who had been with Colonel Stephens from the very early days of his career in the 1890's, was the principal "outdoor assistant" in the practice and number two to him in the hierarchy. However, he had no engineering qualifications whatsoever and I did not come to have a high opinion of his engineering or general management capabilities.

The offices at number 23, Salford Terrace were always a hive of activity and there were very few dull moments. Apart from Colonel Stephens' territorial army activities which lasted until 1924 and included full-time war service between 1914 and 1916., I cannot remember him having the slightest interest in anything other than the promotion, construction and working of his various lines. Although a qualified civil

engineer both by training and inclination, he involved himself with the annual accounts of the railways and had the last word when they were being compiled. He caused lots of problems because he would "adjust" the values of certain items such as coal, oil etc, which the auditors could not readily verify, in order to maintain an appearance of solvency.

In fact, I cannot recall the Kent & East Sussex or the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire ever making a legitimate profit although this was not apparent from the figures. When the companies were short of cash, he would put thousands of pounds of his own private money in for the purchase of items of equipment, notably the Ford and Shefflex railcars.

I believe that the worry that this engendered, resulted in the breakdown of his health in 1930.

Colonel Stephens was, in many ways, a generous man. His friends enjoyed his hospitality, given mainly at his London clubs, of which he used the Royal Automobile and Eccentric most frequently.

He once told me that he would never smoke or have a glass of whisky unless he was in company. He also was lavish with presents. He would order legs of Welsh lamb direct from Llanidloes in Wales, Salmon caught on the Severn, Stags heads and lobsters from Oban. Plovers eggs and moor hens eggs were sent up by gangers and platelayers on the Kent & East Sussex. These were delivered to Tonbridge and parcelled up again by one of the clerks for despatch according to a list provided by the Colonel. In 1928, many of his friends were sent permanent engraved aluminium passes for use on his lines. The staff did not lose out either; he loved the Kent & East Sussex and in or about 1912 had 21 bungalows built of wood with corrugated iron roofing on Rolvenden Hill. These were let at very low rents, which were collected each week by Mr Hilder, a Tenterden stone mason. It was in Hilder's yard, to the rear of the high street that the K & ESR kept its pony and delivery van and also, after he retired from military service, Colonel Stephens' personal motor car. When I married in 1926, Stephens offered to send my wife Elsie to a London school of cookery and domestic

science so that my gastronomic needs would be enhanced. Needless to say, this rather tactless offer was politely refused!

Despite an extensive circle of friends, Colonel Stephens always maintained a certain degree of formality, even with the people who he knew well. No one other than his father or mother called him "Holly". To everyone else, with a single exception, he was "Colonel Stephens" or "Stephens". However, G.S.Szlumper, then Assistant General Manager of the Southern Railway, wrote to him either as "My dear Steve" or "My dear old bird" and would always finish up "As ever Slumps". It was frequently my lot to arrange a lunch companion for him when he was in London. This was sometimes Mr Szlumper, but also Mr J Barfoot his assistant, Sir J.G.Beharrell (Chairman of the Dunlop Rubber Company) or failing anyone else Jeremiah McVeagh, an Irish MP who also served on several of Stephens' Boards. It was McVeagh who arranged a dinner with Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald and several other ministers so that Stephens could put forward his strong views on the role of small railway companies (Note 1)

To my knowledge, Colonel Stephens never took a holiday in all the years that I worked there. However, in April 1922 he did attend the International Railway Congress in Rome, when light railways were on the agenda. He was also very friendly with the European Manager of Canadian National Railways, based in Cockspur Street, near Trafalgar Square.

This gentleman was constantly asking Stephens to join him on a trip to Canada to meet some of the directors and ride on some of their crack trains.

He even sent him company labels and an ornate pen and ink stand with the Canadian National railways emblem on it. However, to no avail.

Colonel Stephens travelled around his lines extensively. This would include the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, Weston, Clevedon & Portishead and Festiniog lines. He usually departed in the late afternoon and arrived back at Tonbridge late the following evening. Usually this would be preceded by a cryptic telegram saying



Pen and ink stand, shown with luggage labels. A present to Stephens from Canadian National Railways, now in the Colonel Stephens Museum. (Brian Stephenson)



Gilbert Savil Szlumper (1884-1969), a close friend of Stephens. (Railway Magazine)

"arrive Tonbridge 10.30pm" or thereabouts and I would be required to hasten down to the office, well after normal hours with letters requiring his signature, so that they would catch the midnight post.

After his first stroke in 1930, Colonel Stephens was advised by his physician, Sir Percival Horton-Smith-Hartley, to go to a London nursing home for 6 weeks. Following some persuasion he did and after this we arranged for him to stay at the Castle Hotel Hastings for two months. However, he was unhappy there and arrangements were made for him to return to his old haunt, the Lord Warden hotel in Dover where everyone, from the Manager to the Boot Boy knew him well. Twice a week I went down to see him, leaving Tonbridge at about 5.30pm. We had dinner together and then retired to the smoking room for coffee and for him, a large cigar. He had a maroon leather cigar case given to him by Gilbert Szlumper as a Christmas present. Because of his condition he found it very difficult to communicate, although he appeared to understand what I said. I sometimes found it very difficult to get away, although I had to leave at 10.00pm in order to catch the last train. On occasions, when he felt well enough, I arranged for

him to go by train to Shrewsbury (for the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire) or Llandudno Junction (for the Festiniog and Welsh Highland lines) staying the night away and accompanied by staff member, Alfred Willard, who could be trusted. I had been given power of attorney over his affairs in January 1931, following a suggestion by his physician.

After Colonel Stephens died in October 1931, the office continued with W.H.Austen in control. In 1932, following the collapse of the Southern Heights light railway proposals, which I attribute entirely to Austen's incompetence in progressing the scheme, he dispensed with the services of the long standing civil engineering assistant and drawing office manager, John Ashworth, in order to make room for his own son, W.H.Austen Junior to join the workforce. This caused a great deal of bitterness in the office for some time. In 1933, Austen purchased the offices from Stephens's executors on the understanding that the companies could remain in occupation at a reasonable rental (deemed to be £250 pa) for as long as was needed. My own work continued as before. One of my responsibilities was internal audit accountant to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and the Festiniog & Welsh Highland Railways. I would spend several days in North Wales, reaching Blaenau Festiniog via the Conway Valley line and travel down the line visiting the various stations to Portmadoc, sometimes using the gravity slate trains, staying overnight at the Royal Sportsman, a hotel also favoured by Colonel Stephens.

