



THE COLONEL

The Journal of THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
The Society for the Enthusiast of the Light
and Narrow Gauge Railways of N.J. Stephens.

number 3 - September 1985

Contents:

SECRETARY'S REPORT

EDITORIAL

THE COLONEL'S BRIEFING

news and information from Andrew Emery

BOOK REVIEW of three books on Shropshire

TAKE A TRIP ON THE MAGIC CIRCLE (part two)
by Bob Williams

COACHES OF THE KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

by Stephen Hannington

THE EAST KENT RAILWAY, SAVE IT OR SCRAP IT?

by Robert Kinghorn

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WELSH HIGHLAND RLY.-

part one (1864-1921) by John Keylock

MY INTRODUCTION TO COLONEL STEPHENS

by Tony Cleford

THE P.D. & S.W.J. Railway - a few notes

by Mike Green

A WOLSELEY-SIDDELEY RAILCAR - ON THE S & M

by Jon Clarke

RESEARCH OFFICERS

LAST VEHICLE including SALES & WANTS

THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

The Society for the Enthusiast of the Light
and Narrow Gauge Railways of Holman F. Stephens.

SECRETARY

ANDREW M. EMERY

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership is growing faster than I anticipated, and with it comes a greater selection of material for publication, although that little headache I leave to Jon, our editor. Elsewhere in this issue I will touch on finance and constitution. My plan is to use the start of 1986 to introduce, firstly, a small subscription to cover the costs of 'THE COLONEL', and I do mean small; and secondly, a formal Society organisation that the handling of money dictates should exist. I am pleased to say that relations with other groups are excellent, and mutual help and publicity are the order of the day. And so they should be. That's everything. Short and to the point. - Andrew Emery.

Editorial: by Jon Clarke. 'Kilmorey', 36 Parkgate Road,
Chester, Cheshire, CHI 4AQ.

Membership is not the only thing which is growing fast. The Society began with a newsletter of three sides. This had grown to some 14 pages for the birth of 'THE COLONEL' as the newsletter became a journal. This third effort has reached 20 pages, and could have been more. Costs become a problem at this stage, so some changes in format are required on economic grounds, but content can be increased as a result.

Contributions of articles will be required for future issues, and any sent to me at 'Kilmorey' will be considered. Typed articles preferred but don't let that stop you; s.a.e.'s if you want your original back.

An important railway anniversary took place since the last issue, no not the GWR 150, but the WC&P 100. The what! The 100th anniversary of the authorisation of the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway, which was authorised as a tramway in August 1885, even though it was not until 1897 that the first section was completed. This year also saw the 60th anniversary of the opening of the Ashover Light Railway, which was opened on Monday 6th April 1925. Please let me know of any upcoming anniversaries you know of.

Finally, my thanks to the following for providing me with various information on the Colonel Stephens Railways: Len Ashby (Llanymynech), J. Burrell (S&M), Ivor Gotheridge (Ashover), S. Hannington (K&ESR), Peter Harding (Hawkhurst, Sheppey, Ryel & Camber), John Scott-Morgan (various), and Lens of Sutton (for no less than 134 photos of the Colonel's lines).

Footnote: The back page contains a new logo for the Society, and I suggest a 'catch-phrase' be adopted, which was used by the Colonel for advertising, being...

"SUPPORT THE LOCAL LINE"

The Colonel's Briefing

by Andrew Emery.

1. THE EAST KENT RAILWAY - PRESERVATION.

Elsewhere in this issue of 'THE COLONEL', you will find Robert Kinghorn's article on purchasing and running the remains of the EKR. I should not say remains, for, as Robert points out, the line is still a going concern. I recently had a visit from Robert, and although I have long maintained that in this day and age there are too many preservation schemes chasing too few customers, I can say that this is no 'pie in the sky', but a practical proposition. Now I realise that this may put the backs up of those who do not believe that there is room for another railway in that neck of the woods, but I must say that an objective look at the proposal shows otherwise. Please read the article without any pre-conceived ideas, and if you are interested, reply.

2. TRANSFERS. By now I expect many of you have heard of the GNR and GER wagon transfers produced and marketed by Richard Tarpey, and which were reviewed in The Model Railway Journal No.2. I spoke to Richard about the possibility of producing dry-print transfers to cover some of the Stephens lines, and he was optimistic. We now need reports on suitable transfers which will go to fill a sheet size A5. Examples which spring to mind are Shropshire & Montgomeryshire loco emblems and names, and Snailbeach wagon lettering, which betrays my interests. Anyone who has ideas should write to me a.s.a.p., and we will put together the collection of photographs necessary. My initial suggestion is to make the sheet include War Department insignia, which are small, used on locos bought by Stephens, taken over from him, and which to my knowledge are not produced elsewhere. Hopefully these would increase the appeal of the sheet. Ideas please. By the way, Richards GNR and GER sheets cost £3-00 each in 4mm, and are available from him at; 16 White Leather Square, Billingham, Linor. NG34 0QP.

3. JOHN MINNIS - BOOKSELLER. John Minnis of Brighton, himself a 2mm Scale modeller, (I should know, I sold him 'Little Wansbeck') stocks a wide selection of secondhand books, many rare, and the majority on railway subjects although he can also supply works on local History, Topography, Architecture, etc. At the moment he has copies of Lawson Finch's, The Rother Valley line; Colt's, East Kent Rly.; and a WC&PR weighbill. Anyone interested should contact John at; 14 York Villas, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 3TS, for up to date info. He buys books too.

4. MIDDLETON PRESS - LATEST. Member Vic Mitchell of Middleton Press has advised me that a new publication entitled 'Branch Line to Tenterden' is due to be released from there mid-August. Vic states that all albums cost £6-95, have 96 pages, hard covers, and are 234mm x 169mm, containing 110-125 photographs. Included in the growing range of titles is 'Branch Line to Selsey', having the same price and specification. Both are available through the Society, or direct from Vic at; Middleton Press, Easebourne Lane, West Sussex, GU29 9AZ. Tel. Midhurst 073 081 3169.

5. THE WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY - GOINGS ON AT 'PORT'.

The preserved Welsh Highland Railway at Porthmadog (is that near Portmadoc?), are active on the literary side, to say the least. John Keylock, member of our group, and amongst other things the WHR archivist, has sent me some of the reprints of original documents that they can supply. Included are copies of 'Festiniog and Welsh Highland (Light) Railways working instructions' effective from 1st October 1925, and the July 1934 timetable. -continued over

5. -Continued. They are priced 25p and 20p respectively, and available from John direct at; 6, Marlborough Road, Sale, Cheshire; or from the WHR shop at 'Port'. John adds: "Timetables of the Colonel's era urged potential travellers to use the railway 'built of British steel, and using British coal, rather than travel by car on imported rubber (tyres) and using imported fuel". He certainly was quite a character!" - Also available from the WHR is a yearbook and guide, as well as a ride on the line. Anyone in the area should pop in. Ask John for details.

6. THE KENT AND EAST SUSSEX RLY. - NEWS FROM TENTERDEN.

Tenterden is thriving, there is no doubt of that if the sheer quantity of material reaching me from there is anything to go by. 'The Automobile' magazine for August 1985 carries a letter from Philip Shaw on railcars used on Stephens' lines. Norwegian State railways number 376 is in need of work, and anyone wishing further information should contact; Mark Toynbee on Tenterden 05806 5392. The railway itself has seen it's busiest July since it was reopened eleven years ago, I am told, and there are new arrivals in the form of the Officer's Train from the Longmoor Military Railway. One is a six-wheeled inspection saloon built in 1910 for the London & North Western Railway, and has been purchased by Philip himself. The other two include a London & South Western family saloon of 1910, and a South Eastern & Chatham family saloon of 1900. It is intended to restore all three carriages to provide first class accomodation at a future date.

7. 4mm MODEL - LANGLEY DOUBLE FAIRLIE. The June 1985 issue of '009 NEWS' carries an article on construction of this kit, recently introduced by Langley, and receiving some publicity as much for the problems concerning the change in specification of the propriety chassis as anything else. Langley are having problems with this model. Designed to sit upon the Bachman U36R chassis which was then one-piece, the manufacturer was confronted with the problem of Bachman's change to split-chassis for the specified model soon after the kit's release. I understand that this problem may now be resolved by an adaption kit, full details not known. The body itself is reviewed at some length by '009 News', but I must be frank and say that the report is TOO good, and tends to lose credibility by this. No cast kit, no matter how desirable a prototype, is perfect, and this model is far from perfect. I hope someone who has themselves completed the model will comment. There is no point in commenting upon products in 'The Colonel' if all we are going to do is drool over them. By the way, anyone interested in 4mm narrow gauge modelling would be well advised to send an SAE to the '009 News' Editor, and member of The Colonel Stephens Society, Hugh Smith, at; 31B. Carnarvon Road, Stratford, London E15 4JW. By the way, Hugh has a guilty secret: he also Edits the News Sheet of The Broad Gauge Society, so make sure you state which one you are interested in.

8. 4mm MODEL - G.E.M. BALDWIN TANK. In the last issue of 'The Colonel' I mentioned George E. Mellor's new body kit for the American built narrow-gauge trench locos of the first world war, designed to fit upon a Farrish chassis. A letter from Roy Dook at GEM Model Railways; 31a Rhos Road, Rhos-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay, Clwyd, LL28 4RR, tells us: "The kit was based on original information pertaining to the first two batches of Baldwins shipped to this country. The spectacle hoods were designated for the first batch and the water lifting device for the second. Considering the number of these engines supplied, coupled to others from our own Hunslet Company and others we were surprised at the dearth of printed information on the subject." I myself have seen the castings and they are good. I intend to build two for my own Snailbeach layout later this year when construction begins, but using a chassis with wheels to 2mm Scale Association wheel standards. Should be interesting work.

9. STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPES. Hugh Smith recently pointed out that I made no mention of the size of SAEs required to be sent to Jon for issues of 'The Colonel'. Of course, the larger they are, the less folding that will be required. Even if you don't mind creases, think of Jon. Brown Manillas are cheap, sturdy, and excellent if they are wide enough for A4. Well done to everyone who sent in half a dozen. Why do I still need to buy stamps in sheets of one-hundred?
10. PETER HARDING - AUTHOR. One of the nice aspects of doing the Secretary's job in the Society is the post arriving on my doorstep containing all the 'Goodies'. One such was a copy of Peter Harding's lovely little book on 'The Rye & Camber Tramway'. I understand that Jon Clarke is to review this and other books, so I will confine my comments to; thank you Peter, good to hear of more Stephens in print, also produced is 'The Hawkhurst Branch Line', and an SAE to Peter at the below address should provide up to date info, and prices, which I seem not to have; "Kossigial", Bagshot Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2SG. Talking of SAEs, did I mention the contributor to 'The Colonel' who sent me some excellent material for publication, in a large envelope with no stamp?! How could I complain after he had gone to such effort? Please remember the postage when writing to Peter.
11. THE REFERENCE INDEX PROJECT. Bitten off more than I can chew here. The truth is you have all contributed so much that I don't want to miss anything out when I collate the info. The sheets of sources will now be produced by individual railway, and I will be asking the Research Officers comments on the drafts where applicable so long as it does not delay things too much. Also included will be an index to model products suitable for our lines (directly related that is) and a Society register. If the first of these is not enclosed with this issue it is not for the want of trying, new material arrives every day. No excuses here, I won't print until I am sure that most of what information is available is included. Should be worth it in the end. Please send info on any little product you may come across.
12. FEES. The dreaded word again. After talking to Jon I have been forced to admit what I really suspected all along, that with the continuously growing membership, circulation costs are too large to be met privately. I am giving plenty of advanced warning here as I believe that with fees should come a society structure to replace my dictatorship (although I can't help feeling that HFS would have approved of it). We are going to need a Treasurer and, truth is, a Secretary who can file! I should be producing articles on the S&MR and SDR, the present work seems to involve a lot of papers strewn across the living room floor at 1:30AM. Would someone like to propose a structure, or part of one? (Fees will be nominal)
13. THE FINANCE OF STEPHENS. No, not a joke. Finance was never a joke to HFS. Mr. Baker (sorry, no first name yet) has written to me for a membership form, and at the same time asked for any information on the financial side of HFS's operations. Unable to help him myself, I am appealing for help from anyone in the know. Please drop me a line direct, until I receive Mr. Baker's address release. What is 3/8 transport stock?
14. THE MODELLING PRESS. Why does the phrase 'The Modelling Press' conjure up an image of old raincoats and flash bulbs? The Dylan Thomases of the soldering iron. I am forever thanking Editors for their help, and this time a word of appreciation to YOUR MODEL RAILWAY, THE TENTERDEN TERRIER, and RAILWAY MODELLER (again) magazines, for the press they have given, and to MODEL RAILWAY JOURNAL for the press they are going to give, if they but knew it! If we had a notice I have missed, please tell me.