As a beneficiary under the Colonel's will, I also acquired the shares in the Snailbeach District Railways Company, which owned the only access route to an important quarry in Shropshire

After the railways were nationalised on 1st January 1948, the Salford Terrace offices continued to operate until 7th June. When they finally closed, several lorry loads of papers were carried away from the store at the rear of the premises for waste paper. Although I rescued a number of interesting papers, I am sorry that I did not salvage some more of the material, some of it dating back to 1891 and the early days of

Colonel Stephens' career. At the end, some of the staff accepted jobs with British Railways; others retired. I was offered and accepted the post of running the commercial accounts section at Waterloo.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS **GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY SYSTEM**

1929-1930

PA 1817

PASS Lt. Col. H. F. Stephens, R.E. (R).
 Managing Director,
 Kent & East Sussex Rly. (England)

OVER ENTIRE SYSTEM

UNTIL DECEMBER 31st, 1930 (UNLESS OTHERWISE ORDERED AND
 SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS ON BACK.)

VALID ONLY WHEN COUNTERSIGNED BY
 F.A. JOHNSON OR H.H. POWELL

H.W. Hamilton
 PRESIDENT

Notes:

1. James Ramsay Macdonald was Prime Minister, briefly, between January and November 1924 when the first Labour government came to power. He had a second term of office between 1929 and 1935 and it is likely that the dinner arranged by Jeremiah Macveagh was in 1929 because Stephens became seriously ill at the beginning of 1930. It is not known what the particular issues were discussed, but Stephens was very concerned about the effect on the small companies of the Railway (Road Transport) Bill introduced by Stanley Baldwin's Conservative administration in 1928 and actively lobbied against it (see Brian Janes's article in Tenterden Terrier No 97). MacVeagh was a nationalist MP for County Down South and contested Sunderland unsuccessfully for labour in 1924.

2. Stephens was accompanied on his visit to Rome in connection with the International Railway Congress by W.A. Jepson who was a director of the Kent & East Sussex Railway and also the Selsey Tramway. Formerly an official with the L&NWR, he was also a member of the Railway Rates Tribunal, Ministry of Transport.

3. W.H. Austen Snr; J.A. Iggulden, A. Willard and G.H. Willard were the sole and equal beneficiaries under Colonel Stephens will.

**Office staff at 23, Salford Terrace,
 Tonbridge, at closure in 1948**

(List compiled by J.A. Iggulden)

W.H. Austen Snr. Successor to Colonel Stephens and solely responsible for all

outdoor works. Retired in 1948.

J.A. Iggulden. chief clerk, senior indoor assistant for all lines and internal audit accountant. Went to Waterloo as head of the commercial accounts section in 1948.

W.H. Austen Jnr. General outdoor assistant on all lines. Went to the office of the District Locomotive Superintendent, Ashford in 1948 for a brief period and then to work for Tonbridge Rural District Council as an engineer.

A. Willard. Stores Superintendent for the K & ESR. Retired in 1948

G.H. Willard. Brother of A. Willard. Principal clerk for the K&ESR. Retired in 1948

C.R. Hewitt. Clerk for the S&MR, WC&PR and Snailbeach District Railways. Went to Waterloo in 1948 to work in the claims section

J. Elcome. Secretary to the Selsey Tramways and assistant to C.R. Hewitt. Left railway service in 1948.

T.W. Edwards. Rates and general assistant K&ESR. Went to the office of the District Locomotive Superintendent at Ashford as a wages clerk in 1948

W. Wills. Principal clerk to the East Kent Railway. Retired in 1948

W.H. Corke. Engineering and drawing office assistant. Joined a large London building company as an engineer in 1948.

A.R. Judd. Deputy to C.R. Hewitt and J. Elcome. Went to a quarry company in Hythe as an accountant in 1948.

A. Osborne. General clerk, Selsey Tramways and also worked in the drawing office. Became a level crossing keeper at Stonegate in 1948

J. Wicks. General clerk. Became a petrol pump attendant in 1948

R. McLean. General clerk. Went to Tonbridge goods office as a clerk in 1948

B. Cheeseman. Assistant to W. Wills. Became a publican in 1948

T. Lloyd. Assistant to T.W. Edwards. Retired in 1948

B. Williams. Assistant to C.R. Hewitt and J. Elcome. Went to District Commercial Manager's office, Orpington in 1948.

Letters to the Editor

Arthur Neal M.P.

Sir – I was most intrigued to see the photograph on page 39 of the Tenterden Terrier No 97. It undoubtedly depicts my grandfather Arthur Neal M.P cutting the first sod of the Halwill to Torrington line in 1922. I was born in 1924 and have no recollection of ever seeing my grandfather or ever a photograph of him until now! I was told that he had some connection with railways, which have always been an interest of mine since childhood. We have the documents about the purchase of this house in 1914 which was arranged by him for my parents. This has always been my home.

By the way my wife and I met you many years ago when we were paying one of our visits to the K&ESR. We were staying in a small hotel on the high street near the Town Hall and talked about the railway over breakfast.

London, NW11 Tim Neal

The Late Jack Marchant

Sir – I, on behalf of my family, would like, through the auspices of your excellent journal, to say thank you to some of your members for the kind help and assistance they gave enabling us to bury my late father's ashes on the lineside, in a beautiful spot between Northiam and Bodiam on Saturday 15th October. Dad died on Sunday 17th July in his 101st year.

Firstly, our profound thanks must go to Nick Pallant, your Company Secretary, and Geoff Crouch, your PWay Manager for the lengths they went too, including the laying on of a special train, in order to make the request possible. Secondly, the members of the family attending on the day would also like to express their gratitude to Geoff Crouch, Pete Salmon, Ops. Manager, "Moggy" Dave Smith from the PWay department and "frim" the driver for the kind, caring and sensitive way they handled the proceedings on the day. Nothing was too much trouble. We would also like to thank the lady in the station buffet and the Station Master at Northiam for their

generosity in providing us with a hot drink on our return to the station. Unfortunately I didn't get their names.

Dad joined what was then the Southern Railway, which later became British Railways (Southern Region), in April 1924 at Hastings and spent his entire career in the PWay department. He started in track-laying gangs, progressing on to become an extra ganger and finally a supervisor before retiring in January 1970. In 1952, as an extra ganger, he undertook extensive work on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, between Tenterden and Robertsbridge, upgrading the track.

He always spoke warmly about the Railway, which is why we thought it would be a fitting place to bury his ashes somewhere on the lineside.

The family will always be indebted to those above who enabled us to bring our wish to fruition. You can be sure that with good people such as these in your midst the Railway is in very good hands.

We wish you continued success in your endeavors and hope that one day the goal of reaching Robertsbridge will be realised.