Book Review: - several in fact!

" HANDBOOK TO SHROPSHIRE AND MONTGOMERYSHIRE RAILWAY "

Author Not known. A reprint of the original guide which was printed by Livesey of Shrewsbury, probably in the late 1920s. This edition, printed by Shropshire County Library 1977. ISBN 0 903802 06 6. Price 50p. 42 pages, softback, 185mm x 130mm, 7 black and white plates, 1 map, no drawings, the original advertisements included.

The original of this booklet, appearing in the late Stephens era, was intended as a chatty pocket guide to sights on and near the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, and as such describes a journey from Shrewsbury Abbey Foregate station via Kinnerley to Llanymynech, and includes the Criggion branch. A lot of the text is taken up with local stories such as the fall of Caractacus' army to the Romans, the tales of Humphrey Kynaston a gentleman of the road, and other local notables.

This nice little novelty will be of interest to any Stephens student for it's insight into the commercial thinking behind the light railway concept, representing as it does the image the S&MR wished to present to the travelling public, and the means it used to convey it's message. A pleasant read.

* Copies of this booklet may be obtained from the Secretary *
* at the enclosed address. Enclose suitable SAE and postage *

" SHROPSHIRE RAILWAYS REVISITED " Edited by the Shropshire Railway Society.

Published by Shropshire Libraries 1982. ISBN 0 903802 20 1. Price £2-00, 80 pages, softback, 230mm x 130mm, 76 black and white plates, 1 map, no drawings.

Basically covering the GWR/LNWR Joint lines in Shropshire, this book also includes photographs of Snailbeach shed, a well known photograph, and lesser known plates of the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire at Kinnerley (Gazelle with trailer), Llanymynech, (Railcars in service), Shrawardine bridge (Austerity tank with SR brakes in WD days), and Abbey Foregate (platform and stock) (twin railcars).

* Copies of this book may be obtained from the Secretary *
* at the enclosed address. Enclose suitable SAE and postage *

" RAILWAYS OF SHROPSHIRE " - Shropshire Libraries

Published by Shropshire Libraries 1983. ISBN 0 903802 27 9. Price £2-20, 76 pages, softback, 150mm x 215mm, 20 black and white plates, 4 maps, drawings include Ford Railcar and Snailbeach Baldwin tank.

This small book deals with the history of the railways of Shropshire in general, passing only lightly over the lines of the Colonel. It is, however, a good read. Again, as with Shropshire Railways Revisited, this is good general reading for a county rich in light railways.

Take a trip on the magic circle

by Bob Williams

The second and concluding part of an article which appeared in the 'Shrewsbury Chronicle' on May 24th 1985.

Part 2: Portmadoc to Shrewsbury.

I think I must be very lucky, for every time I visit Portmadoc, the sun is shining. And so it was on this occasion too, and with plenty of time to walk through the town down to the harbour and the Ffestiniog Railway Station. This made the ideal spot to refresh ourselves before we journeyed up in the mountains, behind one of the great little steam locomotives which haul their red carriages around the twists and turns of the edge-hugging route, which affords quite magnificent views over the vale of Ffestiniog.

The new section of the line, after passing through its new tunnel, and above the reservoir and power station, seems almost to run through the gardens of some of the slate clad cottages which announce that Blaenau is not very far away. Look out too at this point for a waterfall which comes tumbling down out of the hillside.

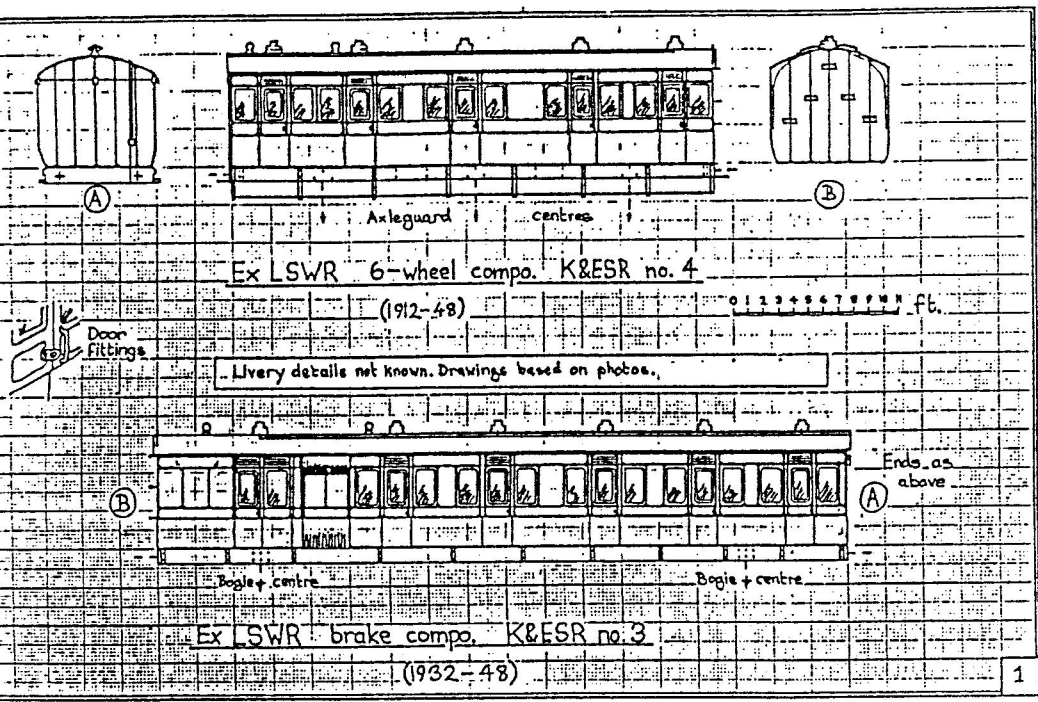
Blaenau is a slate dominated town, and as such always looks dreary and overcast, even when the sun shines. The first part of our journey out of the town, sees ample evidence of this slate heritage and then suddenly, it is gone, as we are plunged into the cooling blackness of the tunnel which takes the passengers 3861 yards from the spoil tips of Blaenau to the green foothills of Snowdonia, where very soon we are joined by yet another infant river, this time the Conway, which tumbles down countless small waterfalls and rapids into Snowdonia's "capital" of Bettws y Coed, where a small railway museum has now been established in the railway yard.

The journey from here to Llandudno Junction was for me the most stunning of the entire journey, with the Conway changing from a tumbling rushing cascade, into a wide smooth and gently curved estuary.

There were distant views of the suspension bridge too as we pulled into the station, to change trains yet again, this time on the coast journey down to Chester, just an hour away.

The sands of Colwyn Bay unhappily all too soon give way to the caravan jungle which heralded Rhyl and Prestatyn and then it was south along the Dee estuary, before the famous old racecourse at Chester signalled our last change.

Two rightly famous viaducts, the one near Ruabon giving a distant glimpse of the aqueduct which carries the Llangollen Canal across the River Dee, and the one at Chirk, where we look down on the canal aqueduct, are the highlights of the journey back from Chester to Shrewsbury.



Coaches on the Kent & East Sussex Railway are notoriously elusive beasts.

There were lots of them, their numbering was illogical and often illegible,

And there were so many that were similar in appearance that, even if a photograph exists, it's often difficult to tell one from the other.

None of this is very helpful to modellers. But all is not hopeless. The K&ESR has attracted a variety of chroniclers, not the least of whom was Les Derbyshire, who made many drawings of K&ESR stock and structures. One of his drawings was of a four-wheel, ex-LSWR brake thirdwheel, with a similar sister coach and a six-wheel composite, formed one of the most widely used passenger sets on the line. This, and the photographic evidence available, made me choose this set as my first K&ESR modelling project, in 4mm scale.

Obviously, the brake thirds were no real problem. The only point worth making here is a small detail difference between the two, which were numbered 1 and 19. Number 1 had a small ventilator between the non-brake end and the first lamp-top. On number 19, this ventilator was between the first and second lamp-tops from the non-brake end.

The six-wheeler was a different case. There were no plans and few photos of it. The drawing shown above, therefore, was very much a guess, based on two not very good photos. Nonetheless, it looks the part, and I doubt that there are any folk better informed to criticise. If there are, I would be very pleased to hear from them!

The same applies to the other coach, number 3, except that I did know that the body is 45ft long, and it is rather better illustrated. Number 2, incidentally, was very similar, except that it was only 42ft long, so that there was only a single line of beading between the windows of adjacent

Livery details are another problem. Mr Derbyshire describes number 1 as being "very dark bottle green" with white lettering and figures along the panels above the windows, and the numerals "3" on each of the compartment doors. Number 19, he says, was chocolate with lettering and numbers in yellow along the waist. So what about number 4? A photograph clearly shows it with "THIRD" spelt out along the waist panel of one door. Since it arrived on the line at the same time as number 1, it seems likely that it too was bottle green, but with a different style of lettering. The Kent and East Sussex was never noted for being logical!

S.R. Garrett, in his little Oakwood Press book on the K&ESR*, reports that the bogie coaches were all bottle green too, but there is no evidence of lettering style. On my model, I avoided lettering entirely.

An article on my methods of modelling panelled coaches will, hopefully, have been published in the Railway Modeller by the time this newsletter appears, so I will not go into it here. However, I will add that Roxey Mouldings^Q makes a range of useful accessories, including axleguards, bogies, guards duckets, buffers, lamp tops and ventilators of the correct type.

The six-wheeler, as are most six-wheelers, was a pig to model because the centre wheel will cause derailments on unlevel track and sharp curves. For the moment, mine runs without its centre axle, which is obviously unsatisfactory. I intend to try a floating-axle system, in which loops of nickel-silver wire hold the axle. The pin-point axle ends will be filed off, making the centre axlebox a dummy, and the axle will be held at the bottom of the loops with a light steel spring. It should work, but I can't confirm it yet.

Anybody wanting copies of the drawing of numbers 3 and 4 should send me a stamped addressed envelope, A4 size, and I will gladly supply it. My address is:

1/110A Brixton Hill, Brixton, London SW2 1AH.

My next coaching project will be the delightful ex-LSWR four-wheel royal coupé. This should present some interesting modelling problems with its "stags-coach" style of bodywork and complicated moulded beading. I shall produce a drawing in the same way as numbers 3 and 4 and make it available to members of our Society. There are some very good published photos of this coach available, so this should not be too difficult.

My main priority now, though, is to add to my goods rolling stock, starting with one of the 10 ton open wagons of the Rother Valley Railway (the first section of the K&ESR). Again, I hope to make drawings of this available in the not-too-distant future.

In the meantime, I hope my efforts here prove useful to aspiring or active modellers of the K&ESR, and prompt either more information on the K&ESR or similar material for the other Colonel Stephens Railways. This is, after all, what our society is all about. Hope to hear from you soon.

* The Kent & East Sussex Railway, by S.R. Garrett, Oakwood Press number 56. A mine of useful information with good photographs, and track plans of Rolvenden, Tenterden and Bodiam, as well as sample timetables and stock lists.

^Q Roxey Mouldings, 83 Bridge Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9HH. Telephone: 01 941 3599.