St. Leonards on Sea, Cliff Marchant
East Sussex

The Late Eric Graves

Sir – Thank you for including the item on my father, Eric Graves, in the Summer 2005 edition of the Tenterden Terrier. Can I correct you – my Dad died on May 12th not in June, as stated in the Terrier. My father was involved with the railway for 36 years and it gave him much pleasure and was involved in so many aspects of the life of the K&ESR that people were not always aware of.

He was behind the rescue of the SECR/LCDR coaches one of which makes up part of our vintage stock, one is about to go into carriage and wagon for restoration and a third one part of which is in the railway museum. Without the prompt action of Eric the railway would have missed the opportunity of saving these

carriages. I will return to this later. He founded the Ashford railway group and had been instrumental in raising many thousands of pounds for the railway. He organised 25 model railway exhibitions in Ashford to raise funds for the K&ESR, these only stopped because there was no one willing to take over from him. The work of the Ashford group is now in the capable hands of a committed committee. He was a member of the Locomotive Trust, the Terrier Trust, and the Norwegian Trust. I spent time with him back in the 70s and 80s replacing track before he became a guard and later he started working in carriage and wagon from time to time. He was always present at the AGM and was quietly working behind the scenes. His car always had piles of advertising material from the railway and he would regularly sell stock from the shop at various events. He would also spend evenings giving slide shows to organisations about the railway, encouraging people to come and visit the railway.

Dad never sold himself but quietly and meticulously got on with the job. For many years he brought rags and distilled water to the railway from outside companies. John Liddell commented to me that he had not realised how much Dad did outside of the railway until he attended the funeral service.

Dad was over the moon that the second Ashford coach was going into carriage and wagon this summer for restoration. The memorial fund, at last count, stood at £1,000 in aid of the restoration of this carriage. This one and the one in service were rescued from Beaver Road in Ashford. Part of a third one is in the Museum. He will be sorely missed by us and by the railway too. There are many other areas he was involved in some of which I am not aware of – looking through his railway records I have found pictures of him working on Newmill Bridge in 1977. I will miss among many things seeing his articles in the Terrier of the work of the Ashford group but look forward to reading inclusions from the new committee. The railway has been very much part of our family life for the last 36 years and will continue to be so.

In 1985 Eric Graves received a phone call

inviting him to look at 4 Victorian carriages. These were located within the frame work of a house in Beaver Road, Ashford. He was told that if he could clear the site he could have the carriages.

All four coaches were sold to a Mr Larkin of the Mechanics Institute at Newtown works. He had them transported to Beaver road where they were converted into a bungalow.

During the Summer of 1986 Eric arranged and participated in the clearing of the cladding of the house so that in August 1986 two of the carriages were removed from the site, no 2947 and no 3062. They were taken by low loader and placed behind the Buffet where they were completely enclosed in a corrugated iron shell. The other two carriages were not felt at that time to be fully salvageable – today the skills available would have made this possible. The end of one of the remaining carriages (3361) was cut off and is in the Museum. The remainder was lost along with 3022.

In September 1993 2947 and 3062 were moved and put onto underframes. This was reported in the Kentish Express on 8th July 1993 and it was the first time since 1921 that they had been on rails. They were stored in the back siding at Tenterden waiting to go into carriage and wagon. In 1994 2947 went into the shed and was restored by a team of volunteers. In August 1995 2947 came out of Carriage and wagon and brought about much publicity for the railway with an article in October 1995 issue of Railway World by Nick Pallant. It was also used immediately in the filming of Wind In The Willows and brought in valuable film revenue money. 3062 is going into C&W this year – again the Ashford group have raised funds for this restoration. The work of Eric Graves in rescuing these carriages is a continuing memorial to his efforts on the railway. The family call these carriages Dad's carriages!

The memorial fund, to which so many people have generously contributed, will fund restoration of 3062. I do believe this is the first time that the efforts of Eric Graves have been documented in the Terrier.

Whittle, Essex Peter Graves

Junction Road, 1930

Even by K&ESR standards 'Junction Road for Hawkhurst' was not a notable station, vying for obscurity with Salehurst Halt and Frittenden Road. But it was in fact a useful little halt that was extraordinarily busy in the hop-picking season right up to the end of hop-pickers specials in 1958. Not bad for a platform opened in obscure circumstances, apparently as a private halt, and then to the public in about 1903, situated at a point where the railway crossed the road from Hawkhurst (a mere 4 miles away) to Cripps Corner. The road was a product of turnpike road improvement and cuts in a notably straight path across hill and valley serving only a few scattered houses and farms. One supposes that it was the 18th Century equivalent of a motorway. When road numbering came into vogue in about 1921 it became the A229, only to be downgraded

in relatively recent times, because of difficulties with earth slippage, to become the B2244.

Quiet country it might be but there was soon demand for a siding and one, with a connection towards Robertsbridge, was put in on the other side of the road to the rudimentary platform in late July 1909. This was called Udiam Road Siding in all the correspondence, although the halt has always been named after the road called Junction Road (it joined two older roads). The Government approved the siding, after a belated inspection by Col. Pringle, in February 1910.

Photographs of the halt in it's first 50 years of existence are rare and it is one of those nice surprises of volunteering on the railway that perfect strangers can walk in and present, in this case to the shop



Foden Steam Wagon at Junction Road, with driver, Edgar Harding (left) and fireman.



Passing train with No 8 Hesperus at Junction Road.

volunteer Colin Pearson, some notable snippet. In this case the four enchanting photos accompanying this article.

The four photos were brought in by Geoffrey Harding after he had found them amongst his father's effects. His father Edgar Harding after distinguished military service as a gunner in the Great War , winning the Military Medal twice and the Croix de Guerre , joined the East Sussex County Council in about 1923 as a driver of a Foden steam tipping wagon. This machine was stabled at Robertsbridge Station and was steamed up by Edgar Harding every morning to do whatever haulage tasks were required that day. Mr Harding still has some of his father's logbooks from around 1935 that show that he undertook many trips loading road stone at Junction Road and hauling it for road repairs in the area.

Edgar Harding can be seen leaning on the wagon in one photo with his fireman, and the other (page 32) shows the backbreaking task of shifting stone by hand from railway truck to steam wagon. It is a sign of a wholly changed world that the lorry would

have been sent round the country lanes the few miles to Junction Road siding to pick up its loads rather than haul them from the mainline at Robertsbridge Junction. A sure indication of the continuing need for a rural light railway well into the 1930s and indeed later.

Mr Harding wondered if we could date the photos or identify the other personalities shown. We can do this with a certain amount of accuracy from the two railway shots. The obviously rather hasty shot (did it catch the photographer unawares?) is of the 0-6-0ST 'Hesperus ' (see my article in the *Tenterden Terrier* for Spring 2002) which because of the position of her toolbox, dates the shots after 1928 but before 1933 when she lost her name.

However the photo of the second Ford railmotor set at the halt enable us to be more definitive. It is a quite lovely photograph. Note the clarity and the detail. In obvious expectation of a hurrying passenger the guard looks down the road towards Hawkhurst over the original rickety fence that was very soon after replaced by something slightly more

Ford Railcar set no 2 at Junction Road platform



modern with iron rails. On the original print the head of the driver can just be seen peering over sill of the window from his extraordinary low seat position as he waits for the off with about two passengers. On the roof a folded canvas appears to be wedged, perhaps to cover roof luggage although I have never seen any evidence that the rails provided for this purpose on the roofs of all the Stephens Ford railmotors were so used. And at Udiam farm the washing waits for a winter breeze. But what firmly dates the photo is the position and nature of the Railmotors primitive buffer beam behind which a petrol can is wedged. A photograph taken in March 1931 show the beam was set much lower with a centre coupling to tow the trailer that was acquired with the Shefflex set which arrived in October 1929. So it is almost certain that the year is 1930.

Times moved on and Edgar Harding lost his beloved Foden in 1937 for a more

prosaic Leyland motor lorry. 'Junction Road for Hawkhurst' halt too is long lost in the holocaust that followed the Ministry of Transport's doctrinaire decision in the 1960/70s to forbid the use of a level crossing across the then A road. Still things continue to change, track moves ever closer and you never know what the future may hold.

Finally a request, dear reader. Mr Harding would love to know if we can identify any of the people depicted when his father was photographed on that winter's day. It would be nice to know the identities of those who laboured at this deeply rural location to maintain roads and railway services 75 years ago. Can anyone help?

Brian Janes

(Thanks are due to Brian Stephenson for producing excellent prints from the original negatives)



Unloading stone by hand from railway truck to steam wagon.

The Trench Warfare Light Railway

Anyone who used to attend the meetings of the former Thameside Area Group of the K&ESR at the 'Corner Pin' pub in Slade Green might well not have realised that they were only a stone's throw from what was once the terminus of one of Kent's more obscure passenger-carrying railways, the sinisterly named Trench Warfare Light Railway. It flourished, like a number of other short-lived lines, during the First World War.

A little background on earlier railway developments in the area may be useful. Slades Green (as it was then spelled) had been expanding during the first decade of the twentieth century. The North Kent line had no station between Erith and Dartford for its first fifty years or so, although there was a signal cabin at Whitehall Crossing. In 1891 the Bexley Heath Railway was opened, joining the North Kent line at Crayford Creek Junction, between Whitehall Crossing and Dartford Junction (with the Dartford Loop Line from Hither Green via Sidcup). A few years later, the South Eastern & Chatham Railways Managing Committee decided to build a spacious new depot there to house locomotives for suburban traffic, replacing various cramped facilities nearer London. The new Slades Green engine shed was opened in 1901, together with a station of the same name at Whitehall Crossing and an estate of new houses for the workmen and their families. Full details can be found in 'An illustrated history of Slade Green Depot', by A.W. Deller.

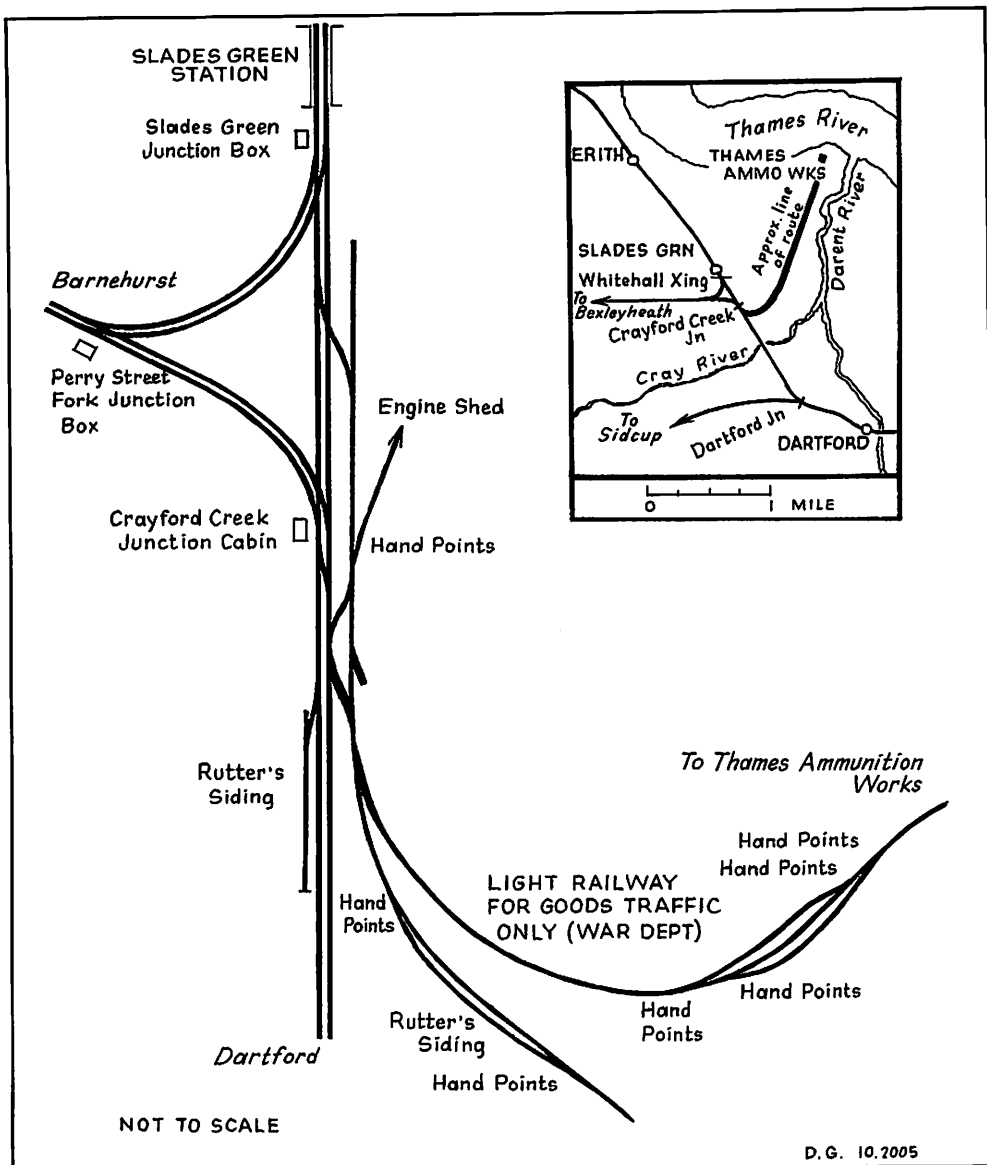
Brickmaking was an established industry in the area, and Messrs Rutters had a siding from the up North Kent line near Crayford Creek Junction to serve a brickworks south-west of the railway. One source of clay was a series of pits north-east of the railway, connected to the works by a narrow-gauge tramway passing under the viaduct which carried the North Kent line over Crayford Creek. In about 1910-1912, the sand drag at the Dartford end of Slades Green engine shed was extended to create Rutter's (Down)

siding, which was used to bring rubbish from Woolwich and elsewhere to fill the worked-out parts of the clays.