THE EAST KENT RAILWAY, SAVE IT OR SCRAP IT?

by

Dr. Robert R. F. KINGHORN

History of EKR

The East Kent Railway was incorporated on 19th June 1911 under the Light Railway Acts of 1896. The first section linking the SECR at Shepherdwell with the colliery at Tilmanstone, a distance of about 2 1/4 miles, was opened in December 1911. Eventually the railway ran to Eastry where it branched with one line going to the Port at Richborough and the other to Wingham. In addition, there were goods only branches to various collieries. The lack of the anticipated development of the Kent coalfield meant that this was the final limits of the railway, although further extensions had been planned. By 1919 the railway was part of the Empire of minor Railways run by Col. Holman F. Stephens. The only other of his railways to survive are the Kent & East Sussex, the Festiniog and the Welsh Highland. Nationalisation on 1st January 1948 sounded the death knell for the East Kent, although it had been struggling and only just surviving for many years. Closure came on 30th October 1948 when all services were withdrawn. Most of the line had been lifted within a few months and the rolling stock scrapped.

Once that had happened, only a remnant remained, the old main line as far as Eyethorne and the branch from there to the Tilmanstone Colliery, i.e. the first part to be opened. Coal from the mine has since then been transported to the main Canterbury to Dover railway line along this section. However, no trains have run since the start of the miners strike in March 1984 and the dismantling of the remaining section of one of Col. Stephens' railways must be imminent. If action is taken now the East Kent could be saved and become a preserved tourist railway in the Garden of England.

Potential to attract tourists

Besides being on the main railway line to Dover, it is five minutes drive from the A2. It is situated in the middle of one of the most popular English tourist areas (7 miles from Dover, 10 from Canterbury and 26 from Margate) and is also on a major route to the continent which could provide more traffic. There are no other preserved railways in the immediate vicinity, the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch and Kent & East Sussex Railways are about 28, 22 and 36 miles away respectively. The K&ESR is about the same distance from the EKR as it is from the Bluebell railway. Delightful views can be obtained from the railway and it would be the only preserved railway to take its passengers to a colliery. It is not impossible that at some future date the preserved railway could again take the coal to the mainline, which would be a useful source of income.

Condition of the EKR

The station at Shepherdwell (or Sibbertswold) consists of a single platform face with one track and a parallel siding, set in a cutting. Immediately past the end of the platform are two loops and the connection to BR. The platform edge would

require a couple of courses of bricks to be replaced but the surface is not too bad. The Path from the road and the BR station is useable but could do with some overhanging foliage removed. There are no buildings but a temporary hut would suffice to get the line open and would be in keeping with the Col. Stephens atmosphere. The loops outside the station could be used for storage and locomotive run round.

The line is in pretty good condition with both sleepers, many of which are concrete, and ballast looking in reasonable order. (As of 13/7/85). The grooves at the two level crossings (both over minor roads) need clearing out and there are a few small plants, dog roses et c., growing on the track, but nothing of any consequence. Golgotha tunnel seems in good order and could be used to store stock. If the piles of chalk blocks could be removed an extra track through the tunnel could be laid to give increased storage with protection for the stock from the elements. There is no signalling but with 'one engine in steam' operation this would not be needed. At the far end of the line, in sight of the colliery, there is a run round loop and thus all that is required to operate a railway is in place on the ground.

Yes, there could a lot of improvements of both the cosmetic and more structural nature, but in the short term there is a railway which can be put into operation with a minimum of effort.

What is needed?

Assuming the railway was available and a group is formed to run it then, besides the minor points mentioned above, the only major problem would be rolling stock (although a minimum would be needed in the early days). In addition, we would require members to run the railway, raise money et c. and money to either buy the line or lease it whilst the project became established.

Some members of our society are trying to get together all persons interested in saving this unique line. Firstly we need to know of everyone who is interested in this project, even if it were only to join a preservation society, even as an armchair member. Secondly we need people who could help on the ground. Thirdly anybody who remembers the old East Kent Railway and has stories and photographs of it which we could publish. Fourthly we need to know anyone who could help with anything material. This could range from goods to sell to raise funds, a hut for the station building, technical expertise (especially legal and financial in the early days), and last (but by no means least) anyone with stock they would be prepared to loan. Anyone interested should contact either:

Dr. Robert Kinghorn, 6, Wilmington Avenue, London W4 3HA. tel 01 995 4020, or

Andrew Emery, 30, Millview Drive, Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear, NE30 2PU. tel 0670 825866.

ACTION is urgently require if this unique little railway is to be saved. This line is an important part of Britain's and Kent's industrial heritage. It is important that it is saved. Once saved it could become a very useful asset to the County and East Kent in particular. It can only be saved if all those who are interested do something and do it now!

*

*

*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY - part one (1864-1921)

In the first of three articles, John Keylock, a Director of The Welsh Highland Railway, outlines the origins of the line. Subsequent articles will cover 'The Colonel Stephens era' between the wars, and the 1980's operation of that inheritance.

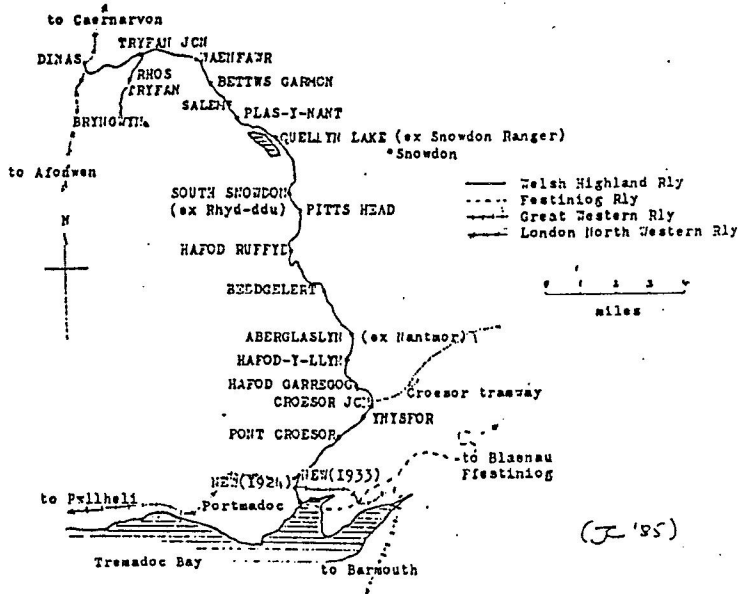
As a through route of some 22 miles - from Dinas Junction, on the Caernarfon to Afonwen line, to Portmadoc - the Welsh Highland Railway opened for traffic in 1923, but the origins of the line go back to 1864. In that year the 2' gauge Croesor Tramway was constructed, as a private undertaking, from Portmadoc travelling north-east to the Croesor Valley. By 1879 this essentially horse operated system had become incorporated as the 'Portmadoc, Croesor and Beddgelert Tram Railway Company (PC&BT)'. Further north, in 1872, the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways Company was authorised to construct two railways; one to Bettws-y-Coed from the junction of the PC&BT, and another from Dinas Junction to Bryngwyn, with a branch to Rhyd-ddu. The latter was built to a gauge of 1'11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and opened for passenger traffic in 1881.