The Thames Ammunition Works Ltd. had been established about 1902 by the River Thames on the Crayford Marshes, a remote area suitable for an explosives factory and with good access to water transport. Before 1914, most of its output was exported to foreign governments (often under subcontracts from its parent company, Vickers Ltd.) as the War Office and the Admiralty were supplied by Woolwich Arsenal and other Government factories. The outbreak of the Great War changed all that, and the Thames Ammunition Company found itself supplying as much as it could produce to the British forces.

Even with Government-funded extensions, the private explosives companies and the Arsenal combined could not keep pace with the unprecedented rate at which modern mechanised warfare was consuming ammunition, and the resulting shortages of shells on the Western Front called the Government's conduct of the war into question. The Ministry of Munitions was therefore set up in May 1915 to coordinate all aspects of supply, and one approach was to build factories to fill single types of ammunition with their explosive charges using unskilled labour.

A Filling Factory designed to fill 2-inch trench mortar bombs was built by the Thames Ammunition Works for the Ministry on a 14-acre site adjacent to their own factory. Part of the land had been taken under the Defence of the Realm Act from an Austrian citizen who had been interned. Instructions to start construction were given to Thames Ammunition on 21 August 1915, output of bombs began at the start of October, and by the end of January 1916 all eighteen of the well-spaced sheds were complete and the factory was handling the entire filling programme for 2-inch mortar bombs – initially 20,000 a week, increased to 25,000 a



week by April 1917. A 2-foot gauge railway was laid down for internal movement around the factory, and motive power included a 0-4-0ST named 'Dalmarnock'.

It had originally been intended that the Filling Factory should be managed under contract by Thames Ammunition, but as it proved difficult to agree on financial terms, and as disquieting reports had been received about safety standards and about the treatment of the women and girls who

comprised much of the workforce, the factory was taken over under the Defence of the Realm Act from 27 January 1916 and run directly by the French Warfare Supply Department of the Ministry.

A temporary siding for Thames Ammunition Works traffic had been brought into use by December 1915, at the London end of Slades Green station. This had been created by extending the engine shed headshunt as far as Whitehall level crossing. It was soon

supplemented by a railway line through to the Filling Factory, which may also have handled goods traffic for Thames Ammunition. This line was provisionally approved by the Board of Trade on 9 February 1916 and ran for about 1½ miles from Slades Green, where it was connected to Rutter's (Down) siding, with a new facing crossover (shown as a heavier line on the diagram) from the down North Kent line, controlled from Crayford Creek Junction signal cabin. New signalling and electrical work was by Sykes & Co.

The Ministry of Munitions used two 0-6-0ST engines: No.7 was built by Hudswell Clarke of Leeds (probably works No. 671 of 1904, which had been previously owned by G.J. Robinson). It was painted red. 'Emerald Isle', built by Peckett (works no. 1424 of 1916) was appropriately bright green. It had been delivered new to the Perivale Filling Factory, west of London, so may have been a somewhat later arrival at Slades Green. Both these engines were kept at the SE&CR locomotive shed when not in use, and when one of them had to be stopped 'Terrier' 0-6-0T No. 751 was hired from the SE&CR at £3-15-0 a day. No. 751 had an interesting history. It had been built by the London Brighton & South Coast Railway in 1876 as No. 54 'Waddon', and was bought by the SE&CR in 1904 to work goods trains on the Sheppey Light Railway. Later on, in Southern Railway days, it became the Lancing Carriage Works shunter as No. 680S, and was not withdrawn from service until June 1962. It was then sent to Canada, where it is still preserved at the Canadian Railway Museum at Delson, Quebec.

In 1916, an average of 350 people were employed at the factory, five-sixths of them women. As the immediate surroundings were only sparsely inhabited, they had to be brought in by motor lorry along the narrow, winding road over the marshes, and a canteen was started at the factory to provide breakfast, dinner and tea. In June 1916 the Ministry of Munitions requested the SE&CR to run a passenger service for the workers in the morning and evening. Following an inspection by Colonel P.G. von Donop RE on 19 June, the Board of Trade agreed to this for the duration of the War subject to a number of conditions: while the passenger train was running, traffic was to be worked by

one engine in steam carrying the train staff for the line; passenger trains were to consist of no more than six vehicles and to have a brake compartment with a guard at the rear; a platform of sufficient length was to be provided at the factory end of the line; the speed of passenger trains was to be restricted to 12 mph throughout, and 4 mph at all facing points; and the engine was to be at the front of the train when it was leaving and approaching the main line. Presumably there was a run-round loop and various sidings at the factory end, although surviving records give no details.

Colonel von Donop's conditions presented no problem apart from the platform. At the end of June, M.S. McKay, the director of department TW4 of the Ministry, wrote to the Board of Trade reporting that although a contract had been let for the platform, it would not be completed for a fortnight. He requested permission to start the train service before the platform was finished. "After all," he wrote, "There will be no more difficulty for the workmen [sic] to get in and out of the carriages without a platform than occurs at present in travelling by the motor lorries." Under the circumstances, the Board of Trade was disposed to make no objection, but as it turned out the platform was completed sooner than expected, and the train service began on 6 July 1916.

Although the Board's original conditions apparently envisaged the use of trains hauled by Ministry locomotives, in fact the service seems to have been provided at first by two of the SE&CR's eight steam railmotors, Nos. 4 and 8. These had been built in 1906, the locomotive portions by Kitson & Co. of Leeds and the carriage part by the Metropolitan Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. of Oldbury. Following use with varying degrees of success on branch and local train services around the SE&CR, Nos. 4 and 8 had arrived at Slades Green loco shed around 1909. Here they worked a local service between Dartford and Gravesend which had been started in 1908 (including recently opened halts at Stone Crossing and Swanscombe) in response to proposals to link the electric tramway systems of Dartford and Gravesend – in the event, the gap between the easternmost Dartford tram terminus at Horn's Cross and the western limit of the Gravesend system at White's

cement works at Swanscombe was never filled. The railmotors were also used for additional workmen's trains in the morning and evening to Uralite Halt, a short distance down the Hundred of Hoo branch.

According to the SE&CR working instructions, the morning train for Trench Warfare Halt left Slades Green SE&CR station at 6.52 a.m., and the empty train was propelled back at 7.10 a.m., direct into the locomotive shed - propelling of loaded passenger trains (apart from the railmotors, presumably) was strictly prohibited. In the shed the passenger accommodation no doubt collected a further layer of coal dust and soot before the empty train returned to form the 5.40 p.m. (Mondays to Fridays) or 11.50 a.m. (Saturdays) train from Trench Warfare Halt to Slades Green station, with a load of weary war-workers, their skin stained yellow by picric acid. No tickets were issued, but passengers had to have a military pass, issued to workers at 'H.M. Factory, Erith'.

As time went on, the service increased until - according to the late Donald Bradley - there were no fewer than fourteen journeys daily. By early 1918, traffic had increased to such an extent that the railmotors could no longer cope, and were replaced by sets of ex-London Chatham & Dover Railway four-wheeled carriages, hauled by Ministry of Munitions locomotives. The redundant railmotors were at first stored at Dartford, and then moved into a tunnel near Greenwich Park, on the closed branch from Nunhead. All the SE&CR railmotors were finally withdrawn from stock by the Southern Railway in 1924, and the locomotive portions were broken up later that year.

Given that it had been decided in June 1917 that no further expansion of the Filling Factory was possible because of the difficulty of recruiting and transporting enough labour (about one-third of the workers resigned each month), it may well be that the increase in traffic was because the train service was also being used by Thames Ammunition workers, although this remains to be confirmed.

In May 1917, the layout of the factory was changed so that filling could be switched from 2-inch to 6-inch trench mortar bombs; gravity conveyors had to be installed to handle the heavier 6-inch bombs. As mentioned, further expansion was not thought practicable, but

filling continued until the end of hostilities, reaching a total of 1,142,806 2-inch bombs and 1,063,193 6-inch bombs.

With the end of the war in November 1918, the need for mortar bombs by the million ceased, and the Ministry of Munitions set about disposing of its assets and closing itself down. The light railway was out of use by 1920, when most of the track was lifted and a bridge removed, and the two locomotives were offered for sale. The Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST went to the Vauxhall Motors factory at Bedford, where it stayed until it was scrapped in the 1950s. The Peckett 0-6-0ST 'Emerald Isle' was sold to in about 1919 Settle, Speakman & Co. who had a long siding from Queenborough station on the Isle of Sheppey to Queenborough Wharf, where coal was imported. Settle Speakman provided shunting services to several factories in the Rushenden area of Queenborough that were connected to the main line by the Queenborough Wharf siding, and so maintained quite a large fleet of locomotives. 'Emerald Isle' is reported to have had a few days of glory in 1922 after a ship, the SS Gyp, hit the Kingsferry Bridge, so that it could not be completely closed. Railway services on Sheppey had to be maintained with whatever engines and rolling stock happened to have been trapped on the island, and 'Emerald Isle' is supposed to have hauled passenger trains on the Sheppey Light Railway for a while. In 1924 it was sold once again, to the Melingriffith Co. Ltd., tinplate manufacturers of Radyr in South Wales. The narrow-gauge engine, 'Dalmarnock', was apparently acquired by William Jones, a machinery dealer in Greenwich, but its later history is uncertain.

The factory itself was leased from about 1921 to W. Villa Gilbert & Co. Ltd., who had a contract with the Disposals Board to break down surplus munitions. On 17 February 1924 there was an explosion and fire in a building used to break open and empty cartridges for Very signalling pistols. Eleven of the eighteen girls working in the shed were killed, together with their foreman, Edward Jones. They are commemorated by a memorial in Brook Street Cemetery in Erith, which was refurbished in 1996. The company was in liquidation by 1926-1927 and use of the site ceased, the buildings becoming derelict.



SE&CR steam railmotor No 4 and trailer car at Hastings on a service from Rye, probably in 1914. (Rail Archive Stephenson)

In the 1920s and 1930s, Rutter's Down siding, and very likely a siding relaid on part of the trackbed of the light railway, were used for tipping domestic rubbish on the marshes. The refuse was brought by train from Hither Green. Hudsons Ltd., the operator of the tip, used at first a Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Margaret' (works No. 735 of 1900), which had been acquired second hand and was originally built for the railway contractor William Rigby. When R.W. Kidner first visited the siding in September 1933, 'Margaret' was still in service, but shortly afterwards it was replaced by a Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST named 'Becontree' (works No. 1563 of 1925). This had been obtained from C.J. Wills, contractor for the LCC Becontree Estate, which was completed about that time. Hudsons continued to use the siding until shortly before the Second World War, but when the dumping started again after 1945, motor lorries were used instead.

The Thames Ammunition Works survived until the Second World War, when it was destroyed by an air raid in 1941. At that period it had no direct rail connection, using road transport to the Thames Ammunition siding near Slade Green station.

Today, the changes brought about by landfill, post-Second World War redevelopment and

the remodelling of Slade Green depot in the 1990s make it difficult to imagine the three years when the light railway across the Crayford Marshes was a vital link in the trench warfare of the Western Front.

Tom Burnham

Notes:

Information from Peter Hickson (Erith and Belvedere Local History Society), Roger Kidner, Linda Rhodes (Barking & Dagenham Local Studies Centre) and Frances Sweeney (Bexley Local Studies Centre) is gratefully acknowledged. David Gould kindly drew the map.

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File MT 6/2429/2, National Archives, Kew

Stephens' Oldest Locomotive

The early origins of one of Stephens' great locomotive oddities, the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire No 2 Hecate (later Severn), are frequently described as obscure. And so they are. Brian Janes has unravelled the facts.

Reported History

For many years the accepted version was that described in *The Locomotive Magazine* for February 1922. This reported:

"This engine has bar framing for the coupled wheels and plate framing from the front of the ash-pan to the bunker end, this plate-frame no doubt dating from the conversion from tender to tank which has obviously been effected at some time or other. The coupling-rods and motion (a variation of the Stephenson link) are finished round, indicating, with the bar framing, some sort of Bury engine rebuilt as a tank and re-boilered.

"The engine was purchased by Colonel Stephens, in May, 1911, from a Mr. R. Hartley, for the then recently re-opened S. & M. Ry., for about £350. After being re-conditioned at Messrs Bagnall's Works at Stafford and fitted with the vacuum brake — perhaps the only Bury locomotive ever to arrive at that distinction — she was put to work hauling passenger and goods trains on the [Criggion] branch, but has more recently been restricted to the quarry stone traffic.