Until the opening of the Snowdon Mountain Railway, in 1896 the NWNG Rlys., provided the quickest means of getting to the foot of Snowdon, for the ascent to the summit, some three miles to the east.

By 1877, slate traffic was moving from quarries in the Bryngwyn area, to Tryfan Junction, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, and thence to

Dinas Junction, where it was transhipped to the L.N.W.R. In 1885 an Act was obtained to extend the railway from Dinas to Caernarfon harbour, but this scheme of work was not proceeded with.

South from Tryfan Junction there were stations or halts at Maenfaur, Bettws Garmon, Salem, Plas-y-Nant, and Quellyn Lake, before Rhyd-ddu was reached after 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles and 600' above sea level. The average gradient of the route is 1 in 65, as is scenically most attractive, particularly after leaving Tryfan Junction.



For the opening of the line three locomotives were ordered: "Moel Tryfan" and "Snowdon Ranger" being single Fairlies from Vulcan Foundry Ltd., and "Beddgelert" also an O-6-4T from the Hunslet Engine Company. Bogie coaches were supplied by Brown Marshalls and by Metropolitan, and subsequently by Ashbury & Pickering. There were originally three Cleminson flexible wheelbase carriages and three four-wheelers. For goods traffic there were two types of slate wagon, side tip and coal wagons, covered vans and brake vans, and also a Cleminson 6-wheeled open wagon. Locomotive livery was 'red-brown', with black and yellow lining. Frames, cab roofs and smoke boxes were black, and buffer beams were vermilion. The bogie coaches were in Midland Railway red, with white roofs, while the six-wheelers were 'teak', and carried the legend "N.W.N.G.(R.)"

The rail used was generally 35lb.F.B. in 24' lengths, spiked to larch sleepers, laid at 2'5½" centres. The single line - with passing loops at the stations mentioned - was initially worked on the 'one engine in steam' method. Wises Patent Train Staff and detachable 'ticket' system was introduced in 1892. Semaphore signals installed initially - and like the lever frames supplied by McKenzie & Holland - soon fell into disuse. The journey time was approximately 50 minutes and there were no Sunday trains.

Even by the end of the 19th century, the slate boom had passed. Nevertheless in 1901 there was incorporated the "Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway" - in which were vested the powers of the P.C. & B.T.Rly.Co. - the object being to link South Snowdon (Rhyd Ddu) with Portmadoc using the bottom end of the Croesor Tramway. Work started in 1906 based mainly on Beddgelert, northwards from where gradients to the summit at Pitts Head, were severe. Behind the Royal Goat Hotel in Beddgelert, a cutting and tunnel were forged, and the road to Portmadoc bridged. This bridge remains to this day, and is often the cause of puzzlement! The tunnels in the most picturesque Aberglaslyn Pass were also cut.

By 1906 the locomotive 'Beddgelert' was worn out; the NWNG Rly was in the receivership of one J.C.Russell and the P.B. & S.S.R., although not yet having a completed railway on which to run it, ordered a 2-6-2T from Hunslet at Leeds. This locomotive was 'Russell', which was to become perhaps the most popular narrow gauge locomotive in the country. 'Russell' survives, and may be returned to steam in 1986. In 1908 the NWNG Rly purchased its final locomotive 'Gowrie', another O-6-4T single Fairlie from Hunslet; the last single Fairlie ever to be built.

With a shortage of capital, hired carriages and declining traffic, the NWNG Rly struggled on with World War I looming. Passenger traffic ceased on the Bryngwyn line at the end of 1913, and on the South Snowdon line in October 1916. There after freight services were run 'as required'. It was to be 1921 before the next phase in the development of the Welsh Highland Railway was to be started - after a world war, and with renewed - if misplaced - optimism.

(to be continued)

MY INTRODUCTION TO COLONEL STEPHENS (No.1)

A contribution by Tony Cleford, with
an introduction by Andrew Emery.

Everyone must surely have come across the railways of H.F.S. in a different way. Personally my introduction came from a derelict overbridge on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire near Shrewsbury. A growing interest in the railways of that County led to enquiries locally, the most interesting being with my wife's grandmother, who told me about the old 'strong & mighty', from Abbey Foregate station. And so an interest was born, not from a deliberate hunt for an obscure line, but from personal experience. Below, Tony Cleford, research officer for the WC&P, has taken me to my word of only needing a few lines on his subject, and contributed his own very personal thoughts. How about some more from other members. - Andrew Emery.

I was born in Bristol, and grew up with a love of fine and innovative engineering, so that when an interest in railways blossomed as an adult, it was only natural that my enthusiasm should centre on a local line, a famous and historic railway company that linked two of the country's great commercial centres and established its pioneering engineering works half way along the route. It's especially fitting that interest is being revived in the company now, as this year marks an important anniversary for the railway, that should not pass unmarked. This illustrious railway company, if doubt still exists in your mind, was of course the WESTON, CLEVEDON & PORTISHEAD RAILWAY. It claimed to be the first light railway and August 6th 1985, marks the centenary of the day its Parliamentary Bill received the Royal Assent, although the Colonel's involvement didn't begin until 1911, when it was already in the hands of the receiver. So don't be fooled by any other concocted railway company anniversaries this year, as they are just leaping on the WC&P band-wagon, no doubt searching for cheap publicity, and hoping that some of its glory will rub off.

One of the purposes of the society is to foster interest in Colonel Stephens' railway empire, so I'll try to act as a clearing house for information about the WC&P. Whatever your interest is - in prototype or modelling - any WC&P information or queries will be appreciated, and will be passed on to 'THE COLONEL'.