"When purchased she was standing at the Griff Colliery, near Nuneaton, and then bore the name of "Crewe." On the S. & M. Ry., where she has been numbered 2, she was at first called "Hecate," but since 1916, brass plates bearing the word "Severn" have been attached to the saddle-tank. The original name "Crewe" suggests some connection with the L. and N. W. Ry., and it is possible that she may have been one of Messrs. Bury, Curtis and Kennedy's later contributions to the locomotive stock of that Company or an acquisition from an absorbed line; if so, it must have been the Northern Division, as none of the coupled Burys on the Southern Division appear to have had 4-ft. 6-in. wheels.

"As a Bury she cannot be of later date than the very early 1850's, and was probably a 0-4-0 tender engine with the firm's characteristic fire-box dome. The origin and date of the present boiler is unknown. The fire-box is raised [It was not in fact- Ed] and there is a dome on the middle of the boiler barrel. The cylinders clear the rail level by about 8 in. only and the motion bars are under the leading axle, the connecting rods working upwards to the cranks."

This supposition of Bury origins for the locomotive is not unreasonable, as the engine carried the basic characteristics of the breed. But the written association between Bury, the LNWR and Severn is, as the writer makes clear, pure supposition probably reinforced by a letter in the January 1918 *Railway and Travel Monthly Magazine*. This was from a former Potteries employee, Mr. W Hughes, saying that he remembered Severn being delivered in the summer of 1872. He reported that it came from the LNWR - in fact the one he remembered was quite another locomotive entirely (Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales No10 Ex LNWR No 1859 built by Bury Curtis & Kennedy in November 1847)

The report that the locomotive originated at Griff Colliery will have emanated from Stephens himself, but begs several questions. Mr R Hartley seems to have been a dealer but the links with any ex LNWR Bury-type locomotive at Griff Colliery bearing the name Crewe seem unsubstantiated. No locomotive of Severn's dimensions seems to appear in LNWR records and there seems to be little, if any, hard evidence of a Bury at Griff.

This shaky history was overlaid at some stage with the assertion that the engine originated as a Bury-type locomotive on the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway, subsequently taken over by the LNWR. This seems first to have appeared in Charles Klapper's *Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway* article in the September 1934 *Railway Magazine*. It cannot be correct as, according to RCTS

publications and other sources, none of the 29 Shrewsbury & Hereford locomotives (half of which went to the GWR) were Bury-type.

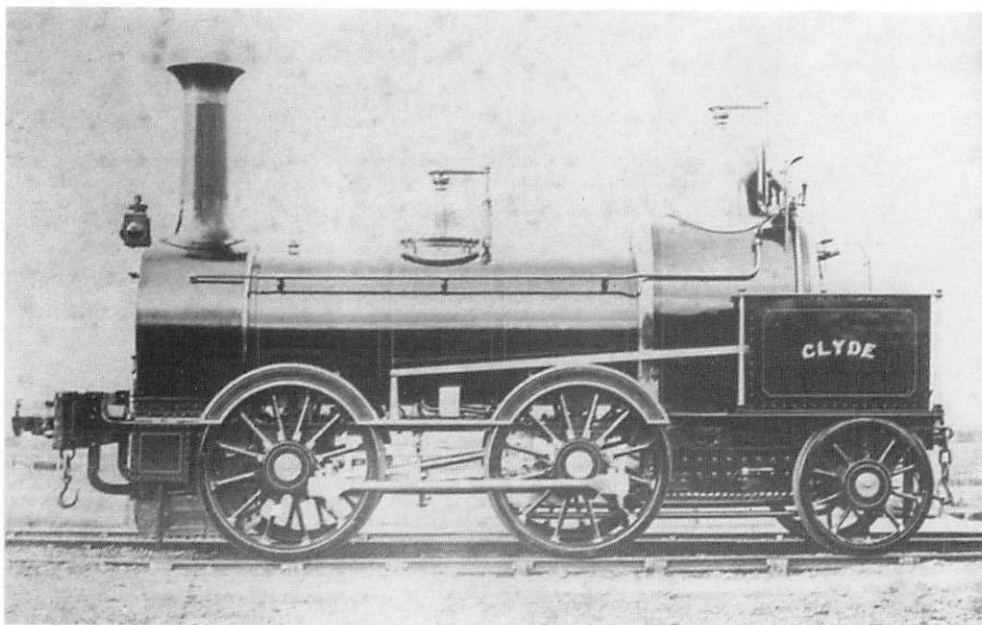
Most Likely History

There is little doubt in my mind that quite another version of Severn's origins is the correct one. It has been subject to sound research by several parties, the principal dimensions of the chassis seem to co-relate to all stages of the engine's life and is the nearest to being confirmable from available records.

In this version Severn began life as a 0-4-2 tender engine that was built, or at any rate assembled, at the works of the St Helens Railway (1) in 1853. Named Hero, and later numbered 23, it was built to an obsolete design with Bury style bar frames for the driving wheels and plate frames for the trailing wheels. Her cylinders also sloped towards the front, a long antiquated construction method. She probably looked like No 26 Clyde, built at St Helens in 1863, which is illustrated here. It is possible that Hero incorporated parts from earlier locomotives as the railway did not usually build its own locomotives, and she was probably the first or second example.

James Cross, a noted engineer who joined the railway in 1854, soon however began a concerted programme of such building (or rebuilding).

The St Helens Railway was taken over by the LNWR on 1 August 1864 and almost immediately disposed of most of its 28 locomotives. Our locomotive was amongst them and was reported sold six months later on 15 August 1865, by which time it had, nominally at least, acquired the LNWR number 1389. James Cross was the buyer, having left the railway at takeover, acquired St Helens works, and set up his own engineering business. He seems to have rebuilt the engine as a side tank and, by 1869, had sold it to the Bristol Port and Pier Railway that had been opened in 1865. It is almost certain that the locomotive was in use on the railway before this by the operating contractors, Messrs Waring Bros, who surrendered their interests, and possibly their equipment, in 1869. Having swapped the muddy waters of the Mersey for that of the Avon, the engine spent the next 20 or so years shuttling along a rather ramshackle line from a terminus at Clifton (later known as Hotwells) nestling under the, then recently completed, Clifton Suspension Bridge to Avonmouth.



No 26 Clyde, built at St Helens in 1863, which was probably similar to Severn as an 0-4-2 tender engine. (Author)

The Midland Railway and Great Western Railways took over the Bristol Railway jointly in 1890 but stock was not included in the deal. Locomotive No 2, possibly still named Hero, passed to Burnyeat, Brown & Co Ltd, Abergorki Colliery, Treorchy, where it was renamed Duty. Industrial Railway Society records have recorded its disposal as "probably to S &MR as No2, HECATE, by 7/1911; otherwise sold or scrapped".