THE PLYMOUTH DEVONPORT AND SOUTH WESTERN JUNCTION RAILWAY

Several weeks ago, Mike Green of Bere Alston was good enough to send to me a few rough notes on this successful line, and I have taken the liberty of reproducing them below for the general interest of all:

THE LOCAL RAILWAY ACTIVITY (THE UPPER TAMAR VALLEY).

- 1862 The Tamar, Kit Hill, and Callington Railway Co. was formed.
- 1863 The first sod was cut at Kelly Quay, Calstock.
- 1864 The inclined plane, quays, engine works, and stores of the Tamar Coal, Manure, and General Merchandise Co. were obtained.
- 1865 Act of Parliament authorising the Saltash and Callington Railway.
- 1869 Act to promote a second railway from Calstock to Callington, using the incompleted T.K.H.&C.R.
- 1871 Act authorising a change of name to The East Cornwall Mineral Rly.
- 1876 Act for a seven mile line from the top of the incline to join The Tavistock & South Devon Rly. at Tavistock.
- 1879 E.C.M.R. unable to raise funds, and the act of 1876 was repealed.
- 1882 E.C.M.R. shareholders decide to sell the company.
- 1891 The E.C.M.R. was taken over, and it's purchase was completed in 1894, by the Plymouth Devonport and South Western Rly.

CALSTOCK VIADUCT (EYESORE OR SCENIC ?)

The P.D.&S.W.R. built a connecting line from Bere Alston (My home village) in Devon to Calstock to make a connection with the E.C.M.R. and this work was completed in time despite trouble between the Engineers and the Contractors and the man who was in charge of converting the E.C.M.R. from 3'6" to standard gauge, (who the contractor called an interfering busybody) Holman Stephens.

- Mike Green.

If anyone else would like to give a potted history of their local line, then please jot down a few notes and send them in.

- Andrew Emery.

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Ploughing through a recent mound of library books which I had ordered, and which had as usual arrived all at once, I found a couple of items of interest to members, which I have recorded below. Whilst on the subject of libraries, I keep mine busy by submitting batches of request cards for books which are either too expensive, or of too small an interest to buy, or more importantly, are out of print and only available in this way. I often submit twenty at a time. They smile, weakly.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ALBUM by George Dow. Ian Allan 1970. SBN 7110 01286
Page 33; NSR 4w carriage in S&MR ownership, believed at Kinnerley.

BRIGHTON LINE ALBUM by R.C.Riley. Ian Allan 1967. No ISBN. Page 41; WC&PR Terrier No.4, carriage No.2, loco was LBSCR No.53. Page 71 shows ElR and carriage on cornish viaduct, E.C.M.R. rebuilt with piers of old 3'6" gauge railway viaduct still standing alongside. Not seen before.

- Andrew Emery

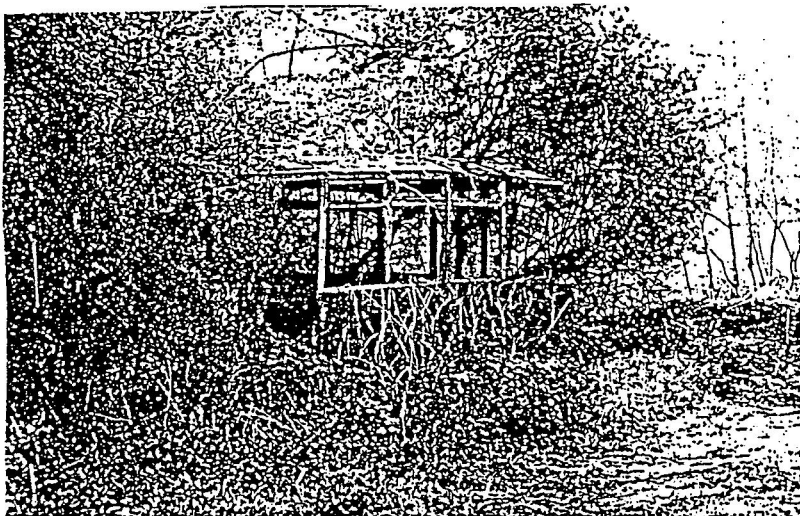
A WOLSELEY - SIDDELEY RAILCAR - ON THE S & M

by Jon Clarke.

Colonel Stephens is well known for the eccentricities of his railway rolling stock, in both its variety and excessive numbers. One of his achievements was his pioneering work with petrol and diesel propulsion on his railways.

In an effort to cut down on the cost of running passenger services, the 1920's saw him experiment with railcars, an exercise not greeted with enthusiasm by those who had to ride upon them. These railcars perhaps did more harm than good, being not powerful enough to attach goods wagons for mixed traffic, and too slow and uncomfortable a ride to encourage increased patronage from potential passengers.

An early experimental effort, made on the Kent & East Sussex Rly.,



(The remains of the Wolseley-Siddeley railcar in May 1985)

saw a Wolseley-Siddeley car fitted with flanged wheels, which were powered by chain drive. After successful trials at Rolvenden, the vehicle was given a small coach body. Additional trials were carried out, and were apparently a success, as later three pairs of railcars were subsequently purchased for the K&ESR; two Ford based units in 1923, and a Shefflex railcar in 1930.

The Wolseley-Siddeley railcar was transferred to the Selsey Tramway after trials were completed, where it saw several years service. It is reported as having been coupled to a Ford lorry, which had been fitted with flanged wheels.

In about 1931 the railcar was sent to the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, but on arriving at the Kinnerley locomotive

depot, it was found to be in a poor condition, and was left 'in storage' in the sidings behind the sheds, apparently unused until the car was converted, with the engine, bonnet and wheels being removed, and the body mounted onto the underframe of the No.16 coach (an ex-London County Council tramcar), the latter having its wheelbase extended to 8ft for the conversion. This work was carried out so that resulting 'coach' could become the new trailer for the diminutive locomotive "Gazelle" (the only S&M engine still in existence), which itself was restored at this time, both returning to active service in 1937.

However, passenger services had long ceased on the railway (since 6th November 1933), and the combination were only employed on private outings, and for track inspection.