A photo of Duty at Abergorki (too poor to reproduce here) shows it as the Bristol engine. Although superficially there is little direct resemblance to Severn in its chimney, cab and tanks, it is certainly that engine. Below the running plate, although masked by posed workmen, the resemblance is very close indeed, and the boiler, smoke box etc all correspond in dimensions and broad appearance. The dome is in the correct position although it lost its cover when enveloped by a saddletank, and the same is true of the safety valves which lost a rather nice brass cover.

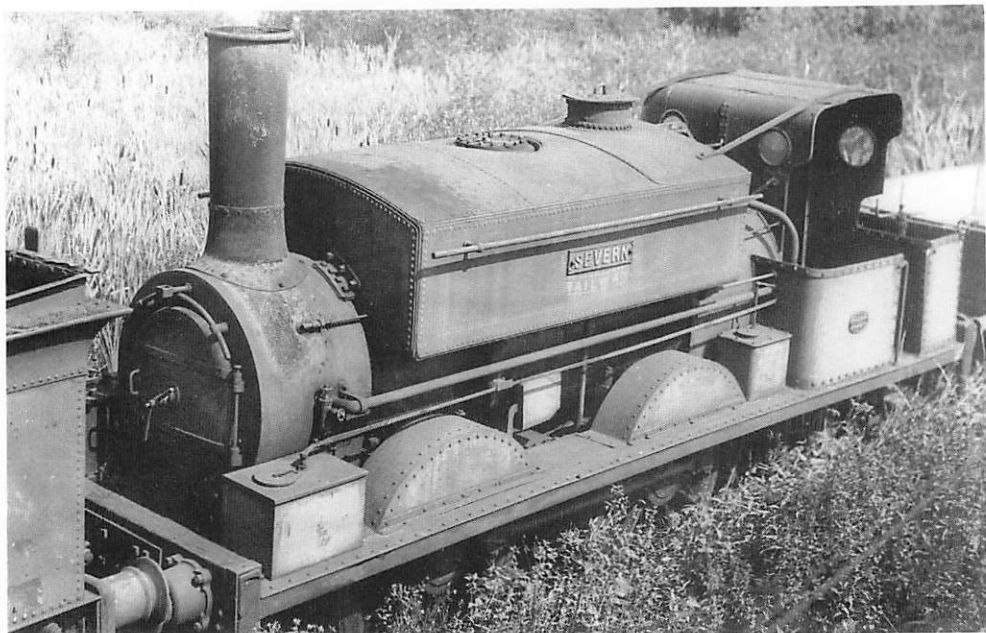
We are now left with the problem of the origin of the Griff Collieries loco story. Perhaps the locomotive history reported in the Locomotive article was actually that of another loco. Stephens was not very accurate

in his records and didn't really care about historical accuracy, and there is no trace in S&MR minutes or other available surviving primary records, of acquisition of the loco. It may even be that the Griff loco was actually the unknown (probably early Hunslet) loco he used in the S&MR's reconstruction, but that is perhaps another story.

Whenever or however our engine passed into and out of industrial service, her career in such service, like many other such locomotives, is unclear. Probably at some time at Abergorki she received a saddle tank. This would have been a poor mismatch to the cab she has in her Duty photo, for the spectacle glasses would have become quite useless for forward vision, being obscured by the new tank. She also acquired at some time a Manning Wardle style cab that was equally useless for forward vision with the saddletank. These changes certainly smack of the knitting together of disparate parts in the way that a colliery or Stephens, but certainly not Bagnalls, might undertake, but we do not know when, where or why these changes were made.

On The S&MR

We can now pick up her history with



Severn at Kinnerley, Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, in August 1926. (H. C. Casserley)

Stephens with some certainty. In May 1910 he had formally contracted to rebuild the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire light Railway and furnish the stock. He is reported to have placed the order for two new 0-6-2Ts to run the line by October 1910, but for some reason these were delayed. Stephens therefore hastily assembled a hotchpotch collection personally. The Company minutes note the purchase of one LSWR locomotive in February 1911, which became No 3 by the time of the Railway's opening at Easter. So Gazelle (No 1) and our loco, which became No 2, might be presumed to be already secured. Reportedly overhauled by Bagnall, and again renamed Hecate with her old number 2 restored, she moved to the S&MR. The Locomotive article gives its arrival date as May 1911 (after opening) though both it and its number are mentioned in R E Davies' article on the reopening in the Transport and Travel Monthly Magazine for June 1911.

According to The Locomotive article, the engine was given brass nameplates and renamed Severn during 1916, and there is photographic evidence that it was so named by 1917. Up to this time her appearance was of a saddle tank with a single up and over sheet ending at the back of the coal bunker as a cab and a squat stovepipe chimney. Between renaming and 1921 her appearance changed again, as her cab was much shortened to finish in front of the coal bunker (which was her original from Bristol days) and a taller, more stately, stovepipe chimney fitted.

This rather ancient machine seems to have spent its active life on mixed and quarry trains on the Criggion branch, which had re-opened in February 1912, but known photographs of her in action are confined to one poor quality image at Criggion quarry. She was probably little used after the arrival of the Terriers in the early twenties, and was thereafter seemingly static, with her vacuum-brake fittings removed, on the 'spares' line at Kinnerley for much, if not all, of the time.

She was first noted as withdrawn in the 1930 accounts soon after Austen assumed direct control during Stephens' illness. Charles Klapper, who was friendly with Stephens, reported that he had some idea of it attaining its [believed] centenary. By 23 July 1930 Austen reported to the Board the proposed sale of 'The Severn' (No 2) to Wards for £47, but by October he had to report that the mainline companies would not allow her to be towed over their lines to the scrap yard, so she stayed put. Her end was prolonged; she was reported as still being broken up in October 1932 and was finally recorded as dismantled in May 1933. But much of her had not in fact gone for it was only on 17 October 1933 that the sale of her boiler was reported, together with those of S&MR Nos 6, 7 and 8, to G R Jackson of Wednesbury for £100. The remainder of her frames and wheels lay around till at least 1937 and bits, both large and small, lay around for even longer, some, including her nameplates, even being entered in the inventory at the Army's takeover in 1941.

A long-drawn-out end for a locomotive, whatever her true origins, with a varied and interesting career.

Note:

(1) *The St Helens railway was opened in 1833 to connect St Helens with the River Mersey at Runcorn and slowly evolved into a T-shaped system that connected the L&Y Liverpool - Manchester line with a line from Garston to Warrington. Part is now incorporated in the main line from Crewe to Liverpool.*

Sources and Acknowledgements:

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Geoffrey Hill of the Industrial Locomotive Society
The St Helens Railway, J M Tolson, Oakwood Press, 1983
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