Various conflicting reports on the Wolseley-Siddeley railcar exist. One report (+) refers to a pair of railcars bought by the S&M in 1923, and operated with a light car between, claiming it was taken out of service in 1929, and scrapped in about 1935, with some of the seats used on station platforms. Another report (x) also claims that there was a pair of Wolseley-Siddeley railcars, being scrapped in 1938, with one body being transferred to the chassis of the ex-LCC tramcar. Photographic evidence, or the lack of it, indicate with other reports (x) that only one railcar existed, and that it came from the K&ESR via the Selsey Tramway. There are apparently no photographs of the Wolseley-Siddeley car in use on the S&M, and those which include or feature the car, only show one vehicle, and that is always in the sidings behind the locomotive sheds at Kinnerley. It is assumed that only one car ever existed, and this is known to have still been in use in 1941, when the War Department, on taking over the line, continued to employ the Wolseley-Siddeley based trailer, together with the locomotive "Gazelle", as an inspection saloon (+).

"Gazelle" was moved to the Longmoor Military Railway in June 1950 for preservation. The fate of the trailer was not so glamorous, with the chassis being removed and the body finally used as a lineside hut.

The body of the Wolseley-Siddeley still exists, but in a derelict and very fragile condition, as can be seen in the photograph. Amazingly some of the original paintwork remains. Unfortunately the wreck is now beyond restoration.
Or is it?

- + "The Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway"
by Eric S.Tonks (Industrial Railway Society 1972)
- x "The Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway"
by Keith and Susan Turner (David & Charles)
- x "The Kent & East Sussex Railway"
by S.R.Garrett (Oakwood Press 1980)
- x "Carriage Stock of Minor Standard Gauge Railways"
by R.W.Kidner (Oakwood Press 1978)
- + "Locomotives at War"
by P.M.Kalla-Bishop (Bradford Barton)

(If you have any additional information on the Wolseley-Siddeley railcar or on the S&M, please let the Editor know)

RESEARCH OFFICERS

The following good souls have come forward as R.O.s of their favourite line or lines. Anyone wishing to get in touch direct to talk Stephens should remember to enclose an SAE.

THE SHROPSHIRE & MONTGOMERYSHIRE Jon Clarke, 'Kilmorey', 36 Parkgate Road, Chester, Cheshire. CH1 4AQ. Jon is Editor of 'The Colonel', and a member of Chester Model Railway Club.

WESTON, CLEVEDON & PORTISHEAD Tony Cleford, 21 Regina Road, London, N4 3PT. Tony tends towards 2mm modelling of the WC&PR in the 1900-1940 era.

WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY John Keylock, 6 Marlborough Road, Sale, Cheshire, M33 3AF. John is a Director and Archivist of the Welsh Highland Railway 1964 Company. He can also supply W.H.R. 'Goodies' direct.

PLYMOUTH, DEVONPORT & SOUTH WESTERN JUNCTION RAILWAY Mike Green, 2, Bedford Villas, Bere Alston, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 7DR. He collects relics of the PD&SWJR, and has a sample of loco livery blue paint as a reference.

KENT & EAST SUSSEX Stephen Hannington, 1/110A Brixton Hill, Brixton, London, SW2 1AH. Stephen produces good K&ESR stock drawings, and models in 4mm scale, E.M. Gauge.

HUNDRED OF MANHOOD AND SELSEY TRAMWAY Hugh Smith, 31B Carnarvon Road, Stratford, London, E15 4JW.
SNAILBEACH & DISTRICT Hugh is Editor of the 009 News, and involved in Broad Gauge doings, too.
RYE & CAMBER

We still need, at time of writing, R.O.s for the following lines:

PADDOCKWOOD & HAWKHURST
EDGE HILL LIGHT
FESTINIOG
EAST KENT

NORTH DEVON & CORNWALL JUNCTION
BURRY PORT & GWENDRAETH VALLEY
ASHOVER LIGHT

There is no commitment to produce great reference works, in most cases this has already been done anyway. Just a few lines for 'The Colonel' every second month about the line, or modelling it, etc.

- Andrew Emery

MODEL INDEX

Can't help but notice that a lot of the Society members are also active model makers. So; I am taking it upon myself to draw up a MODEL INDEX of all scales of railway models, which have some connection with any of the Colonel Stephens railways, but I need help. The Research Officers please take note! However, anyone knowing of any suitable model, please contact me a.s.a.p., so this project can get going! Thanks.

- Andrew Emery

Last Vehicle

As this issue of the journal fades into the distance, all that is left in sight is the LAST VEHICLE, and you may wonder what to expect in the next issue (so do I!), but all being well, look out in about November for THE COLONEL in which...

Articles likely to appear include:

- The Colonel's Briefing
- Book review
- Picture this!
- Society Sales & Wants
- Rother Valley Railway Stations
- Welsh Highland Railway (part 2)
- Track-plan (a new feature)
- Snailbeach wagons
- My introduction to Colonel Stephens (No.2)
- Last Vehicle

Plus.... your contributions

WE NEED YOUR HELP

If you want to contribute.. DO SO!

Type written articles preferred, on white A4 paper, but clear hand written articles will be considered. Send all contributions to the Editor at 'Kilmorey', 36 Parkgate Road, Chester, CHI 4AQ

: : : : : : : : : :

SOCIETY SALES & WANTS

Two spots for you to buy and sell, or if you just need information, a place to cry out for HELP!

For Sale: Copies of HANDBOOK TO SHROPSHIRE & MONTGOMERYSHIRE RLY. reviewed in this issue. Price 75p plus sae (min 185x130mm) available from the Society Secretary.

For Sale: Copies of SHROPSHIRE RAILWAYS REVISITED reviewed in this issue. Price £2.00 + sae (min 230x130mm), again available from the Society Secretary.

Wanted: A HISTORY OF GWR WAGONS VOL.2 - condition immaterial. Andrew Emery desperately requires to purchase a copy so he can give the library back theirs. Will pay cover price.

: : : : : : : : : :

S.A.E.'S. - DON'T FORGET

If we don't have your s.a.e.'s. you will not get your next issue, so make sure to send them in. Why not send about six s.a.e.'s. to save you time and money! Thank you.



**SUPPORT
THE
LOCAL
LINE**